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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESS AND REASONS FOR SUCCESS: A STUDY OF TWO SUCCESSFUL
SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BOTSWANA.**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, PLANNING AND
SOCIAL POLICY**

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DECLARATION

I, *Marcos Tlhaloso Maedza*, solemnly declare that this research work is my original product supervised by the supervisor whose name appears on the title page and the views used from experts in the field of study have been duly acknowledged or listed in the reference section. This research report has not been previously submitted for a degree at another university.

Signature: *Marcos Tlhaloso Maedza*
Marcos Tlhaloso Maedza

Date: 15 Day of August 2000

Abstract

Powerful learning does not occur by accident. It is usually a result of an effective learning situation created by a skilful teacher. Such learning and teaching engagements are commonplace in schools that have an ethos characterised by high expectations, collaborations and innovations. These schools, powerful schools, are designed and organised to support powerful learning.

(Hopkins, 1995:01)

The aim of this study was to research top-management, teachers' and students' perceptions of success and reasons for the success of their school in two senior secondary schools identified as successful in Botswana. Interviews of these participants correlate across students, teachers, school heads and deputy heads in respect of their perceptions of the reasons for their schools' success. Important are the pedagogical and social climate of the school and how they are expressed in the daily work of the school. These factors are: the school head's leadership and expectations, teacher involvement in school policy; forms and content of teacher co-operation; teacher expectations on, and attitudes to student capacity; teaching organisation and content; press for academic success; community involvement and social relations in the school.

Governments and schools need knowledge and skills about school improvement and this research attempts to contribute research-based information to help them cope with innovation and improve teaching and learning. School improvement is seen as a combination of school effectiveness and management of change research. Factors that seem to be related to effective schools are listed and knowledge about the change process is used to consider how a school could be improved. It is argued that generic school improvement characteristics and processes take on different meanings in practice, and these meanings are shaped by a school's response to the particular circumstances and challenges of its environment. In turn, this response has implications for the way school improvement programmes are developed and for the role and contribution of the stakeholders to educational change.

The study concludes with an outline of possible school effectiveness factors common to those identified in the international literature, those factors specific to Botswana context, and offers further research and policy recommendations.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades administrators, policy makers and researchers have focussed attention on the effectiveness of educational organisations (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993). Education practitioners and evaluators have an obvious interest in assessing existing levels of effectiveness of staff, students and programmes; ideally, they would prefer checklists of indicators to measure the quality of performance regardless of context and other constraints. Academics tend to have a broader interest, incorporating the fundamental matters of deriving definitions of success, isolating major determinants of effectiveness and building conceptual models to understand success (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:166). Both parents and students have an interest in how schools perform. The character of schools has long been of interest to the discerning parent (Gray and Wilcox, 1995). Parents often talk about the merits of local schools, particularly at those crucial times when their off-spring are about to start formal education or to transfer from one school stage to another. It is often argued that schools acquire 'reputations' for being 'good' or 'bad' in general or in specific terms. The keen interest taken in those reputations shows that parents firmly believe that schools can confer advantages or disadvantages on those who attend them. Therefore, choice of school matters. More and more parents, taxpayers, and politicians are of the view that schools can have effects for good or ill.

On the other end of the continuum there are those (for example, Weindling, 1989) who argue that schools are currently suffering from considerable 'innovation overload' with multiple changes being demanded by education reform efforts and other sources. It seems clear that government and policy makers need research-based information to help them cope with initiation and implementation of new policies on education to improve both teaching and learning. This study attempts to contribute in this regard.

1.1. Aims of the study

The study explores pupils' and teachers' (including heads and deputies) perceptions of school success and the factors that influence it in two senior secondary schools in Botswana identified as successful. The goal is to develop the research on perceptions of school success. I have identified certain senior secondary schools as "successful" in Botswana, using the criteria of end of school student performance during the period 1995-1999. Examination results play a very important part of schooling in Botswana. Good performance in public examinations enables students to study further and ensures employment. The department of Curriculum and Evaluation through the division of Examinations and Testing Unit compiles league tables every year based on individual school's student performance. The government has recently introduced a policy that requires good passes- particularly at "O" level for one to acquire government scholarship particularly for studies outside the country. This adds to the importance of public examination attainments in the country.

1.2. Theoretical framework

This research study could have taken on a different dimension. For example, one could have used the school effectiveness indicators as a checklist to see if they are found in the two selected schools in Botswana. In this way it would have been possible to come up with either agreement in the indicators or differences, subtractions or additions to the list. I have elected to take a slightly different route because of the influence of Michael Fullan's (1991) work in *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. Citing the work of Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) and Smith and Keith (1971), Fullan (1991:19) argues that there are often problems in implementing educational change even among people who seemingly desire reform. In some cases, innovations fail because of the failure to develop an adequate design for implementation. Sometimes they fail because they encounter technical problems in the management of such changes. At times there are questions about developmental soundness of the innovations themselves (Fullan, 1991). One question that can follow from here is: are innovations appropriate for the school communities they are intended for?

The author continues to give other examples pertaining to why innovations fail. Sometimes changes are based on faulty and overly abstract theories not related to practice, limited or no contact with an understanding of the school, and failure to consider explicitly the relationship between the nature of the proposed innovations and the purpose of schools (Fullan, 1991:23). For this study, what is important is what Fullan calls “the problem of meaning in educational change.” That is unless people find meaning in an innovation, it will falter. I will spend some time on this factor here.

Fullan’s (1991) views on the importance of finding meaning in an educational change could be summed up in the words of Cuban (1986b) that,

Most reforms are foundered on the rocks of flawed implementation. Many were diverted by the quiet but persistent resistance of teachers, and administrators who, unconvinced by the unvarnished cheer of reformers, saw minimal gain and much loss in embracing changes boosted by those who were unfamiliar with the classroom as a workplace. [In this case] changes were either adapted to fit what existed or sloughed off, allowing the system to remain essentially untouched.

(In Fullan, 1991: 29) [Words added]

The success of any innovation depends a great deal on the meaning people attach to it. New experiences are always initially reacted to in the context of a “familiar, reliable construction of reality” in which people must be able to attach personal meaning to the experiences regardless of how meaningful they might be to others (Fullan, 1991:31). Any innovation cannot be assimilated unless its meaning is shared. Individuals (for example school heads, teachers and students) are members of social systems (a school in this case). Social systems provide a framework of theory, values and related technology that enables individuals to make sense of their lives. Threats- in whatever form- to this system threatens this framework (Marris, 1975, in Fullan, 1991). This is very important and must be recognised by those who initiate educational change.

In chapter two I will discuss in some details Fullan and other authors’ views on the meaning of educational change, for now I think it suffices to say that change regardless of its source brings with it anxiety and discomfort to those for whom it is intended. These

feelings have to be understood as they regulate the success and failure of the reform. The success of any change will then depend on how the recipients of a change programme appropriate it in relation to what they already have. In this process they make meaning of the change programme and it is this meaning that will influence the success of the change. My point of view in this regard as influenced by Fullan cited here, is that while it is important to plan changes and implement them, it is even more important in the process to have a clear picture of the meaning the recipients of change attach to it. There is often a gap between what people on the ground think about a particular reform measure and what the planners have in mind. It is this gap that explains the ineffectiveness of many educational changes. Once again I feel that it is important for change planners to have knowledge about the feelings of the people on the ground so that they can use that to allow for adaptation of changes to suite individual contexts.

For this research study, it is important to understand teachers', school heads' and students' perceptions of the reasons for the success of their schools. Depending on the results of the research into this question, one can contribute to the debate in the literature about indicators of school success. The results of this research can also stimulate discussions about understanding educational change, school improvement, and further research in these fields in Botswana where work in this regard is still in infancy. In many cases when we think of efforts aimed at reform, effectiveness and improvement, we often bring into schools what we take to be "good practice" without necessarily knowing what the schools have to say. For Example, Fullan (1991) has cautioned that educational change is one phenomenon hardly ever understood and never implemented correctly. The reasons according to the author include the tension between the stakeholders in the change process. For example, should change be initiated from the top (government policy) or from the bottom (parents, teachers, students) or should there be a sort of partnership in decision making that leads to change?

1.3. Context

In everyday life (particularly in times of fiscal troubles!) schools are under pressure to demonstrate to the parents, taxpayers, and government, the economic and social worth of what they offer. In this regard, school success takes on the connotations of both quality and efficiency in service provision. At the end of each final examination year, parents, students, politicians, government officials, and teachers look with great interest at the pass grades of different schools. A mixture of jubilation for those who did well and sadness for those who did not do so well, point to the fact that school success (as expressed by exam results) is a phenomenon that touches many people.

Since the inception of a new policy on education in 1994, the Botswana government has embarked on a project to increase education provision and improve the quality of education in the country. Noteworthy in this regard is the massive training and re-training of teachers, school heads and deputies, establishment of In-Service offices in all regions of the country, the department of Schools Inspection and most of all the establishment of what is called Secondary Schools Management and Development Project (SSMDP). The In-Service and SSMDP are meant to improve instructional, leadership and management in schools. These developments are designed both for the development of schools through the provision of recommendations for improvement in student outcomes and to offer a means of holding various levels of the educational system accountable.

Presenting a paper at the annual Secondary Schools Headmasters' Conference held at Gaborone Sun, Moswela reported that "never in the history of educational provision in Botswana, have issues on educational reform such as innovation, change, teamwork, development planning, and others related to the concept of 'educational reform' been so emphasised" (Moswela, 1997:01). His words echoed the then President Sir Ketumile Masire's words on Botswana Vision 2016 that Botswana educational system is undergoing a metamorphosis. The Botswana Revised National Policy on Education (1994) calls upon teachers to use new classroom teaching techniques, school heads are encouraged to involve participative decision-making in the way they run schools. For me these recommendations

amount to a need to improve schools in ways that would make teachers teach and students learn more effectively. In a way this seems to evoke school effectiveness. The question that could follow is, how much do we know about individual school's perceptions of success in Botswana? Answers to this question would enable us to handle change and educational reforms made to suite individual school's needs. Often reforms are frustrated because we tend to take for granted that since it has worked in other contexts it will work anywhere. What is important is that for a change to be successful individuals and groups must construct meaning regarding that change (Fullan, 1991).

It is within this context that this project sets out to investigate the perceptions of success and reasons for the success in two senior secondary schools in Botswana.

1.4. Significance of the research study

This study uses perception of success by school heads, deputy heads, teachers and students from two successful secondary schools in Botswana to contribute to the big picture about some of the possible ways of making schools effective. We have to know what these schools understand about school success and what factors these school communities perceive to be responsible for their success. When we have information on what successful schools perceive as factors for the success of their schools, we may begin to approach education reform or school-based reforms expertly. This information could also be used to influence regional and national reform policy. Per Dalin (1994:xi) points to three essential ingredients of successful educational reform:

- A. A national operational commitment to quality improvement that is well planned- and evolving- as experiences from the field provide learning opportunities for regional and central reform planners. A national effort that is made concrete through systematic management and a professional support structure, and effort that is sustained at least over a period of ten years.
- B. A strong local capacity with a strong emphasis on school and classroom practice. This means local empowerment, room to manage local implementation, latitude for adapting the programme to be maximally effective locally, assistance that enables teacher mastery to develop, and the encouragement to develop local materials.

- C. A coherent linkage system between central, district and local schools via information, assistance, pressure and rewards. The various means of communication in the system must reflect engagement and commitment between levels, not bureaucratic, rule-driven control.

Two factors are important for this study, a wish to inform policy, and personal interest. At policy level, it is hoped that the study will contribute to the efforts already undertaken in Botswana to improve the education service. Most of these efforts are undertaken through Teacher Development and Training (in-service and further training of teachers) and the Secondary Schools Management Project (improvement of schools' management and leadership). This study will therefore add to what has been happening in secondary schools and might add a new dimension to the approach to success in Botswana secondary schools. As much as we strive for success in schools, maybe we need to hear what some successful schools have to say, hence this research. It is hoped that this report will stimulate further research in such areas as school improvement, school effectiveness and contribute to the debates on establishing indicators for school success, school improvement, and coping with educational reform.

1.5. Personal motivation

The researcher is currently involved in secondary school leadership and management in Botswana. It is a result of 13 years of experience, both as a teacher and deputy headmaster, that I witnessed how much interest people attach to school success (no matter how it may be defined/measured). I have also spent 3 years as a co-ordinator of school management and leadership development programmes at regional level with a very strong quality improvement thrust. The eagerness with which heads and deputies, and senior teachers in many schools participated in some of the workshops hosted in the region goes to show that many of them had school success at heart. Personally the experience from organising these workshops has made me want to know more about school success, hence this research.

Also, having been involved in school leadership and management, I hope to build new insights about the concept of school success from this study. It is hoped that the knowledge gathered through this study will help in making one a better school leader and

manager. The debates in the approach to school success measurement from the existing literature and the information gathered through interviews will help to generate discussions in Botswana.

1.6. Research question

This research study is guided by this central question:

What do school heads (including deputy school heads); teachers and students in two successful schools in Botswana perceive to be reasons for the success of their schools?

I identified factors for school success from the literature and have used them as a framework within which interview questions are based. I visited two senior secondary schools in Botswana identified as successful to collect data. Using this research question I have been able to focus on what the participants perceive to be reasons for the success of their schools.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of literature

2. Introduction

Many studies and commentaries have noted a developing consensus about indicators for gauging school success (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993). At the same time, several writers have questioned some of the ideas upon which the successful school indicators are based. The objections assert that the methods used by school effectiveness researchers applied restricted focus enquiry, a lack of mutually confirming investigative methods, and a range of other problems (Holdaway and Johnson 1993). According to the critics “only a limited confidence can be attached to some of the simple recipes for school success” (Purkey and Smith, 1983, cited in Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:166).

The school effectiveness literature is vast, and frequently contradictory on factors of school success. Should there be a list of factors of good schools at all? This section of the research will not go through all the available literature on school success and the debates around this topic, but will provide a framework in which the exploration of school success can be discussed. An attempt is made to include current debates on methods used to arrive at conclusions about school success. Most of the literature comes from United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and the Netherlands. Literature on school success based in Africa particularly on Botswana is limited; except for some that deals with the developing world, for example, Levin and Lockheed, (1993) and Harber and Davies (1997). These types of literature are limited in that they do not accord individual countries thorough attention. They tend to generalise and are highly insufficient to help draw conclusions about individual countries except for those where the researches were based.

For this research study, most of the literature reviewed comes from United Kingdom (UK). This is because of the established relationship between Botswana and UK in education particularly school development, effectiveness and school reform. For example, until 2000 Botswana has been using Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (COSC) for

its 'O' level examinations. Many teachers and school heads receive further training in UK. The University of Bath (Scotland) runs short-term and full-time courses both in Botswana and in Scotland for practising heads and in-service staff. In fact, Secondary Schools Management Development Project (SSMDP) in Botswana, from which I draw a lot of insights for this research, was a joint venture between the government of Botswana and that of UK through the UK Overseas Development Agency. However, the review notices researches from other countries. First, let us review literature dealing with school effectiveness indicators.

2.1. Review of international literature – Developed countries

The origin of the effective schools literature can be tracked to the sixties in terms of general concerns with school effectiveness, but it took a particular form in the seventies (Levin and Lockheed, 1993:04). The notion of creating a different kind of school that would be more effective with all children, including those from marginalised or poor backgrounds is found in many places particularly the developed countries of Europe and North America. As a reform movement, the effective schools movement is largely based on research and reform strategies that were established in the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK). There are several questions behind the research into school effectiveness (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Lockheed and Longford, 1991:01). First, do schools make a difference in how much a student learns (that is, does the specific school in which a child is enrolled have a particular impact on his or her achievement, independent of family background)? Second, if so, what are the characteristics of the school that account for this difference? Third, do certain schools affect certain types of students differently than others?

The qualitative tradition within school effectiveness research often uses a methodology, which is statistically complex but conceptually easy (Harber and Davies, 1997). One or more outcomes of schooling are established and schools are compared on their results. Conventionally these outcomes will be in terms of examination or test results, less often in terms of social behaviour or the employability of students. From the ranking that emerges, common features associated with 'good schools' are extracted. The underlying

justification for these types of researches is that these factors may be causal or contributory ones, and not accidental, or indeed a product of the successful outcomes (Harber and Davies, 1997). With this in mind I review literature on school effectiveness from developed countries- the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and I cited one study from Canada. I start with the US literature.

2.1.1. Research in the US

The coming of the effective school movement is often associated with the work of Edmonds (1979) and Brookover and Lezotte (1979) cited in Reynolds (1992), Holdaway and Johnson (1993), and Levin and Lockheed (1993). The authors raised the question of why there are some –albeit only few- schools that seem to get educational results for at-risk or marginalised students. They hypothesised that if they could identify those schools, they could ascertain how they differed from the more typical school educating at-risk children. They could then create school reforms based on effective school practices so that ineffective schools could be transformed into effective ones (Levin and Lockheed, 1993: 05).

With achievement test scores as the criteria, the first ‘effective school’ studies were statistically analyses of schools that were supposed to be serving student populations that were similar in race and socio-economic status. Statistical ‘outlier’ schools that were performing much better and much worse than average were identified. Next, the researchers studied the two groups of schools to find out how they differed. Although different researchers came out with slightly different lists of characteristics, the most commonly cited list from these first studies is that compiled by Edmonds (1979). Edmond identified the following five characteristics, which came to be known as the ‘five factor theory’ (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Holdaway and Johnson, 1993):

- a) strong leadership by the principal;
- b) emphasis on mastery of basic skills;
- c) a clear and orderly school environment;
- d) a high teacher expectation of student performance;
- e) frequent assessment of student progress.

These results became popular in the US schools as the basis for educational reform (Levin and Lockheed, 1993). The unusually receptive response to the results by educational authorities seems to be related, in part, to the argument that “they were based upon sophisticated statistical inquiry, and in part, to their appeal to common sense” (Levin and Lockheed, 1993:05).

Compelling as the effective schools movement has been to educators, researchers found much to criticise. First, the critics analysed performance of students and found inconsistent results from grade-to-grade and from year-to-year in terms of which schools were statistical outliers. That is, the analysis was done in a particular grade and a particular year, a school might be shown to be statistically effective; for another grade or for another year, the same methodology would show the school to be ineffective (Levin and Lockheed, 1993). Second, the statistical methods for identifying effective schools were also challenged, with different techniques identifying different outlier schools. For example, Elliot (1996) and, Scheerens and Creemers (1989), offer a persuasive case against some of the old methods used in school effectiveness research. For example, outliers based on school mean achievement scores differed from those based on individual scores nested within schools; differences were also found when scores were adjusted for differences between students in terms of social class background and test scores upon intake. Also characteristics of effective schools were charged as being excessively vague, particularly when one was trying to replicate them in other contexts (Levin and Lockheed, 1993). This point is developed later in this study when we review literature from developing countries.

In the 1980s a ‘second wave’ of effective schools literature began to emerge, and the list of common characteristics of effective schools also changed a bit. Purkey and Smith (1983) in Levin and Lockheed (1993) and Austin and Reynolds (1990:167) compiled the most frequently cited list here. The list identified nine organisational and four process characteristics for school effectiveness. The organisational factors were:

- f) school site management;
- g) instructional leadership;

- h) staff stability;
- i) curriculum articulation and organisation;
- j) school-wide staff development;
- k) parental involvement and support;
- l) school wide recognition of academic success;
- m) maximised learning time; and,
- n) district support.

The process characteristics were:

- o) collaborative planning and collegial relationships;
- p) sense of community;
- q) clear goals and high expectations;
- r) order and discipline.

Researchers in other countries further developed these characteristics, as we shall see here.

2.1.2. Research in the UK

During the 1970s a group of British researchers studied both elementary and secondary schools to identify the more effective' ones. The secondary school study was first to be published by Rutter, et al., (1979) and followed ten years later by the elementary school study Mortimore, et al., (1988) cited in (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993; Reynolds, 1992; 1994; 1995; and, Austin and Reynolds, 1990). Both studies followed students over time, studied their teachers, classrooms, and schools through direct observation, surveyed teachers, parents and students; and evaluated the conclusions between school and home influences and student test scores. They concluded that there are ranges of school practices that can elevate the performance of students, regardless of socio-economic background. These studies stressed features characteristic of the second wave of US effective schools studies. The following features of effective schools were found:

- (a) high expectations of instructional effectiveness among staff;
- (b) strong leadership by the school head;
- (c) an orderly, quiet and work oriented atmosphere at school;
- (d) an emphasis on academic activities and development; and,
- (e) frequent monitoring of student progress.

(Levin and Lockheed, 1993:05)

Other researchers in the UK came up with similar characteristics as those listed above. Willms (1992) argues that there are certain things in the school that can be measured that seem to promote success. These are what he calls, disciplinary climate, academic press, pupil attitudes, teachers' attitudes and institutional leadership by the school head. According to Gray and Wilcox (1995), citing the study conducted by Louis and Miles (1992) outlined the tenets of successful schools programmes summarised in five-point plans. These have included: 1) strong administrative leadership; 2) the creation of a safe and orderly climate for teaching and learning; 3) an emphasis on the acquisition of basic academic skills; 4) the generation of higher teacher expectations; and, 5) constant monitoring of pupils' performance. Gray and Wilcox (1995) caution that although these were pioneered in New York by Ron Edmonds (1979), the extent to which they have been grounded on research has been questioned by such people as Ralph and Fennessey (1983).

Powerful schools are designed and organised to support powerful teaching and learning (Hopkins, 1995). Successful schools throughout the world – those schools whose students progress further and faster than one would expect on the basis of prior learning histories – share very similar characteristics (Hopkins, 1995). The author states that through the research on school effectiveness, we have gained insights into the school level conditions necessary to sustain effective teaching and learning. Some of these insights include quality teaching, school development and leadership practices.

The conclusion from the UK research asserted that schools with similar student intakes showed very different educational results and that these school characteristics explained the vast differences in effectiveness. For example, Reynolds (1995:14-15) argues that using the relationships in data between what pupils were like at, say junior secondary school and what they achieve at, say senior secondary school, one can be able to give classes, departments, and schools predicted scores of what the children should have been attaining. The difference or the "residuals" being explained as the school effects. With further observation, questionnaire or routine collection and analysis of school documents,

school or class variables can be used to explain in the statistical sense what lies to be explained at the different levels of schooling. However, Reynolds (1995:16) cautions that some of these factors of successful schools have been challenged with sets of findings that almost invalidated their certainties.

I turn to the review a study based in Canada on school effectiveness indicators. This study is similar to this research as it investigated people's perceptions of some of the effectiveness dimensions and how they viewed their perceptions could in relation to their schools' success. Because of the similarity between this study and this research project, I wish to deal with it at some length.

2.1.3. Review of one study from Canada

Holdaway and Johnson (1994) study based in Alberta Canada is very close to this research study, and I wish to review it in some length here. Holdaway and Johnson's study investigated among other things, the perceptions of principals, teachers and superintendents about the school success and effectiveness on specific dimensions, and to assess and compare the perceptions of these educators about the importance of specific dimensions for overall school effectiveness. Perceptual data were collected from elementary and junior high school principals throughout Alberta, Canada, as well as from teachers and area superintendents in one major city. The study set off by reviewing literature on current educational and business management. From these sources the authors identified what educational researchers call indicators that may be used to gauge effectiveness in a variety of organisational setting. The following indicators came up: (a) high expectations of instructional effectiveness among staff; (b) strong leadership by the principal; (c) an orderly, quiet and work-oriented atmosphere at school; (d) an emphasis on academic activities and development and (e) frequent monitoring of student achievement. From other sources reviewed, the authors such as Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston and Smith (1979), Holdaway and Johnson added the following indicators of school success: (a) uninterrupted classroom instruction; (b) collaborative work by teachers; (c) care of physical facilities; (d) consistent use of positive and negative

sanctions, as well as (e) an array of student outcomes such as attendance, behaviour, examination success, employment and delinquency. The authors conclude the review of literature by a caution that further research is needed in a range of other locations "...in order to identify priorities in the many organisational dimensions that may be associated with the effectiveness of schools" (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993: 168).

Four broad questions guided Holdaway and Johnson (1993) study. From these four questions I cite three because they seem to be close to this research project. These are:

- (a) What are the perceptions of principals concerning the overall effectiveness of their schools?
- (b) What are the perceptions of principals about the effectiveness of their schools on specific dimensions?
- (c) What are the perceptions of the principals concerning the importance of specific dimensions for the overall school effectiveness?

The information was obtained from the participants by questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. Items in the questionnaires were based on matters arising from the literature on effective schools and other types of organisations, and items used in the senior high school study conducted earlier by Gunn and Holdaway in 1986. For example from the literature on effective school indicators the authors generated items such as school climate, academic emphasis and leadership by the school principal. From these they designed effectiveness scales ranging from 1 to 6 (highly ineffective to highly effective). They designed another scale to rate the importance of specific dimensions ranging from 1 to 4 (not important to highly important). Questionnaires for the main study of the principals in Alberta were mailed to 20% random sample of 131 elementary school principals and 94 principals of junior high schools. Usable responses were obtained from 112 (85%) and from 84 (89.4%). Parallel questionnaires were developed and distributed to all teachers in 34 elementary and 22 junior high schools in one large city. In addition, nine area superintendents associated with the schools were assessed effectiveness of the schools on items about which they were judged to be familiar. Of all the 34 selected elementary schools, useable responses were obtained from 30 principals (88.2%), and from 262 (67.0%) of the 391 teachers in 32 schools. For the junior high schools involved, returns

were received from 21 principals (95.5%) and 132 (52.0%) of 254 teachers in 21 schools.

Let us look at the results of the study.

For the purpose of this study I will give a summary of the results pertaining to the junior high schools participants' perceptions concerning: the overall effectiveness of their schools, their perceptions about the effectiveness of their schools on specific dimensions, and how they perceived their perceptions in terms of their schools' success.

The authors found that principals of both elementary and junior high school, teachers (in city sub-study), and superintendents displayed generally positive outlook about the overall performance of their schools. This finding underscores not only the importance of gaining a variety of perceptions, but also the need to treat elementary and junior high schools as different organisational types for the purpose of school assessment and improvement (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:181). On the effectiveness of specific dimensions, the schools were regarded as highly effective by their principals on variables relating to social climate, community support and communication, acknowledging achievement and encouraging academic success. It is important to note here that these are the same variables that other researchers on school effectiveness have identified (e.g. Rutter, *et al.*, 1979; Austin and Reynolds, 1990; Reynolds, 1995; and Hopkins, 1995).

On the participants' perceptions and how they saw their perceptions in terms of their schools' success, the researchers found that schools are performing effectively in matters of high importance and may reveal important dimensions to which greater attention should be paid. The participants' disclosure of highly important but less effective domains may highlight dimensions in which a shift in schools' priorities from less important to more crucial areas may enhance school effectiveness overall (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:85). For example the authors continue to point out that, at organisational level, schools were perceived to be highly effective in emphasising academic work and maintaining low turnover of staff, yet these were viewed as less important areas of schools' work.

Holdaway and Johnson (1993) conclude by suggesting that, with refinements in methodology and replication in other jurisdictions, their study may lead to results that will assist in identifying more useful indicators of effectiveness and improving understanding of operation of educational organisations. However, the authors caution that while the results of their study support the importance of school effectiveness indicators, the effectiveness construct remains problematic (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:186).

Although there seems to be agreement in the literature on factors for school success both in Canada, the US, and the UK, there are still issues that need to be resolved. Some of these issues pertain to: seeking more knowledge about school processes linked with a school being successful (which processes? How do they work? Which key processes may determine some other processes?), and there is need to know more about the extent to which these effective processes may be of different usefulness in different settings. For example, Reynolds (1992:29) argues that it is possible that what is needed to make a school successful is different from what is needed to keep it that way. In addition, it may mean that what is necessary for a school to be successful may be different in different types of catchment areas. Further research is needed to resolve some of these issues (Reynolds, 1992).

From the literature reviewed here, one could note some similarities in terms of the school effectiveness indicators. It must be said at this point that, it has not been explained in the literature the amount of influence each of these dimensions has in a good school. Also, the issue of applicability beyond developed countries context has not been fully explored, partly because there are limited studies in developing countries. However, there are commonalties in what researchers call school effectiveness indicators from the studies reviewed here. These are: something one might call social school climate (collaborative work by teachers, collegiality, sense of community, order and discipline, use of positive and negative rewards, culture of the school); strong leadership by the school head; external support and involvement- particularly by the parents and local community; teacher's role in school effectiveness; value and press for academic success. The value of

these characteristics of school effectiveness has been to provide me with themes from which I developed this research focus. Also, school effectiveness indicators have influence on policy of school improvement, as we shall see later in this chapter, which is a very important part of this research study.

What follows is a brief descriptive analysis of literature of the identified school effectiveness indicators from the international literature. This is to develop some insights on how these indicators work or are demonstrated by effective schools. It must be said once again that they are not discussed in order of significance, as the literature reviewed here is inconsistent in that regard.

2.2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF FACTORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES LITERATURE

In most of the literature reviewed here, factors of school effectiveness can be categorised in two *viz.* organisational (structural) factors and process factors. Organisational factors are suggestive of all organisational or structural components that account for the organisational culture of a particular school. Process dimensions on the other hand could be defined as those factors that provide "...the means of achieving the organisational factors, they lubricate the system and fuel the dynamics of interactions" (Hopkins in Ravele, 1998:38). There is a close relationship between organisational and process factors both of which are at the heart of school success (Austin and Reynolds, 1990). For the purpose of manageability, I have selected four factors here. These are social school climate (including relationships, discipline, and culture of the school), value for academic achievement, leadership and management and the teacher and school success. The following section reviews selected factors of school success, starting with social school climate, which includes relationships, discipline, and culture of the school.

2.2.1. *Social climate of the school*

A healthy school climate contributes to effective teaching and learning (Freiberg, 1998/99:22). The instruments for assessing school social climate can help schools make informed and meaningful changes for the better. The author continues that even the size of

the school and the opportunities for students and teachers to interact in small groups both formally and informally adds to and detracts from the health of the learning environment. According to Freiberg (1998/99) there are no single factors determining a school's social climate. However, interactions of various school and classroom climate factors can create a fabric of support that enables all members of the school community to teach and learn at optimum levels. The author suggests that small surveys such as those measuring student concerns, entrance and exit interviews, and ambient noise check lists can lead to significant improvements in social school climate. Very important here is that all the suggestions from students and teachers must be acted on by the school.

Reynolds (1990; 1995) adds that parental involvement is very important in ensuring the participation of significant others in children's lives in the rewarding of achievement effort, also to ensure that in cases of difficulty, the parents will if it is appropriate to do so support the school against the child. For a long time the terms "school climate and school ethos" have been used to capture this pervasive, yet elusive element called "culture" (Peterson and Deal, 1998/99:28). Although very difficult to measure, culture is very powerful. Culture influences everything that goes on in the school: from the staff dress, what they talk about, their willingness to change, the practice instruction, and the emphasis given to students and faculty learning (Peterson and Deal, 1998/99). At school level, culture is made up of underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that have been built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges. This highly enduring web of influence binds the school together and makes it special. It is up to all those with interest in the schools (school heads, teachers, parents, and students) to help identify, shape, and maintain strong, positive, student focused culture. Without this supportive culture, reforms will falter, staff morale and commitment will wither, and student learning will slip (Peterson and Deal, 1998/99:29).

According to Peterson and Deal (1998/99:29-30) schools differ in their cultures with more successful schools having positive strong cultures. These are schools:

- where staff have a shared sense of purpose, where they pour their hearts into teaching;
- where underlying norms are of collegiality, improvement, and hard work;
- where rituals and traditions celebrate student accomplishment, teacher innovation, and parental commitment;
- where the informal network of storytellers, heroes, and heroines provides a social web of information, support, and history;
- where success, joy, and humour are abound.

The authors conclude by saying that “strong positive cultures are places with a shared sense of what is important, a shared ethos of caring and concern, and a shared commitment to helping students learn” (Peterson and Deal, 1998/99:28).

Reynolds (1992:26) talks of “incorporative approach” versus “coercive approach” in the ways in which the schools attempted to generate order and pupil learning. Reynolds claims that from the effective schools that took part in his study, they appeared to have been utilising the incorporative strategy, of which the major components were twofold, including, the incorporation of pupils' parents into the support of the school. Pupils were incorporated within the classroom by encouraging them to take an active and participative role in the lessons and by letting them, to an extent, intervene verbally without the teacher's explicit directions. Outside the teaching time pupils were involved through such strategies as the prefect system, class monitors selected from all parts of the school ability range. Such a practice appeared to have the effect inhibiting the growth of anti-school pupil sub-cultures because of its effects in creating senior pupils who were generally in support of the school (Reynolds, 1992). According to the incorporative approach, parents were also enlisted to support the school. Informal and semi-formal meetings and visits were arranged for pupils' parents to the school to hold discussions with the teachers on their children's progress. Another strategy was to develop interpersonal relationships between pupils and teachers. This according to Reynolds (1992) enabled the teachers to ‘tie’ students into the value system of the school and of the adult society by means of developing good personal relationships with them. Accompanied with these developments in the incorporative schools was minimal use of physical punishment, a tolerance for a limited amount of ‘acting out’ (such as gum chewing), and a pragmatic hesitancy to enforce rules, which may have provoked rebellion.

Young (1985:181) cites work done by Rutter, *et al.*, (1979) that the chief mechanisms to school norms are: teacher expectation about the children's work and behaviour; the models provided by the teachers' own conduct in school and by the behaviour of the other pupils; and, the feedback that children receive on what is acceptable performance at the school. The author goes on to say that there must be some sort of consensus on how school life should be organised and for the accepted set of norms to be applied consistently throughout the school. The basic building block to successful school ethos is the style of leadership and management by all those involved in the school. Successful schools tend to involve all stakeholders in the running of the school (parents, teachers and students).

2.2.2. *Press for academic achievement*

Willms (1992:74) citing Anderson (1982) and Mitchell (1986) uses what he calls '*environmental press*' or '*academic press*' to refer to the extent to which school staff value academic achievement and hold high expectations for their pupils. Schools with high academic press place a greater emphasis on academic skills, which is manifest in a number of school routines and processes. The belief that all students can master the curriculum is projected by the school head and teachers, such that pupils are likely to engage in challenging activities and to establish high norms of their own academic success (Oakes, 1989, cited in Willms, 1992:74). The author suggests that a set of indicators for academic press could be measured by asking such questions as; do teachers start classes on time and place high demands on their pupils throughout their lessons? Do teachers make special efforts to challenge the most able students, and do they provide extra help to pupils struggling with the material? What is the type and amount of homework assigned? Are pupils confident they can master the curriculum? Do they spend adequate time doing schoolwork? Is there cupidity among pupils in the completion of assignments?

One of the major factors differentiating high-and-low-achieving schools in Brookover *et al.*, (1979) study cited in Willms (1992:75) was pupils' sense of efficacy versus academic futility. The term futility here refers to the extent to which pupils felt that they had control

over their school success and failures, whether teachers cared about their progress, and whether other pupils punished them if they did succeed. Measures for these constructs are similar to the psychological construct *locus of control*, which refers to the extent to which pupils, attribute their success or failures to their own efforts or to chance or fate. Other measures of the construct can emphasise pupils' satisfaction with school or their assessment of the quality of school life. Epstein and McParland (1976) study of school life for pupils in grades 4 through 12, (in Willms, 1992) defined the construct "quality of school life" in terms of three dimensions: pupils' general sense of well-being, pupils' academic behaviour and life plans, and pupils' relationships with teachers.

Reynolds (1990; 1995) adds to Willms (1992) on academic push or academic 'press'. This involves high expectations of what the pupils can achieve utilising strategies that ensure large amounts of learning time (such as well-managed lesson transmissions). Utilising homework to expand learning time and to involve parents, and entering a high proportion of students for public examinations to ensure they remain 'hooked' in their final years.

2.2.3. Leadership and management

School leadership and management has always been an important issue. It is the most important factor contributing to the effectiveness, quality and efficiency of a school (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994). The performance of a school, its staff and its pupils is deeply affected by the school head's leadership and management role. There is thus a need for school heads to develop and apply appropriate skills to enable them to carry out their tasks competently (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994; Cheng 1996; Fullan 1992). The importance of leadership is known and it is a subject upon which a great deal has been written. It is therefore not the intention of this paper to present a detailed account of the numerous theories of effective, efficient leadership and management. Instead, an attempt is made to elucidate some of the important aspects of the school head that make a difference in bringing success to a school. The guiding question here will be what role does the school head play in making a good school?

The school head is often cited as a key figure in blocking or promoting change, and as such represents a fertile ground for considering the concept of implementing action (Fullan, 1992; Cheng, 1996). The argument claims that the degree of implementation of any particular change in a school depends on the school head's actions. The school head's action and not what he/she says carries the message as to whether a change is to be taken seriously and serves to support students and teachers (Fullan, 1992; Cheng, 1996). Planned change, school improvement, effective/successful schools and staff development, all bear the mark of the school head's central role in leading, sustaining success and supporting change (Fullan, 1992).

Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Levis and Ecob (1988), and Fullan (1992) found that, in good schools purposeful leadership of staff by the school head was key. A purposeful school head was described as understanding the needs of the school and involved in the school's work without exerting total control over the rest of the staff. For example when it comes to in-service training total freedom to attend any course is restricted, and attendance is encouraged for a good reason (Fullan, 1992).

Reynolds (1990; 1992; 1995) asserts that research has shown how important the nature of leadership provided by the headmaster is. With more effective schools having better head/deputy head relations, and having a management style and structure that involves heads setting goals, establishing directions and possessing that in most popular or contemporary management terms, a 'mission'. Also having an active involvement of staff in planning the means for achieving the goals of the school through staff involvement in some decision-making. The successful school has a balance in its management between vertical push and horizontal pull, between laterality or diffusion, and centralisation. Indeed, it possesses a balance between managerialism and collegiality that is ensured by having elements of both at the same time (Reynolds, 1995). "Leadership ... seeks to promote... followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivation, the expectations, the wants and needs, aspirations and expectations of the leaders and followers..." (Young, 1985:183).

Effective school heads set high standards and create incentives for pupil learning, and transmit the belief that all pupils can achieve at a high level. They set clearly defined goals and priorities for pupil learning, and prescribe means to achieve them. They enhance teacher commitment by involving teachers to improve their skills, and through consistent and fair evaluation. Willms (1992:78, citing Rosenholtz, 1985 and Thompson, 1967) believes that policies and procedures set by effective school heads have to do with what organisational theorists call “buffering the technical core”. This means that they minimise the extraneous and disruptive influences that keep teachers from excessive paperwork or provide non-teaching personnel to assist teachers with classroom and school managerial tasks can help to maximise teaching time. School heads can also ensure that disruptions for announcements or school assemblies are kept to a minimum. Clear policies about discipline and school behaviour, and support from the school head in dealing with behavioural problems, can help teachers focus their energies on teaching activities.

There is considerable evidence in the studies of school effectiveness that leadership and management is an essential element in determining school success (Hopkins, 1995:21). Drawing from his work, *The Improvement of Quality Education for All* (IQEA) Hopkins (1995) emphasises the need for leadership approach that involves all levels of the school community. This perspective tends to view leadership as “transformational” which distribute and empower, rather than “transactional” approaches, which sustains traditional concepts of hierarchy and control. Spreading the leadership function throughout the staff means accepting that leadership is a function to which many contribute, rather than a set of responsibilities vested in a small number of individuals. Leadership that arises from relevant knowledge or experience seems to be more successful than leadership stemming from authority.

Levine (1992) notes that the literature on unusually successful schools, gives great prominence to the headmaster’s role. For effective schools, school heads were often defined as “maverick” risk-takers who practice “creative insubordination” as they “buffer” their school from negative external influence. What was important for the author was to

find that the literature portrayed these school heads as risk-taking that frequently seemed to extend as much or more to internal as to external relationships. For example, they seem to be willing to risk organisational maintenance objectives, as they are to ignore or reject unproductive external regulations and policies (Levine, 1992). These successful school heads would insist that teachers follow school-wide policies that benefit the entire school even if doing so disturbs seniority arrangements in the building or otherwise discomforts some staff members. They will stress on transferring out non-contributing staff. In a way successful school heads do not let organisational maintenance goals subvert productivity goals of the school. At the same time, they appear to be skilled in providing a supportive environment for teachers and in motivating staff to perform at a high level (Levine, 1992).

2.2.4. The teacher and school effectiveness

A great deal of research indicates that learning can only occur under certain conditions (McIlroy, 1979; Hansen and Childs, 1998; Cross and Cross, 1985; Potter and Powell, 1992; Townsend, 1994). Only under appropriate conditions will learning occur, and the teacher must never assume that just because he/she teaches, learning will occur, and if it does not then there is something wrong with the learners. McIlroy (1979) has identified a number of different roles teachers can play which can make the learning environment conducive. Without going through all the different roles, it suffices to note that teachers must establish rewarding relationships with their learners.

A good learning environment goes hand-in-hand with the teacher's knowledge of her/his children. To motivate and engage children, teachers must create an environment where each learner comes to believe "I count, I care, and I can" (Dodd, 1995:67). Dodd (1995) and Perrone (1997) assert that what teachers need most to know about students is hidden; unless they develop a trusting relationship with their students, teachers will not have access to the knowledge they need either to solve classroom problems or to motivate students. Good teachers take time to establish a rapport with their students so that they are free to talk about their feelings (Dodd, 1995; Perrone, 1997; Goldstein, 1998). For example, a good teacher will be sure when to reward or punish his/her student.

Punishment is one way through which teacher-student relationship can be broken or solidified (Dodd, 1995).

Above all, understanding students' perspectives is one of the best ways to foster engagement and learning (Dodd, 1995; Perrone, 1997). Effective teachers know that to become engaged, students must have some "feelings of ownership- of the class or the task-and personal power- a belief that what they do will make a difference" (Dodd, 1995:65). Good teachers invite their students to share their feelings and perceptions, establishing positive relationships with them and thus minimising classroom problems. Even more important, students' perceptions can contribute to helping the teacher modify his/her teaching methods and assignments in ways that engage students in learning.

In their review of the literature on effective teaching Ralph, Kerstin, Lang and Smith (1998) found that the practical and relevant routine of day-to-day teaching is as important as the theoretical or philosophical aspects of education. Their findings conclude that more and more emphasis is laid on teaching as a complex process of reflective practice, where the professional teacher plans, prepares, and orchestrates in a sensible, sensitive fashion a variety of methods, materials, and motivating experiences meeting the students' learning needs.

Gray and Wilcox (1995) acknowledge that teaching and learning are at the heart of the activities of any school. What particularly distinguishes the more effective schools is their 'press for achievement'. Teachers expect their pupils to achieve and pupils in turn expect to find themselves stretched and challenged in the classroom. There appears to be some mutuality of perceptions between pupils and teachers. Cullingford (1995) says that good teaching can be detected in the way the classroom is run. There are 'signs' that point to good relationships and learning in a good teaching situation. The author goes on to discuss these 'signs', which can be summarised as a shared working atmosphere, an awareness of the need for success. The teacher, consciously dedicated to achieve more

with his/her class inculcates these signs. The most telling 'sign' under such conditions lies not in the presence of the teacher but in the work that is being carried out by the learners.

Research has attempted to relate teacher commitment and morale to pupils' academic achievement. Willms (1992:76) cites studies by Hoy and Ferguson, (1985); Bushman, (1990); Rosenholtz, (1989a) to conclude that schools with committed teachers, satisfied teachers have less teacher absenteeism, lower turnover, and less dysfunctional classroom behaviour. The most important aspect of morale and commitment is that teachers have a sense of efficacy about their work. "The most psychic rewards for teachers' come from students' academic accomplishments- from feeling certain about their own capacities to affect student growth and development" (Willms, 1992:76). Subsequent to the Brookover *et al.*, (1979) study Willms (1992) asserts that teachers' sense of academic futility has a strong influence on pupils' achievements. Teachers scoring high on academic futility were less likely to push their pupils to do well and felt there was little they could do to ensure that pupils achieve at a high level. For them, according to Willms (1992), the custodial function of schooling outweighed the educative function. Commitment and satisfaction with work also entail the belief that work is meaningful. Teachers, who believe they are making an important contribution to the well being of their pupils and society in general, will show greater commitment and job satisfaction. The meaningfulness of teaching becomes an important part of their value system.

Hopkins (1995:10) asserts that, "the literature on teaching effects is replete with the cues and tactics necessary for effective teaching". The cues according to Dolye (1987) cited in Hopkins (1995) summarised as classroom studies of teaching effects that have supported a direct and structured approach to instruction. That is, students usually achieve more when a teacher:

- emphasises academic goals, makes them explicit, and expects students to be able to master the curriculum;
- carefully organises and sequences curriculum experiences;
- clearly explains and illustrates what students are to learn;

- frequently asks direct and specific questions to monitor students' progress and checks their understanding; provides students with ample opportunity to practice, gives prompts and feedback to ensure success, corrects mistakes, and allows students to practice a skill until it is over learned or automatic;
- reviews regularly and holds students accountable for work.

This perspective could be seen as pinning the teacher's success on his or her ability to plan and organise his or her teaching, explaining to students what they are to learn, arranging occasions for guided practice, monitoring progress, providing feedback, and helping students understand and accomplish work. Teaching models refer to consistent use of various and innovative teaching practices. This has been found to yield good results. Reviewing the studies conducted by Bruce Joyce *et al.*, (1987), Hopkins (1995:11) alerts us to the impressive evidence pointing to the effectiveness of innovative teaching practices that include:

Co-operative learning approaches, representing social models of teaching, yield effect sizes from modest to high. The more complex the outcomes- higher-order thinking, problem solving, social skills and attitudes- the greater are the effects.

It is important thus far to note that what makes an effective school requires a combination of a number of factors. It has not been demonstrated in the literature if any of these factors is more important, so it might be safe for one to conclude that they are all very important.

2.3. LITERATURE REVIEW FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Dealing with literature for the developing countries we find Harber and Davies (1997). The authors begin by a caution that judging a good school in developing countries may involve substantially different criteria, given their contextual realities. The heritage of school effectiveness research is that we cannot tell what an effective school is unless we identify clearly a set of outcomes which it is trying to achieve (Harber and Davies, 1994:40). These outcomes may vary significantly between countries, communities, and individuals. They maybe different not just their wanting different outcomes, but also in the way that similar-looking goals can be interpreted and aimed at in the light of different cultural imperatives. The authors write that in looking at how far schools are actually meeting their expressed and diverse goals, we can get more information from single

country studies than those that attempt to aggregate data from different settings. This approach enables each project to be studied on its own terms rather than simply providing a comparative benchmark.

In reviewing literature from developing countries, Levin and Lockheed (1993:10-13) found that success depended on basic inputs necessary for schools to function particularly in economically impoverished countries. The authors go beyond the indicator stage to the issue of sustainable development in schools. Using case studies from other developing countries (Thailand, Brazil, Colombia and Burundi) the authors are able to give factors as important, but most importantly, they note the significance of what they call the *will to act* in sustaining undertaking and sustaining change in schools. The factors of school effectiveness are divided into what the authors call *necessary inputs*, and *facilitating conditions*. The key factors here are:

- a) a well-developed curriculum-scope and sequence;
- b) instructional materials- text books and supporting materials;
- c) time for learning – more time on task;
- d) teaching practices – increased learner participation;
- e) community and parental involvement;
- f) teacher professionalism – leadership, collegiality and motivation, accountability;
- g) flexibility – greater curriculum responsiveness, appropriate pacing, organisational flexibility (class time and promotion policies), and pedagogical flexibility.

Dzvimbo (in Ravele, 1998:30) has highlighted the importance of the following factors for school success in developing countries:

- i) Curriculum in which all stakeholders were involved.
- ii) Availability of teaching and learning materials.
- iii) Adequate learning time or time-on-task.
- iv) Effective teaching and learning strategies
- v) A stable environment.
- vi) A clear mission statement and goals.
- vii) Strong instructional leadership
- viii) Close relations with local communities.

According to Sackney (in Ravele 1998:30-31) the following factors correlate with school effectiveness in less developed countries:

Christie and Potterton (1997:03-07) in a research project to *Investigate Strategic Interventions for Quality Improvement in South African Schools* discuss factors that make up “resilient schools” in South Africa. The authors’ qualitative study was motivated by the need to provide portraits of successful schools, which highlighted features of quality schooling. They found eight features of resilient schools. From these eight features, six are listed here for their closeness to Botswana situation. These are:

1. Sense of responsibility. Resilient schools were found to be showing a sense of responsibility for themselves and their functioning. The authors maintain that the most significant manifestation of this was the schools’ willingness and ability to take initiatives.
2. Leadership and management in resilient schools were strong based on accountability to staff, and at least some degree of consultation and participation. There were management teams working alongside heads of schools. Many heads at the participating schools spoke of motivating staff, and students, and the importance of dialogue and communication with staff.
3. Centrality of teaching and learning. A striking feature in all the schools visited by the authors was the emphasis the schools laid on teaching and learning. The schools viewed this as their principal purpose and the major focus of their attention. The schools had well-organised programmes of teaching and learning, timetables were evidence; teachers and students were working inside classrooms; and movement between classes was purposeful.
4. Safety and organisation. The resilient schools were all able to provide demarcated safe and orderly space for teachers and students. These schools were able to contain problems of their local communities from becoming problems of their schools. The schools were fenced and boundaries of space and time were maintained.
5. Authority and discipline. A striking feature of discipline in several of the resilient schools was its link to the educational vision of the school. Teachers stressed the importance of discipline anchored in educational needs. Thus, disciplinary actions against late-coming, absenteeism, generally ‘going-out of hand’ were linked to educational purposes, rather than being seen as ends by themselves.
6. Culture of concern. According to Christie and Potterton (1997) all the above features go together to make up a culture of concern within resilient schools. These include forms of leadership that takes views of others into account, personalised relationships where students are known by name to at least some teachers, concern for the well-being of students in and outside the school, discipline involving parents, and a focus on engaged teaching and learning.

From analysing various factors associated with school success, I discovered some disparity among the various school effectiveness factors mentioned. These differences are noticeable between the literature from developed countries and that from developing countries. It is worth noting at this point that the difference in these indicators would

have an impact on school improvement policy formulations that result from research in school effectiveness. For example, it is argued later in this review (*e.g.* Harber and Davies, 1997; Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Dalin, 1994; Lockheed and Longford, 1991) that because of contextual differences, school development policies in developing countries are bound to be different from those in developed countries. Also, it is important to note here that one of the challenges to school effectiveness research was its applicability in different contexts. The following section of the literature review sets out some of the debates that should be considered when talking about school effectiveness and school improvement in developing countries, which is the issue of context.

2.4. REVIEW OF SOME SCHOOLING CONDITIONS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES VERSUS THOSE IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

One important finding emerging from the few 'effective schools' studies in developing countries is the importance of material inputs on achievement in economically impoverished countries (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Lockheed and Longford, 1991; and, Harber and Davies, 1997). Such basic materials as textbooks, teachers, school buildings, desks and chairs are very important to improve school effectiveness in developing countries. For example, after controlling for student socio-economic background and initial level of achievement, Lockheed and Longford (1991) found that in Thailand achievement was higher in schools with more educated teachers, more frequent use of textbooks, and an enriched curriculum. In Zimbabwe Riddell (1997) found that achievement was higher in schools with more textbooks, less teacher turnover and a higher percentage of trained teachers. Other conclusions about the organisational and process characteristics of effective schools- particularly conclusions drawn from the second wave of research- appear to have more relevance in developing countries (Levin and Lockheed, 1993).

Creating an effective school in a developing country is more difficult than it is in developed countries (Levin and Lockheed, 1993 and Harber and Davies, 1997). Schools in developing countries lack even the basic inputs for them to function as schools while schools in developed countries are adequately provisioned. Harber and Davies (1997)

develop this point to say that, developing countries' schools are different in six ways from those in developed countries. These are: demographic, economic, resource, the context of violence, health, and cultural context. It suffices to note here that according to Harber and Davies (1997:10-22) these contexts are completely different from those in developed countries, and it is these dimensions that operate in schools in developing countries. The authors go on to say that, what is certainly the case is that most of the literature on school effectiveness and improvement has been written in developed, industrialised countries, and describes educational conditions and realities as they exist in those countries. It will be mistaken to assume automatically that these conditions exist in developing countries (Harber and Davies, 1997:10).

Lockheed (1993:20) supports the point stated here above, that is, schooling in developing countries takes place under conditions that are very different from those in developed countries. For example, at primary level, students in developed countries are likely to go to school in a modern well-equipped building and have a curriculum that is well thought out in terms of scope and sequence. On average, they have 900 hours a year of learning time, \$52 a year of non-capital material inputs, and a teacher with sixteen years of formal education. Moreover, these students will share a teacher with fewer than twenty other students, most or all have good health and nutritional states. The reverse could be said about many developing countries. In many low-income countries, by comparison, students are likely to go to a structureless school or have class in a poorly constructed and equipped building, and their curriculum is likely to be poorly designed (Lockheed, 1993). On average students in poor countries have 500 hours of learning time a year, \$1.70 a year for non-capital material inputs, and a teacher with ten years of formal education. Typically, the student will share a resource- poor learning environment with more than fifty other children, many of whom, are chronically undernourished, parasite-ridden and hungry (Lockheed, 1993:20). One consequence of these differences is that the job of teaching is more difficult in developing countries than it is in developed countries.

While all these facts are true about the realities of developing countries, it must be said that generalisation about developing countries risks understating the contrasts between

individual developing countries, and the existence of similarities with developed countries. This could lead to painting a negative picture about all developing countries without noting the differences between them. Like Harber and Davies (1997:10) say, there has been “considerable progress made in developing countries in a whole range of fields over the last two to three decades”. However, most of the realities as stated here prevail in developing countries and they have a bearing on how schools are organised, how the people perceive their schools’ effectiveness and how they feel about school improvement keeping in mind their contextual realities. The purpose of this research is to establish people’s perceptions of reasons for the success of their schools. Given that Botswana is a developing country and as such shares a lot with many features found in developing countries, it will be interesting to assess people’s views regarding school success. It is assumed that these perceptions will have an influence on how school improvement policies are shaped Botswana taking account its own contextual realities.

2.5. SOME CRITICISMS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS RESEARCH

In the literature review I encountered several criticisms against school effectiveness research. I revisit some such criticisms very briefly here. This will enable one the opportunity to develop insights into this highly contentious area.

According to Mortimore (1992), Cuttance (1992), Holdaway and Johnson (1993), Elliot (1996), De Waal (1995) and Ravele (1998) the following criticisms, among others are levelled against school effectiveness research:

- a) Lack of guiding theoretical framework.
- b) Research bias by school effectiveness researchers.
- c) Lack of valid measures of school effectiveness.
- d) Sample bias and lack of empirical data on schools and the neglect of the fact that most schools are of average level
- e) Inappropriate methodologies and analysis of data.
- f) Neglect of immeasurable school factors that impact on school success, namely school social climate, vision and mission, teacher and student attitudes.
- g) Concentration on school level factors at the expense of learner background and its contribution to achievement.

- h) The neglect of the multi-level nature of schools, that is they consist of learners, teachers, classrooms, districts, regions and national level.

Some commentaries, for example Purkey and Smith (in Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:166) have gone as far as arguing that as a result of some of these shortcomings, "only a limited confidence can be attached to some of the simple recipes for school success".

Some authors (*e.g.* Scheerens and Creemers, 1989; Elliot, 1996; Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998; Gewirtz, 1998) have been very outspoken on the shortcomings of the school effectiveness research in general. For example, Coe and Fitz-Gibbon (1998:421) argue that despite the huge contribution made by school effectiveness research and school improvement movement, a number of fundamental issues remain unanswered. Some of these issues underpin much of the research that has been reported, and the uses of such research in policy formation and making real life changes, and significant judgements about individual school's effectiveness. The argument continues that school effectiveness is a thriving field of theoretical academic research; it is an applied discipline, with direct implications for the well being of national education systems and direct effects on the lives of all those who work in schools (Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998:421). Therefore, it is vital to get it right. The authors note weakness in school effectiveness methodologies, theoretical grounding and applications as some of its demise. They conclude by pointing out that,

Locating 'effective schools' and assuming that identifying common characteristics would identify which features made them effective, *i.e.* assuming correlation was evidence of causation.... School effectiveness research's mechanistic, instrumental view of the process of schooling is inappropriate.

(Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998:422)

According to the authors cited here, the effects of some of these deficiencies are potentially damaging since schools maybe held accountable for outcomes over which they have little control. For example, given the key characteristics of effective schools, school inspectors may judge schools against what is deemed the 'best practice' or essential features- such as high expectations- when in fact these supposed research based

findings are highly insecure (Ball, 1997; Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998). In the authors' view, this will not only lead to poor advice for teachers and pupils but also prevents the development of sounder research methods by asserting that issues are unproblematic and resolved (Elliot, 1998; Coe and Fitz-Gibbon, 1998).

For this research what appears to be irksome about school effectiveness indicators is their applicability to other contexts. It has been pointed out in this research that most of the research recommendations of school effectiveness are based on conditions in developed countries. Their relevance and applicability to developing countries needs to be asserted through more in-depth research in those countries. At the moment, the limited research findings based in developing countries reveal that there are a lot of discrepancies as a result of the contexts of the schools in developing countries *vis-à-vis* those in developed countries. As a result of these differences, it seems inappropriate to apply recommendations of school effectiveness from developed countries in developing countries.

Elliot (1996) accuses the school effectiveness research of being a 'top-down' model. He says that, this is problematic because it results in findings that ignore the perspective of classroom teachers and the complexities of teaching in them. The perspectives of classroom teachers are important because,

...Any serious attempt to innovate in classrooms has to start from where teachers are and how they constitute their own teaching, their pupils and what they are trying to achieve.

And,

The effectiveness correlates have taken little account of the variations that are most salient for those in schools and classroom who have the responsibility for making the schools effective and whose implicit theories (no matter how misguided they may appear) will provide the basis for understanding why things turn out as they do.

(Brown, *et al.*, 1995 in Elliot, 1996:211).

I am convinced by this argument. In fact, the aim of this research is to explore people's (teachers, principals and students) perceptions of the reasons for the success of their schools. These perceptions are examined against the framework of school effectiveness

as guided by literature from developed countries. What is important is to be able to capture the views of the participants so that when we talk of school improvement we have their views in mind. Seen from the examples already underway in Botswana on school improvement, this seems to be a great task because it calls for an understanding of educational change (discussed somewhere else in this review of literature), school improvement and taking account of the individual country's context. Even though the school effectiveness indicators from the literature framed this research focus, which I must admit might be seen to reflect my own construct of potentially significant variables, the interviews allowed the participants to express their opinions freely (ref. Chapter three of this study). This approach made it possible for the participants to reveal how they make sense of their world and in the process reveal their most salient variables taking into account their country's context.

At the same time, one should not lose sight of the importance of school effectiveness research as a field that could contribute handsomely to school development. The school effectiveness exponents are not prepared to take the criticisms without a challenge. Some exponents in this field maintain that individual schools are different. Within school effects on children who go through them can explain the differences between schools. This is evident even after controlling for such factors as student intake, and social background (Reynolds, 1992; 1995). Cuttance (1992) adds to this view that, even though examination performance seems to be limited in scope to be used as a measure of school success, they remain reliable for evaluation of school success. Clearly it is more difficult to evaluate such long-term effects such as political awareness, self-esteem, work-place preparation, and social responsibility (Harber and Davies, 1997).

It seems from the review of some of the challenges to school effectiveness research that the area is fraught with debates. The intention of this section was not to go through all of these debates, but to use some of them to try and better understand it. It has been established that the shortcomings of the school effectiveness indicators may not be applicable to developing countries because of the differences in contexts. It seems this section could conclude by saying that "schools are complex organisations and despite

their commonalties, organisations and management are not sector indifferent” (Ball, 1997:317).

2.6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Change force is a deliberate double entendre. Change is ubiquitous and relentless, forcing itself on us at every turn. At the same time the secret of growth and development is learning how to contend with the forces to our advantage, while blunting negative ones. The future of the world learning is a learning future.

(Fullan, 1993:vii)

I am of the view that in general, current studies of school effectiveness and educational developments in Botswana assume that schools have to be viewed as organisations to be properly understood. This perception emanates from organisational theories used in the planning of organisational development and change aimed at improvement of school effectiveness and efficacy. Concern about the quality of education in Botswana as expressed in the RNPE (1994) suggests the need for planned change. For such a reform to occur, schools as organisations require a massive shift in terms of how they have been organised and run. Fullan (1993) points out that it is no longer sufficient to study factors associated with the success or failure of the latest innovation or policy. It is no longer acceptable to separate planned change from seemingly spontaneous or naturally occurring change. He continues,

It is only by raising our consciousness and insights about the totality of educational change that we can do something about it. We will learn that it is not possible to solve the change problem but we learn to live with it more proactively and more productively.

(Fullan, 1993:vii)

Schools as learning organisations undergo a re-perception of the world in order to learn and change (Ravele, 1998). Citing the work of Senge, Ravele (1998:30) continues to say that, “a learning organisation is an organisation that continually expands its capacity to create its future”. I concur with this view in that schools are subjects to changes that occur in society and therefore, they need to evaluate their effectiveness in line with the changes that are taking place in society. I believe that schools as learning organisations need to harness a co-operative effort of stakeholders to enable them to achieve their goals

through continuous capacity building among stakeholders for the purpose of attaining their goals and objectives. At the same time I agree with the view that for any successful educational reform there must be among other things “a national operational commitment to quality improvement that is well planned- and evolving-as *experiences from the field provide learning opportunities for regional and central reform planners*” (Dalin, 1994:xi. Emphasis added).

Lazarus and Davidoff (1997) assert that a learning organisation needs continuous development through intervention not only through its members but also through external consultants through identification of organisational strengths and weaknesses. In the light of this assertion, effective schools need to engage in developmental planning informed by the schools’ stated tasks, policies, values and its norms. Understanding change implies re-evaluation of all aspects for purposes of ensuring school success. Fullan (1993:03) asserts that for us to better understand educational change we need a “new mindset”. A new mindset according to the author is a situation where we make educational systems learning organisations- expert at dealing with change as a normal part of its work, not just in relation to the latest policy, but also as a way of life. Once this has happened, it would enable schools to better deliver on their promises, including the moral purpose of schools. This moral duty is to make a difference in the lives of students regardless of background, and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies (Fullan, 1993). This puts all educational change agents (teachers, parents, governments, and policy-makers) precisely in the business of continuous innovation and change.

Understanding educational change is based on theories and organisational development. For schools to be able to be effective organisations the change process should be an in-built component of their existence. Fullan (1992:xi) wrote that:

It is essential to understand both the small and the big pictures. We have to know what change looks like from the point of view of the teacher, student, parent, and administrator if we are to understand the actions and reactions of individuals; and if we are to comprehend the big picture. We must combine the aggregate knowledge of these individual situations with an understanding of organisational and institutional factors that

influence the process of change as governments departments, ...school systems, and schools interact.

Most of the time educational changes are planned from the top (government policy, regional, or department policy) without enhancing the perceptions of the schools. My view is that if we are well informed about the feelings of the people on the ground (teachers, administrators and students) we will make informed decisions on what we want to change and how we could best handle that change. I think schools are unique. No two schools look the same. In this way I think it will help to incorporate their unique feelings when we introduce change.

2.7. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The concept of school improvement is very important for this research. In my view there is a need to try and link school effectiveness and school improvement. As it has been stated here school effectiveness was first conceptualised as a reform measure. It was to establish good schools' indicators and try and use them to help improve those that are seen as less successful. "School improvement approaches to educational change embody the long-term goal of moving towards the ideal of the self renewing school" (Hopkins and Lagerweij, 1996:66). This obviously implies a very different way of thinking about change than the top-down approach. When the school is the centre of change, the strategies for that change need to take into account the school's perceptions about change. Somewhere else in this section of literature review I talk about understanding educational change. The point here is that reforms that are not supported by teachers' commitment are bound to falter (Dalin, 1994).

Improvement is the ultimate aim of the change process, that is, it aims at doing rightly what has been done wrongly in order to achieve school success (Ravele, 1998:35). Hargreaves and Hopkins cited in (Ravele, 1998) maintain that one of the mind-boggling issues in school effectiveness research is the necessity of going beyond mere identification of school effectiveness correlates. The problem that manifests itself with heightened frequency is how to turn the identified effectiveness correlates into a programme of action sufficiently articulated to lead to school improvement. It has been

established (Bollen, 1996) that school effectiveness and school improvement should be mutually linked as they address very similar issues. In a way school improvement takes on where school effectiveness left off. Bollen continues his argument by stating that school effectiveness found its origins from the phenomenon of the ineffective school (Edmonds, 1979). Bollen continues,

If schools were really perfect, fulfilling their missions to the great satisfaction of pupils, parents, school boards and politicians at local and national level, nobody would ever have thought about 'more or less effectiveness, and if schools were a perfect work-environment for teachers, nobody would ever have wanted to start a process of school improvement with teachers through convincing them that improving their own performance is the right thing to do.

(Bollen, 1996:01)

Within the explicit concept of effectiveness by definition we can understand the effort of school improvement as an attempt to overcome the problems and troubles caused by activities at the schools with a low degree of effectiveness. That is, those schools with too little output. By definition school improvement implies:

A systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

(Bollen, 1996:03)

It seems clear that school improvement relates to school effectiveness, but school improvement aims at the learning process by mentioning explicitly 'learning conditions and other related internal conditions'. At this definitional level there is much openness about the nature of educational goals and, in fact, school improvement efforts have often aimed at a great variety of educational goals (Bollen, 1996).

Writing about the *diagnostic phase* of school improvement process, Bollen (1996:15) notes that in schools, a lot of diagnosis of problems for change does not exceed the level of an opinion. A lot of projects' objectives for improvement are chosen and adopted without taking a thorough look at the current state of affairs, and in many cases without knowledge of educational required standards. It is here that school effectiveness knowledge is required. By looking at the factors that contribute to school effectiveness which can be handled by the actors at a given level, say a school, it is possible to identify

objectives for improvement that will help to improve effectiveness. With a focus on those factors, diagnosis will provide a strong base for further action (Bollen, 1996). In this research, it is suggested that it be at this diagnostic phase that people's perceptions should be taken into consideration. Without knowing what teachers and students have to say about what is important for their school and to themselves, we are likely to implement change that does not address their school's needs.

By bringing school effectiveness and school improvement activities together we can see school effectiveness research as an attempt to define effectiveness at the level of educational practice. In doing so, school effectiveness research is offering educational improvement means and goals to practice in school improvement. In turn, school improvement can deliver its concepts of the school, the learning environment and its understanding of the process of change to practitioners in school effectiveness research, thus contributing to a greater usefulness of the research (Ravele, 1998; Bollen, 1996). This brings us to the next point related to school improvement, which is "sustaining change".

Levin (1992), Fullan (1992), Ravele (1998) concur that school improvement for effectiveness needs to be sustained to prevent any degeneration into meaningless and aimless one-off events. Effective school improvement requires proper identification of goals, provision for staff to embark on actions intended for instructional improvement, identification of possible hindrances to improvement needs, readiness to learn from methods and approaches successfully implemented elsewhere (Dalin, 1994). The author continues that, from outside the school sustaining change for the school improvement heavily depends on the existence and implementation of a national policy of education whose goals, among others, include school improvement for effectiveness, and effective evaluation system for all functions performed by stakeholders in the school.

In this regard I view school improvement, as a very important concept that needs to be understood when dealing with factors of school effectiveness. The need for school

improvement implies the operation of factors of effectiveness within and without the school.

2.8. SOME LIMITATIONS OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

While it has been argued elsewhere in this literature review that school effectiveness and school improvement are complementary, it is worth noting that they are different in how they generate knowledge. For example, effectiveness research deals with characteristics of measurable nature which are mostly correlates in statistical overviews, while school improvement focuses on processes and tries to describe them in case story form (Bollen, 1996:17). A case study is still a story and a knowledge base founded on case stories might not be reliable in all aspects. School improvement knowledge has to be transferred into improvement strategies, built on a series of interventions by different actors in the improving system (Bollen, 1996). This is problematic because we could ask, if school improvement strategies are context free? A similar question could follow, which is; could we say school improvement efforts (if successful) can be replicated, year after year, in the same context (or even in a different context) and still get the same results?

Stoll, *et al.*, (1996) and Harber and Davies (1997) inform my preliminary conclusion to this question. That is, there is need for contextually specific school improvement strategies, in which we tailor the precise nature of the programmes offered to the presenting culture and context of individual schools and countries. The reason is that different contexts particularly between developed and developing countries are reflected in all sorts of ways many of which have a bearing on what goes on in schools. For example, differences in resources, as is the case between rich and poor countries, make it a bit unrealistic to try and implement indiscriminately all improvement strategies from rich countries in poor countries.

Gewirtz (1998) finds problems in the conceptualisation of school improvement by such authors as Bollen (1996) Hargreaves and Hopkins (in Ravele, 1998). She argues that there is a tendency by the school improvement movement “to exaggerate the extent to which individual schools can challenge... structural inequalities” (Gewirtz, 1998:440).

The author warns of the danger of basing national strategies for change on the efforts of outstanding individuals working in exceptional circumstances,

While some schools can succeed against the odds, the possibility of them doing so year in year out still appears remote given that the long-term patterning of educational inequality has been strikingly consistent throughout the history of public education in most countries.

(Mortimore and Witty, 1997 in Gewirtz, 1998: 440)

The point made here is that schools are greatly influenced by the conditions of the societies, in which they are located, so that a school in a poor country may need completely different improvement strategies to the one in a developed country. Most of all, it will be unfair to ask children from developing countries to perform the same way as those in the developed countries. Gewirtz states that,

The 'social mix' strongly influences school organisational management-processes so as to drag down the academic effectiveness of schools in low socio-economic settings and boost it in middle-class settings. ...Schools with differing socio-economic settings intake compositions will not be able to carry out similarly effective school policies and practices even with similar levels of resourcing and after taking account of individual student backgrounds.

(Gewirtz, 1998:440)

To illustrate her point Gewirtz uses the example of a research study based in two schools located in two different socio-economic settings in the UK. One school was a middle-class and the other a working-class school. She talks of stubborn constraints on organisational and management processes in low socio-economic settings schools compared to their middle-class counterparts. This leads her to conclude that,

teachers and principals at low socio-economic setting schools are so overwhelmed with pastoral and learning problems that they will be unable to deliver similar academic programmes to those at middle-class schools.

(Martin Thrupp, 1998 in Gewirtz, 1998:446)

This might seem to be a sociological interpretation of schooling by Gewirtz, (reminding us of Paul Willis' (1976) book *Learning to Labour*) but it has some similarity to what is likely to happen if we use developed country standards to improve schools in developing

countries. As Harber and Davies (1997) argue, some of the 'good practice' theories may be difficult to implement in many of the developing countries particularly in Africa where educational realities are completely different to those in the UK or US. The authors concede that judging school effectiveness and recommending strategies for improvement in terms of contextual relevance is laden with difficulties, especially in developing countries. One major problem relates to the question of outcomes and goals. The second problem is the contextual nature of successful operation. In developing countries this may well involve substantially different criteria, given their contextual realities (Harber and Davies, 1997). The pressing questions in developing countries are likely to be, for example: Have the teachers actually been there most of the year, and have they been paid? Have the children been sufficiently fed and healthy to benefit from being at school? Do the children manage to attend regularly, or do they take large periods of time out for domestic or agricultural support to the family? Has school managed to educate about avoiding malaria, HIV/AIDS, or bilharzia? Has the school managed to get hold of a spirit duplicator? (Harber and Davies, 1997:10)

It is clear that some of the issues raised by Harber and Davies may seem a bit overstated, but they help us see the discrepancies between developed countries and developing countries educational realities. Botswana may not fall altogether in the category stated here by the authors, but there are peculiar realities that apply to her making it imperative that educational improvement efforts should be tailor made to take cognisance of those peculiarities. For this research an attempt is made to elicit from the participants some of the educational realities in Botswana as reflected by their perceptions.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The literature on research in school effectiveness in many ways tends to draw very close to school improvement. This is where school effectiveness could be seen as a holistic issue in which all elements of schooling play an equally important role. School effectiveness has been researched in all its vital areas. These are, indicators of school effectiveness, how schools improve and change, and how these could be made to have an impact on schools.

Most of the research in the area of school effectiveness, school improvement and educational change has been based in developed countries – particularly the US and the UK. This has shown to be problematic because some times the recommendations that follow, as a result of these researches may not find relevance in developing countries. The educational conditions in developing countries are at times very different from those found in developed countries. This necessitates examination of structure and process dimensions of schooling based in developing countries in order to inform policy. At the moment the literature has shown that there is need for country based studies – particularly in developing countries- so that educational conditions are captured and formulate policy for school improvement, school effectiveness and educational change in general, could carry forward from there.

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Chapter Three

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methodology, research strategies and data analysis method I employed to attain my research goals. It also gives a discussion of validity, ethics and study limitations that subsist in this research report.

3.1. QUALITATIVE APPROACH

In this study I use the qualitative approach of enquiry. This approach is selected on the basis that the data is derived from people involved in the two schools, namely school heads, teachers, and students. Their perceptions, actions, motives and attitudes are examined and analysed. Glaser (1992:12) wrote about qualitative methods that it "...can be used to uncover the nature of people's actions and experiences and perspectives which are as yet little known in the world of research products". An equivalent cannot be tapped easily with quantitative research, which might be seen as yielding patterns of a more aggregate nature (Glaser, 1992).

Maxwell (1996:17) compares qualitative and quantitative methods and says the two are not only different ways of doing the same thing, but they also have their different strengths and logics and are often best used to address different questions and purposes. The strength of qualitative research according to Maxwell (1996) is derived primarily from its inductive approach, its focus on specific situations or people, and its emphasis on words rather than numbers.

Maja (in Ravele, 1998:63) expresses the view that "...Researchers who use qualitative methods are interested in the quality of a particular activity, situation and relationships. Emphasis is on rich and holistic descriptions rather than numbers". I employ this approach because this research focus is on participant's perceptions of the reasons for the success of their schools. I analyse and describe their views, actions, and attitudes as they present them.

Punch (1998:139) acknowledges that a dominant feature of present day qualitative research is its diversity. Two aspects of this diversity concern approaches to data gathering and methods of analysis of data. To this end I employ three techniques of data gathering, interviews, observation and documentary analysis.

3.2. RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

3.2.1. Interviews

Interviews form the main part of data gathering technique in this research. The methods of entering and maintaining conversations with people and the theoretical interpretations which social researchers make as a result, constitute the fundamentals of interviews, defined as,

encounters between a researcher and a respondent in which the later is asked a series of questions relevant to the subject of the research. The respondent's answers constitute the raw data analysed at a later point in time by the researcher.

(Ackroyd and Hughes, in May, 1993:91)

The strength of the interview as a tool for data collection lies in that it remains a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality (May, 1993; Punch, 1998). Jones adds to this view that,

In order to understand other person's constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them...and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and *a priori* by ourselves) and in a depth which address the rich context that is the substance of their meanings

(In Punch, 1998:175)

In this study school heads, deputy heads, three teachers, and five students were interviewed at each of the two schools. Using a set of open-ended questions, interviews elicited from participants their perceptions of the reasons for the success of their schools. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:96) pointed out that in qualitative research interviews are used to gather descriptive data "...in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world".

On the use of open-ended questions, May (1992:93) notes that they give the interviewer the freedom to probe beyond the responses, for clarifications and elaboration on the answers given. The strength of this type of interviews allows people to answer more on their own terms than the standardised interview permits, but still provide a greater structure for compatibility over the focused interview (May, 1993).

The head and deputy of each school, three teachers, and five students from each school formed the interview participants for this research. There was an attempt for gender balance in the participating teachers and students. This was to gain access to different perspectives to the research focus. There was also one teacher from each school who was new (two or less years at the school). Teachers who have been at the school for more than five years will know much about their school's way of doing things, while those who are new, two years or less are likely to talk more about those things that captured their attention when they first came to the school. Students were chosen from completing classes. I felt that completing classes were more likely to have been at the school for some time, more conversant with what goes in the school and are more likely to be free to talk. Teachers' (including heads and deputies) interviews were held on one-to-one basis.

Students were interviewed in-groups of five to eliminate the discomfort that is often associated with interviews. Even though group interviews are commonly used in researches focusing on group norms and group dynamics (May, 1993; Punch, 1998) I employed this technique to allow the students the freedom and comfort to explicitly express their views, motives and reasons in the presence of their friends. Punch (1998:177) states some of the advantages of group interviews as being "...inexpensive, data-rich, flexible, stimulating, recall-aiding, cumulative and elaborate". But, there can be problems associated with group culture and dynamics, and in achieving a balance in the group interaction (May, 1993; Punch, 1998). May (1993:95) continues that a group response often tends to take account of the situations of others present, leaving a possibility of inconsistent data from group and individual interviews. But this according to May (1998) does not mean one result is 'true' and another 'false'.

Most of the interviews with teachers were conducted in one of the Head of Department's office in all the schools. The students' interviews were in the Deputy Head's office. Each time the participants were asked if they were comfortable to have the interview in these areas, and in these cases they all felt fine with the venues. I was prepared to let the participants choose a convenient place for the interview had they been uncomfortable with the venues that the schools gave me for use. Each interview session lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. Most interviews took place after teaching time except for the school heads and deputy heads who felt they could be interviewed at any time. For teachers and students, afternoons were practically convenient because they were free from normal lessons. As one of the practical aspects of interviewing, Punch (1998:180) cautions that the place where the interview is to be conducted, time and length of the interview are some of the aspects to be considered before a decision can be taken.

Recognising the importance of these aspects, and careful consideration of alternatives in any particular research situation, enables decisions to be made which maximises the quality of the data, in the light of ethical responsibilities towards those being interviewed.

(Punch, 1998:180)

For the purposes of gaining maximum benefits out of the interviews, my respondents allowed me to tape-record all responses. May (1993:104-5) supports the use of tape recording device for interviews as it allows the interviewer to concentrate on conversations and record non-verbal gestures of the interviewee during the interview, rather than spending time looking down at his or her notes and writing what is said. Further, tape recording guards against the interviewers substituting their own words for those of the person being interviewed. Information in audio recordings was transcribed and processed for purposes of analysis and interpretation.

I prepared two sets of interview questions for teachers (including heads and deputy heads) and students that were used in the collection of data in the two participating schools.

3.2.2. Structure of the interview guidelines

The international literature on school effectiveness was crucial in this section of the research particularly as a source for factors of school effectiveness. From the literature reviewed common themes of school effectiveness were identified and used to structure the interview guidelines. These themes pertain to class supervision, relations in the school, leadership and management, staff development, student discipline, availability of teaching and learning resources, and community involvement. The purpose was to focus the study and most of all check if the participants from the two schools perceive these factors as important for their school success and/or emphasise other factors peculiar to the schools and/or Botswana context. Even though the interviews were semi-structured (*ref.* 3.2.1. above), the themes from the literature were useful when it became clear during the interview that the respondent did not address some of the areas to be covered by the research. In this case, interview questions were generated to address that area.

3.2.3. Observations

The first few days of the week at each school was taken up by observation. This was limited to the school's interactions- teacher to teacher, teacher to student and student to student. The goal of this was to observe what the schools normally do and also to help me have a feel of the schools. Because of time constraints I could not stay at each school long enough to gain far insights through observations. My actions here have fallen short of considering one of the indices of observation as a research method, which is time (May, 1993). The observation made by May is that the more time that the observer spends with a group, the greater the adequacy achieved. He continues to say that, as process is a focus of inquiry,

It is time, which tells us how deeply people feel about certain subjects. It is time that tells us how long it takes an outside influence to become a meaningful part of the lives in a culture. Cultural influences have an incubation period, which takes time and close association to study.

(May, 1993:123)

What was important for this research was to gain some feel of the school through observation of basic processes in the schools. Observation of students' response to the

bell for start of school day, between lessons and afternoon studies would enable me to have a feel of how they respond to the school rules. I was given a guided tour of the schools during which I learnt about the school setting, the buildings, the surroundings and other resources in the school. Notes were kept at all times to add to my data as well as to help remember in detail some of the things observed.

3.2.4. School documents analysis

Documentary data maybe collected in conjunction with interviews and observations (Punch, 1998). In conjunction with other data, documents can be important in triangulation, where an interesting set of different methods and data types is used in a single project (Punch, 1998:190). I requested and was given permission to look at some of the schools' documents including, school prospectus, mission statement, development plans and school rules and regulations. The analysis of these documents took place mostly in the mornings of the first week of my visit to the schools. Access to these documents enabled me to learn about the 'official' perspective of the individual school as well as the ways various school personnel communicate. This added to my descriptive data. I recall May (1993:133) who says

Documents inform the practical and political decisions which people make on daily and longer-term basis and may even construct a particular reading of past social or political events. They can tell us about the aspirations and intentions of the period to which they refer and describe places and social relationships at the time when we may not have been...present.

Like observation documentary analysis served me with background information about the schools not as a form of intense data gathering technique for this research. The interviews as stated here above, formed the basis of this research data collection technique.

3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected is analysed collectively for the two schools according to themes identified using the methods of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Conventional methods, which can make sense of raw data, involves coding of open-ended replies in order to permit comparison (May, 1993:105). Coding has been defined as

The general term for conceptualising data; thus, coding includes raising questions and giving provisional answers (hypotheses) about categories and about their relations. A code is the term for any product of this analysis (whether a category or a relation among two or more categories).

(May, 1993:105)

Employing open coding, data are analysed and expressed in categories that correspond to the broad scope of the research question. Strauss and Corbin (in Punch, 1998) describe open coding as the part of analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorisation of phenomenon through close examination of data.

During open coding the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomenon as reflected in the data. While various questions are asked, the key question is the one, 'What is this piece of data an example of?'

(Corbin and Strauss, in Punch, 1998:212)

Within the categories I identify themes supported by extracts present in the data. The extracts cited as examples are selected in a way that they are representative of a particular theme.

3.4. VALIDITY

To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretations of the findings reported, we need to think about validity (Stake, 1998). This is because meanings do not transfer intact between two people. They take on some of the uniqueness of the listener or reader. There is a need to make sure that there is correspondence in terms of the interpretation of data in a qualitative study report. To this end, I shall employ triangulation procedures to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation. Data from many people, observations, the perceptions of different stakeholders and formal school documents will be considered. This will enable observation of the same events from different points of view in order to arrive at a more accurate position. Flick (1992) cited in Stake (1998:97) has observed the following about triangulation:

Triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. But, acknowledging that no observation or interpretations are perfectly repeatable,

triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen.

Triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. But, acknowledging that no observation or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen.

3.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Flew (1984) adopts the following "laymen's" definition of ethics:

The word 'ethics' often suggests a set of standards by which a particular group or community decides to regulate its behaviour- to distinguish what is legitimate or acceptable in the pursuit of their aims from what is not. Hence we talk of 'business ethics' or 'medical ethics'

(In May, 1993:41)

Another author says, "qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict" Stake (1998:103). Barnes (1979) defines ethical decisions in research as those, which "arise when we try to decide between one course of action and another not in terms of expediency or efficiency but reference to standards of what is morally right or wrong," (in May, 1993:42).

From these definitions, it seems that research like all human behaviour is subject to ethical principles, rules and conventions that distinguish socially acceptable behaviour from that which is generally considered unacceptable. For this reason the following ethical considerations subsist in this study:

3.5.1. *Informed consent*

Before the commencement of this research, I wrote a letter to the government of Botswana applying for a research permit, and informing them of the purpose, nature of study, and benefits of this research. The schools where this research was conducted were contacted over the telephone to inform them of the intention to carry out the research at their schools. Upon receiving the research permit, a letter was written to the schools

through their regional offices, to inform them officially of the research. I visited the schools a week before the start of the research. This enabled me to establish the purpose, and nature of the study. I made it clear to the participants both in writing and orally before each interview session that the information gathered would not be used to demean or otherwise hurt them or their school in any way. I undertook to protect the information and identity of the participants. The participants were advised that they have the right not to take part in this research.

3.5.2. Honesty

The procedures and nature of study, and purpose (as explained before the commencement of the research), remain that way. Any change to the procedures, or any part of this study will be effected only after the expressed consent of all those affected. The findings of this research are for academic purposes.

3.5.3. Confidentiality

The participating schools' identity, the school heads, teachers and students taking part in this study remain anonymous. Every effort will be made to avoid using direct names of the schools, heads, deputies, teachers and students participating in this research during the research or during the reporting, to protect their identity. But, it was explained to the participants before the research, that there are circumstances under which their identities might be exposed. For example, this is a study based in two successful schools during a particular time frame (1995-1999), so it is possible that with deduction one can discover the schools. Also there are very few mission schools in Botswana (there are four in all – two of these are Catholic), so it is easy to guess the schools participating, particularly if one combines the two factors used to select the participating schools (performance and mission schools). Under these circumstances it will be very difficult to protect the schools' identity.

3.5.4. Feedback to schools

A copy of this research report shall be given to the government of Botswana as required by law after it has been passed, and the schools concerned as a feed back. It is hoped that this will restore trust and extend contact with the schools.

3.6. STUDY LIMITATIONS

Findings in this study are based on studies of two schools, the research and the generalisations can not necessarily represent perception by other schools, or what transpires in other schools either in Botswana or elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the study develops some insights, which might be of some use to other schools, and policy makers. In so far as findings in the study resemble other schools, they may use the data to reasonably assess themselves.

This study relied more on interviews as a data collection technique, as a result open to the following limitations: Interviews rely on people's account of their actions as representing something beyond the interview situation (May, 1993). As a result three possibilities arise here. First, accounts may simply be inaccurate for one reason or the other. Second, while accounts maybe a genuine reflection of a person's experiences, there might be circumstances or events, which surrounded these of which the person was not aware. Third, fuller understanding can be achieved only by witnessing the context of the event or circumstances to which people refer (May, 1993:109).

Interviews rely on personal views and circumstances, so some people might feel that they are going to be exposed and embarrassed, hence they will not freely participate in the interview. It is also not possible to understand everything about a particular phenomenon and as such another person who may engage in an investigation after me may understand other things that I may not have understood.

In this study I recognise that I am interested in people's perceptions, and individual histories, and context regulate perceptions therefore, the results may not be generalised to other schools and contexts. The number of participants and schools in this study may also be problematised. The schools were selected based on their previous student performance and this might be challenge as a limited way of looking at schools. As a result the findings here will be limited in that they are based on a restricted way of looking at

school effectiveness. Time and financial constraints influenced selection of two schools as well; therefore strict scientific procedures of sampling were not adhered to.

This study with all its stated limitations attempts to make a valuable contribution in the quest for better schools, educational reform, and debates on school effectiveness in Botswana. Despite this, more research is needed particularly paying attention to the school processes that enable other schools to perform better.

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Chapter four

4. DATA GATHERING, PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this chapter the research tools mentioned in chapter three were used to gather the data. Processing, analysis and interpretation of data are detailed here. Through data analysis and presentation of the findings, an attempt is made to answer the research question, “what do headmasters (including deputies/assistant heads), teachers and students in two successful senior secondary schools in Botswana perceive to be the reasons for the success of their schools?” This chapter is arranged this way: Data gathering, which describes access to the schools, selection of participating schools and selection of interviewees. This is followed by data analysis presentation and an interpretation of research findings.

The section on data analysis, presentation and discussion of findings is further divided into two parts. The first part presents data analysis and discussion according to identified themes from international (developed countries) literature. The second part presents data analysis and discussion according to themes pertaining to Botswana context and developing countries literature.

4.1. DATA GATHERING

4.1.1. *Access to the schools*

The law requires that before any research could be undertaken in Botswana research permit application should be made to the Office of the President. In this application a copy of the research proposal is enclosed, the number of schools/people involved, financial support and the amount of time the research will take, were part of the information needed. After the permit was granted, I wrote to the Regional Education Office where the schools are, enclosing both the research proposal and permit to process access into the selected schools. On the strength of the research permit from the Office of the President and the Regional Education Office I contacted the schools. Initially I wrote letters to the schools enclosing the two permits and the research proposal, notifying them of my intention to conduct this research at their schools. This was followed up by telephone calls

to confirm the letters and setting up appointments to start the research. I then visited the schools upon which I discussed with the school heads selection of the interviewees and set up interview schedules.

At both schools I was given a member of staff to work with. This is the person who introduced me to the people I wanted to interview and helped me gather the students for their part of the interviews. I was given an office to work from for most of the interviews except for the school heads and their deputies. I was given a guided tour of the schools to obtain their overall impression, particularly the state of the physical infrastructure. I used the opportunity on the first day at the schools to have a look at the schools' documents in order to familiarise myself with the schools.

4.1.2. Selection of the participating schools

Schools were selected based on their final year examination performance over a period of five years (1995-1999). This statistical data was obtained from the Department of Examinations and Testing. From the list of schools, I selected five schools that were in the top-five over this period. The two selected schools were among the top five schools over the period 1995 to 1999. From the five schools, I identified two schools that would represent a different perspective in their organisation to the research question. For example, school A is old (established in the 1960s) and a government school. School B also established in the 1960s belongs to the Catholic Mission and it falls in the category of Government Aided Schools.

4.1.3. Selection of interviewees

The head and deputy of each school, three teachers, and five students from each school formed the interview participants for this research. Teachers and students had equal number of males and females from the two schools. There was also one teacher from each school who was two or less years at the school. This was in order to get different perspectives. Teachers who have been at the school for more than five years will know much more about their school's way of doing things. Those teachers who are new, two years or less, are likely to talk more about those things that captured their attention when

they first came to the school. Students were chosen from completing classes - prefects, and other student leaders. These students were selected on the strength of their length of stay at the school, thus were hopefully more knowledgeable about what goes in the school, and were likely to be free to talk about their school.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the two schools (*ref.* Chapter 3 for structure of interview guidelines). In both schools the same set of questions were used in the interviews for teachers, heads, deputies and students. Each interview lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed word-for-word before analysis. Students were interviewed in-groups of five to eliminate the discomfort that is often associated with interviews, while teachers' interviews were held on one-to-one basis. For ease of management during transcriptions, I gave each student a number and asked them to say the number each time they gave a response. This enabled me to differentiate the responses during the transcription of the audio -tapes.

4.2. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents research findings analysed according to the themes and sub-themes identified from the data and the literature reviewed in this study. The results of this study confirmed in a great way the factors identified as important for school success from the literature reviewed, and there were other factors emphasised by the respondents, which are peculiar to Botswana context. The results are presented in two parts, part A and part B. Part A presents data analysis pertaining to themes and/or sub-themes identified from the literature and part B presents themes and sub-themes relating to the context of Botswana. Each theme and/or sub-theme is illustrated by typical quotations from the respondents. Each theme and/or sub-theme and the supporting quotation reflects data pertaining to each of the three groups of participants; thus: the Top-Management (heads, deputies/assistant heads), Teachers, and Students. The quotations are coded (TM)-Top Management, (T)-Teachers, and (S)-Students. At the end of data presentation and interpretation on each theme and/or sub-theme, there is an attempt to link through a discussion, the research findings and the literature reviewed in chapter two of this study.

4.3. PART A: INTERNATIONAL THEMES IN THE BOTSWANA CONTEXT

4.3.1. *Understanding school success*

Using student performance, as a determinant of school effectiveness has been one of the issues contested in the school effectiveness literature. For example, Cuttance (1992) cites Torrance (1986) as saying that the system where public examination attainments are used to rank schools is limited. According to this view it is limited in that it does not take into account other factors, examinations discriminate against less-gifted pupils and they are very often unreliable. It seems the literature, particularly from the developed countries, finds the use of student attainment as a way of understanding school success, problematic. While this is the case, it seems from the two participating schools in this research, that examination performance is one of the goals of education and schools should be judged according to the number of students they successfully enter for public examination and who proceed with their education. It is difficult to tell if this is a view widely held by other schools in Botswana or limited only to these two schools. Equally difficult is to explain why these two schools seem to perceive student performance as important to them.

Botswana education particularly at secondary level has one feature that plays a dominant part in the life of most students who pass through it, the preparation for, and presentation for public examinations. Pupils' attainments in these examinations provide a prominent measure of both the pupils and school academic success. Examination results are subsequently used in the selection and channelling of pupils in post-school educational and occupational careers. This means that examinations have effects on the lives of pupils once they have left school. Pupils who go through the education system in Botswana have to go through at least three public examinations. The first public examination takes place after seven years of schooling (Primary School Leaving Examination), the second, after three years of schooling (Junior Certificate Examination-JC). JC selects students for senior secondary schooling. At secondary school, pupils write what I think is the most important examination, Cambridge Overseas School Certificate-COSC), after two years. COSC determines students' entry to colleges, employment and other forms of further training. It seems the education system in a way encourages seeing

student attainment in public examinations as very important than any other view of schooling.

The Department of Examination and Testing compiles and publicises 'league tables' for every school based on each school's student performance on a yearly basis. In a subtle way, the system puts pressure on schools that are found at the bottom of the table to do something about their performance. Harber and Davies (1997) argue that the use of examination results implicitly imply that schools' main task is to get as many students through examinations as possible. All other possible goals of school – related to citizenship, work-place preparation, family life preparation, co-operation, political awareness, – are implicitly secondary to competitive testing. It seems the importance attached to public examinations in Botswana could partly explain why the two schools participating in this study understand school success as they do.

The two schools understand school success in a similar way. They perceive examination results as one paramount way of seeing school effectiveness. It seems there is conviction that schools that are not good in student performance are regarded as less successful. The respondents however, refer to other forms of success such as teacher commitment, student discipline, and performance in sports. But, all these are seen as relatively important to improving student attainments in final year examination. This perception is illustrated by the following extracts from Top-Management (TM), Teachers (T) and Students (S) responses.

The response from the Top-Management illustrates reference to other ways of understanding school success but as stated here above, there is indication that other ways of understanding school success are seen as contributory factors to achieving good student pass rates. The comment from School B Deputy Head runs like this:

Well, I should say school success is a wide area, but I think school success we have to look at the products. Like, we can look at the results. Like how the school has been doing along the years. Has the school been doing well? If the students have been passing so that they can continue with their education, then the school is successful. Also, the staff, if

teachers are positive and they do not need to be pushed, then that shows the school is successful.¹

(TM)

At School A, a teacher represents teachers' views as she says,

I think school success entails excelling in academic work, excelling in other activities related to school such as co-curricula activities and when the school is consistent in academic performance. When you do not go on top one time and at another you are at the bottom. I think a successful school should be consistent throughout.²

(T)

Students think the school is successful if its results are good. One student from School B says,

I think this is the best school. This is the best school in the country; it is always at the top in the examination results. I love it here.³

(S)

While there was some consensus in the definition of school success from the two schools, there were some divergent views expressed by some interviewees. For example, one teacher from School A adopts a holistic definition of school success. In her view success includes excellence in sports and good behaviour by students. She says,

[School success could be understood] in different ways, this is a successful school because we here from what we produce, very responsible students. We have students of different calibre, and for those who are not good in academics, usually they are very good in things like sports, and other extra-curricular activities. At this school we weigh our students and after we realise what they are good in, we try and encourage them to excel in those areas.⁴

(T)

Form School B the deputy head says school success can be defined in two ways, that is, academics success and teachers' attitude to school work. He says,

School success I would say could be categorised in to two ways, academically and he general attitude of teachers in the school towards work.⁵

(TM)

One student from School B thinks her school is good because it is a mission school, it has disciplined students and it has hard working teachers students and staff members. She continues to say,

I think [name of the school] is a good school because you know it is a mission school, it has the church running it and it has disciplined students. Some of the teachers are Catholics so that sort of sends a message to students about the discipline. I think it is a good school because starting from the headmaster to the teachers; and ordinary students even the ancillary staff; every one is hard working.⁶

(S)

DISCUSSION

From the interviews cited here school success remains an issue of debate. Some of the responses report a perception of school success in terms of student performance while others view school success as encompassing other roles of schooling beyond student attainment. It is interesting to note that even within one school the interview participants were not completely unanimous about the definition of school success. This adds to Gary and Wilcox (1995) that judging a good school is still an elusive concept. The character of schools has long been of interest to the discerning parent (Gray and Wilcox, 1995). The authors continue to say that, some people insist that the concept undoubtedly has something of the 'best buy' features so assiduously researched and celebrated in some countries such as Great Britain and United States, (Gray and Wilcox, 1995). Different groups have different criteria for judging quality of a school.

The international literature reviewed here seems to be of the view that schools are different and many people perceive schools as capable of conferring advantages or disadvantages on those who attend them. In a way these (school) reputations influence choice of schools by parents and students. Sometimes in the process of choosing schools many people turn to such traditional indicators of educational outcomes as examination

results and staying-on rates (Gray and Wilcox, 1995; Preedy, 1993). The proportion of pupils' truancy and pupils' attitudes are often used even though it is difficult to measure their contribution to making good or bad schools. The arguments against using such measurements as examination results include the fact that they can be influenced by other factors upon which schools have very little control. These include social class and the economic levels of the children (Gray and Wilcox, 1995).

4.3.2. Leadership and management

There are five sub-themes identified from the international literature under leadership and management theme. These sub-themes pertain to communication and decision-making; student discipline; staff development and empowerment; teachers' support and motivation; and, teachers' supervision. Each sub-theme is analysed and discussed separately, as well as supported by quotations representing views of the interviewees. There is a discussion section at the end of the main theme. Let us start with communication and decision-making.

Communication and decision-making

Statutory weekly staff briefings were part of the two schools' programmes to enhance communication and decision-making. At these meetings, staff members are free to convey any information for the members to note. At School A, teachers chair such meetings on a rotational basis. Information concerning students from these briefing sessions is conveyed by the teachers on duty or a member of the Top-Management team at assembly. In addition to this, general staff meetings are held three times a term.

At School B, the School Head explains the usefulness of the weekly staff briefings in these words:

Every Tuesday at 0645 we have a briefing session. Not only for teaching staff but we have short weekly briefing sessions for other members as well. First, we meet as senior members of staff, and they tell me their problems and I tell them about mine. The following day we have academic staff briefing where we meet and we tell them all that we have discussed or have taken place in the school. We allow them to give us their views on any matter of concern. The same thing applies to the support staff. We discuss

everything concerning their work and so on. I listen to their concerns, be it death in the family or any hardship.⁷

(TM)

Other than the staff meetings, the two schools seem to maintain 'open-door policy'. This is where teachers and other members of staff are free to approach the school management on any matter at any time. There seems to be some form of democratic decision making at the two schools. The teacher from School A seems to be happy about this arrangement. He says,

I think there is a lot of democracy in this school. Every teacher has the right to suggest the way he/she thinks things should be done. Even the students and parents are part of the decision-making in the school. We always have meetings where we discuss all sorts of issues in the school and at that meeting we are free to say our views. We say out our ideas and in most of the time they are accepted.⁸

(T)

Students are also involved in the decision-making process at the schools. There is prefect and class monitor system at the schools. The student body elects prefects. They are then involved in supervising other students during general cleaning, meals, studies, and other school activities. One student from School A expresses the view that she is happy with the level of consultation at the school. She says it is one way through which they contribute in the running of the school. The student continues to say,

All right, you know in (name of the school) we have a good hierarchy. We have the head, teachers, prefects and other students. So if the students want to do something they will first tell the prefects and then the prefects will take it to the teachers who will then tell the administration. If that thing does not work, the teachers will tell the prefects so that they tell the students.⁹

Another student from the same school adds,

We as prefects usually make sure that students follow the school rules and we also counsel them.¹⁰

(S)

Students are represented in Disciplinary Committee sittings particularly when a student is involved in a disciplinary hearing. According to School A's headmaster, this is to make sure that there is transparency and ownership of the decisions reached at such hearings. The two schools seem to acknowledge that there is need for a student body that has a real say in the running of the school.

Student discipline

The school rules and regulations are written in the school prospectuses that are sent out to the students before they are admitted to the schools. There is an undertaking to be signed by the prospective student's parent/guardian before children can be formally enrolled at the school. This undertaking ensures that the parents agree to help students abide by the school rules and help enforce them if need be. In addition to this, the schools have clear disciplinary procedures that centre on individual teachers, Guidance and Counselling Department, the Disciplinary Committee and then the school Top-Management. This structure is followed depending on the gravity of the misconduct. The School A head explains this structure this way,

Oh! Discipline? Well if it is a small thing the teacher or class teacher deals with it. But, if it is a big thing...I always let the Disciplinary Committee deal with it. The channels are that it starts from the class teacher, the Disciplinary Committee and then to me. These channels allow for seeing the same thing from different angles.¹¹

(TM)

School B teacher responded by saying,

In my class it depends on the nature of the misconduct the student has been involved in. If it is something that I feel is beyond me, I report it to the administration. But if it is something that I can deal with, I deal with it right there. In most cases I counsel the student and reprimand him/her before the others. And if it needs counselling, I call the student to the counselling room and talk to him/her.¹²

(T)

On their part, the students cite the involvement of the parents in the school as a major factor in controlling student discipline. School B student says,

What I have noticed about students here is that they are... like they feel they are not supposed to do anything wrong because their parents can be called. If you tell them not to do something they know the punishment of doing something wrong in the school.¹³

(S)

At School B there is a strong perception that the church, the way the school conducts its morning assemblies, and the fact that every student is expected to do Religious and Moral Education helps instil discipline in the students some how. This is developed further later in this research as “the role of the church in schooling”, a theme peculiar to Botswana situation. At that point, an explanation will show how this practice of conducting assembly sets School B from School A even though they both reported highly disciplined students. At School B, morning assemblies are distinctively marked by the use of what they call ‘themes’. These themes include, ‘honesty’, ‘discipline’, ‘trustworthiness’, ‘responsibility’, and ‘faithfulness’. Each of these themes is taught for a week and students are encouraged to follow it at least for that week. As the Deputy of School B explains, this has helped in student discipline and changed students’ attitude to school. He says,

The other thing that we have managed to do which other schools have not succeeded in is to change the attitudes of our students. I think we have succeeded in making them develop positive attitude to school. I think the way we conduct our assemblies is working very well. At this school we have different themes on different issues of life and we use those themes to address students at assembly. Many of the themes relate to students’ life and helps in moulding them into responsible people.¹⁴

(TM)

The Guidance and Counselling Committee helps the Disciplinary Committee in dealing with students’ discipline by ensuring that students who seem to have problems are attended to. These committees work hand-in-hand in ensuring student discipline at the schools. However, not all cases of student discipline have to follow the laid down procedure. Depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, a case could go straight to the school head from the teacher, student, or any of the committees responsible for student discipline. If a case is referred to the head, the parent of the student concerned is

called to the school to discuss the matter and review possible consequences of the offence. The results are then communicated to the teachers and the rest of the school.

Staff-development and empowerment

From the responses by the Top-Management and Teachers at the two schools, it seems they value their human resources a lot. This is demonstrated by the schools' efforts in staff development and empowerment. The two schools encourage internal staff-development. The respondents seem to be convinced of the importance of continuous staff-development programmes. At School B the staff development programmes run for the whole year. These exercises are budgeted for within the schools' annual recurrent budget. Staff-Development Committees at the schools are responsible for planning professional growth of the teachers. This committee is responsible for inviting resource persons, organising venues, and making sure that the programme is followed. The general teaching staff is responsible for the selection of topics for the staff-development programme. In addition to the internal staff-development workshops, the two schools revealed that, once in a while teachers get the opportunity to attend regional and national workshops based on specific subject areas. At school B teachers are encouraged to undertake part-time courses for their professional development.

The Head of School B response cited here represents the Top-Management's views on staff-development and empowerment. He says,

We have a committee for ... staff-development. I think the idea of breaking the school into committees reflects on your leadership style. I want to create the spirit of "we did it" rather than "they did it". This is one way; secondly it is a staff-development exercise because the teachers get to know how things are done. They are forced to know the policies and thereby gain experience. You see our posts of senior teachers are advertised for everyone to apply. So if you all have the same qualification, then the difference is going to be in the small things the teacher has been involved in. This gives one the urge over others with the same qualification. Empowering the teachers but at the same time create a sense of togetherness.¹⁵

(TM)

Teachers also mention the way staff meetings are conducted at their schools as one way that makes them feel empowered and developed in the process. They feel valued at the school and their contributions at these meetings are accepted as valuable contributions to the well being of the school. One teacher School B sums up this view this way:

Teachers participate [at staff meetings] a lot in the deliberations. Unlike in other schools where teachers are not allowed to express their views and headmasters are more of dictators. The teachers would be silent on whatever the head says. But here... whenever the head talks teachers would respond and the headmaster welcomes their opinions and welcomes their suggestions. I think that is what keeps the teachers here together.¹⁶

(T)

Teachers, in addition to the above, talk of subject based cluster meetings and workshops where they discuss subject-related matters. This is where they also share ideas on different ways of teaching and help each other solve subject problems. These meetings are seen to contribute to professional development of teachers.

Teachers' support and motivation

Teachers perceived the support they got from their Top-Management as paramount to their effective teaching and professional development. Teachers pointed out that they enjoyed a fulfilling support and co-operation from their schools' Top-Management. They seem to be convinced that their schools' success emanates from this good support and rewarding relationships. This support ranges from attending to teachers' professional needs, dealing swiftly with student discipline, accommodation and providing resources for teaching and learning. School B teacher sums up this,

The attitude of the administration towards teachers, it is very much positive, very much inviting. When teachers have problems, they present them to them [the administration] and they try to offer assistance. They make sure that they give teachers answers that the teachers will be happy with. Their response to the teachers is very positive.¹⁷

(T)

The Top-Management of the two schools considers teachers' satisfaction to be central to their duties. They view this as a form of motivation to the staff. School B head expressed this view this way,

So one thing that I identified as a challenge to me was to improve on the teachers morale. I had to work on staff morale. So, I invited them individually and asked them to give me their problems, their fears and work out ways through which I could help. They were telling me all sorts of problems. Many have been working for a long time and they had not made any progress in terms of positions of responsibility. Some were saying, " my colleagues with whom I started working are a salary notch higher and I am still here". So I began to find ways of giving them back some morale by recommending them to new posts and those who have been acting, I recommended that they be given acting allowances and so on.¹⁸

(TM)

This action according to the school head has enabled teachers to gain financially which in turn is seen as very important to their motivation. It seems the two schools view staff motivation as a very important factor in their schools' success. Once they are convinced of this, they do every thing within their powers to make sure that their teachers are always happy.

Teachers' supervision

The Top-Management at the two schools carries out regular class visits to check on teachers' work. At School A, these visits are meant to help the school management and the teacher concerned. Each class visit is followed by a candid discussion of the findings with a view to find strengths and weaknesses. After this there is an agreed plan forward and a record is kept for future reference. Other than these Top-Management's visits, the bulk of day-to-day supervision of teachers is delegated to the Head of Department (HOD's) as illustrated by the Top-Management (School B Deputy head) here:

Our Senior Teachers Grade 1 are responsible for day-to-day supervision. They make sure that the teachers under their departments are doing their work. We also, like in the mornings, some teachers are assigned to make sure that all attend classes and registration. We are also there as the Top-Management to make sure that everything is all right. If there is anything that needs urgent attention we are there.¹⁹

(TM)

Teachers recognise the supervisory role of the Top-Management as very important. School B teacher says,

...They patrol the classes during the lessons, in the mornings and during studies to see if students are learning. If a teacher misses a lesson they call the teacher to come and explain why he/she did not attend the lesson. I think in that way it helps a lot in that it forces the teachers in a way to do their work.²⁰

(T)

I think if this point is combined with the above point on motivation and empowerment, it seems the schools – particularly at Top-Management level- are bent on ensuring that teachers do as much work as possible. It seems the two schools perceive the ingredients for maximum teachers' performance as motivation and strict supervision. Teachers have not expressed the view that their school management was rigid and uncomfortably strict, so one could take it that it means they [teachers] understand the reasons for it. Also, I have not discovered from the responses any case of teacher discipline from the schools, so one could infer that, the type of supervision, and support teachers get from the Top-Management, helps eliminate instances of dissidence.

DISCUSSION

Literature is unanimous on the importance of school leadership and management in contributing to the effectiveness, quality and efficiency of a school (Fullan, 1992; Cheng, 1996; Gray and Wilcox, 1995; Reynolds, 1990; 1992; 1995; Squelch and Lemmer, 1994). This seems to be confirmed by the two schools here. Even though the participants do not explain their school's leaders as 'maverick' (Levine, 1992), they show through their comments that they associate their schools' success with the important role played by the leadership and management at their schools.

From the data analysed above, it is fair for one to conclude that the top-management, teachers and students agree, firstly, that the leadership and management style of the school is collaborative and this is one of the reasons for the school's success. Everybody

is involved in decision-making. Teachers are involved either as individuals or through their HOD's. Students make use of the set representation structures of class representatives, and prefect body. Parents and the community are catered for through the PTA. These are democratic processes, which Hansen and Childs (1998) say improve relations in schools and contribute to effective teaching and learning situations.

Secondly, the schools have discipline structures that are clearly understood by all. The school policy stresses minimum use of corporal punishment. A Disciplinary Committee deals with more serious cases of discipline while the Guidance and Counselling Committee sees to it that students are better advised to stay on the right side of the school rules. These discipline structures combined with elaborate student welfare structures have improved relations at the school particularly student-teacher relations. This supports Dodd (1995) who writes that discipline, particularly use of corporal punishment, is one way through which relations can be broken or solidified in a school. It was elating to find that students support the view that for improved discipline in class, teachers should communicate well with students. The initiatives should be with teachers to build nurturing relationships in class. This view supported by Dodd (1995) and Perrone (1997) highlights the important role played by a teacher in building positive relationships in class.

Many authors view student discipline as indispensable in schools perceived to be successful. Reynolds (1990; 1992; 1995), Holdaway and Johnson (1993), and Levin and Lockheed (1993) acknowledge the importance of A quiet, work-oriented environment to teaching and learning. These depend on student discipline enforced at the school. The two schools seem to succeed in this regard.

In school effectiveness literature, staff development in all its forms has been identified as one of the factors contributing to school success. Staff development enables staff professional development and contributes in making their work more fulfilling. In their own ways the two schools reported on here seem to realise the pivotal role played by staff development in school success. What was not clearly discerned from the

respondents is the monitoring of implementation of skills and knowledge derived from staff development programmes. It seems the two schools rely on improvement in student performance, and teachers' morale to gauge the efficacy of such programmes. Also the incentives (financial rewards and promotion) for those who attend staff development programmes could not be ascertained at the two schools. Maybe the schools sort of trust teachers' perceptions and value of staff development programmes to their professional and personal ends without expecting monetary or any other form of inducements. This is supported by the fact that teachers themselves suggest internal-school staff development workshops/courses. From the data analysed here it seems that the schools expect teachers to choose topics that are seen as valuable to their teaching and professional development.

4.3.3. Social relations in the two schools

There are three sub-themes identified from the data and international literature here. These are: staff co-operation and teamwork, student-teacher relations, and parental involvement. Each sub-theme is illustrated by quotations from the three perspectives offered by the interviewees. That is, Top-Management, Teachers and Students. A discussion follows at the end of the presentation of each sub-theme. We start by looking at staff-co-operation and teamwork as described by Top-Management and Teachers at the two schools.

Staff co-operation and teamwork

The Top-Management of the two schools perceives school success as dependent on the co-operation and teamwork demonstrated by the teachers. Staff-co-operation and teamwork builds the spirit of togetherness in the school. It reduces friction among staff that could lead to undesirable consequences. When teachers work together as a team, they seem to have a common focus and determination to succeed. Teachers at the two schools seem to view teamwork as very important. One member of the Top-Management (School A Assistant head) says,

I think school success depends on the teamwork that goes on in the school, the team spirit. In most cases you will find that we are almost one thing. We are working together, pulling together as one thing. So when you join the school, immediately you come to

(name of the school), you are part of the family. You will even feel that you are very comfortable because our teachers and students will make you feel very comfortable.²¹

(TM)

Teachers agree with the Top-Management on the importance of teamwork in the school as reflected by these words from School A teacher:

There is a sense of teamwork [in the school] irrespective of where they [teachers] come from- foreigners or *Batswana*. ...Teachers here are like a team. I think that in this school everybody feels he/she belongs or should belong. I think that is what makes the school what it is.²²

(T)

From the above statements attesting to the importance of teamwork at the schools, one could infer that, this spirit also helps reduce number of cases of discipline among teachers some how. Teachers who regard themselves as one thing are most likely to find commonness than differences between them. I think this is healthy for the teachers and learning at the schools. Also when all the energies are invested in teaching and learning rather than solving teacher problems, there are greater chances of success. For example where teachers are a team, they are likely to cover for one another when he/she is unable to go to class, thus reducing lost teaching time.

Student – teacher relations

Extracts supporting this theme come from the Teachers and Students. Teachers' views are that teacher-student relationships are very cordial. Teachers express a consensual view about the importance of student-teacher relations. They agree that these relationships are good for effective teaching and learning. They also contribute to the good student discipline discussed here above. It looks like the two schools enjoy good student- teacher relations. School A teacher says,

The staff at [name of the school] enjoys a cordial relationship with the students. We conduct ourselves in a professional manner. The way we relate to one another and to the students is good.²³

(T)

One student from School B applauds the teachers for the good relationships at the school. She feels teachers are open and caring making it easy for them [students] to approach them when they need to. She says that,

The relationship between teachers and students here is a very wonderful one. Teachers are very open. Every teacher comes to class happy and it makes us want to learn as well.²⁴

(S)

From the students' comments, teachers and students have a 'wonderful' relationship, which makes students develop drive to learn more. One student from School B concludes here by saying, "if people have most of their time spent on teaching rather than dealing with misbehaviour, I think that really makes a good school"²⁵ (S).

Parental involvement

Responses under this theme pertain to Top-Management, Teachers and Students. The Top-Management talks of the value of community involvement- particularly parents of their students- in school success. They always involve parents whenever it is possible. In School B parents are involved in issues discussing school policy. The school head says that the involvement of parents in the running of the school promotes ownership of decisions reached by the school. She elaborates here by saying,

Even when they [students] make a request, before I give them the answer I call their parents to let them know of the request. Like now the students have requested that we introduce school blazers as part of the school uniform, before we could give them an answer we are going to discuss with the parents on Saturday at a meeting. The following Monday I will give the students the summary of what transpired at the meeting. I want something that is accepted by all. I want total ownership of every decision in the school.²⁶

(TM)

Teachers cite the valuable contribution of the parents to the school not only in helping student discipline, but also about their contribution to performance of their children. One teacher from School B in this way sums up this view,

There is interaction between the school and the community. There is Parents' Day at the school, where we meet and discuss their children's welfare at the school. In that way I would say the parents are concerned about their children's performance.²⁷

(T)

Students feel their parents help a lot in student discipline. They say that, very few students would like to see their parents called to the school because they had misbehaved. A School B student adds,

Like we have things like Parents' Day. Both the teachers and parents support discipline. It happens that parents come to the school to talk to teachers about schoolwork, know how their children are doing. Somewhere some how the teachers and parents will sit down and talk about discipline. I think this is something that helps discipline. The other thing is that if he or she [student] thinks that anytime I do something my parents are going to know, it makes that person to think again so that he/she does not disappoint his/her parents.²⁸

(S)

Teachers and the Top-Management talk of value of parental involvement in their children's learning and most of all, children's discipline. The two schools try very hard to have parents come to the school as much as possible. In School B parents are required to come to school at least once a term to collect their children's reports. If for some reason the parent does not come, the report is withheld and the parent reminded as regularly to come and collect it. According to the two schools the opportunity with the parents at school enables teachers to discuss with parents the student's performance and work out solutions to problems if there is any. Both schools report a helpful and fruitful support by parents. School A wants to keep the relationship between the school and the general community as healthy as possible. The school and community coming together to perform community projects such as village cleaning campaign and construction of bus stop shelters in the village ensure this. In this way the relationship between the school and the community is strengthened.

DISCUSSION

There is agreement amongst teachers and students interviewed that there is a lot of teamwork. They perceive teamwork and staff co-operation as an essential component of

school success. At these two schools, subjects are grouped under one HOD. They are given a sort of an office to work from [in School B]. Planning and scheming are done as teams. This ensures that departments move at the same pace, set common tests, and teach the same things. The leadership and management structure where HOD's and Top-Management come together to form school management team, combined with the structure where subjects are grouped and work as units, gives one the feeling that there is a lot of emphasis on teamwork at these schools. One finds this a very important feature to the success of the school although it has not received enough prominence in the literature reviewed here.

There is a positive student-teacher relationship in the school. The students feel their teachers care for them, value them as people, and teachers in turn find their students eager to learn. This has produced a harmonious environment where teachers want to teach and students want to learn (Hansen and Childs, 1998). McIlroy (1979) says that teachers have a duty to create learning environments where students will be able to look forward to being with the teacher.

From the two schools investigated here, community involvement –particularly parents- is rated very highly in terms of their contribution to school activities, student learning, and student discipline. Parental involvement has been identified as very important in ensuring the participation of the significant others in children's lives in the rewarding of achievement effort, and to ensure that in cases of difficulty, the parent will if it is appropriate to do so, support the school against the child (Reynolds, 1990; 1992; 1995; Peterson and Deal, 1998-99)

Townsend (1994) pointed to good home-school relation as one of the basis for good schools. His point was that schools with community support stood a better chance to become good schools. The analysed data confirms that the schools have a good working relationship with their local communities. The schools' PTA's are very active. Parents and other members of the community take part unreservedly in the schools functions. Parents come to school at least once a term to collect their children's reports and discuss

with teachers any matter concerning their children's learning. This relationship has enabled the community to play a part in other ways to help develop the school [e.g. help develop and enforce school policies]. This seems to be very beneficial to schools and their communities.

4.3.4. Value for academic success at the two schools

One thing that seems to make the two schools similar is their quest for academic success. The respondents talked very passionately about the importance of student success. According to the interviewees the high expectations held by the Teachers and the Top-Management rubs-off onto the students. They in turn try their best to, as one student (School B) puts it, “[teachers] motivate us to work hard so that we do not disappoint [them]”.²⁹

The Top-Management seems to appreciate the spirit of competition that exists in their schools. They feel it is healthy for production of good academic results. One view (School B Deputy head) sums this up in this way,

In our school every one is competing to do better within the school and even against other schools. Like when the results come at the beginning of the year we analyse them in the school per a subject and per a teacher and we produce an analysis of who did well and who needs help.

When we analyse we make sure that we write the name of the teacher against the class, how many [division] ones, and twos he/she has produced. Also every term like Mid-Year Exams we also analyse the performance of the school class by class and by teacher.³⁰

(TM)

Teachers put forward their views regarding value for academic excellence using subject-based innovations as one way they see to it that students learn more. This view using teaching of English Language at School A as an example, runs something like this,

If we take that [whole country performance in the subject] into account I would say we are still the best. Looking at what has assisted us really, I would say we have a number of innovations that address various areas such as reading. We have introduced class library. Every teacher is in charge of a variety of books, novels that are kept in the class cupboards and are given out to students. We also encourage debates against other schools

in the school. We also have common scheming in the department. That helps to let everyone in the department know what is happening. We are really committed to work hard.³¹

(T)

When it comes to teaching methods, teachers are free to choose their own methods of teaching. They employ varied teaching methods in order to cater for the varied ability range in the school. Students seem to like these methods as they feel they challenge them and make them learn more. For example, one student from School A says,

I think the teachers make us perform well because the way they teach makes learning fun. They question you, they teach what they know and put you in a position to think. [In this way] they encourage a questioning mind, discovering and wondering mind. Because of that, that is why we are a good school.³²

(S)

Another student (School B) describes his science teacher in this way:

The way he does his teaching is that normally when we are dealing with a particular topic, you will find that he always tells us what kind of questions are likely to come out of that particular topic and the way we are to attempt answering it. I think this is a very good way of teaching.³³

(S)

It seems teachers teach in ways that would result in good student passes expected of them by both the students and the community. At School B results are analysed internally subject-by-subject and by teacher. This is meant to gauge the success level of the school in general, the performance of the individual teachers and identify those students and teachers who might need help. This method according to the deputy head encourages competition within the school and against other schools.

In addition students are allowed ample time to study on their own in the two schools. Every afternoon (after school) there are afternoon studies for students from Monday to Friday and evening studies for boarding students. Day students are allowed to attend evening studies even though they are not forced to. This applies to Saturday and Sunday mornings. This gives students time to do their schoolwork. It is something else to talk of time to study and the students doing the actual studying. To this end the schools have

decided to make sure that members of staff are available to help ensure quiet and work oriented atmosphere during study time. Attendance registers are kept to ensure students compliance. At School B the school library is open even during the school holidays to enable students access to this learning resource.

DISCUSSION

The need to improve passing particularly the quality of English Language passes in school A has been identified as one of the needs of the school. In other words, there is a commitment to academic improvement. Teachers have accepted this as a challenge and have started implementing different ways and methods to improve teaching and learning. Students are without any doubt aware of the school's desire to improve the quality of their passes. They applaud the school authorities and their teachers for showing dedication and support to their learning. Wilcox and Gray (1995) have expressed a similar view that, press for achievement distinguishes the more effective schools from those not so effective. Preedy (1993) emphasises the point saying that good schools value quality in teaching and learning they have high expectations and encourage achievement and success.

On the success of the above goal, teachers have expressed the feeling that the main drawback has been limited access to computers and in most cases teachers are not computer literate. This made it difficult for many teachers to produce worksheets and other teaching materials on their own. The school secretary is often over burdened with work leading to delays in implementing some of these ideas.

4.3.5. Teachers' attitude to work

Related to teachers co-operation, and motivation is the perception that teachers' attitude to work is important for school success as reported by the two schools. This theme pertains to how teachers regard their work of teaching. It is when they are able to find teaching rewarding that they are able to perform to their maximum capacities. What transpired at the two schools studied here is that teachers are hard working and they find their job both enjoyable and challenging. Their attitude to work as described by the Top-

Management, Teachers, and Students has been revealing. The Top-Management view is that teachers' commitment to work hard is partly responsible for the school success. This is demonstrated by teacher's willingness to do extra work for the students. School B Deputy head says,

Our teachers are always there for the students. Teachers are very hardworking even if it means working in the afternoons. You will find teachers competing to book classes to do some extra work in the afternoons. For example, at the beginning of every term, we prepare a timetable for monthly tests. In this schedule there is very few days left out and these are the days the teachers almost fight over to use for extra teaching.³⁴

(TM)

Teachers seem to be aware of their colleagues' commitment to work as supported by School A teacher's view cited here.

When I first came to this school I was amazed by the level of co-operation between the staff and the level of hard work demonstrated by every one in the school. When you come into a system like this one you very soon become part of it and becomes as if it is in-born.³⁵

(T)

Students add to this about their teachers. One student from School B says she believes she is at the right place at the right time and she is prepared to take advantage of the teachers' willingness to work hard to pass. She says,

I believe I am at the right place at the right time and I have confidence in myself that I will pass. I have active hard working and committed teachers so I believe I will pass.³⁶

(S)

DISCUSSION

Teachers' commitment to work has been cited as one of the most important factors in school success. For example Willms (1992) has come to the conclusion that schools with committed teachers have less teacher absenteeism, lower turnover and less dysfunctional classroom behaviour. Committed teachers have a sense of efficacy about their work. This

comes from the students' performance- from feeling positive about what the students are able to do and can accomplish against a sense of academic futility (Willms, 1992). This seems to be the case in the two schools making up this study. Teachers are willing to work very hard, compete amongst themselves, and are always ready to help students. It seems the students have realised this about their teachers and are making use of it to their advantage, which I think is a sign of a good school.

4.4. PART B: THEMES WITH A SPECIAL BOTSWANA CHARACTER

This section represents themes and sub-themes peculiar to Botswana context. Reference is made to Harber and Davies (1997) studies (*ref.* Chapter two) that judging a good school in developing countries may involve substantially different criterion given their contextual realities. The school outcomes may vary significantly between countries, communities, and individuals due to different contexts. Different cultural imperatives may lead not only to different outcomes of schooling, but also in the way that similar looking goals can be interpreted and aimed at (Harber and Davies, 1997). The local imperatives define factors of school effectiveness and they influence the nature of school improvement efforts. For example, what is important in UK schools might be different from what is important in Botswana schools because of such things as culture, resources, economic development level of the two countries and a host of other factors. These differences make it necessary for a study such as this to capture the contextual emphasis from developing countries.

While the findings reported here generally concur with the international literature on school effectiveness indicators, there are some themes identified from the data peculiar to the Botswana context. The themes and sub-themes emphasised by the respondents pertain to resources at the two schools, student support, the importance of culture and schooling, and the role of the church in schooling.

4.4.1. Resources at the schools (human and material)

The sub-theme identified here pertains to teaching and learning resources. Physical and other forms of resources needed for the school to function are discussed under this sub-

theme. Extracts cited here represent views of the Top-Management, Teachers and Students in the two schools.

I was interested in the resources at the schools because literature particularly from developing countries has identified this theme as very important for school success. The availability of basic teaching and learning resources in poor countries has been identified as one factor responsible for ineffectiveness of schools (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Harber and Davies, 1997; Lockheed and Longford, 1991). In Botswana resources are provided by the central government. Schools make requests on an annual basis for recurrent budgets and it is from this that they are able to procure what they need. Big capital expenditures such as construction of new schools and upgrading or refurbishing of old ones are provided for in the National Development Plan. This system ensures that schools are equally funded.

From the research findings, it was revealed that there were slight imbalances in terms of extra resources between the two schools. One factor for this as illustrated by the responses is the fact that one school is a Government- Aided school while the other was a government school. This is further explained later in this section. The differences in availability of basic teaching and learning resources particularly on the basis of government versus government-aided school makes this theme unique to Botswana context. While the theme has been recorded by the literature as important for school success, it has not been fully treated in the literature as it applies to Botswana.

Teaching and learning resources

Good physical and human resources are important for school success. It seems the two schools are generally happy with what they have in this regard. But it must be said that, although the participants expressed contentment with the basic teaching and learning (space, books, chairs and desks) resources they had, it seems there is a slight imbalance between the two schools in terms of extra resources. These included computer labs, number of vehicles and the state and number of classrooms. School B seems to have

better facilities than School A as captured by the following extracts from the school head and his deputy. School B Head says,

Facilities are the best in the country. I have moved all over the country and I still think that the facilities are the best in the country. This is the only school with all the big classrooms and where every department has a full compliment of class space all of them double storeys.³⁷

(TM)

His deputy adds,

The school has three busses and a number of small vehicles to use on day-to-day running of the school. We have a school clinic so that the students have very little reason to be away from school. Two well installed computer labs. Even our sports fields are the best in the country. Now even the national teams want to use them for international games.³⁸

(TM)

It seems the availability of these extra resources give students and teachers some motivational urge. This could be inferred from the responses of the Top-Management, Teachers and Students. For example, Teachers express contentment with what they have in the school. One teacher explains,

The structure of the school, the number of classrooms, vehicles, which are used for every school business and some other facilities like television sets, computer labs, video players are there.³⁹

(T)

The students at School B add that, they feel they have been very fortunate to be blessed with these facilities. One of them puts it in this way,

In terms of resources I think [name of the school] is the best. We have most of the things that help enhance learning. Like I can give an example, an interesting one, in [name of the school] we have two computer labs, more than 40 computers, where else in other schools you might find that there are three computers in the whole school. Also we have a good library with a wide variety of books. As for the library it is very good. Whether it is resources to do with Physical Education or academic things, everything is there.⁴⁰

(S)

School A's responses express satisfaction without giving details of what they have in terms of extra facilities. The school head says,

We are okay even though we would wish to have a lot of other things such as Language labs [English] so that we work on the communication aspect of our students. We think that communication is very important.⁴¹

(TM)

Like the Top-Management, Teachers at School A express satisfaction without indicating if they would need extra resources like in School B. For example one teacher says,

I think we have been fortunate in that whenever we make a request for something in the department we have been able to get it. The administration tries to help us with all that we need in the school. We have adequate textbooks and other forms of teaching materials. At the moment we have acquired audio-visual aids for the English Lab and soon we will be able to teach our students in quite broad ways.⁴²

(T)

Students at School A are happy in their own way. One of them says,

The learning environment in the school is conducive. Like the classrooms, they have been built and maintained to support our learning. There is a development at the moment, which is still going on to build more and even better looking classrooms and other facilities for the school. The [Science] labs also have been improved.⁴

(S)

DISCUSSION

The two schools have enough basic facilities for them to operate as schools even though School A's responses seem to indicate a need for more extra resources. The two schools have working libraries; good supply of their basic teaching and learning needs [books, pens, and chalk]. There is little doubt from the responses that School B seems to be happier than School A as far as physical resources are concerned. The two schools reported a full compliment of qualified teachers, even though School B has cited the advantages of having some teachers staying at the school for more than 15 years. According to one teacher, these teachers become very resourceful to new teachers. They are seen as custodians of the school norms and traditions, which is very important to the school's success.

On some factors that lead to improved quality of a school Liven and Lockheed (1993) and Harber and Davies (1997) pointed out among other things to the availability of resources (teaching-qualified teachers and learning resources). The data shows that the schools are generally well equipped. The staff at both schools are well qualified. The students are supplied with books, textbooks, and even calculators free of charge. This has made teaching and learning easy. While this was the case, School B boasts of 'exquisite' computer labs and school vehicles, while School A seems to [at least until the current construction finishes] to make do with what they have. Teachers at School A expressed the wish to have computers in each department to enable them to speedily produce teaching materials. From the views expressed by those interviewed, these problems do not dampen the fact that the school is sufficiently equipped, a very crucial factor in producing good results.

The literature dealing with developing countries (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Harber and Davies, 1997; Dalin, 1994) concur that basic physical infrastructure is essential for school effectiveness in developing countries – particularly in impoverished countries where availability of these facilities is scarce. Basic materials such as classrooms, textbooks, desks, and chairs are very important for schools to function as schools. Human resources in the form of qualified teachers, length of teachers' training are some of the additional factors contributing to school success in the developing countries where there seems to be a noticeable shortage of skills in general (Riddell, 1997).

From the literature review and data presented here on the availability of extra resources to schools, it seems that, there could be a level at which the availability of resources affects school success negatively or positively. At the same time, there is a point of resource availability after which school results are minimally affected by their existence or lack of. This is demonstrated by the situation as portrayed by the two schools in this study. It seems both schools are effective regardless of their skewed extra physical resource availability. While everyone at School B seems to be very exhilarated about the availability of extra resources, direct contribution of these resources to student achievement could not be ascertained here. This leads us to conclude that basic resources

as mentioned here are responsible for student success, while extra resources help broadening the minds of the learners and motivation. The contribution of extra resources to student's success still needs to be confirmed through further research in Botswana.

4.4.2. Student support

Teaching and learning cannot take place unless students feel they are supported to learn. In the two schools in this study there are structures in place to support study at the schools and make them learn better. These structures range from those dealing with student discipline, guidance and counselling to physical and material resources available in the school [discussed in more details here above], and most of all, to which students seem to have limitless access. It seems the two schools are convinced that student support makes students stay at the schools and learning more rewarding. This is supported by extracts representing Top-Management, Teachers and Students' views. The respondents talk of structures that exist at their schools to support students' learning and make their stay at the school enjoyable.

The Assistant Head School A says,

We have the Guidance and Counselling Department at the school. It comes up with ways that can make the students learning better. They provide lessons on things such as study skills and so on. And again we do have like the form fives; we have counsellors for each class. There is a class teacher and a counsellor for each class. The counsellors go there every Wednesday to address different topics with the classes on a number of issues. We try to teach students a lot on the importance of education, discipline and better study skills.⁴⁴

(TM)

Teachers stress the importance of teachers' commitment to helping students and the Guidance and Counselling department as some of the structures that support students learning. This view is summed up by the following extract School A teacher:

I strongly feel that teachers at this school work extremely hard. They spend most of their time in the school attending to students' needs. This is passed on to the students. It stresses the need to work very hard. The Guidance and Counselling Department

Committee also support this. This committee calls meetings with students and addresses the needs of students as well as the social welfare of the students.⁴⁵

(T)

Students cite the support from their teachers as very valuable to their schooling. The view from School B student runs in this way,

Our teachers are really working hard. That motivates us to work hard. If we have problems they are there for us. Each teacher takes his/her part and they come to help students. I think that is what really makes us a best school.⁴⁶

(S)

In addition to the support to students learning, the two schools reported that the Guidance and Counselling Department plays other roles in the school. That is, to provide students with some sort of career guidance. These according to the respondents are meant to expose the students to some of the available employment and training opportunities.

DISCUSSION

Literature reviewed here speaks in no specific terms of the need to establish structures within the school to support student learning. One could only assume that the literature assumes that such structures are embedded within the rubric of factors of school effectiveness cited here. From the two schools studied here it emerged that they attached great importance to the availability of separate structures that deal with general student welfare [academic and social]. The reason for this includes the fact that there is an implicit acknowledgement that a student with a social problem is unlikely to do well unless that student has access to help. Some support structures, as illustrated earlier, have to do with issues such as discipline, which has to do with what the literature calls orderly, and work orientated environment (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Austin and Reynolds, 1990).

The other factor that has not received enough coverage in the literature but has been very common in the two schools relates to the functions of the Guidance and Counselling department other than dealing with student discipline. This factor is the career guidance of students. The schools place a lot of emphasis in providing for the student's career

guidance by advising students on what career choices are available given student's academic abilities and interest. For example, the two schools expressed to me that at least once a year they hold what they call "Careers Day" for the students. During this day different people from different professions and employment are invited to the school to give a lecture on opportunities and entry or employment requirements in their departments. This according to the schools provides the students with a choice and something to aim for in life. This factor may be seen to have very little to do with school success because it is not directly related to academic work that schools seem to be for. But it must be stated that it seems to have a lot to do with arousing the student's interest towards particular career fields, which in turn contributes to motivation to learn. It could also be said that it seems the two schools have a broader understanding of schooling. This broad understanding of schooling includes the fact that it is the responsibility of schools to provide students with information about possible career choices. In addition to the annual Careers day, the Guidance and Counselling Department is charged with responsibility to provide information to students as often as possible on available careers and most of all, the academic entry requirements to those careers. This is done through the use of audio-visual aids and pamphlets.

One possible explanation of the absence of career guidance in schools as an important factor from the international literature could be that, most of the literature is based in developed countries where students have access to information about the world of work through other means. They could get this information from their parents (many of whom are educated), televisions, newspapers, and other forms of public media. Some of these advantages are non-existent in developing countries, leaving the bulk of the job to the schools and the teachers.

4.4.3. Culture and schooling

At School A (a rural school) one teacher emphasised the importance of having parents or communities coming to the school to help share their cultural knowledge with students. This was seen as important because the community felt the school should help to impart cultural values to the students and most of all, it enables the community to play a role in

the school thus promoting a bond between the two. This bond is perceived to be important when it comes to dealing with issues of student discipline and other school activities.

The teacher uses the example of her subject area to demonstrate how they try and involve the community in teaching. She says,

In our department, there are topics that are a bit culture related, where possible we invite a villager to come and explain some of the things. For instance, to come and talk about how we treat funerals. If it is health related topic we invite a nurse from the local hospital to come and give a talk on the topic.⁴⁷

(T)

From this school issues of dress or appearance in general and teaching students about things such as hygiene are very important. While the school emphasises school uniform, the community expects the student dress to be in keeping with the cultural expectations. For example, short skirts are not allowed, the community discourages certain types of haircuts and hairstyles. It is this harmony between the school and the community that School A teacher perceives to be very important to the success of the school. The local hospital nurses help in addressing issues of health and cleanliness in the school. These issues are perceived to be important to this school because the students are seen as elite in the community and as such they should dress and appear accordingly. For example one teacher from School A sums this up in this way,

This we believe are not far from academics because we think that for students to be fully involved in their education they must be clean, fresh and their surrounding should be clean. They must be exemplary because this is the only senior secondary school in this area.⁴⁸

(T)

At School B there were no responses from the interviewees that emphasised the need to adhere to the culture of the community. One explanation is that, rural communities are

conservative and would like to see their children brought up in certain ways, while those in towns are more eclectic.

One student from School A reiterates the point made by her teacher above about the importance of culture in discipline, and school success.

The fact that the school is in an area inhabited by [name of the group of people], these are the people who are still attached to their culture and tradition. So the school head also comes from this area and understands the community's culture. This makes the school head, head the school in a way that a parent would do at home. This makes it difficult for the students to do these funny things because they know that culturally when you do something wrong you are punished. So the students consider the school head as a mother and this makes the school a good one.⁴⁹

(S)

DISCUSSION

In a way School A in particular is expected to play a wider role in that it has to impart modern and traditional culture as well. The fact that some of the small things such as cleanliness are emphasised at the school shows that they cannot be taken for granted in a rural school. This has not been discussed in the literature reviewed in here. The inter-marriage between the school and the community as demonstrated by examples from School A is perceived as important to its success. This aspect has not been adequately discussed in the literature reviewed here, but it seems from school A, to be very valuable. The fact that the school is prepared to allow the community to come and share with it, its cultural knowledge has a number of advantages, some of which are explained above. Also a school in a rural area will inherently have to adjust in order to allow for the co-existence of cultural influences as well as modern or western cultures, which schools seem to impart. At the same time, there seems to be legitimacy on the part of the school when the community sees it as an extension of its own principles. Particularly when one considers the fact that rural communities are a bit conservative.

While this is the case, the school is expected to produce people upon whom the society will look up to for examples and good behaviour. This is why dress is so important at School A. The fact that the school has been able to perform well in student attainment

over the years demonstrates that there is harmony between the culture of the community and the school in general. There seems very little friction that could have resulted in poor student performance or bad school- community relations.

4.4.4. The role of the church in schooling

The involvement of the church in education in Botswana as in other African countries has a long history. Missionary education in Africa was used mainly to eradicate paganism and enable the African people to read the Bible and thus help spread Christian belief. The missionary involvement had two profound results. In many cases missionary participation was seen as an ingredient in the whole colonial movement in Africa, which ultimately blamed for (rightly or wrongly) westernisation and breakdown of the African social system. The positive part of the missionary involvement includes provision of education and other facilities such as health to the people of Africa. In the case of Botswana, missionaries fought on the side of Botswana to get British protection. They were also involved in provision of education and health facilities as well.

At independence, there were (and still are) four mission schools in Botswana. Two of these schools were Catholic (one of which was a participant in this research). Initially mission schools provided education for children who were and/or intended to become christened members of the church. Today with government intervention, all these schools provide education to all Batswana regardless of their religious background or intentions. These schools are now classified as Government – Aided schools. This means that the state provides the infrastructure, financial support and pays teachers, while the church owns and helps run the school. In a way the schools retain some autonomy, which enables the school to function in ways slightly different to government schools. For example, School B requires all the students to do Religious and Moral Education while this is not the case in other non-mission schools.

For this study, perceptions pertaining to this theme come from School B (a Catholic school) responses. Teachers and students interviewed perceived the church as playing a very important part in the school's success. The role of the church ranges from instilling

discipline to teachers and students as well as making the school retain some sort of autonomy, which is very important in such areas as procurement of resources. As such this is why the two schools are a bit different in terms of availability of extra teaching and learning resources (reported earlier in this research). There is consensus in School B that the church is very important. The deputy head emphasises the way the school has drawn from the Christian principles some of the ways they use to conduct assembly and he sees this as very important in instilling discipline to the students and making them develop positive attitude to learning. As explained in Part A here above, each week has a theme used at assembly and students are encouraged to practice it at least for the whole of that week. Sometimes the Pastor comes to give sermons to the students. All these according to the deputy head “are moulding the student into becoming a better and responsible person” (TM). He continues to explain the importance of the church in this way,

I would say the church plays a very important role because we have a school manager from the church who is always in consultation with the school administration. At the moment the church before the prefects resume their duties at the beginning of the year, takes all of them for a weekend training camp. The church teaches them so that they can assume their responsibilities without any problems. Of late some schools have been interested in what we do and they have been asking us to help them train their prefects. We have some very good people who train our prefects.⁵⁰

(TM)

The school head adds to the deputy’s view about the way the school conducts assemblies. He reports that it is a very important component to student learning and thus school success. He says,

We also call church people to come and lecture on some of these topics. The underlying message of these themes is that they help in discipline. If there is no discipline, there will never be any teaching or even learning. There must be firm discipline in the classrooms and dining hall because we believe success depends on discipline.⁵¹

(TM)

Apart from the discipline, the church in School B provides the school with the needed autonomy that enables it to acquire facilities and resources that would probably be difficult or take long to get in a government school. The School B head explained that the fact that the school is Government –Aided enables the school to “play around with money” without direct government interference.

He continues to say,

For example if we ask for money for a block of toilets and when that money comes we realise that we needed something else urgently, we can do that thing and come back to the construction of the toilet block later. Also, if we ask for money to buy say a school bus, we have the latitude to keep that money in the bank for a while to earn interest so that when we withdraw it we have earned interest that we can use for whatever we see fit. I think that is our advantage.⁵²

TM)

Teachers in School B also perceive the role of the church in the school as very valuable for their success. One teacher says that she thinks the fact that students are taught Christian principles in class and during sermons makes them more disciplined and eager to learn. The whole school is expected to do Religious and Moral education as a subject which the teacher sees as important for students discipline. She continues to say,

I think it is [the church] because we are a catholic school and all students are expected to honour the church one way or the other. For example it is compulsory for the entire student body to do Religious and Moral Education (RE) as a subject. I think this is the only school in the country where (RE) is done as a core subject. I think this instils some sort of discipline in the students. In some of these classes I have noticed that students pray and do all sorts of Christian religious things, which I think has effects on the students.⁵³

(T)

One student adds to teachers’ views about the church’s role in the school. She says,

I think [name of the school] is a good school because it is a mission school. It has the church running it and it has disciplined students and even some of the teachers who teach here are Catholic people so that sort of sends a message to students about the discipline.⁵⁴

(S)

DISCUSSION

The role of the church in education has received little coverage from the literature reviewed here. However, from School B interview comments cited here, there is agreement by many of those interviewed that the church plays a very important role in the success of the school. The church according to the respondents helps instil discipline amongst the students, which in turn enables teaching and learning. The fact that the school is a Government-Aided school gives it some autonomy, which marks it out from the government schools. This is shown by the way the school is able to make adjustments in its budgets and procure facilities and resources for teaching and learning. The deputy head explained that the school's advantage is that when the government plans to build something, the church before adoption must pass the plan. If the church feels there should be some improvements, the government in many cases complies. If the government is unable to comply with the suggestion because of costs implications for example, the church still has the latitude to source money somewhere else to provide that facility.

The autonomy combined with the role of the church in school B is perceived as very important for the school's success. In a way the church in School B is seen as a force for the good. One would like to believe that the church principles in the school help in other areas as well. For example, Catholic students are taught very strongly against engaging in outward behaviour such as sexual activities, which instils discipline and contributes to dropout as a result of pregnancy and other means. This is the discipline the teachers and students agree makes School B a good school.

Chapter Five

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter draws conclusions of the research findings from the study and makes recommendations.

5.1. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research has been to study the two schools' perceptions of the reasons for their success through the lenses of the known factors in the literature, which are associated with school effectiveness. I commented on these factors as the school heads, deputy heads, teachers, and students in the two schools perceive them, and link these to understanding of educational change and improvement. Particular attention was paid to contextual differences between Botswana and the literature reviewed from the developed countries. The informing argument was that, some of the recommendations for school effectiveness, school improvement, and educational change in general might not necessarily find echoes in the developing countries because of their contextual realities.

In order to achieve this goal I consulted the international literature on school effectiveness from developed and developing countries. I consulted literature on understanding educational change and school improvement. Such literature review unravelled a host of factors associated with school effectiveness, limitations to school effectiveness research, and most of all, the literature revealed the need for more studies based in developing countries that would take account of the educational realities of these nations. On the question of the schools' perception of factors for their effectiveness it has become clear that even though most of research findings concur with the literature reviewed here, these factors do not operate in isolation and in homogeneous contexts. It has also become clear that schools are whole organisations whose components should function interactively for the sake of effectiveness. This perception is shared by Lightfoot cited in Ravele (1998:149) that:

The effectiveness of schools is seen not to lie in the specific list of characteristics of discreet additive elements, but in the creation of a whole efficient working systems, which includes its people, structure, relationships, ideologies, goals, intellectual substance, motivation and will.

This assertion seems to view school effectiveness factors not in isolation but as corollary to the change and development of schools as whole entities in particular contexts. This perception is the offspring of whole school development on which Lazarus and Davidoff (1997) and other authors have elaborately written. Educational improvement should be consummated by an understanding of educational change that includes enabling the schools to play a big part as centres and agents of the change process (Fullan, 1992; Dalin, 1994). When schools are centres of the change process, we would be able to take advantage of their capacities to change as learning organisations. This is contrary to top-down change process. For school improvement to be achieved, stakeholders in schools need to understand schools and learning organisations that are capable of undergoing change and improvement. Such a change for improvement should be understood as a process rather than a once-off and dramatic event and there is need to consolidate and maintain it to avoid reversion to old ways of doing things (Fullan, 1993).

While this research study focused on what two successful senior secondary schools in Botswana perceive to be reasons for their success, many of the findings concur with the literature reviewed here. They may well find echoes in other schools as well. Some of the factors emphasised in the two schools are: leadership and management based on accountability and involving all staff members, student discipline, school-based staff development programmes, teachers' motivation and support by the school leadership, teachers' supervision, social relationships in the school, parental involvement, value for academic success, and teachers' attitude to work. These were what one would expect from a successful school anywhere. Maybe this means that successful schools in Botswana can be compared to successful schools anywhere else in the world.

There were local context emphases from the interview responses as well. These related to: availability of teaching and learning resources, student support (particularly guidance and counselling), culture and schooling, and the role of the church in education in

Botswana. The existence of these local factors leads one to conclude that, while in many ways the research has confirmed the literature on factors of effective schools, there are local realities that mark successful schools in Botswana from those in other countries, particularly developed world. The implication is that, while a lot of effort is needed to support school success as determined by successful school indicators from developed countries, we should not lose sight of the local contexts of the schools in developing countries. This is because in many cases educational realities in the two worlds could be different. It is these local realities that we should support and use to develop our schools.

School Improvement Research (*ref.* Chapter two for a detail analysis) embodies the long-term goal of moving towards the ideal of self-renewing school (Hopkins and Lagerweij, 1996). In a way school improvement goes beyond mere identification of school effectiveness correlates. The problem to achieving this, as noted by such authors as Bollen (1996), is how to turn the identified effectiveness correlates into a programme of action sufficiently articulated to lead to school improvement. This is where people such as Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) are important. These authors talk of the need to understand schools as learning organisations made up of multiple elements all of which should be functioning optimally for the school to effectively function. For example, the authors have identified elements of the school as an organisation as: leadership and management, identity, strategy, school culture, human resources, technical support, structures and procedures and school culture all of these are influenced by the society and community in which the school is found. Without going into details in terms of how each of these elements works, it suffices to note that they continuously interact such that change at school level for improvement must address all of them.

In comparison to an important study (similar but different context) conducted in South Africa by Christie and Potterton (1997), this study revealed similar perceptions as well as different factors necessary for a school to be successful. Among the similar factors are: leadership and management of the schools based on accountability, participatory and consultation, press for academic success (centrality of teaching and learning, in Christie and Potterton (1997), governance and community relationships, parental involvement and

authority and discipline. Among those factors that were seen to be important in the cited study but were not confirmed by this study are: safety particularly as regards measures against drugs and substance abuse, political violence, gangsterism and other acts of criminality, and relationships with the education authority. One explanation for the difference is that some of these factors are not yet problems in Botswana in schools particularly drug abuse, political violence and general criminal acts. That is why the respondents did not consider them important for their schools' success. While there is no doubt about the importance of support by the education department, it is surprising that it did not receive emphasis from the interviewees. One could only assume that the respondents took it for granted that school success hinges on the amount and type of support from the education department or authorities.

At the same time the following factors were emphasised by the two schools participating in the study but were not significantly covered by the Christie and Potterton (1997) study: the role of community culture in schooling, the role of the church in education, and student support (the role of guidance and counselling in the school). These factors seem to have more to do with the local factors of Botswana educational system.

The review of literature on school effectiveness provided this research framework, which it is proposed could be used in school improvement. I was heavily influenced by studies by Fullan (1992; 1993) who emphasised the point that school effectiveness, and a particular understanding of educational change process should support policy on school improvement. The author's view on meaning making cited in chapter one is worth a revisit here. Fullan argues that the success of any innovation depends a great deal on the meaning people attach to it. New experiences are always initially reacted to in the context of "familiar, reliable construction of reality" in which people must be able to attach personal meaning to the experiences regardless of how meaningful the change might be to others (Fullan, 1991:31). This is why for this research people's perceptions are important. Without a broad framework of change implementation, educational policies are bound to fail (Fullan, 1992; Dalin, 1994). This view was found to concur with Bollen (1996) who seems to perceive school effectiveness as an outcome of interactions of

higher average scores achieved in the final examinations or sporting and cultural achievements although they are generally viewed as such because of their visibility. Scores or symbols in examinations are among others determined by the potential abilities of the students and a school that succeeds in enhancing the performance of students whose abilities are not so extraordinary will be deemed to be successful by such even if no higher scores were achieved by the students compared to other schools. There are some intangibles that are not susceptible to clear-cut measurements that form part of the school's goals and those determine effectiveness of the school, for example, attitudes, perceptions and interests of the stakeholders in them. School improvement goes beyond improving examination results even though they (improved examination results) will be a result of the effective school change.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Literature reviewed on school effectiveness (from both developed and developing nations), understanding of educational change, and analysis and interpretation of data findings of this research enabled me to make the following recommendations:

- 5.2.1.** Government, and all those with interest in good schools should support school effectiveness indicators as emphasised by the respondents in this research in order to keep these two schools as well other schools successful.
- 5.2.2.** Policy makers, change initiators, governments should take everyone on board when thinking of school improvement. School effectiveness indicators should be used as a framework against which school change for improvement should be launched. Policies intended to contribute to school improvement should be based at the school level in order to tap the local realities of these organisations. For example, staff-development programmes.
- 5.2.3.** The role of Guidance and Counselling in the schools needs to be strengthened. This sector seems to deal with a wide range of duties that support school success including student discipline, counselling on social (psychological) and academic

needs of the students. From the evidence of the two schools it seems one teacher helped by a few other teachers holds this job on *ad-hoc* basis. Such teachers carry normal teaching loads, which makes it barely impossible to attend to needs of over 1400 students as well as teaching. Student career guidance is one of the duties of the Guidance and Counselling Department. It seems this adds enormous pressure on the guidance and counselling teacher. One of the possible solutions is to make this post a full time job of a teacher. This would enable him/her to research more on career opportunities and spend more time dealing with students on an individual basis (when there is need) without having to miss classes.

5.2.4. Appropriate amount of time should be devoted to case studies of schools in order to do justice to ethnographic research, particularly dealing with school improvement, school effectiveness and educational change. This will contribute knowledge to what factors, and processes are responsible for school effectiveness in Botswana. The school and the classroom though at a micro-level in the education system, finally should become signposts of effectiveness or otherwise; hence the view that schools should be the units of focus on planning educational system change. As debates on school improvement in Botswana seem to be at infancy, there is need to revive this area in public, education, and academic arenas. Such debates are healthy for the educational improvement of the country.

5.2.5. For schools to be effective attention needs to be focussed by all stakeholders in the school on organisational and process factors that impact positively on such a goal. This is where people's perceptions are important. Implementation of decisions on such factors may contribute to some degree of effectiveness depending on the sense of duty, the will to change and commitment of stakeholders in the school (Fullan, 1992; 1993; Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Dalin, 1994).

5.2.6. In order for schools to focus their efforts on the pressing objective of raising standards, there should be reliance on community support and parental involvement. This group of people provide a wide range of support for school

management. The majority of the respondents participating in this study perceive parental involvement and support as essential in this respect. The fact that parents have a vested interest and a shared responsibility for school success generate collegial sense of either culpability or pride in the performance of a school. Government and schools must then encourage their participation. Other roles of parental participation (*e.g.* in curriculum choice and board of governors) should be investigated in order to harness their important contribution to education.

Finally, factors of school effectiveness as identified in the school effectiveness literature seem to be of significance in determining school success. Some of these factors appear to operate interactively in the two schools studied in here. Factors of school success should be interpreted in terms of local educational practices and processes in individual schools and classrooms in relation to the schooling system of a country because individual countries have different cultural, socio-economic and political imperatives.

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¹ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000

² School A. Interview Teacher 3. 17 May 2000

³ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000

⁴ School A. Interview Teacher 3. 16 May 2000

⁵ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000

⁶ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000

⁷ School B. Interview School Head. 24 May 2000

⁸ School A. Interview Teacher 2. 17 May 2000

⁹ School A. Interview Student 1. 15 May 2000

¹⁰ School A. Interview Student 3. 15 May 2000

¹¹ School A. Interview School Head. 17 May 2000

¹² School B. Interview Teacher 1. 26 May 2000

¹³ School B. Interview Student 3. 25 May 2000

¹⁴ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000

¹⁵ School B. Interview School Head. 24 May 2000

¹⁶ School B. Interview Teacher 1. 26 May 2000

¹⁷ School B. Interview Teacher 1. 26 May 2000

- ¹⁸ School B. Interview School Head. 24 May 2000
- ¹⁹ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000
- ²⁰ School B. Interview teacher 1. 26 May 2000
- ²¹ School A. Interview Assistant School Head. 15 May 2000
- ²² School A. Interview Teacher 1. 17 May 2000
- ²³ School A. Interview Teacher 1. 17 May 2000
- ²⁴ School B. Interview Student 3. 25 May 2000
- ²⁵ School B. Interview Student 4. 25 May 2000
- ²⁶ School A. Interview School Head. 17 May 2000
- ²⁷ School B. Interview Teacher 1. 26 May 2000
- ²⁸ School b. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000
- ²⁹ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000
- ³⁰ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000
- ³¹ School A. Interview Teacher 1. 17 May 2000
- ³² School A. Interview Student 2. 15 May 2000
- ³³ School B. Interview Student 4. 25 May 2000
- ³⁴ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000
- ³⁵ School A. Interview Teacher 2. 17 May 2000
- ³⁶ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000
- ³⁷ School B. Interview School head. 24 May 2000
- ³⁸ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000
- ³⁹ School B. Interview Teacher 1. 26 May 2000
- ⁴⁰ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000
- ⁴¹ School A. Interview School Head. 17 May 2000
- ⁴² School A. Interview Teacher 1. 17 May 2000
- ⁴³ School A. Interview Student 5. 15 May 2000
- ⁴⁴ School A. Interview Assistant School Head. 15 May 2000
- ⁴⁵ School A. Interview Teacher 1. 17 May 2000
- ⁴⁶ School A. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000
- ⁴⁷ School A. Interview Teacher 3. 16 May 2000
- ⁴⁸ School A. Interview Teacher 3. 16 May 2000

⁴⁹ School A. Interview Student 1. 15 May 2000

⁵⁰ School B. Interview Deputy School Head. 22 May 2000

⁵¹ School B. Interview School Head. 24 May 2000

⁵² School B. Interview School Head. 24 May 2000

⁵³ School B. Interview Teacher 2. 24 May 2000

⁵⁴ School B. Interview Student 2. 25 May 2000

University of Cape Town

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Interview guidelines

Questions to teachers

Personal Background Information (Teachers only)

1. What is your level of education/training?
2. For how long have you been teaching? At this school? Else where?
3. What is your present position at the school?
4. Have you held any other position before this one? (If yes) What was it? For how long?

Research Related Information

1. How would you define school success?
2. Do you think this is a successful school?
3. What do you think are some of the things that make this school successful?
4. In which areas would you say this school excels?
5. In which areas do you think there is need for improvement?
6. What kind of assistance does the school give to teachers? (Head /deputy or HOD only)

If at this level some or all of the following areas not covered by the participants' responses, questions will be generated to cover them. For example, what can you tell me about:

- (a) Class supervision
 - (b) Students support (guidance and counselling, study time)
 - (c) Relations in the school
 - (d) Leadership and management (style)
 - (e) Staff development
 - (f) Discipline (staff and students)
 - (g) Community support (In what ways do you involve it)
 - (h) Resources in the school (material and human)
7. How are school rules decided upon?
 8. How are these rules enforced?
 9. Do students and teachers participate in setting rules? (if yes) In what way?
 10. What happens when they are broken?
 11. Is there anything else you would like me to know?

Questions to students

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. How long have you been at this school? (if coming from another school) Why did you come to this school?
2. If you now had a choice, would you still have come to this school? (if no) Which school would you go? Why?
3. Do you think you will pass at the end of the year? What makes you think so?
4. What would you like to do when you finish school?

RESEARCH RELATED QUESTIONS

1. Do you think this is a successful school?
2. Tell me why you think this is a successful school?
3. Are there ways in which you think this school is different from others? What are those?
4. As students in what ways are you involved in making this school good/successful?
5. If at this level some of the following areas are not covered follow up questions will be generated to cover them. For example, what do you think about the following:
 - (a) Student/teacher relations at the school
 - (b) Student support (guidance and counselling, study time and sports facilities)
 - (c) Learning/teaching resources
 - (d) Discipline at the school
5. What else do you think needs to happen to keep this a successful school?
6. Who else do you think needs to be involved to keep this school successful?
7. Is there anything else that you would like me to know?

APPENDIX 2:

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

School A (based in a rural area)

Date: 16th May 2000

Time: 1130 hrs

Venue: HoDs office

RESPONDENT: TEACHER 3 (FEMALE)

Q. What is your level of education/training?

A. I have a BA in Humanities and (PGDE) Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching for seven years.

Q. At this school?

A. Yes.

Q. What is your current position of responsibility?

A. I am (a cough!) I am a Setswana Teacher and also a boarding mistress. I am also co-ordinating the school-choir.

Q. So I assume you have not held any other position of responsibility other than the present one.

A. No.

Q. Eh! In what ways do you see this school as a successful one?

A. Well, in many different ways. This is a successful school because we hear from what we produce, very responsible students. We do not only emphasise on academic work; we also produce very excellent students in academics. We also, we have different students of different calibre, but for those who are no good in academics, usually they are very good in things like sports, and in other extra curricula activities, things like clubs and sports. They are very active in those and we... Here at our (name of school) school we weigh our students, we look at them and after we realise that these are capable in doing this, we try to encourage those who are capable in sports to be serious in sports, and those who are good in singing to be serious in the school choir.

Q. Great. You have mentioned two things. You have in a way given me the impression that you understand success in two ways, one academic success and two, things such as sports.

A. Well, I would not say, they are only two, those are the only two that I can remember now.

Q. Which of these two do you think the (name of the school) school emphasises on?

A. I would say we take them both at the same weight, because we believe that for the student to be excellent we believe that student must be disciplined. We believe that without discipline we can not achieve anything in terms of academics.

Q. I am going to ask you to talk about the issue of discipline at this school later, for the moment, tell me what the school does, giving specific examples in how it supports academic excellence? How do you organise your school such that you do so well?

A. Well, let me tell you the secret behind (name of the school) the school's success. Here at (name of the school) we have what we call team spirit. From the admin down to the students we believe in teamwork spirit. So, if for instance we our admin here and we work hand in hand every day. If we have a problem in one department like I am Teaching Setswana, we do not work as Setswana department as a different entity. We believe that our school is like a human body. We have the head, legs, eyes things like those. I think you know that the whole part of the body must work together to make body. So that is how we work here. We, after having different meetings, after having a meeting the head would talk to us about different things and from there we go to our different departments where we emphasise on whatever the admin will say and we divide our selves into different, we give our selves different responsibilities within the department. From there don't, if you are given a responsibility, for instance, if I were to set exams this term, it is not that I am the only one who is going to deal with exams we work together. Time and again I see other members of the department and ask them, is this okay? They add this and they delete this and that. And from there if we have a problem we do not punish ourselves, we go to another department like English because Setswana and English are almost the same because they are both languages. So we go to another department and ask them how they do some of these things, for instance how they teach certain things because English and Setswana teach things like translations and things like those. We work together as a department, we work together as teachers, and we work together with our administration, hand to hand.

Q. The administration you! The administration is quite broad these days I would like to assume that you mean the school head, deputy head, assistant head and (HOD's).

A. Yes, I think I mean those in terms of academics, but eh! I don't see it proper to leave out who ever is working in the admin because the secretary is there to type this and that she contributes in our success. If the person, if that secretary doesn't type our exam in

time, we will be behind time and we will not be able to finish our syllabus. I think those people, people like the secretary, bursar they contribute a lot in our success.

Q. Okay. So after submitting those. The ways of doing things at the school would I be right to understand that the school excels both academically and child development related aspects?

A. Yes, I think so because if we have visitors here from different schools like we have sports, teachers will come here and when they see us beating students for going out of bounds, they say, Ah! You call this a problem here we take it as a minor problem. In our schools we have very serious problems than you have here. So I think what we consider to be serious problems, in other schools they think they are minor problems. And, (coughs) I believe that, here (name of the school) we believe that, we believe in (inaudible). That is we deal with students directly. For instance if I walk around, we mould our students here. So if I am walking around the school, along the corridor and I see that a student is not properly dressed, for instance the shirt not tucked-in I, whether I teach the student or a class teacher or not I will ask the student to dress properly. And that is how teachers here (name of the school) behave because we believe that students should be presentable, they should learn to dress properly, for people to look at them as people who are educated, somebody who is civilised. They must be exemplary because this is the only senior secondary school around here, around this very area so they must be exemplary.

Q. Hmmm! I'm sorry I may have to ask some of the things that you may have said before, I am going to ask you again so that I can be able to sort of develop what you have given me in terms of particular classes. I want to start with what you do probably in dealing with class supervision, things such as study supervision?

A. Looking at class supervision, there is a hierarchy here there is the admin, teachers and students and we have a body called prefects- head boy, head girl their deputies and the prefects. So we felt that for us because teachers are normally four on duty to supervise the prep, so each and every has a prefect who is taking care of it during prep. He/she is monitoring everything whether people are making noise sleeping or whether they are fighting, or sleeping. That person I think is the eye of the school and the teacher on duty. But we don't just seat in the staff-room and say the prefects will come and report, we go around the school, take rounds, so that if the prefect has a problem, he/she can say, excuse me teacher here is a problem. That is how we supervise our, our, monitor our classes.

Q. Who goes around every teacher or...?

A. The teacher on duty. We work at different times.

Q. Any specific support to students like, in academic performance, like you said at the beginning that you have students who are not very good so, does the school have

structures that support those weak students particularly or even help the brighter students excel? Give me an example from your department or the school generally.

A. Yes, after identifying weak students we came with this idea of remedial work whereby we collect very weak students and take them at, get them at their spare time or during prep or after prep for an hour or so and help them. We think some of them are not weak but they are slow. They are slow learners. So at their spare time we talk to them very, very..., we take them at a very slow pace so that they can cope with what ever you are saying. Some of them are very fast and if you three quarters of the class is fast and the quarter is slow some times these very slow students, they don't, they don't show you that they do not understand because the majority are excelling. So after identifying them we take them at their spare time and talk to them slowly or teach them slowly, but not repeat the same the topic per se but we tell them to write their problems. For instance if the person can say the teacher you are too fast, and things like those not that the topic is difficult but that the teacher has been fast. Okay if I am too fast let us take it slowly bit by bit. That is how we help. The other thing is that in our department, Setswana, there are topics that are a bit culture, that are culture related, where possible we invite a villager to come and explain some of the things, for instance to come and talk about how we, treat our funerals in our tradition. An elder from the village will come and say this is how we do it, after the person has died we, after the person has died the person who is mourning, the wife of the person who has died, will be dressed in beads. Things like those. That is how we help our students. Or rather if it is health we normally invite a nurse from the local hospital to come and address our students, especially we go for the girls because some of these girls, do not know how to bath, not literally bathing but how to do it hygienically. So we invite a nurse from the hospital to come and tell them this and that. How they could use sanitary towels, things like those. This is how we help our students. And this we believe that they are not far from our academics, because we think, we take it that for students to be fully involved in their education they must be clean, fresh, their surrounding should be clean. That is how we teach. We do not only emphasise on academics, even though we know that the academics, that is what we are here for, but we should mould our students properly. Actually we take the students here as our own. Let me say it that way.

Q. Generally, how do you assess relationships in the school. Teacher to teacher, teacher to student, student to student, student to the administration, and teachers to the administration?

A. Well, to be fair and frank I will tell you that teachers here, there is that collegiality. We believe that we should respect each other, we like each other, and we, we, believe in each other such that we.... I would say this is the first school... when I was doing *Tirelo Sechaba* (National Service) I was at a school where teachers were always quarrelling, this, and that. The co-operation was very low. But here since I came in 1996, not even once did I ever hear teachers quarrelling over something, you know, just like that. Teachers here they believe in respect, they believe in co-operation, they believe in teamwork like I said earlier on. So, If there is something I did not like about something a certain teacher did I would say "excuse me sir or madam I didn't like what you did"

He/she would say, "oh I am sorry, I did not know that you did not like it". That is that. When we go to the students I would say, also our students I think they like each other and respect each other because we hardly see cases where students were fighting. If students did not like each other we would see... hmm, how should I put it? We would know that they do not like each other or they hate each other because of the fights. But here we hardly see cases where students were fighting over what ever. We hardly. May be we can see over a case once in a term where by a girl was insulting a boy things like that. Boys because they think they are physically strong, they will slap a girl. Those are the things they do, and we believe that students should believe in co-operation, they like each other. And when we look at teachers- students relationship, I think they are respect teachers. We have small cases where a student has been said to be stubborn and we punish the student. But, they are very minor, they are very minor. And if that student refuses to take the punishment from the teacher, then the class teacher comes and say "okay I am sorry teacher I did not know you will be hurt by my student and the student will take the punishment. I would think the relationship between students and teachers is the best. Even looking at the admin and the teachers I think there is a lot of co-operation, because the co-operation... like the other day I was talking to the principal, she said, "why are you looking so concerned do you want to go"? I said "no teacher, principal we are coming to your office to fight" She said " Why? Do you want to go"? I said, " no I do not want to go I am happy here" She said " Ah! It is unusual to hear a teacher say I am happy. I am very happy to hear that teachers are very happy". I was honest I am very happy here. I am very comfortable whether at home or at work. I think that is very important. The teachers you know, teachers working area should be conducive I believe. Even at home when you are not sleeping properly, you know, I believe you will not work properly. But here at (name of the school) I believe that most of the teachers, even though some may not be, are very happy because the administration is good.

Q. Lets go back to the issue of discipline. Can you tell me how you carry out discipline in the school, at different levels and things like that?

A. Here we, at (name of the school) what we do is, if a student does something wrong, who ever catches the student, the teacher will call the student and try to ask her/ him why he/she did you do that. Let me give an example, if a teacher sees a student at the shops (during school time) the teacher would "ask why are you here at this time"? The student would say " sorry teacher but I have permission to be out to buy soap". We assess the situation and also look at whether the student is someone who is always seen outside the school or it is the first time to see the student out side, and how the student will respond when you call the student. And if that is the case when you come here you do not discipline the student outside at the shops, no you just say "okay I will see you at the school". When you come here you call the student and say, " you know it is wrong to go out of the school without permission". Then you punish the student; you give the student whatever punishment you think is appropriate. Depending on what the student did and how he/she responded. But if it is a serious case, after calling the student, call the class teacher and tell him/her that you did this and that. And the class teacher would take the student and do whatever she/he feels will be appropriate. If the class teacher feels that this is a serious case, or he/she thinks it is not the first time to do that, because the class

teachers know their students better than subject teachers, so here we have what we call Disciplinary Committee. When there are serious cases we take them to the Disciplinary Committee. The committee will sit down and ask the student questions because we believe that every student must be given a fair hearing. We ask the student questions, whether she/he is lying or not until we get to the truth or the culprit then we give him the punishment. That is how we do it. It is not only that we talk of discipline in the committee, during assembly we talk to the students about some of these things that are wrong that they should not do like smoking and this and that. And also on Wednesdays we have what we call Counselling. Each and every class has a counsellor who is there to talk about disciplinary issues or talk about whatever the topic is on that very day. We do this every Wednesday.

Q. Right. How would you assess community support in this area?

A. Hmmm! To be fair and frank, the (name of the school) community, let me not say (name of the school) let me say the community because we are talking about the villages around, I think they support us. They support the school. Each every time we see parents coming to the school, especially those who are in the PTA committee. They just come visiting. And even during PTA meetings, like I was saying I taught in one school when I was a temporary teacher, when you call PTA only teachers and the PTA Committee bother to turn up. But here when parents and teachers are called to a meeting they turn up. Like we have a PTA meeting this coming Saturday, I very sure that they will come. And here when we talk to them about discipline they support us. If there is need to use a stick they will say you can use it, if there is this and that say it out never say we will not support you. I must say that I have never seen in a single day a parent coming to the school to complain about his/her child having been punished. We only call the parents and say, My father/ mother your child did this and that, and according to the government regulation this is what should be done. The parent would say, "okay, if that is how it is what the law says, then there is nothing we can do, the boy/girl is wrong". That is why I am saying they support us because they never go against the teachers. They do support us.

Q. I should assume that there are rules in this school.

A. We do have the school rules.

Q. So how are they drawn? Would you know?

A. Hmmm! I would not know I only found them here.

Q. If you found them then you will not know how they were drawn. What I wanted to know was whether students participate in some of the general school rules and decision making but you have already mentioned the prefects so I assume that they are involved in making the school rules, and also help in terms of supervision.

A. Yes, because after we have selected the prefects we orientate them, we tell them basic things like discipline. We emphasise in discipline because we expect them to be exemplary to the rest of the school. We emphasise on discipline to the prefects because we want them to help in the running of the school.

Q. Tell me about Staff Development I take it that there is Staff Development at the school. How do you identify the topics for Staff Development?

A. Yes, we have Staff Development Committee in the school. I am a member of the committee. This very committee, the duties of this committee is to see to it that we organise workshops for teachers every term, not even every term, but may be even three times a term depending on the number of topics that we have and what we want to cover. But, normally we call the workshops and invite the resource persons from neighbouring schools. Sometimes we talk about time management. We talk about communication because they are very important. If you do not manage your time properly, everything is going to be behind. For example if we look at individual teachers, if they do not go to class on time, obviously they will not be able to finish the syllabus. We believe in communication because we think there should be channels of communication. We believe that for us to be operating well there must be clear communication channels. If you want to be away, you need to inform the admin or your supervisor, you do not just go. That is why we emphasise on communication, so that when you are away the teacher who is there can take care of your class and do what ever you were supposed to do. There many other topics that we deal with, or that we have had workshops on. These are the most important ones that we have had. In this Staff Development Committee, they also see to the welfare of the teachers, so that teachers are happy. If we hear teachers mumbling about something, may be that they are not having tea properly, and we think that we should organise a workshop on any of the topics that seem to bother teachers, we will do that. We will take the topic and make sure that one of the teachers come to present on it. Sometimes we look at the newspapers and if we see a topic that would be useful to teachers, we will cut it and let teachers see what is happening around, because some of the teachers do not read the newspapers. We also copy styles from other schools. When we hear teachers from other schools saying in our school we do this and that, we would like to see how they do things there. Here we are talking about teachers not students.

Q. Great. We are coming to the close of our discussion, generally would you like to tell me any other information that I may have left out?

A. What I want to tell you is that, I have learnt a lot from the school head. This is a very strict school head I will tell you but, not strict to punish anybody but strict for us to you know, she expect to see that the work is done properly. If you are assigned a duty and you do it properly then there will be no problem. But, if you fail to do something you were assigned, now she will show you her true colours. And because we do not take things the same way, for example, how would I put it? You know some people when you talk to them, they will say "I am sorry". But others will say, "how can you talk to me like that?" I would not say she likes quarrelling, because after showing you what she

wanted you to do, you will have no problem with her. Even my self when I first came here I thought she was strict for no good reason. I was new in the school, I was new in the, in the education, in the department. Let me say that this was my first school. I was posted here the first time after my training. When I first came I thought she liked quarrelling, but after sitting down I realised that this woman is okay. The problem is with us. So I told myself that the day she quarrelled with me I sat down and look at what ever she said I did and said why did I do that and that? This is wrong, let me correct it. And from there she... I do not know if she realised it but she also came back to me and asked me to attend a workshop in (name of a neighbouring school). And from that workshop I changed totally. And every time I want to do something, I will tell her, and if there is time I she will say "okay do it" But if there is no time, or there are reasons for not doing it she will offer that we do it some other time. Up to this day I will tell you that I am very proud, I am one of the people who will say she is the best. I would say... the other day we were talking in the staff room and I said if I was given one of the schools as ahead, I can do it from the experience I have got from this School head. May be I do not have other things but I have learnt from this woman. I think she is a wonderful person to work with.

Q. Wonderful. That brings us to the end of the interview. I would like to thank to you very much for your time and letting me interview you. I wish you all the best, in the coming examinations.

A. I thank you too.

School A

Date: 17th May 2000

Time: 1130 hrs

Venue: English Department's office

Respondent: Teacher 1 (male)

Q. What is your level of education?

A. I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. (PGDE).

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching for the last 11 years in Botswana and another ten years in Zambia.

Q. Any position of responsibility held at this school?

A. I am a Senior Teacher Grade 1 in English Department.

Q. Have you held any other position other than the present one?

A. Em! I held various positions. I have been in the Boarding Department of the school; I have been in the examination Board and a number of other roles.

Q. What do you understand by school success?

A. I think school success entails excelling in academic work, excelling in other activities that are related to school such as co-curricula activities and when the school is consistent in the academics. When you do not go on top and at one time you are at the bottom. I think a successful school should be consistent throughout.

Q. Would you say this a successful school?

A. Em! (Name of the school) is a successful school. If you look at about ten years we have been among the top five schools in the country in terms of academic results. A one time the school was position six in (year given). And after that we sorted out our problems very quickly and the school was back where it belongs.

Q. Are you saying the problems were sorted out quickly so that the school goes back to its position; position one, two, and three. Do you call these positions your school's positions?

A. Well I think in a way there is culture now at the school that has been established. The administration, teachers, and students embrace this culture. And if suddenly the school is at the bottom, I think we will be shocked.

Q. You have said the school' culture is upheld by the whole school, could you give one or two examples in which the school community supports excellence?

A. I shall initially begin by looking at the leaders of the school. I tell you, positive results in any institution are what the school is about. When our head came to the school she very quickly embraced the culture of the school. Other members of the team also very quickly adapted to the ways of doing things and the school continued to do well. Not only that, within the team members of staff are very, very dedicated. They are members of different committees that address different issues in the school and as such every one feel he/she has a role to play in the school. There is a sense of the team irrespective of where you come from, foreigners, or Botswana. I have actually not worked in any other school since I came to this country, but teachers here are like a team. I think in this school every body feels he/she belong or should belong. Within the school we are a team. I think that is what makes the school what it is.

Q. Bring in the students a bit. What are some of the different structures the school has put in place to support student learning?

A. Well with the students, I regard discipline as a very important part of this school. We have disciplined students compared to other schools I should think. Whatever disciplinary problems crop up, from time to time, they are addressed or handled

respectfully. We have a body dealing with discipline in the school the Disciplinary Committee. It comprises various members of staff. This committee takes care of the discipline of the school. And the students really have a role to play. Meetings are held from time to time and different issues are outlined to them. We also have students council and we get in touch with them through that body. These channels of communication are upheld in the school. Discipline the committee is responsible and the students have a role to play in terms of what is to happen in terms of student welfare. Really every body is taken on board here. The PTA also comes into play here. From time to time we hold meetings an annual meeting and if there is need for an emergency meeting, that will be arranged. During these meetings parents are made aware of how the school runs and they are kept abreast on various issues in the school.

Q. Other than those meetings where you call parents to the school, is there anyhow the school involves parents and how would you assess the relationship between the school and your community?

A. Right. The school has a cordial relationship with the community. The community here I would like to include all the villages from which we get our students. We are lucky to have such a community. We do communicate with them through the Newsletter, which we issue every term. Two, we are actively involved in some of the projects in the village. Some of the projects involve putting up bus stop shelters in the village.

Q. Let's move again to the academic performance of the students. Tell me, you can sight examples from your department, What are some of the things that you have put in place to support learning in the school?

A. As a department looking at English Language as a second language to the students I would say it has not been outstanding. In every part of the world where English is a second language, results have not been very outstanding. Whereas I would say the quality of the results in English Language have not been very good, we have to look at the school grades, and we have not been very outstanding. But that is in line with the whole nation's performance. If we take that into account I would say we are still the best because at one point an analysis was made of all the nation's results and we were rated number three in the country in English Language in terms of quality. We have to consider quantity pass. In a number of occasions we have managed to attained 91% or 90% pass in English Language and that is on record. Looking at what has actually assisted us really, I would say we have made a number of innovations that addressed various areas such as reading. We do emphasise extensive reading greatly. We have introduced class library. Every teacher is in charge of a variety of books, novels that are kept either in cupboards or in boxes that taken to the class and given out to the students. Every student takes a book and changes it after reading it and goes on and on. We feel that we can not divorce reading aspect from the actual teaching of the English Language. We also try to encourage debating against other schools. Every time the sports teams go out, we try and make sure that there are debate teams as well. We also carry out our own debate sessions within the school. In that way we address the aspect of speaking and the use of the language to communicate. As much as would have liked everybody to use English in the school to

quite widely, and in this case the situation is that we have agreed in the department that students should use English when ever possible but students are students like any other. There are some that prefer to use their own mother tongue to communicate, but we do stress the need to use English to communicate. We also have common scheming in the English department. We are really committed to work hard. We have a committee that takes care of scheming in the department. There is a committee that is responsible for scheming for the English Language and a committee English Literature. Other than having work done by one person in this case me, we have divided it amongst ourselves so that every one in the department knows what is happening.

Q. Would you say some of those arrangements are paying dividends?

A. Actually they are paying dividends both in the sense that apart from noticing a marked improvement within the school, other schools have already come to us to copy our system for use in their own schools. I would like to sight the example of (name of school) from (name of village); the English department sent a team to share ideas with us on what really happens in our English Department. When they went back, I do not know whether it was a coincidence or what they performed very well. Apart from (name of school), (name of school) came to ask for the same ideas to try and improve the teaching of English at their school. For many years (name of school) has not performed very well. They we here last year we spent the whole day with them. We had one to one discussions, group discussions with them. When they got back to the school, for the first time in a number of years (name of the school) had greatly improved in the results. So we feel what we do is in the right direction although we need to learn a lot from the other school (name of the school) because they also very good.

Q. Tell how the relationship between teachers and students is at the school.

A. Staff at (name of the school) enjoys a cordial relationship with the students. We conduct ourselves in a professional manner. The way we relate to one another is good we are a family.

Q. What about the area of Staff Development?

A. There is a committee formed to take care of that in the school. This committee organises workshops, which are on various topics, and it takes care of any other issues relating to the area of Staff Development. Apart from the workshops that are going on in the school, members of staff are once in a while called for workshops called at regional and national level dealing with different areas of teachers professional development.

Q. Level of resource supplies in the school? Supply of materials for teaching and learning.

A. I think we have been fortunate in that when ever we make a request for something in the department we have been able to get it. The school admin tries to help us with all that we need in the school. We have adequate textbooks and other forms of teaching

materials. At the moment we have acquired the audio visual aids for the English Lab and soon we will be able to teach our students in quite broad way. Money for buying materials is an allocation for every department in the school and we are allowed to use it as we like. I think we are adequately equipped.

Q. Would you like to talk about anything else that I may have left out or that you may wish to tell me?

A. I think the only area that I would also want to talk about apart from what we have already talked about is hard work. It is not the case that I would like to paint a good image of the school for the sake of it, I strongly feel teachers at this schoolwork extremely hard. They spend most of their time in the school attending to students needs. This as well is passed on to the students. It stresses the need to work very hard. This also supported by the school's Guidance and Counselling Committee. This committee calls meetings with the students and addresses the needs of the students as well as the social welfare of the students.

Q. That sums up all that I wanted to know from you. Thank you very much.

A. You are welcome, but before you go I would like to know more about the University of Cape Town.

School A

Date: 17th May 2000

Time: 1000 hrs

Venue: School Head's office

Respondent: School Head

Q. What is your level of training?

A. I have a BSc from the University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland and I am currently studying for my Med.

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching since 1974.

Q. For how long have you been at this position?

A. I have been at this position since 1993.

Q. Let's talk about school success. How would you define school success?

A. I do not think I can define the term school success, without using a certain context.

Q. Then you can use you own school.

A. I think we are achieving every objective that we set ourselves. And some times the public would say the school is not successful if the results are not forthcoming. But at (name of the school) I can say we have been very lucky. Our results have been satisfactory. For the last five years we have been coming position one, two, three just like that. The teachers here have been very good. May be it is because of my age, I normally call (lady teachers) the girls and they seem to appreciate it. They have been saying sometime in Setswana – *ha gongwe o a galefa* (some times you are too strict) I say yes sometimes I have to be strict in order for things to be done. When things are not going the (name of the school) way, they know I will not like it, and if I do not like it I will say it out to them in a way that they will not miss the message.

Q. And what is this (name of the school) way?

A. The (name of the school) way is success nothing else. If I say the (name of the school) way, they know what I mean. If it is a Prize Giving Ceremony and I say it must be done the (name of the school) way they know what I mean.

Q. How did you build that thing such that you are able to talk about the (name of the school) way?

A. I think it goes with how you motivate teachers. When I first came to this school I think I was the first woman to head this school and I am sure some people thought I will not make it. I used all my experience some of which is from a foreign country where I did not speak their language, and here is a woman coming to head a very big school what do you expect. So, I knew that if I wanted results I had to work very hard. I think my magic for success is motivation. Teachers here know that if the school is successful I will give them a pat on the back. They know it. When things are good even at assembly they can very easily tell. Even when there is a school choir and the conductor is there I join in and sing and dance with them. That is when I am happy and when things are going for the school. I even have a nick name in the school they call me Mother. When they achieve something I congratulate them they know it. They have weaknesses and they have strengths. When they have done well I let them know, when they have not done well I let them know and we plan a way forward. I always want to keep their morale up. I always tell them that no school should beat us. I always want to be the best.

Q. Naturally that is how you are?

A. Yes, even when I was at school I always wanted to be among the best in the school. Even at the University I majored in Mathematics a subject that was thought to be difficult particularly for women. I always tell them that you know when somebody wants to look down upon you, you must beat him at his own game. I always know that if I work hard I can make it. I value competition. From my primary school days I used to compete with boys and sometimes beat them. The competitive spirit sort of cultivated itself in me. You know when I first came to head this school one school head said at a meeting “women

have not been doing well as school heads". I could not believe my ears. I said to him " I will compete with you on a par my friend. If you beat me the following year I will beat you. If I do not succeed then I will ask for a transfer to another school". That same year I think I was number two and he was number five. When we meet he congratulates me. I look at him as one of my role models. I like him. I do not think there is any woman head who has competed with men like me.

Q. Even though the school excels in academic areas, would you suggest areas where the school still needs your attention?

A. Yes sports. I think that in sports we have not been doing as much as we would like to do. May be it is because I over emphasise academic excellence. They like sports but they do not do as much as we would hope. Maybe it is that we always talk about being recognised academically and may be we tend to put more effort in academic field than sports. I am more interested in academic work even though I encourage them to do well in sports. In the infrastructure I am proud to have been able to achieve all that is here now. When we came there were very few classrooms and today with the present construction we are going to be among the best in the country. But I can not say that is my achievement. Without the support of the teachers I would not have been able to do all these. They are very supportive. They are now very open and they can tell me what they want and what they do not like. The first time you could see that they were hesitant, but now they know they can just come to me for anything whenever they want to. Even at meetings like the one we had yesterday they just open up and I will listen. That is what I enjoy most. They do not hesitate to criticise me.

Q. As long as they know they have to do things the (name the school) way, excellence?

A. They can say anything but the last thing I will say is that it must be done the (name of the school) way. And no body ever asked me what is (name of the school) way. They know excellence is what we aim for.

Q. Can you give me examples where you as the head help teachers directly with their work? Whether this involves Staff Development or discussing with the teacher on teaching and learning matters.

A. I visit the classrooms to observe teachers teaching and from there I sit down with the teacher and we discuss the strengths and weak areas noted and we plan a way forward. I always want the teacher to open up and then give my advice later. Well, Staff Development I always want every body to be involved. I even tell my Staff Development Committee to involve some of these young teachers to be resource persons, to facilitate workshops while I am there. Sometimes I do and then delegate them to whatever job and let them gain experience. My role then is to support them, correct them in a way that does not hurt them. They need to know that they are part of the correction. When something is wrong how would know that it is wrong unless you are part of the correction. It is not that I a will be trying to correct the teacher, in the long run there is ownership of the decision taken if the person is part of the correction. There must be ownership of the

decision always. Let me give an example, those boys you saw out there yesterday, the Disciplinary Committee had recommended that they be suspended from school. I am not going to take the decision alone. First I am going to tell the whole student body, all the teachers the support staff, and the parents before the final decision is final action is taken. If the stakeholders buy the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, then there is ownership of every thing. Anybody who comes to the school to ask “why did you do this to the students”, I know anyone in the school can answer him/her. It is not my decision alone. If I do it alone they will all say, “we don’t know, it is the admin”. So I can not do anything without involving the rest of the school. That is why I involve them. Even you, I told them about you they were questioning me about you and I had to tell them why you are here. They were asking, “ why has he decided to do his research here?” I said, “he has chosen our school because it has been doing well”. I do not want them not to know anything. Even when I go out I never lock my office so that when the deputy wants anything from here he can do it without any problem. Everything belongs to us not me. Even the students I am going to tell them about you. After I have talked to the teachers I am going to the students and tell them what these students have done, and hear what they have to say. I will show them the copy of the law and tell them that they have broken law number so and so and the punishment for that is this.

Q. Let’s move on to another area. How do you see to it that class supervision takes place?

A. Every day there are four teachers on duty to see to it that students use the prep time appropriately, there are prefects in each class to take note of any problem and duty teachers take periodic rounds to check on students in general. I also from time to time take rounds to check if everything is all right. There are study record books that are kept for each class and collected daily for each class and checked by both the duty teachers and the deputy head. I also do lesson observations and record it in two forms, one going to the teacher and one into his/her file. If I do lesson observation and I do not keep a record or I do not give the teacher feedback then it will not be possible to correct or improve on the teacher’s strengths. So that even in future I can say I observed you on this day and found out the following. Also, teachers go on trips, so as stock check I always say “go for it and when you come back give me a report”. This is just a way of making sure that teachers indeed went to where they were supposed to go. No body can go out and not give me a report.

Q. How would you in a nutshell summarise your leadership style?

A. I would say I am a democratic leader, but strict. That one I do agree with it because I take an exception if you do not tow the line. I would say I am a democrat, I try by all means to be democratic, but I always want to see things happening the right way. Some people have said I am too strict but I do not think so because I do not think I can leave the school to run like Animal Farm.

Q. Let’s talk a bit about the students now. How do you involve the students generally in the running of the school?

A. Any of the prefect head boy, head girl is invited to the Disciplinary Committee so that they are part of the decision making. Even whatever we do, we never do anything in the school without involving them. If you have something that you want to do sometimes go to them first and hear what they will say. Sometimes give them time to think it over. I am sure when you do something that the students are not happy about you can feel it even if they do not tell you. So if you involve them that is a way of making them own the decision. Sometimes we even invite to do the feeding plan together. If we are given a certain amount of money we call them and let them help us plan their menu. They will bring all sorts of ideas and at the end we come to some conclusion that is shared by all. And I do not want to arrive at a decision without their parents. Even when they make a request, before I give them the answer I will call their parents to let them know of the request. Like the other day they wanted us to let them keep Rastafarian (Dreadlocks) hair cut. We simply said we would need to ask their parents if they would let their children do that hairstyle. We called the parents and they said we would not allow our children to be like that. That was the end of the issue. The students never brought it up again. We are having the PTA meeting on Saturday, so on Monday I will summarise everything to them. The students have suggested that we introduce blazers for the school. I am going to let the parents decide on this and inform the students. I want something that is accepted by all stakeholders. I want total ownership of every decision in the school.

Q. In that regard has the community been with you throughout?

A. I would say so because I have not seen anything to the contrary.

Q. In that case in what other areas do you involve the community?

A. We invite them to all school ceremonies. Prize Giving Ceremonies, School Open Days and so forth. We invite the whole community to come and see if there is any project going on in the school. For example when the current construction started we called them to come and see it. We explained to them what was going on and we would like to always keep them involved.

Q. You have mentioned a bit about student discipline, could you tell me some of the structures in place that deals with student discipline?

A. Oh! Discipline? Well if it is a small thing the teacher or class teacher deals with it. But if it is a big thing, you know in Botswana you are never guilty until you have been found to be guilty. And everybody needs to be given a fair hearing. So I always let the Disciplinary Committee make a decision. After they have made the decision they come and brief me and I may have to over turn their recommendation, but I will have had a feel of how other people feel about the same thing. What ever I work on will be based on their findings. I can give you an example they have once recommended that a student be given eight stroke of cane. So I simply said that was not possible because the law says maximum is five. My role is to advice them, so that what ever we do does not go against the law. So the channels are that it starts from the class teacher, then the Disciplinary Committee and finally to me. These are channels of, may be seeing the same thing from

different angles. So that the child if at all feels the Disciplinary Committee is not fair he/she has the chance of talking to the class teacher and the school head. In the long run he/she will see that he/she has had a fair hearing. That is why I do not want it to come directly to the head because sometimes he/she will find me in the wrong mood. In the Disciplinary Committee the students are represented. You know sometimes when the students leave the Disciplinary Committee they lie about what was happening there, so we want the other students to tell other students the truth. I think this is why we have never had a strike at this school. Some of the strikes are not caused by anything but only that the students are not informed about what is happening in the school. So we are trying to let them know.

Q. Are you happy with the supply of teaching learning resources in the school?

A. We are okay even though we would have wished to have a lot of other things like language labs, so that we work on the communication aspect of our students. We think that communication is very important. Like now through communication you are able to see what type of person I am. That is very important.

Q. I take it that there is school rules here, how were they drawn? Were students involved?

A. The current school rules were drawn sometime back but we renew them as new things come in like I told you about uniform and haircuts and other things. When a new thing comes in we change the rules to accommodate that change. Like every three years.

Q. I think I have heard all that I wanted to know, but would you like to tell me anything else generally?

A. About what?

Q. Anything, anything that you might wish I know.

A. There is a lot I don't know exactly what you want, but what I want to say is that now that you have decided to do a research at this school we would like to have a copy of the report.

Q. Yes certainly I would do that. Thanks very much for your time and assistance.

A. You are welcome.

School A

Date: 15th May 2000

Time: 1430 hrs

Venue: HoDs office

Respondents: Students (3 girls, 2 boys)

Q. For how long have you been at this school?

A. St. 1 I have been here for two years.

St. 2 I have been here for two years.

St. 3. All of us have been here for two years we are all in form five.

Q. Why did you choose to come to this school?

A. St. 1. I came here because when we completed our junior school our group was sent here because they used to be sent to another school and there were always riots at that school and it was thought that students from my village were the ones causing trouble. So when we finished were taken at this school.

St. 4. As for me I came here because there are some things that I was looking at, for example (name of the school) was always tops in the final year examinations. The school was always among the top schools in the country so I chose to come here.

Q. Do you think you are going to pass at the end of the year?

A. St. 2. Yes I think so because of the way teachers are dedicated to what they do and the way they deliver the materials to the students is so great and they work hard and they always tell us to work hard. They impress upon us the need to work very hard to impress them and as well to impress our selves. Because of that I believe I shall pass.

St. 4. Yes I think most of the students are going to pass because in the past many students failed because English Language was a passing subject. Now it is no longer the case I think many of us will pass. In the past they failed you just because you were unable to do well in English Language.

St. 3. I also feel we are going to pass. The way I am looking at the students they are studying very hard. They are willing to do their schoolwork. Like another one said the teachers are very active, they are encouraging us to, to do our schoolwork.

St. 4. Apart from what has been said, we have such things as Guidance and Counselling that helps us a lot. They help us design our own study time tables, guide us.

Q. What would you like to do when you finish from this school?

A. St. 5. I am very much interested in building so when I finish school I would like to be a Civil Engineer.

St. 4. Actually I am interested in being a pilot. The problem is that I am not good in Physics, I think I am going to improve on that so that I can meet my dream.

St. 5. Well I am not yet certain of what I would like to do, but I think I am interested in being a Police Officer.

St. 2. Actually I want to be a Journalist because writing is in my blood and I really know that I am good at that so with the grades that I have been getting I know that I can make it.

St. 1. I would say I would like to be an Engineer I know I am good in Physics and again I think it is an advantage for me because at home I have my father who does a bit of engineering jobs so I think I would make it.

Q. Do you think this is a successful school?

St. 1. I think the school is good because if you compare (name of the school) with other schools you will find that there is a great difference. In (name of the school) the fact that the school is in an area inhabited by a certain group of people, for example in (name of the school) most of the people are (name of the tribe) these are the people who are still attached to their tradition and their culture. So, the school head again comes from this area too. Since they are attached to their culture, it makes the school and the students or the school head is leading the school in a way that a parent would do at home in a (name of the tribe) family. So, that is what the school head is doing, not like in these other schools where you will see students. In other schools, let's take (name of the school) for example, you will find that students come from different backgrounds and tribes as well as different places. Here you will find that students come from the same tribe. Almost 90% of the students come from this area and only about 10% from outside, so it is easy for this small group to interact with the rest of the school. For sure they will adapt to the way these other people are doing. As the school head is leading the school in a cultural way, it is not easy for students to be arrogant or do these other funny things because they know they know that traditionally at home when you do anything wrong you are punished. The students consider the school head as a mother. So that is how I think (name of the school) remains a good school.

St. 3. Apart from that, in our school it is different from other schools in that if you look at other schools like (name of the school), there is no Disciplinary Committee. In our school we regard our selves as a family. We know that in a family when a child does something wrong he/she is going to be punished. Here if a student does something wrong, the committee will talk to the student in a way that he/she will realise that he/she was wrong. If there is need for punishment, they will do it just like in a family. So when you think of doing that thing again you will say "a! I am going to be punished".

Q. Are there structures in place in the school to support you to learn better and even excel more? If there are, what are they?

St. 1. Ya! In (name of the school) there are what we call remedial lessons. Whenever, say for example, may be you are doing Economics, if the students are unable to get a certain concept, the teacher will not say I have no time I will not go back to that. Instead he will let the class go on and then schedule a remedial lesson for that particular thing. Again I have discovered that the students are working themselves. Here in (name of the school) of course we dismiss from school at 9:45 p.m. but many student are up at 4:00 am to do

extra reading on their own, despite that it is cold, because they know that they want to pass. You will find that in some schools it is not easy to do this. That is why you find that (name of the school) is excelling because we do not depend a lot on teachers, we do a lot of work on our own.

Q. In what ways does your teachers make learning good for you?

A. St. 2. Ah! I think the teachers make us perform well because they make learning fun in that the way they teach, they question you, they teach what they have and then they put you in a position to think. For example, they make you ask “ what if this did not happen what would be the results?” that will give you a critical mind, for you to think further and prepare you to learn more on your own and develop a meta-scientific mind. Questioning mind, discovering and wondering mind and all sorts of things. Because of that that is why we are a good school.

St. 1. Again looking at the teachers, for example, if we look at English Department teachers the textbooks they call them “kids’ stuff” they want us to read more and more challenging books than the ones we do in the subject. Most of the time we use other books to try to read more and broaden our own minds. We also have teachers like Mr (name of the teacher) that is one of my Maths teachers always you will find that he is never late for his classes. So you will find that two minutes before his lesson he is there already. So you will find that daily we are punctual for his lesson. So if a teacher come five minutes late and that teacher comes five minutes late for the whole year, you will find that you have lost a lot of time.

St. 4. Something that teachers do to contribute in our passing is that they have time for us like in projects in Agriculture you will find that even if it is after school if you want to discuss something with the teacher, you will find that they are always available. Everyday they are there for us. I think that is how we are managing to do well in the school.

Q. What are other non-academic structures are there in the school that support your welfare here?

A. St. 4. Actually I am the head organiser of the PACT. What we do is to get students with problems such as social problems and we discuss their problems and try and guide and counsel them. What we do at the beginning of the term is to call all new students and tell them about life in a senior school where to get help and where to get assistance if they need it. We discuss issues such as HIV and AIDS and we make sure that we reach out to every student. If a student has a problem that we can not manage we pass it on to our teacher Mr (name of the teacher). You will find that some students have personal problems that make them unable to concentrate in class and then they fail. These types of problems are discussed in the school and we try to help them.

St. 3. We as the prefects usually make sure that students follow the school rules and we also counsel them because you will find that most of the time the students are afraid of

the teachers so they prefer to talk to us than to teachers. I usually call them and then counsel them on may be some of the things that they are doing. Sometimes I make them clean at the hostels as some sort of punishment. I sometimes, you know the students as I said they do not feel free when they talk to the teachers, so they, I usually counsel them, and ask them why they are doing such things they become free and tell me, and they improve on their behaviour.

St.2. Also we as students we contribute to the excellence of our school in that as we are living in an area where it is mostly (name of the tribe) people, and we know that one of the things about these people is that many of them do not speak Setswana, they try by all means to do well in this subject. They approach it in such a way that they can learn it. This makes other students from other tribes see that if they try they can overcome some of the problems they have in other subject like Maths and Science. This on its own brings the spirit of competition among students in that when other student see that others manage subjects that are difficult for them, they also want to try hard.

Q. In what ways do you contribute in the running of the school?

A. St.1. All right! You know in (name of the school) we have a good hierarchy. We have the head, teachers, prefects, and other students. So, if the students want to do something they will first discuss it with the prefects and then the prefects will take it to the teachers and try to discuss the issue with the teachers who will later take it to the school head, and try to find out if that thing is possible. If that thing does not work the teachers will tell the prefects so that they tell the students. Or they will tell us at assembly, they will tell us that what we wanted to do has failed because of this and that or has succeeded.

St. 4. Like we have already mentioned we are like a family in this school. If the administration wants to do something they call a meeting and tell us, if we want something we approach the admin and tell them. If at all we are not pleased with something that is being done in the school, we go to the admin and tell them that we are not pleased with that. They will discuss about that one and reach a conclusion.

Q. What is the level of resource supply in the school particularly those things that help you learn better?

A. St. 4. We have a Library in our school, students go there and research in the afternoons or in the evenings.

St. 1. With resources we are fine the problem is that when students are to go out on field trips it is very difficult. The government has stopped schools from travelling in open trucks and buses are not able to travel to some of the places where for example Geography people would like to go like mountains or Deltas. Four years back student used to go out to have a view at the outside world in the Deltas and so on. After the declaration or after the government decided to stop open trucks from being used for students trips, it has been very difficult to go on educational trips.

St. 5. There is a conducive learning environment in the school like the classrooms, they have been built and maintained to support our learning. There is a development at the moment that is still going on to build more and even better looking classrooms and other facilities for the school. The labs also have been improved.

Q. In what areas would you suggest the school should improve on?

A. St. 4. As you know there are some students who are interested in football so there are some people who are playing football in South Africa, so boys would like to watch football games on Tvs on weekends. So I think the school should reinstall the satellite dish so that we can watch some of the soccer games on Tv. These guys are really complaining about that. They want to be looking at some of the soccer stars in South Africa.

St. 2. I think if our school was to get computers like other international schools like say American schools or even South Africa, they have computers and internet the students will be able to study biological things that are going around the world and also new gadgets that come out they can get connected in the web site. If the school could be on the Internet I think we would be part of this world some how if I could say that.

St. 1. I am supporting her that if at all our school can manage on buying the computers, we will benefit a lot. If you look you will find that other schools have experience in computers than us. From this school if one thinks of doing Computer Science with someone who has been using computers at school, you feel you are going to fail because you do not have the experience.

Q. We are coming to the end of the interview, is there anything else that you would like me to know?

A. ST. 1. I think if the world of sports in our school can be improved, I think we can even do better than we are doing at the moment. Since students will be having enough time to rest I think that could help students understanding better.

St. 2. If I were to add to what he was saying about sports and all, many science students those who do pure sciences and all are interested in colleges and universities say in America and they really want to... you know that things like sports and all like there is Basketball, Football and all, like for them to be able to acquire places there they should have great minds but also excel in sports. So if we were to choose or even included in the school...what do you call it? The school lessons, for example at some school it was like compulsory you had to do something in sports, and we took it as a wonderful thing we trained our minds and also the physical, that because of what you get in that since I have trained and succeeded then if I try hard in school subject I can still make it.

Q. That brings us to the end of this discussion. Thank you very much.

School A

Date: 17th May 2000

Time: 1030 hrs

Venue: HoDs office

Respondent: Teacher 2 (male)

Q. What is your level of training?

A. I have a Bachelor of Arts and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education.

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. At this school?

Q. Yes, and anywhere else.

A. At this school I have one year and some months. I have also taught in a junior secondary school in another village before coming for a year.

Q. Your present position?

A. I am a Geography teacher and a class teacher.

Q. In your view how would you define school success?

A. School success.... Every institution has got its own aims and objectives. If the aims and objectives are being met, then that institution is successful. I think at school level examination performance is one of the objectives of every school and if the school passes well then we say it is successful.

Q. From that analysis, would you say this school has been successful?

A. Yes I think this school has been very successful. The goals of the school have been achieved. There has been good student passes every year and for that I think the school has been very successful. We excel in academic and sports as well.

Q. What do you attribute that success to?

A. Well, success has its own taproot in the students' readiness to work hard. All the students here are prepared to work very hard. Even teachers are hard workers all of them. Like I said the taproot is in the hard work of the students and teachers but there are other roots such as the willingness to demonstrate to the students what should be done and how every body in the school should do it also counts. And also co-operation. I think teachers co-operate among themselves and this makes life very nice at the school. We help each other and we are prepared to go an extra mile to help the students.

Q. You are saying the pillar of success in this school lies in hard work and co-operation by both teachers and students, but how do you place other factors such as the administration?

A. Yes the administration is part of it, helping the teachers work very hard. They ensure that the school goes on the right way. The school rules are obeyed and the teachers work without any hindrance and so on. They also make sure that what we need as teachers are provided. The work environment is conducive for us to work. The administration gives us support.

Q. What are some of the things that appealed to you about the school when you first came?

A. When I first came to this school I was amazed by the level of co-operation between the staff and the level of hard work demonstrated by every one in the school.

Q. How did you manage to be part of this system?

A. From the moment I got in here I realised that there was a lot of teamwork in the school so I had to immediately be part of the team. Other teachers also helped me settle down. They got me in to a house on my own they showed me around the school and soon I became part of them. When you come into a system you have to adjust in order to function in that system. When you come into a system like this one you very soon becomes part of it and it becomes as if it is in born.

Q. Give me some of the things that your department do to make learning both enjoyable and effective.

A. In our department we support the students academically. When a student seems to be lost, we are always there to help. We even come here after school to make sure that those students who need help can find it. We also have remedial work on top of all these things. This takes place in the afternoons when the students are a bit free.

Q. How would you assess the relationship in the school?

A. In (name of the school) the relationships are very good. Like I said students enjoy coming to the teachers for help. We are always ready to help them. Between the teachers as a whole I also think that the relationship is very good. This is demonstrated by the fact that when a teacher needs help other teachers are ready to help. When a teacher is away for some reason, other teachers cover for him/her without any problem. The relationships here are more like in a family.

Q. What about the level and availability of teaching materials in the school?

A. Well, teaching materials are there, even though sometimes some of it may arrive late from the suppliers we have never had a situation where we were without teaching materials.

Q. If you were to define the type of leadership in the school what would you say?

A. I think there is a lot of democracy in the school. Every teacher has the right to suggest the way he thinks things could be done. Even the students and parents are always part of the decision making in the school. We always have meetings where we discuss all sorts of issues in the school and at that meeting we are free to say our views. We say out our ideas and most of the time they are accepted. So I think there is a lot of democracy in the school.

Q. Tell me about community involvement in the school.

A. Some of the parents do come to the school when they are called but there are some who do not come, because sometimes meetings are called when they are away and some stay away from this village. As you know the school caters for students from a lot of villages around here. But, all in all I think the community around here is very willing to help in the running of the school. We always call parents to come and collect the reports of their children and we use the opportunity to share with them all that we have about their children.

Q. Q. Are there any structures in place that deal with student support? Those things that make students' stay at this school enjoyable?

A. Yes, we have the Guidance and Counselling Department that has been charged with the duty of making sure that students' welfare is taken care of. The department provides guidance for the students and helps in any other way possible. If students have any complaints they are channelled through the Guidance and Counselling Department before they reach the administration. The students also have their own prefects to channel their quibbles through.

Q. If you were to suggest some of the changes or emphasis in the school to make it even better what would that be?

A. Even if an institution is successful you will find that there are one or two areas that need some improvement. So with this school I think we need to work very hard in the extra-curricula activities. The school has not been doing well in sports and other areas and I think we need to look into this very soon. I think also in the Teacher Development Programmes I think we need to improve particularly in those workshops called by region or national officers. We need to make sure that every teacher is given a chance to attend them for professional development.

Q. Tell me, is there anything else that you think I should know about the school?

A. I think we have covered all. But I think from the students' side may be we need to improve on their entertainment particularly on weekends. At the moment they only watch movies and I think there should be games and may be live soccer matches for them on Tvs.

Q. I think hat brings us to the end of the interview let me thank you very much for your time.

A. You are welcome.

School A

Date: 15th May 2000

Time: 1130 hrs

Venue: Assistant Head's office

Respondent: Assistant school head (male)

Q. What is your level of training?

A. I have a Bed Science from the University of Botswana.

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. In June this year I will be turning seven years of service.

Q. What is your current position of responsibility in the school?

A. I am acting Assistant Headmaster.

Q. For how long have you been in this position?

A. This is my forth month.

Q. Have you held any other position other than this one?

A. Yes, I have been Senior Teacher 1 Science.

Q. How would do you define school success?

A. Well, it is not easy to define but I think school success I think depends on the teamwork that goes on in the school, the team spirit. Sort of co-operation that is going on in the school in general the whole school. Basically I think that is what makes us come up with good results at the end. In most cases you will find that we are almost one thing. We are working together; we are pulling together as one thing. So, when you join the school, immediately you come to (name of the school), you are part of the family. You will even feel that you are very comfortable because our teachers and the students will make you

feel very comfortable. Of course we have problems there and there, but in a community you should expect that. Basically I think that is what makes this school what it is.

Q. As part of the top-management of the school, what are some of the structures you have in place to support teachers so that they teach well?

A. Well, basically what we do from the management is we encourage internal workshops. In most cases our internal workshops help the new inexperienced teachers who have just completed from varsity and other colleges of education. So we try and make sure that they start their work without a lot of problems. They do help a lot. The question of discipline well we are lucky we do not have a lot of troublesome students. In most cases if there is any, Disciplinary Committee and Guidance and Counselling Department deal with those cases. For us we try to help our fellow colleagues where we feel they are not doing things right. I think the idea of internal workshops help a lot. In the Science Department we have what we call Peer Coaching and Peer Collaboration. This is where teachers discuss each other's teaching ways and observe each others lessons. I would not mind to say to colleague that I expect to see this and that and the teacher is free to tell me what he thinks of my lesson. So after the lesson we sit down again and discuss some of those things. If it is clear that something is not clear or it is lacking, we try and help each other.

Q. Are you satisfied with the current level of the school performance in terms of results?

A. I am not satisfied myself because I do not want to see other schools beating us. More so because this year we went down by three percent, last year we were 85% and this year were 82% and I think that is a drop. The fact that the science department contributed a lot in that drop I am not happy even though we came position three in the whole country. I was not happy. So that means it is an assignment on us teachers to work hard to try and improve on what we got last year.

Q. Are all the teachers taking that as a challenge?

A. Yes, they are because there is nobody who actually came out and said no this year the results are okay. They were all concerned that we went down. All of us I think we feel that we have to do something about that. We want to have better results compared to last year's results. And I feel all the teachers feel the same way and we are having more Staff Development Workshops internally so that we address some of our problems particularly pertaining to teaching and learning. We soon to have another workshop on remedial work. We felt that we need this workshop because people seem not to know the difference between remedial teaching and re-teaching. Many people re-teach in place of remedial work. So we felt that we should have a workshop and call resource persons who can come and give us light on some of these issues. Sometimes I organise an extra lesson myself and when I get there I re-teach the stuff that I taught in the previous lesson. This is not remedial but re-teaching. The idea is that we need to improve our results this year. Not because we did not teach a lot last year but our students disappointed us.

Q. What are some of the arrangements you have put in place so that students learn better in the school?

A. We are trying because that part as I have already mentioned is assigned to our Guidance and Counselling Department. They always come up with ways that can make the students learning better. They provide lessons on things such as study skills and so on. At the moment we are trying to organise a meeting for all the form fives and try to help them study better choose their careers on the strengths of their subjects we hope to come up with something that will help them. And again we do have, like the form fives we do have counsellors for each class. There is a class teacher and a counsellor for each class. The counsellors go there every Wednesday to address different topics with the classes on a number of issues. We try to teach the student a lot on the importance of good education discipline and methods of studying better in school. You know some of the students are here as if their parents told them to come to school. They are not ready to study hard and we have to work on such attitudes.

Q. How do you involve the student in the running of the school?

A. Amm! There is this committee where we have the students the deputy head and some members of staff. This is a committee comprising members of staff including students. They meet on regular basis to discuss students' problems and teachers concerns about students. And students say out their own problems in the school in general. The students have this forum. One student from form five and one from the form four are in this committee. Again the prefect system is also one way of involving them. The boarding staff work very closely with this body of prefects in the hostels and during meals. They supervise studies as well. They also act as a body of student council to the administration.

Q. Is there any other area of the school in which you feel the school could do better?

A. Well I think. I think the other thing is I do not know if I should say the school or what but I think I should say the school because I think we have a lot of co-ordinators in the school and some of them they have been acting the whole year without any allowance for the job they do. I think that discourages teachers a lot. But if people are paid, accordingly even if it is acting allowance, I think it will encourage them to work even harder. But, at the moment they are working hard but I think they can do even better. I think if that can be corrected I think the school can do much better that what it is at the moment. Well our school head is trying hard because every time she puts you there she tries to write a letter to the employer so that you can start drawing acting allowance. Sometimes there are delays and people get disillusioned.

Q. Tell me a bit about community involvement in the school?

A. We involve the community actually through the PTA. I think we meet once a term. We meet the parents and we tell them our problems and they help us solve them. Particularly relating to students' performance. They also advice the school on how

certain things should be handled for example discipline of the students. I mean we involve the community and they are very supportive.

Q. How are school rules drawn in the school? Do you involve the student and teachers?

A. The school rules I would say I found them here. Well they do change with time but the bulk of them rules have been there for some time. For example after meeting the parents and discussing with them some the issues in the school, we often agree on certain things that will lead to changing school rules or even adding certain items. The school rules are drawn by the school community but including the parents and students.

Q. How are these school rules enforced?

A. In our school we have Disciplinary Committee. So that one is for, actually it is for students who break school rules. The committee is there to try and guide those students who break these rules. The committee is made up of teachers and when it is in session over some thing, say a student's case; their head prefects represent the students.

Q. Is there anything that you would like me to know before we close?

A. Hmm. I think we have discussed everything except that I have left something about orientation of new teachers, I know I have said something about internal workshops but those workshops are about Staff Development. There is that orientation for new teachers when they first come to this school. The orientation covers everything about the school. Where to find classes, information communication channels, how the school runs, different committees and their duties. We do not want someone to spend a week here without being part of the system.

Q. That bring us to the end of the interview. Thank very much.

A. Thanks to you as well.

School B (town school)

Date: 22nd May 2000

Time: 1100 hrs

Venue: Deputy Head's office

Respondent: Deputy School Head (male)

Q. Tell me about your level of training.

A. I have done Bed Science.

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching for the last twelve years.

Q. At this school?

A. Yes at this school.

Q. What is your position of responsibility at the moment?

A. I am acting Deputy Head.

Q. Have held any position before this one?

A. Yes, I was HoD Pastoral.

Q. How would you define school success?

A. Well I should think school success is a very wide area. But, I think school success we have to look at the products. Like we can look at the results. Like how has the school been doing along the years? Has the school doing well? If the students have been passing so that they can continue with their education, then the school is successful. Also the staff, if the teachers are positive and they do not need any pushing, then that shows that the school is successful.

Q. So far how do you assess you own school?

A. Hmmm! My school is great. In all the aspects that I have mentioned I think my school is doing very well. Let me say people feel proud to be here and they feel great working in this school. Also the students, they feel a sense of belonging. They feel powerful, they feel great.

Q. What are some of those things that the school does that makes it so great?

A. Well the first thing that strikes and motivates you is the infrastructure of the school. The buildings in the school and the resources that we have. The other thing that we have managed to do which I think other schools have not succeeded in, is to change the attitudes of our students. I think we have succeeded in making them develop that positive attitude to school. I also think that the atmosphere in the school some how changes the attitude of our students. I think our assemblies the way we conduct our assemblies is working very well. In this school we have some themes on different issues of life and we use those themes to address students at assembly. Many of these themes are drawn from the church. Each week has a theme and who ever conducts assembly, teaches the theme for the week. This goes on for the whole year. Like this week we have a theme on Honesty. We have things like Honesty, Discipline, Faithfulness, Justice, Cleanliness and so on. So these things relate to their real life. They are moulding the child into becoming a better and responsible person. We have decided that on the days that we do not go for assembly we have guidance in the classes and there are days when we have what we call SURE Silent Uninterrupted Reading Exercise. This is when every student for about fifteen minutes is allowed to concentrate on reading something in class without any

disturbance from anybody. Even for those students who may come late will have to stand at the door and join in the exercise. For us this encourages our students to read and we think it improves their concentration as well.

Q. Academically what are some of the structures in place to support teaching and learning?

A. Well, academically our students are also positive our teachers are always there for the students. The teachers are very hardworking even if it means working in the afternoons. You will find teachers competing to book classes to do some extra work in the afternoons. For example at the beginning of every term we prepare a timetable for monthly tests. In this schedule there are very few days left out and these are the days the teachers almost fight over to use for extra teaching.

Q. Where do you get these types of teachers? How do you make them work so hard?

A. AAA! In our school everyone is competing to do better within the school and even against other schools. Like, when results come at the beginning of the year we analyse them within the school per a subject and per a teacher and we produce an analysis of who did well and who needs help. When we analyse we make sure that we write the name of the teacher against the class, how many ones, twos, he/she has produced. Also every term like Mid-Year Exams we also analyse the performance of the school class by class teacher by teacher.

Q. And teachers respond to this challenge equally? Don't they begin to say, no we can not compete with certain subjects because they are easy? For example, Mathematics against Setswana?

A. Yes equally. They used to say that. But we have also made it clear that we can accept certain reasons on their own merit. We can not allow teachers to use any reason as an excuse.

Q. How do you ensure such things as class supervision?

A. Hmm! Class supervision, our Senior Teachers Grade 1 are responsible for day to day class supervision. They always make sure that the teachers in their departments are doing their work. They are very supportive and the teachers are also very supportive. We also, like in the mornings you will find that some teachers are assigned to see to it that classes and registration is attended by all. We also have teachers on duty to check on late coming but we are also there as the Top-management to make sure that every thing is alright. If there is anything that needs urgent attention we are there.

Q. Other than your assemblies, Guidance and counselling that you offer students, are there other structures to support students learning?

A. Well, we boast of resources. We have a library, which is highly stocked up with books. We encourage our students to use the library even during the holidays they come

to the library to read. Also I think the influence of the church here makes the students listen to you when you talk to them.

Q. Tell me about the relationship between the school and the church.

A. Yes I would say the church plays a big role because we have a school manager from the church, who is always in consultation with the admin. At the moment the church before they resume their duty at the beginning of the year takes all our prefects for a weekend for training. The church teaches them so that they can assume their responsibilities without any problems. Of late some of the schools have been interested in what we do and they have been asking us to help them train their prefects. We have some very good church people who do training of our prefects.

Q. What about teachers? What do you do for teachers in terms of Staff Development?

A. For teachers we keep on in-servicing them. Like last week we had a workshop on Educational Policies. So we invited people from the Ministry of Education to come and explain to our teachers how policies work. So we keep on having these in-service workshops. We schedule these workshops throughout the year. We are not only looking at the teachers, like right now some time this week we are going to have a workshop for the industrial class staff of the school.

Q. Let us talk about student discipline. How is that done in this school?

A. Student discipline, most of the time we talk to them. We counsel them and we also use the assembly to try and correct them if there is need. Like I said these themes are so helpful. We use these themes, we talk to them, and when we tell them we do not want something, we would also make sure that it is related to one of the themes. But students are students you will have one or two who will be out of the line. But most of our students are very responsible. Like last year when we were writing the final examinations, most of the time students from other schools were all over the town after writing say in the morning, but our students were always in the school as normal. We always want to keep our students in the school and we keep them focussed to the exams. If we tell them to go home we never know what will happen to them. For us when the students enter the school in the morning they only leave the school after four in the afternoon. We have even told their parents so that those who wish to come and collect them can do so at that time. If a child is to be away from school for any reason we make sure that the parent or the guardian comes in person to seek permission. We also want them to produce their identity cards just to be sure that they are who they say they are. We also have a school clinic so the students have very little reason to be out of school. If the nurse feels the student needs to go to the hospital, she writes to us and then we release the student.

Q. What about the local community support to the school?

A. I think the support is okay even though at times they are not there in great numbers. But we cannot blame the parents as such because some members of the community stay

away from the town and often difficult to reach them on time. We have the PTA and we invite the parents to the school to collect their children's reports. We use such opportunities to discuss with them anything relating to the school. If the parent does not come to collect the report, we keep it and remind the parent to come and collect it. We also have what we call Open Days which is an annual event at which parents come to the school, meet with teachers, see their children's work and discuss with the teachers any area they might feel needs attention. We have realised that when the students know that if they do not work hard or they do something wrong in the school their parents will know about it, they tend to work harder. In the past we used to analyse the results and then call the parents of only those students who were having problems. Now we feel we should call all of them.

Q. We coming to a close, do you think I have left anything out?

A. No I do not think so except that I think the infrastructure is so well that you will want to be here.

Q. How did you manage to get these nice buildings?

A. I think our advantage is that the school is in a town and there is shortage of land so the school is forced to build double storeys. The other advantage is that it is a mission school and every time the government proposes a plan the church has to accept it as well. Sometime the church offers money fore additional improvements, like the school clinic. Even our playgrounds are the best in the country. Now even the national teams want to come and use them for their matches.

Q. What about you? Are you not utilising these fields?

A. We are almost every year we produce a student who goes on to represent the country in national events such as long jump, volleyball high jump and so on.

Q. Thanks very much for your time.

A. You are welcome.

School B

Date: 26th May 2000

Time: 1100 hrs

Venue: Deputy Head's office

Respondent: Teacher 1 (Female)

Q. How would you define school success?

A. School success I would say can be categorised in to two ways, academically and the general attitude of teachers in the school towards work.

Q. What can you say about this school? Is it a successful school?

A. I would say my school is successful, because academically in terms of students' performance I think we have been doing very well. The co-operation of the teachers with the administration, their conduct has been exemplary.

Q. What would say lies behind that co-operation? What brings the teachers together in that spirit?

A. I would say it is the attitude of the administration towards the teachers, it is very much positive, very much inviting. When teachers have problems they present them to them and they try and offer assistance. They make sure that they give teachers answers that the teachers will be happy with. Unlike some other school heads who would give negative answers to teachers' problems. Their response to the teachers is very positive.

Q. When you first came to this school what are some of the things that you thought struck you positively?

A. Yaa! The facilities that are available in this school I think I can highlight on. The structure of the school, the number of classes, school vehicles that are used for every school business and some other facilities like videos, Tvs computer labs are there. That is what struck me when I first came here.

Q. So in a way the sheer size of the school as well as the facilities?

A. Yes, I think so

Q. Do you think the resources are adequate?

A. To some extent yes, but I do not know may be some departments. The subject that I teach, English I would say we are adequately resourced.

Q. Anything else that captured your attention when you first came to the school?

A. Ya! The first staff meeting that I attended in this school I noticed this co-operation among the staff members the administration and teachers. There was a lot of humour in the meeting. Teachers participated a lot in the deliberations. Unlike in other schools where teachers are not allowed to express their views and headmasters are more of dictators. The teachers would be silent on what ever the head says. But here in the first meeting that I attended whenever the head talked teachers would respond and the headmaster would welcome their opinions and welcome their suggestions. I think that is what keeps the teachers here together. The fact that the head, the administration is not at all discriminative against the teachers.

Q. What are some of the structures you have put in place to support learning in this school?

attention, they demand medical proof. I think in that way it helps a lot in that it forces the teachers in a way to do their work.

Q. Tell me about Staff Development in this school.

A. There are committees we are divided into committees one of which is Staff Development Committee which is responsible for organising workshops for teachers on topics that are very much relevant to teachers' work. There has been a workshop this week on Ministry of Education policies. We teachers learned a lot from that workshop.

Q. So those workshops are for all the teachers?

A. All teachers yes.

Q. When there is a workshop, say in your department how do you decide on who should attend the workshop?

A. I am sorry since I came to this school we have not had a workshop for our department.

Q. How would you assess community involvement in the school?

A. There is that interaction between the school and the community. There was a Parents Teachers Day where parents were to meet teachers and get feedback from teachers on their children's performance. This is the only time I saw the parents coming to the school. But you should know that I have just joined the school.

Q. On that particular day would you say parents were willing to listen to teachers and willing to support teachers?

A. In fact I was not in on that day, I was on compassionate leave, but I have heard from some other teachers that the interaction was very fruitful. There was one student from my class who absented himself from school for quite a number of days that is where I had to call the parent and the parents way very supportive in the sense that she was able to disclose some of the information about the child how the child behaves at home and what she thought could be done to help the child. There has been one parent who came to the school and asked me to offer tutorial lessons to his child. In that way I would say the parents are involved in the school. The parents are concerned not only about the discipline of their children in the school but also about the performance of their children.

Q. In what areas would you say the school needs to improve on?

A. I would say the Guidance Office, I think there is shortage of manpower there. They only have one guidance teacher there and I feel the school is too big for one person. More especially that the guidance teacher is teaching at the same time. I think that is just too much for her.

Q. What about you own personal aspirations, professional development?

A. It is my wish to see the school does well in English Language. I know that the students can only do well if I work harder. I make sure that they use the language proficiently.

Q. Are you making any progress along that line?

A. AAA! We have been having shortage of staff in the department and it is like our situation will be alleviated because we are expecting two new teachers join us soon. Now that the teaching load will be a bit light I would be able to do my work more effectively.

Q. That sums up our discussion, thank you very much.

A. Thank you.

School B

Date: 24th May 2000

Time: 0930 hrs

Venue: School Head's office

Respondent: Head (male)

Q. For how long have you been teaching?

A. I have been teaching for a very long time. (...) My last station before I came here was (name of the school). I came to this school from there because the church, which owns this school, has been struggling for a long time to get a Catholic to come and run this school. So, the Father and the Bishop of the church approached me and I agreed to come here. That is why I am here today. I am a very strong member of the Catholic Church. Not only a member but I lead sermons and I take part in a lot of other church activities. Why me, was it because of the church or because of other contributions I made in education I do not know. I will give you a copy my CV and you will see I have put up a number of projects that I am proud to say that these are some of my own initiatives. Not only in school but also across all aspects of the society. Even in the army for instance, I am the first headmaster to start a project in which I identified a 90-year-old destitute and built a two-roomed house for her. I have also been involved in community projects such as putting up bus shelters. When I came to (name of the school) a known school, I accepted some of the challenges. Some of the people were saying I might not meet the standards left by the former head, some were saying I would right away fail. One thing that I noticed when I came here was that it is a lovely school. The buildings are very nice the facilities are there, the school has three buses and a number of small vehicles to use for day to day running of the school. Also I noticed that the school has a very good culture. Everybody, every staff member, every support member of staff is very supportive and dedicated. They seem to know what they are expected to do. So I am fitting in this lovely culture. I do not remember having to talk to any teacher concerning his/her work commitment. I do not know may be I am new but I do not think so. So one thing that I identified as a challenge to me was to improve on the staff morale. I had to

they see that there is nothing wrong with the food they eat. We normally pray before the meals, and every Sunday we hold a church service for the boarders as well. One thing that I have learned in my 20 years of experience is that I like to make sure that the people I work with are very happy. I have managed to buy some television sets for the boys and girls hostels. I am also in the process of introducing briefing sessions for the prefects. So all these are what I have tried to do to develop the school community. But one would say what is the secret of success at this school?

What I have noticed is that the school has got responsible teachers and disciplined students. That is the secret of the school's success. What they do is to teach, identify weak students set remedial work for them voluntarily as a subject. Of late what I introduced was a Parents' Day very early. Usually in this country we do it around third term, this year we held it very early in first term. Parents are invited to come. Those, whose children may not do well, they come and meet with the teachers and they discuss the way forward. I have decided to do it first term, form fives, where we have teachers, parents, and students' discussion for about 10 minutes where they also listen to their children's problems and successes. We make sure that all parents know about this day because we feel it is very important. This year we even made a spot announcement over the radio so that no parents will miss the invitation. The attendance was very good.

So we have our morning assembly which we use as a learning arena. We use different themes mainly drawn from the Bible to teach our students about different things in life. Like this week's theme is Honesty. Next week's theme is Discipline. We use these themes to inculcate into our students all the good virtues of life. We try to make sure that the students also practice all the principles of each theme for that week. For example, if the theme of the week is honesty, then we expect the students to exercise honesty in all that they doing for the whole week. The next one is responsibility. We teach them what responsibility is and how it benefits us as a community and how it will help them as adults in future. That is what we do. We also invite the church people to come and lecture on some of these topics. The underlying message of these themes is that they help in discipline. If there is no discipline, there will never be any teaching or even learning. There must be firm discipline, in the classrooms, dining hall because we believe success depends on discipline.

On their own we allow students ample time to study on their own. We have afternoon studies every day Monday to Friday. We have evening studies, mainly for the boarders, even though the day students are allowed to attend. We also have Saturday studies. We have a very good library, which is open even during school holidays. That is that about this school. The teachers here are always prepared to go an extra mile, to do something extra for the students. I believe teachers are happy here. You know it does not matter how small something could be, if a teacher brings it up as a leader make sure that you provide an answer. If you do not have it ready, let the teacher know when he/she can come and get the answer. If you suggest time try and meet it. Try and honour the appointment, it is very important. I also tell them to go to class and deliver. Like in an hour's time I know I will be having a meeting with one committee. I have a dairy and I know of this meeting. So I will make sure that I am there and on time. You know some people think school

management is something very big, but actually it is these small things that make or break the school. Communicate it does not matter how small the information is, let people know of it. Let the teachers talk to you, let them see you as someone who is prepared to listen and support them. Do all these things within the law. Use the law to suite you. Do not let the law or rules bottle you down. I think the school is better these days.

Well some people have accused me of over consulting. Well at least that is what I know I am doing and I have reasons for it and it seems to be working.

Q. Tell me about facilities in the school.

A. Facilities are the best in the country. I have been moving all over the country like I was telling you, but I still think the facilities here are the best in the country. Our advantage is that we have a lee way in terms of control over our own funds. We are a Government-Aided Senior Secondary School. So the government gives us a grant and then we use it as we see fit in the school. We can play around with that money. For example if we ask for money to build a toilet, and when that money comes we realise that we need something else urgently, we can do that thing before we go back to building a toilet. Also if we ask for money to buy a bus for the school, we keep that money in the bank for a period of time and when we withdraw it we earn interest that we can use for whatever we see fit. I think that is our advantage. This is the only school with all the big classrooms and where every department has full compliment of classrooms all double storeys. What happened was that when the money came for the construction of the classrooms, we did not build them immediately. We put the money in the bank, and it earned us huge interest. In the end we got the interest and we got the classrooms. We do not have these government red tapes when it comes to the finance of the school. We still go through all the normal procedures of budgeting and the grant comes from the government. This is the advantage we have here. And if you look at these government aided senior secondary schools, they are doing much better compared to government schools in terms of student performance. But one thing that I can tell you is that, apart from facilities, it is the discipline of both the teachers and the students. If a school has a person like me, I like discipline. I am always the first in the school all the time and every day. I am always on time so that then I can tell teachers that they are late. I do not want to tell people to come on time when I come late. I then tell and expect teachers to do the same. Be punctual for lessons; be punctual for meetings and so on. In leadership these are all that they talk about. When you are a leader you must lead by example. If you tell your teachers not to come to school drunk, do not come to school drunk yourself. Leadership throughout the world is based on those principles. I try to maintain them at this school, from the school prefect, boarding staff, grounds people and the teachers. On the point of leadership I feel one should always consult. Whenever I go away, I make sure that every one knows that the school head will be away. I even tell them who will be in-charge in my absence. I know of some school where the head just disappears. May be only the deputy is the one who might know. I do not know why. I think as a leader you must trust the people you are working with. Why should you fear them, trust them. Even the students I go to them talk to them let them relax when they are with you. I think for a

very long time the students here had not expected the headmaster to come to them and talk to them. I visit them in their halls and see how they eat, talk to them and they will tell you if they are not happy about something. To me the informal discussions are very important. People talk to me about anything and from there I can tell if there is a problem. A school is like a human being, it has feelings. So when I go around the school I keep my ears on the ground.

One thing that I am proud to tell the world about is that, in all the years that I have been working as a teacher and school head, there has never been a strike in my school. My philosophy is to consult and talk to people. Go to the students and talk to them. Go to the teachers and talk to them. But I think every school has a potential to succeed the whole thing lies in the general organisation of the school. This school looks unique at the moment because it was among the first in the current government expansion programme and may be because there are double storey buildings. But to tell the truth if you go to all other government schools the structures are very good looking. The only difference is how we play with these small things to make our schools different. The students we get here are not different from students in other towns. The difference is may be what we emphasise here might be different from what other schools do. I have tried all these things that I am talking about. I have tried motivation of the staff, consultation, believing in all the staff that I work with and I can tell you they work and they make all the difference.

This is successful school I must tell you. Even the parents know about this and they are trying everything to bring their children here. Some schools have are even complaining that their students are going away to my school. What I always tell other headmasters is that “ why are your children coming to my school? Why are parents willing to take their children from your school? Have you ever sat down and analysed you results? Have talked to you staff and try to improve the result?” I ask them all these questions and many of them are not in a position to answer them. You know the other problem in this country is that we do not have parents who are prepared to take on the schools. Imagine a child who comes with a first class or merit from junior school and then come and fail here. If I were a parent I would sue the school. You know if a child fails here, that child is condemned to death. I think we must stop this.

Q. I think I have got all that I needed to know, thank you very much sir.

School B

Date: 24th May 2000

Time: 1100 hrs

Venue: HoDs office

Respondent: Teacher 2 (female)

Q. How would you define school success?

A. My role at the moment as the HoD is to see to it that the department runs smoothly, all materials are available for teachers to use, teachers attend classes and on time, I serve as a resource person for the department as well. So I try and support the learning culture that has always been there in the school. In my department even if I am not there everything works smoothly. There has never been any time where I have found problems because I was not there. I also work very closely with my Senior Teachers Grade 1 in the different Science subjects, like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. It is not like I will have to carry the whole department alone. I have also realised that some of the teachers have been at the school for a very long time. They have the experience in teaching and in the school as well. Some of these teachers are very resourceful. Like we have one Maths teacher who has been in the school for more than 15 years. This teacher helps us in many ways. He is well knowledgeable in the subject he teaches as well as very kind and willing to help other teachers. In the department we try and work as a team. If one teacher is unable to teach a particular concept in his/her subject, we normally sit down as a department or subject and try to help that teacher. Sometimes we try and hold a sort of workshop in the department discussing a topic and ways of approaching it if it gives us a problem. Sometimes we let other teachers teach certain concepts that are different for us. We are really like a team here.

Q. How come the school is able to keep some teachers for such a long time?

A. I think some of them may not want to go because they have families here. In many cases the chances of transfer come with promotions. So I know one teacher who has turned down offers for promotion because they were going to take her away from her family. I think some of the teachers have developed the love for this school that they will try by all means to avoid transfers. I know of some that were transferred to other schools and they had to be brought back.

Q. Would you say other departments in the school run like yours?

A. I think other departments are doing the same. We may be different there and there but I think there is a lot of co-operation in the school. There is that togetherness that makes this school a bit unique.

Q. What are some the specific things that you do in the school to make sure that learning succeeds?

A. I would say in my department as compared to other Science subjects, my department is not very successful. We have had better results this year than in previous year but compared to the rest of the school I think we were still a bit low. You know Mathematics is said to be difficult. So, what we do is we try to go out of our way to develop the love for mathematics in the students. We tell them some of the advantages and areas as well as careers where Maths is required. By doing this we are trying to change students attitude to the subject. We try to make the students turn away from this idea that Maths is difficult. So at times instead of teaching we go to class and we start talking to them about the positive aspects of Maths, and how it could help them in life. Some times it makes

sense to them if we try and link Maths to their careers. One student would think of becoming an Engineer without knowing that he/she will need Maths to achieve that goal. We also invite the school Guidance Department to come and help talk to the students about their attitude to this subject. Also we have afternoon studies during which we make sure that we have one or two Maths teachers in the school so that if student need help they can get it easily. When the duty-rota is drawn we make sure that there is at least one Maths teacher on duty every week.

We also do have remedial classes. We do not call everybody for remedial lessons. We select those students whom we feel need extra help in the subject. We also consult other schools on how they teach Maths. This has not been very helpful in that some of the schools seem not to be willing to help at times. One of the things is that may the schools are competing. Apart from that there is this subject clusters which we use to exchange ideas with other schools on the teaching of the subject. At these cluster meetings we discuss common problems and look for solutions and we set common examinations for the whole cluster. In this way we are trying to make sure that there is common teaching and learning in all the schools as well as unity between the teachers.

Q. How do you deal with student discipline in the school?

A. Day-to-day discipline is done by class teachers. Most of the time we try and counsel the students. If it becomes a persistent case, we refer it to the guidance and Counselling Department for further guidance. If this continues, we then take it to the administration. In many cases the students do not even want to go upstairs to the administration office. They even talk about it openly that they do not want to go there. The fact that the administration offices are up stairs makes it seem very serious for a person to be referred there. I think this symbolically helps us in the discipline of the students. We also employ the technique of calling parents to the school to collect their children's reports and also if there is a case of indiscipline. We have realised that many students do not like it when their parents are told of their behaviour in the school. We use the chance with the parents to sort of consult with them on a number of things about the school. This also I think helps a lot.

Q. How do you involve the students in the running of the school generally?

A. We have the prefect system. The students normally elect the prefects. They help in supervision of general duties like studies, general cleaning, during meals and so on. They also act as the link between the teachers and the student body. We also have class monitors. These students take care of day to day supervision of their classes. They make sure that classes are swept, chalk is available, and they also help notify teachers if there are problems in the class. For example if one student is not well, or has gone away for some reason. We have decided also to keep all the prefects in boarding to enable them perform their duties without problems.

Q. We have covered all that I needed unless you would like to tell me something else.

A. I think we have covered everything, I did not think that I could talk for so long.

Q. In that case thank you very much.

School B

Date: 25th May 2000

Time: 1430 hrs

Venue: Deputy Head's office

Respondents: Students (2 girls, 3 boys)

Q. For how long have you been at this school?

A. St. 1. I have been here for about five months now.

St. 2. I am in form five that means I have been here for a year and some months now.

St. 3. I am doing my form five it means I have been here for a year and four months.

St. 4. I am also doing form five and I have been her for a year and four months.

St. 5. I have been here since last year in 1999 this is 2000. I am completing my second year.

Q. If you now had a choice would you have chosen this school?

A. St. 3. Certainly I would have chosen (name of the school) this school because this school I think this is the best school. My parents also think this is the best school. They have been students of this school and they always encouraged me to work hard so that I could end up here.

St.2. Well I think I would not have gone to another school. I think this is the best school. My brothers and sisters also attended this school and they think it is the best. My grand mother even taught here for a long time. She also thinks it is a good school. This is the best school in the country; it is always at the top in the examination results. I love it here I would not want to go anywhere.

St. 5. Ya! To tell the truth I have been in love with (name of the school) while I was young. I mean I like the school since my childhood and also I just stay near the school it is just less than 400 metres from home to school. This is why I like it. Everything about it is nice it is okay.

St. 4. I after I finished my JC (Junior Certificate) course, a lot of people encouraged me to come to (name of the school). And my parents also stood on their feet and tried hard to get me a place here. So I started coming to school when I was a day student. I used to travel more than 27 kilometres to come to school. I used to wake up very early to come to school. Now I have a boarding place because I am a prefect. I really tried and my parents tried their best for me to come to this school. This is a very good school in all the respects.

Q. Do you feel you are going to pass at the end of the year?

A. St. 2. I think (name of the school) is a good school because you know it is a mission school it has the church running it and it has disciplined students and even some teachers who teach here are Catholic people so that sort of sends a message to students about the discipline. I think this is a good school because starting from the headmaster to the teachers and ordinary students, even the ancillary staff every one is hard working. There is a lot of co-operation between the teachers and students.

St. 4. Okay, this school is a very good school even if you look at how it looks, the way it has been facilitated it is a very tempting place and when you are told that you are coming to (name of the school), you feel very happy and you have that urge in your self that you should see yourself one day at this school. If some one likes to be at a certain place that makes the person very well motivated to look forward to coming to that place. Even when you are when you are. During the holidays when you think of school you feel you miss the school a lot and it becomes a very good school that can. actually motivates the students.

St. 2. I am talking about teachers. I do not know if I would be lying or what, but our teachers are really working hard. That motivates us to work hard so that we do not disappoint our teachers. Like we really do our home works, if we have problems during the weekends they are there to help us. Each teacher takes he/his part and they come to help students. I think that is what really makes us the best school.

St. 5. Umm! From my primary and junior level, I have been going to school and being beaten at school. Ever since I came to this school I have never been beaten. I am doing my second year now. What they do these teachers is just to motivate us, they do not discourage us by using rude language. I just feel great.

Q. What do your teachers do to make learning both enjoyable and easy?

A. St. 4. I have one teacher that I would like to quote and talk about; I really want to applaud this teacher. The way he does his teaching is that normally when we are dealing with a particular topic, you will find that he is always, during the lesson he always tells us what kind of questions are likely to come out of that particular topic. And the way we are suppose to attempt such question. I think this is very good method of teaching. You teach students, make them very ready and prepared for the examination. That is a very good method of teaching and you should expect the students to pass if you use that method.

St. 3. The relationship between teachers and students here is a very wonderful one. Teachers are very open, when you get into a class you will see that they are in the mood of teaching. Every teacher comes to class happy and it involves us to be ready to learn as well. It also makes us open and ask questions wherever we want to know about something. If a teacher comes to class and he/she gives you that funny mood the students will be reluctant to learn and it will lower their results.

St. 2. Well, another thing concerning the teachers is that teachers in (name of the school) almost all the teachers who teach me different subjects, they don't spoon feed. Sometimes we asked to go to the library and research on our own. In that way you get to understand well. Another way is that when you get into class even if the teachers explains it does not dwell in your mind but if you do it yourself, going to research, finding the information your self, that is better. You tend to analyse the information yourself. Here they also come with the information and explain to the students and if we do not understand we ask because it is easy to talk to them, they give all their time for us. Even their free time. When the school ends at 1 o'clock they go home for lunch and then they come back and they are here until 9 o'clock in the evening just to help the students.

Q. What else is there to support your learning, things such as material resources?

A. St. 4. There are a number of structures or facilities that I can say help us learn better. I will take for instance the clubs, Maths and Science club that exist in the school. This club is very much encouraged by the teachers. Students make Science Projects and participate in quizzes and that is where a lot of people learn things. Like right now I am doing an electronic project. Actually it is demanding a lot. It makes me study a lot. You will find that I cover a lot of things under electronics such that when our syllabus comes to learn about this electricity you will find that I am already up to date. And they are very good learning structures that help students.

St. 3. I our school we have clubs like Journalism where we learn how to interview people even the headmaster. We learn a lot about interviewing and other people's lives. I think it encourages one to be anxious to know about other things or other person or life. They are able to relate that to their own lives. We also have a club called PACT, which is a group of students who help other students in academic and social lives. What we do in this club we have counselling session like every time before lesson starts, we discuss topics such as teenage pregnancy. Like if that is the topic for that week we go to every class and talk to students about this. We also discuss things about help and those things that are not wanted in the school. If any student needs help he/she can come to us and we can tell the Guidance teacher or anyone who can help.

St. 1. Say like we go to church and we were doing a reading at school, and say I do not understand that reading, may be it could have been done at the church might help me. We do the reading and the Sister or Father will explain it to you and the true message of the reading.

Q. Does the church play a big role in the school?

A. St. 3. Yes it does. The church teaches things such as morals to the students and they are able to respect themselves and if they respect themselves they will be able to respect the school and the teachers. It is not only about gaining something for themselves, it is building them up to be, they are going to be good people in the future because they will know that they are not supposed to do certain things like being dishonest.

St. 4. Normally you will find that during studies we try hard to maintain order and make students sit quietly even though some of them may be thinking that, what we are doing prevents them from enjoying their freedom, we are actively helping because in the long run you find that that time they spent silently they have read something and that is going to benefit them. Even more at the hostels there, we always encourage them to sleep on time and give them enough time to rest and to prepare for the following day. I think the prefects we play a very important role in the upbringing of the school. And in other respect you find that in a school where students do not behave well, that particular school never does well. After sometime you will find that the relationship between the students and teachers has collapsed. It is now very poor. Teachers do not teach and they just cheat their students. So with us we try very hard to enforce the school regulation. Anything that is not good we bring it to the attention of the teachers. Whoever has done that gets action taken against him/her. This discourages other students from doing the same thing. And they only resort to learning. This is what they have to do now that misbehaviour can not be accepted.

Q. Tell me more about the resources in the school.

A. St. 2. In terms of resources I think (name of the school) is the best. We have most things that help enhance learning. Like I can give an example, an interesting one, in (name of the school) we have two computer labs, more than 40 computers where else in other schools you might find that there are 3 computers in the whole school. So here we can say we are blessed. We have a lot of things, which help us learn. Also we have a good library with a wide variety of books. You go there you will find different information that you need. In terms of resources I can say (name of school) is exquisite it is incredible. One thing about the library is that it is very good. Whether it is resources to do with Physical Education or academic things everything is there. Like the sports fields are well looked after and they are the best in the country.

St. 5. To add on to that talking about the library I mean in this school we have the library, if you compare it with the (the name of one school) or even the public library in town it is the best so far. The school one is the best; I want to assure you. I mean it is even open during the holidays, which means studying during the holidays is not a problem. Which is good for us, I mean we do not forget what we learn during the holidays. During the holidays you just continue studying. It is open from 0730 Hrs to 1630 Hrs, which is a very good time.

Q. Do you think students here are more disciplined? Why?

A. St. 4. Normally during the holidays I have friends who are attending at other schools. They always tell me about certain types of behaviour in their schools. I find it strange because I have never seen that type of behaviour here. Because of this very good behaviour, I think this is what makes us pass. If people have most of their time spent on teaching rather than dealing with misbehaviour, I think that really makes a very good school. I also think that because we are also taught Moral Education here, it really moulds us. If you can talk to some one you find around here he may just think that we

just learn Religious Education to help us pass because it is thought to be an easy subject, but in my own point of view it does a lot more than just improving our aggregate. It really does a lot of things. We learn a lot of things from it. It is not that if you pass, it means that you have learnt and then when the examination comes you are able to present the information. Now if everyone is passing Religious Education, this means that everyone knows about morals, and knowing about morals really there is no reason why you should not pass.

ST. 3. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday we have assembly. So every Monday the deputy gives us a talk about a particular theme like honesty, good example, and responsibility. When you hear about these things you ask yourself, if this person is talking about this, I should make sure that I am honest to every one. I mean if you ask yourself about human life you change. I think this goes hand in hand with discipline. You get information about discipline from our teachings everyday of the week and we tend to be more disciplined.

St. 5. To add on that, it is not that we go for assembly in the mornings only, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, after evening study, after 9 o'clock we evening assembly. In that assembly we get a short version from the Bible to pass the message to the students. Like yesterday I was with my colleague here and we were reading from the Book of George Chapter 1 verses 5-10 and we passed the message to the students. It was talking about Jesus Christ.

St. 2. Also I can say that discipline so far in (name of the school) is at a very good level. Like we have things such as Parents' Day. Both the teachers and the parents support discipline. Teachers and parents co-operate and it happens that parents come here to talk to teachers and know about schoolwork, know how their children are doing. Some where some how there is that little error that discipline of one child the parents and teachers will sit down and talk about it. I think this is one thing that helps discipline. The other thing is that if he or she thinks that, anytime I do something wrong parents are going to know it makes that person to think again so that he/she does not disappoint his parents.

St. 3. What I have noticed about the students here they are very, they are very, it is like they feel they are not suppose do anything wrong because their parents can be called. If you tell them not to do something they know the punishment of doing something wrong in the school.

Q. If you were to suggest some improvements for the school, what would that be?

A. St. 1. I think there is one thing (name of the school) is lacking in that is facilitating for the toilets. Because every time I come from break, I have to wait for a little while until some student are gone before I relief myself. So, I think that is the only thing that (name of the school) is lacking.

St. About discipline now. Teachers or the admin should not be very lenient with the students concerning discipline. If a student does something wrong the student must be punished.

St. 4. It looks like most of the students that have been admitted to this school are still staying very far away from the school. Some are staying in (name of the village) which is about 27 kilometres from the school. So I think even if we have got such a well-facilitated and very good hostels we cannot cater for the numbers of people in the school. So I think in future may be they should try to increase the boarding facilities. In any case what the school has already done is very good, what we want is for them to improve on what is already there so that it does not decline because we still want to keep this school at the present standard, it should not go down.

St. 5. There is one thing that I should talk about, testimonials. Teachers should urge the students to behave very well so that they can get good testimonials. I mean a testimonial really explains who you are and what you were doing in the school. I mean if you were misbehaving you know that you are still going to get a good testimonial. So it should be done in such a way that if I know I have not been doing well in school, then my testimonial should reflect that. At the moment people misbehave knowing that they can come and negotiate with teachers for good testimonials. So it should be done fairly and reflecting how people truly were.

St. 3. If I say something must be improved I think is, whenever I pass by the church I hear nice music and some students have been asking me if that was only for the church not the whole school. So if only the school could establish a sort of a music club or music as a subject, so that the music club can go and represent the school like a band.

Q. Thank you very much for your time. I wish you the best in your coming exams.