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# **SCHOOL – COMMUNITY RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY**

**A dissertation completed in part fulfillment of the requirements for an M Ed at the  
University of Cape Town.**

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**September, 2000**

**DECLARATION**

**I, the undersigned declare that this project is my own original work and has never been presented to any other University for any academic credit.**

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**DATE :.....** 24 November 2000.

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## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work to my beloved daughter, Chelsea Shiku Shauri**

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### **Parental Community:**

This term will be taken to apply to the body of parents of learners enrolled at school V. This definition will also encompass other persons who are the legal guardians or care givers of the learners.

### **Local community:**

This term will apply to people or persons residing in the close vicinity of the school, including the non-parents, former parents, future parents and incumbent parents of learners at the school.

### **School Community:**

This is a problem concept in this study in that it can either refer to the first or second meaning.

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## ABSTRACT

Insecurity in South African schools has reached great levels. To curb this problem, the National Director of Education through a new policy statement appealed for community participation in schools. This case study investigates the feasibility of this call by examining the features of school–community relations in a case study of a school, at school V.

Three general understandings of school–community relations were developed in the literature review: the ‘local community’, the ‘interest community’ and the ‘consumer community’. In this research study, the features of school – community relations were found to correspond to those in the typology of the consumer community, and not the ‘local community’ as presumed in the new policy statement: Call to Action: Mobilizing Citizens to Build a South African Education and Training System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Asmal, 1999). These features of school – community relations are shaped by the current and deeply entrenched policy, the South African Schools’ Act. This act advocates school choice policies, which in effect, undermine the notion of the local community in school V. It becomes clear therefore that the National Director of Education’s call for community participation cannot be implemented at school V.

This study finds a discrepancy between the current policy represented by the South African School’s Act and the new policy expected to shape the structure of school–community relations in the future. This points to a lack of coherence in educational policy in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

Recent crime in South African schools has raised alarm within educational circles, and triggered increased calls for community involvement in schools. A glance at the crimes in schools in the Western Cape schools for instance showed that computers worth 80,000 were stolen at a school in Delft early in 1999, and evidence pointed to the fact that it could have been an inside job. ‘...the burglars knew exactly where the computer room was and even left behind a faulty computer’ (Cape Times, 1999). At Rustenburg Girls High School, an armed robber opened fire in the secretary’s office and stole R10,000 from a parent (Argus,1999). Even more grievous was an incident where a boy from Thandokulu High School in Mowbray shot his friend after buying a gun in a taxi on his way to school for R15. This, together with other incidents of the same nature increasingly afflicting schools in South Africa paint a picture of gross insecurity in schools.

The new Education Minister, Kader Asmal then called for school-community co-operation to combat crime and vandalism in schools in a reaction to the incident. ‘It has redoubled my determination to press ahead with our plan to make schools the centers of community life - places of peace and security for all’(Cape Times, 1999). These events have coincided with the nine point proposal he has recently put forward, in which he announces that one of the priorities for his new education plan is to develop schools as ‘community schools’. He urges schools to become centers of community life and in so doing ensure that schools are safe places to teach and learn. His argument is that:

“The school will truly become a center of community life if its facilities are being put to use for youth and adult learning, community meetings, music and drama, sports and recreation. *An idle school is a vulnerable place, inviting vandalism. A busy school is a place the community will protect because it is theirs.* There is a role in a community school for religious bodies, businesses, cultural groups, sports clubs and civic associates, both to serve their own requirements and to contribute to the school’s learning programme both in and out of school hours” (Asmal, 1999:9) (Emphasis mine).

Asmal’s proposal is expected to shape South African education policy for the 21st century, and should be evaluated seriously. In his call for partnership between the community and the school, the benefits are expected to be substantial, and these include:

- Increased security in the schools;
- Facilitation of the community’s contribution to the school’s learning programme;
- Provision of a community center to enable the pursuit of its own activities, for example adult learning and
- Fostering a ‘common purpose’ through setting a vision and mission, which would increase mutual support between the school and the community.

The school should therefore become a ‘true community in its own right, and an indispensable center for the wider community’s social and cultural needs and interests’ (Asmal, 1999:10).

This policy statement by Asmal makes certain presuppositions about school communities, and also about the nature of interactions that schools and communities have with each other. At the heart of this proposal is the assumption that schools and the communities in their localities have some intrinsic interests in each other, and will easily work together for their mutual purposes.

It is this presumption that generates interest, and motivates me to study school - community links in order to assess the viability of such an interaction in practice. The study responds to the question:

**What are the features of school community relations in a particular school and how compatible are these relations with those propounded in key government policies?**

In exploring how realistic Asmal's plan is, it will be pertinent to investigate the kind of interactions that schools and their communities enjoy. Several sub - questions will be meaningful to this study. These are:

- 1. What understanding of school community relations is evident in government policy, specifically the SASA and the 'Call to Action' document?**
- 2. Do the majority of a sample of learners at the school (that is, Grade seven learners) live in the same locality as the school which they attend?**
- 3. For how many years have learners in the Grade seven sample been at this school?**
- 4. What are the forms and content of relations between the school and parents of learners?**
- 5. What are the forms and content of relations between the school and the residents of the area surrounding the school?**

## **1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS**

In the next chapter, the literature on school – community links will be reviewed and a typology of these links developed in the conceptual framework. These are the interest community, the spatially proximate community or local community, and the consumer community. Chapter three, the methods' chapter will outline the research design, which in this study will consist of a case study. Other sections in the chapter will deal with the selection of the research site, data collection strategies employed in the study and aspects of validity. Chapter four will focus on data presentation and analysis. This will be done in two sections: the analysis of government policy documents and the analysis of data collected at the research site. Chapter five will consist of the discussion, conclusion and recommendations for policy.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Central to this study is the recognition that there are different kinds of school - community interactions. This literature review will therefore argue that the 'school community' is a problematic concept in that it has different meanings attached to it by various actors in education who are concerned with and are responsible for community links. These are, namely, policy makers and the governing bodies.

I will engage with the concept firstly by noting that there is a tendency to appeal to community participation in policy discourse today. I will then review the contradictions within the concept of 'community', establishing that it is of necessity that caution be taken on how the term is approached in policy. I will then review in varying depth, three approaches to school community dealt with in the literature explicitly and implicitly. These are the spatially proximate, interest and consumer communities.

In summary, I will argue that there is more than one understanding of school community and thus more than one kind of school-community interaction. The intelligibility, coherence and implementability of policy depend on recognition of this.

#### **2.1 INCREASED CALLS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLS**

Kader Asmal's proposal for increased community participation in school is not a new phenomenon. According to Plank (1996), analysts from all points on the political spectrum affirm the virtue and value of communities as an essential source of support for schools and as the guarantors of accountability in the educational system. He finds that both in the USA and abroad, educators are enjoined from all sides to work in closer harmony with the community in order to fit their practice to local needs and better serve their students. Sayed (1999), in an examination of the policy of educational decentralization in South Africa since 1994 notes that 'the policy of educational

decentralization has in recent times become a key aspect of educational restructuring in the new international arena'. In South Africa, this has been expressed in the call for greater community and parent participation in schooling.

Plank (1996) however points out that as educators seek to engage with communities, some clarity as to what kind of community they are looking for and what kind is likely to be found would be helpful. Plank adds importantly that 'it will be helpful to recognize at the outset that

differing definitions of community summon forth deep and possibly irreconcilable disagreements, rooted in competing ideologies and values. Serious considerations of the ambiguities and oppositions that give rise to these disagreements is essential to an understanding of the policy dilemmas we now face in the educational system' (Plank, 1996:14).

The next part of the review will seek to examine the concept of community in the literature.

## **2.2 COMMUNITY: A PROBLEMATIC CONCEPT**

'Community' is a problematic term. There is an exhaustive literature on the idea, much of which shows the concept to be contentious (Cohen, 1985). It has had an extra-ordinary capacity - and for a long time - to carry opposed meanings (Eileen and Stephen Yeo, 1988:230). This is to the extent that, as Smith (1996) observes, 'Of all the words in sociological discourse community is the one that most obviously comes from Wonderland, in that it can mean just what you want'. To demonstrate this view according to Smith (1996), Hillery (1955) provided 94 definitions of the term 'community', proving the term to be broad to say the least. Cohen explains:

"'Community' is one of those words - like 'culture', 'myth', 'ritual', 'symbol', - bandied around in ordinary everyday speech, apparently readily intelligible to the speaker and listener, which, when imported into the discourse of Social Science, however causes immense difficulty"  
(Cohen, 1985:1).

This is perhaps what prompted Margaret Stacey who attempted to restrict the use of the term in community studies as a method by arguing that community was a 'non-concept', and that it would therefore make more sense to think in terms of 'local social systems' and study those instead (Willmot, 1989:5). Yet as far as the attempt is made to thrust the concept of community into limbo, it as obstinately emerges again; of late in such notable titles as 'community relations' and 'community development' to name but a few (Clark, 1973). Thus despite the vagueness of the term, it continues to be used today and it is certain to continue in general usage, at least for the foreseeable future, whatever efforts are made to abolish it (Willmot, 1989).

Given its slippery character, it would be useful to examine the term as carefully as possible. According to Evans (1995), community should be understood according to how it is *used or employed* rather than its lexical meaning. (See also Williams, 1983, Cohen, 1985, Eileen and Stephen Yeo, 1988, and Clark, 1973). Evans (1995) notes that the term 'community' must be critically evaluated, not least because it is used with such regularity by those involved in the management and control of these areas and the people who live within them but also because the term has been invoked by both national and local government personnel in order to "make a difference" at a local level. According to Evans (1995), how people use their understanding of community and of neighborhood can differ from place to place,

"Yet policy makers and practitioners still invoke the notion of 'community' without reference to how the different dimensions are actually experienced, intersect with one another and play a part in shaping local people's beliefs and behavior" (Evans, 1996:12).

In recognition of this, Rose (1990) finds that struggles over its meaning reveal much about the social, political and cultural power relations of specific times and places, and using the work of Eileen and Stephen Yeo elaborates:

"As keyword, it has been conspicuous in - and constitutive of - social conflict in Britain for at least 500 years. 'Community' seems unusually serviceable as a signifier for what human beings are and can become, and is thus a contested concept" (Rose, 1990:425).

How 'community' is understood by different groups of people is therefore pertinent.

The essence of the word as all etymological explanations show, is the idea of 'having something in common' (Willmot, 1989). Many commentators of the concept agree that there are two categories of the use of the term. In one, the central concern is place or neighborhood, while the rest focus on the notion of relationship, of solidarity or communion, of interaction, which may go beyond a particular location (Smith (1996), Bell (1971), Clark (1973), Berger (1988), Bulmer (1985). In the education field, Plank (1996) posits that one fundamental question is whether the school community is to be defined primarily in terms of geographical boundaries, or in terms of one or more dimensions of social affinity.

Willmot (1989) suggests that the two concepts - the territorial community and the interest community - are not mutually exclusive. They can overlap in the sense that, although interest communities are often geographically dispersed, they can also exist inside even quite small areas. A local territorial community might contain several communities of church and chapel goers, a community of business people and a community of Asian students. A second distinction cuts across the first, between local and non-local communities. Local communities are territorial, but contain localized interest communities. Non-local communities - that is, communities at a larger territorial scale also contain interest communities that are geographically dispersed. Important dimensions to note are that territorial/ interest and local/non - local refer to collections of people. A local territorial community is simply the population of a particular area, a dispersed interest community is a collection of people who have something in common, but do not live in the same geographical area.

### **2.3 THREE CONCEPTS OF COMMUNITY**

This next section will consider three general understandings of community, that is, the spatially proximate community, the interest community and the consumer community.

For each of these, the general concept and its application to school-community relations will be considered. First, the effect of territory or neighborhood in shaping community interaction will be reviewed, and then it will be argued that its influence is dwindling in contemporary times. This will lead to a discussion of school-community interactions based on the logic that the school is spatially located within the community.

The terms 'spatially proximate community' and 'local community' both refer to the same understanding of community. The term 'spatially proximate' community' will however, be the preferred usage in this work.

## **2.4 THE SPATIALLY PROXIMATE COMMUNITY**

Spatial communities are those 'groups of people who derive meaning from living together in the same locality' (Bell and Newby, 1971). By deriving meaning from living together, the people that make up a community form bonds and ties. Clark (1973) decries the fact that many contemporary writers tend to underrate the importance of locality, which according to him is a mistake. This is because locality is one of the fundamental 'bases' of community, a view implicit or explicit in a good number of community studies. Evans (1995) notes that the history of the study of community is one which is well-rehearsed - from the rejection of the study of community in the 1960s, to its replacement with the study of 'locality' during the 1980s, which re-emphasized the importance of 'place'. Evans (1995) extends this theme citing the work of Day and Murdoch (1993) who say that these studies show that 'people within particular places tended to be an important aspect of their lived experience ...and is a major resource drawn upon for many purposes'. The ecologists have made a major contribution to the study of community in emphasizing the effect of the physical environment on social relationships.

According to Bell and Newby (1971), the ecological approach is one which '...at its finest provided sharp and accurate descriptions of the spatial aspects of communities'. A subscriber to this approach, Amos Hawley wrote that:

“The community has often been likened to an individual organism, so intimate and so necessary are the interrelations of its parts ....that any influence felt at one point is almost immediately transmitted throughout” (Bell and Newby,1971:33).

The spatial understanding of community yields a vocabulary in which ‘rootedness’, to borrow Heidegger’s (1966) term is strong. According to Harvey (1993:14), Heidegger represents the post-modern, who see ‘authentic communities as materially and physically rooted in particular places through dwelling, rather than being constructed solely, as happens in postmodernist rhetoric, in the realms of discourse’. Tonnies (Smith, 1996) is also one of the proponents of this concept of the community, with *Gemeinschaft* representing kinship, neighborhood and friendship being community in its natural state. Networks in the community were multiplex, as the same people who were linked in multistranded role relationships as kin, neighbor and work mate. This, Tonnies argued, produced intimacy, social cohesion and sympathy between participants. On the other end of the continuum, *Gessellschaft* (associational) arose out of industry, urbanization and mobility which meant that people resided in one place, worked in another and relaxed elsewhere. What this signified to Tonnies is that people met in greater numbers, but each contact was fleeting, instrumental and involved a single relationship. Clark (1973) describes Tonnies as an ecologist because in emphasizing the effect of the physical environment on social relationships, the metaphysical character of the clan, the tribe, the village and the town community is wedded to the land in lasting union.

Looking at traditional neighborhoods, Bulmer (1985) finds that localities were permeated with informal social networks sufficiently dense, complex and extensive, and evoking sufficient commitment from residents for a high proportion of local needs for care to be met within them. He however argues that the so-called natural helping networks of the traditional neighborhood - not actually natural of course - developed as a response to certain highly specified social conditions which one would not wish to see reproduced today. Reciprocal care between neighbors grows where information and trust are high and where resources for satisfying needs in other ways are low; in relatively closed and relatively threatened social milieu with highly homogeneous populations.

Smith (1996) enters this discussion by observing that in both urban and rural studies with diverse methodologies, the recurring question is whether community has been 'lost', 'saved' or 'liberated'. He notes that some empirical work seems to show that neighborhood and kinship - based on helping and support networks remain strong, while other studies seem to confirm that there is now no sense of community where local folk memory alleges that once everyone helped each other and 'left their front doors open'.

The understanding of a spatially proximate community or local community is however waning. The next section will review how this is taking place.

#### **2.4.1 Erosion of the Concept of Spatially Proximate Community**

"Blood, we say, is thicker than water. The metaphor may still be apt, but its days are numbered. Over the last one or two hundred years blood has been notably thinning, while the waters have become increasingly muddied. In a world increasingly dominated by transnational corporations, the invocation of kinship and community may seem like a little more than sentimentality or worse, a cynical pseudo - *gemeinschaft*" (Berger, 1988:52).

The traditional concept of a spatially defined community is currently undergoing such erosion to the extent that some writers reject geographical space as a determinant, or even a constraint upon social action. Bulmer (1985) notes that 'ways of life do not coincide with settlement patterns' and uses Pahl's (1966) work to suggest that 'any attempt to tie patterns of social relationships to a particular geographical milieu is a singularly fruitless exercise'.

Reasons given for this event is provided by several writers such as Harvey (1993), who explains that the viability of actual places has been powerfully threatened through changing material practices of production, consumption, information flow and communication, coupled with the radical reorganization of space relations and of time horizons within capitalist development. Thus, we have imaginary places mediated chiefly by technology, with the television, radio and computers playing a key role. '...TV

channels and interactive information networks proliferate, and 'virtual communities' emerge in cyberspace' (Smith, 1996:254).

Bulmer (1985) finds that two of the social products of industrialization that have worked their way through to the local level are greater mobility and choice. Better transport, longer journeys to work, geographical dispersal of kin and friends, a wider range of shopping and recreational opportunities, and the privatization of the family have all reduced the centrality of the neighborhood as a locus of social interaction and social support.

Hence Harvey (1993) again comments aptly that the 'long geography of capitalism has so liberated us from spatial constraints that we can imagine communities independently of existing places and set about the construction of new places to house such communities in ways that were impossible before'.

In another, earlier work, Clark (1973) finds that while place *influences* community, it is a different matter to assume that certain geographical units or areas are synonymous with it. This is because the term community has been applied to places ranging from the small neighborhood to the entire nation. It is his observation also that evidence does not support those striving to create community within neighborhoods because differences, even relatively minor, of social class have confounded many such attempts. Even in very homogenous areas, residents have still proved very reluctant to make more than superficial contact with community facilities provided for their entertainment and edification.

## **2.4.2 The Spatially Proximate Community and School Relations**

There is a broad literature on school-community relations, which is based on the understanding of neighborhood being the primary basis upon which social relationships are fostered. According to Thompson (1981), the linking of the school with the environment, means trying to make the school a motive force in the grassroots community. Thompson (1981) further adds that the school should not be a foreign body within the community but an emanation of it, organizing itself steadily for the community's development. This concept is founded on the idea of shared ownership of the educational enterprise. It regards each individual in the school community as a part owner of an educational venture, by virtue of the fact that they pay taxes to support education in their community. The individual receives dividends directly in the form of education for himself and his children and indirectly in local, state and national benefits. Their community is a better place to live because of the school (Sumpton and Engstrom, 1966).

Such a concept further emphasizes the educational principle that the school should be an integral part of the community it serves. The functions it performs are closely related to the functions of other community agencies, and a co-ordinated program of services benefits the whole community.

“The nature of the community largely determines what goes on in the school. Therefore, to attempt to divorce the school from the community is to engage in unrealistic thinking, which might lead to policies that could wreak havoc with the school and the lives of children. The community and the school are inseparable”- James B Conant (Sumpton and Engstrom , 1966:ii).

It is not surprising that these arguments, which emphasize spatial proximity, first emerged prior to the explosion of information technology in the 90's. These views nonetheless still inform current arguments. Some of the main approaches of earlier attempts to link schools more closely and fundamentally with their communities are discussed by Thompson (1981). These strands take various forms in different parts of Africa and are combined in various ways. They fall into four main categories:

1. Efforts to increase the 'relevance' of the education provided to the young, through environmentally related curriculum reform;
2. Efforts to involve the community more effectively in the activities of the school in order that it may be the school *of* the community and not merely a school *for* the community;
3. Efforts to serve the community directly and to meet the learning needs of all its members;
4. Efforts to develop the school as a community and as a microcosm of the external community and as a functioning part of that wider community (Thompson, 1981: 266).

School-community interaction as spelled out above is clearly a consequence of the fact that the community is seen as an extension of the school, the reason being that learners are all expected to come from the vicinity of the school. The school is accorded a central role in community proceedings, and May (1967), would characterize the interaction as falling within Thompson's (1981) fourth category, and envisages it as having close links with the families of the surrounding locality at many levels. These levels include being a co-ordinating center of the area for youth groups, parents' associations, adult study groups, the St. John's ambulance class, Red cross society branch, the local orchestra, drama group or choir, weight lifters, Judo experts.... and similar organizations which will turn to it for occasional or regular accommodation. May (1967) enthuses about the school being a center '....in areas where no other arrangements have been made for some of the social services to be closely associated with the school on either long term or an *ad hoc* basis. If there is a marriage guidance society meeting to be held, the school would seem its natural venue....' and adds that it is imperative that it be regarded as the *psycho-social center of its neighborhood* (May, 1967). Strictly in this understanding of school community, the school belongs to the local community in the spatial sense of the word, and is practically central to the activities that are important to it. The National Director of Education's (NDE) third priority to increase community engagements with the school also fits snugly in this particular understanding of the school community. This is premised on the assumption that people living in the same geographical area necessarily are bound by a strong sense of community or even common purpose.

In a contrasting perspective focusing on the South African situation, Christie (1995) however found that not all relationships between schools and their communities were necessarily mutually enjoyable ones, particularly in historically black schools in the post-apartheid period. This is in a paper in which she presents the research findings of two studies conducted in South African schools. One study considered dysfunctional schools in one of South Africa's nine provinces while the other looked at schools at a national level that were succeeding where those around them were not (resilient schools). Christie (1997) reports that in many of the schools, problems such as political violence, criminality and substance abuse were, or had been features of the surrounding communities. Yet, in contrast to the dysfunctional schools, resilient schools managed, at least to some degree, to minimize such problems spilling over their boundaries. This, Christie (1997) finds, was in keeping the local community out of the school. Almost all the resilient schools were fenced. Noting that fences were sometimes symbolic rather than real signs of containment, Christie (1997) reports that although the fence around one of the schools would be very easy to scale, nevertheless it managed to curb vandalism from outside.

In spite of this, it is well worth asking whether all communities are necessarily spatially proximate ones. Are all community schools located in this particular understanding of it?

## **2.5 THE INTEREST COMMUNITY**

Smith (1996) finds that definitions of community fall mainly into two main categories. In one, the main concern is spatial proximity as has been discussed above, while the rest focus on the notion of relationships; of solidarity or communion...the 'positive quality of social relationships' (Eileen and Stephen Yeo, 1988). Using the term 'Bund' coined originally by Schmalenbach as cited by Heatherington (1994), Smith (1996) explains that individuals covenant together into a group with greater levels of belonging and intimacy than the transitory associations of *Gesselschaft*. Also unlike *Gemeinschaft*, status and roles are not ascribed by tradition, but tend towards either radical egalitarianism or

dependence on charismatic leadership. Thus the concept of 'Bund' has been applied to communities as diverse as Kibbutzin and the Hitler Youth and to religious sects, street gangs, military units and Japanese work teams.

'Communities of interest' are those groups that gather first and foremost because of shared beliefs, values and concerns rather than because of proximity of residence or because of established patterns of social relationships (Clark, 1973).

According to Clark (1973), two fundamental communal elements of any social system are a sense of solidarity and a sense of significance. A sense of solidarity is a sentiment very much akin to 'we-feeling' which leads men to identify themselves with others so that when they say 'ours' there is no thought of division. On the other hand, a sense of significance is defined as 'the sense of place or station' experienced by group members 'so that each person feels that he has a role to play, his own function to fulfil in the reciprocal exchanges of the social scene'. Clark (1973) also explains that the strength of community within any given group is determined by the degree to which its members experience both a sense of significance within it.

### **2.5.1 Interest community and school interactions**

While interest based communities are discussed in the general literature about communities, they are not discussed in literature about school communities. However, certain types of schools do nevertheless constitute their communities on the basis of interest rather than locality, and these are represented in the independent schools such as Waldorf and Montessori which follow a different philosophy from mainstream public schools, and which have high levels of belonging and intimacy. Others include religious schools such as Jewish and Catholic schools. In these schools, the school community is narrowed to those with a special interest in the school, the first among these being parents. It is interesting to note that public schools' links with their communities are also taking the shape of interest communities. The Western Cape Provincial School Education Act (1997) states that 'Unauthorized persons may not visit a public school or enter the

school premises', and further provides a list of those that are allowed into the school, and under certain conditions. These include 'a person(s) or instance(s) granted approval by the principal of the school concerned, to visit the school (Dept of Education, 1997).

## **2.6 THE CONSUMER COMMUNITY**

There is a third kind of community, which is not explicit in the literature, but is dealt with by implication. This is the community that draws together or shares an interest because they consume the same product. While the literature on this kind of community in its general sense is not reviewed here, the school literature deals with it expansively, albeit indirectly. Education is viewed as a product for consumption, and the consumers are given the freedom to select the school of their choice. This means that increasingly, those involved in schools do so more as consumers, and less as citizens.

In looking at this, Smith (1996) finds that increasingly in every aspect of life, individuals are being presented with choice. In fact, new flexibility in product specifications means that consumers are overwhelmed with choice. Also increasingly, market values dominate sectors that previously were seen as not - for - profit, such as health and education.

### **2.6.1 Consumer Community and School Interactions**

Communities that relate to school primarily as consumers have arisen in the context of the marketisation of the social relations of schooling primarily through the introduction of school choice policies. School choice policies in the global context can be traced back to globalization and the changing role of the state. Mok (1997) finds that in recent decades, there has been a considerable degree of questioning the state's role in the welfare sector and the realm of social policy all round the world. At the ideological level, Mok (1997) explains that big governments were said to have usurped the proper role of markets and the ability of individuals to run their own affairs. Kenway et al (1993) find that in an economic climate dominated by enthusiasm for growth and for budget cuts, the public sector generally and the public sector of education particularly are juxtaposed against the

private/market sector and found wanting. As a result, genuine market forms, rather than orientations towards labor and commodity markets, are encouraged in state institutions and activities.

Tikly and Mabogane (1997) explain that the concept of marketisation when carefully applied to the South African context can act as an overarching framework for understanding school choice. In the desegregation reforms, characteristics of marketisation included:

- The transfer of costs to parent communities;
- The decentralization of management responsibilities to the level of the school, including financial management and the setting of school fees;
- The abandonment of traditional catchment areas and a shift towards a policy of schools marketing themselves (Tikly and Mabogane, 1997:164).

When the educational financial responsibility is discharged from the public and transferred to the parents, it may be argued that this provides a basis for decreased public interest in education. A community that has not invested in the enterprise may not be expected to be intrinsically committed to the interests of education. Furthermore, those who have invested - that is, the parents - may not be well disposed to the use of the school for the benefit of those who have not invested.

In further characterizing market forms in education, Pring (1987) cited by Kenway et al explains that the various forms of privatization can be categorized under two broad headings: ‘...the purchasing at *private* expense of educational services within the *public* system, and ....the purchasing at *public* expense of educational services at private institutions’. In South Africa, a key feature in education was the increase in subsidization of private schools in the late 1980s, and the move towards the ‘semi-privatization’ of white schools in the 1990s (Fataar, 1997). While these privatization moves in South Africa have been criticized from various quarters (see Christie, 1995 and Tikly and Mabogane, 1997), schooling has increasingly been viewed as less of a public prerogative, and more of a private enterprise. It may be argued that the generalization of fee paying to

all public schools has resulted in the semi-privatization of the whole public school system. This has implications for the role of the broader community, which is seen to be sidelined as they seem to have no interests in the education enterprise.

### **2.6.2 The Pros and Cons of School Choice Policies**

Dheli (1996) observes that debates about school choice in North America, the UK, Australia and New Zealand are often framed as a matter of structuring relations between schools and parents in market terms. Dheli (1996) finds that proponents of such market versions of choice presume that schools will be improved by structuring them as if they comprised a competitive and 'free' market, where power and resources would be more equally shared between educational producers (teachers and administrators) and consumers (parents). However, Dheli finds that this faith in the market as equalizer ignores that capital market relations are inherently structured through relations of exploitation, inequality and hierarchical difference. It also overlooks the vast differences in parents' capacity to exercise their role as consumers in the market.

Beresford (1992) concurs with this and adds that in reality 'choice' often means the choice exercised by informed, articulate, middle-class parents whose 'rights' are advanced against the interests of the silent majority. Citing Jonathan (1989), Beresford (1992) points out that some parents will inevitably have more power than others, and will purchase their preferred commodity in the educational marketplace while others miss out. Some schools will get better and others worse, with those parents who are most informed and articulate influencing and obtaining the 'best' buy for their children. What this means is that among the consumer communities are those which can make a positive difference in their schools because of their influence and money, while there are those which will be less able to do so for the same reasons. Community-school relations will therefore yield greater results in some schools than in others. Vally (1997) concurs with this assertion, finding that involvement of parents shifted from the notion of parental participation as a form of partnership in the running of schools, toward parental power as consumers.

The operation of schools as markets has certain implications: those who consume the product are viewed differently - they are the 'consumers' of education, not 'citizens'. Education is no longer seen to benefit the community, but individuals. That is why Brown and Lauder (1996) argue that according to the New Right the route to national salvation in the context of global knowledge wars is through the survival of the fittest, based on an extension of parental choice in a market of competing school, colleges and Universities.

This marketisation of education also has implications in terms of school composition because due to mobility, choice has enabled parents and learners to select schools for reasons other than their being in the neighborhood. Clearly, those that are in an economic position to do so will make choices beyond the borders of their locality. School communities, seen here as parents - the consumers - do not necessarily reside in the neighborhood of the school. The spatial community within the vicinity of the school may have no attachment to the school, and those who do have an attachment will do so in their capacities as parents.

As a teacher in a school, Beresford (1992) makes certain observations about the new relationship between schools and parents. One is that the impetus of perceiving the parent primarily as 'consumer' in a marketplace could lead to the involvement of parents becoming a superficial public relations exercise rather than a meaningful educational partnership.

Another observation Beresford (1992) makes is that parents are encouraged to operate as self-interested consumers in the educational marketplace. Sayed (1999) picks up this argument, and adds that the operation of the markets in education creates a conception of the consumer citizen who is a self interested, utility - maximizing, rational individual. In this conception, the school community simply becomes the locale for self - interested possessive behavior.

An important point worth noting is that non-parents are left out of the equation and schools are narrowly treated as the exclusive site of parental concern over individual children. Vally (1997) makes a crucial observation that what is often ignored is the behavior of producers who operate in no less a self-interested, utility-maximizing way than parent consumers. In this context, the school as producer actively solicits and attracts those parents who can and are likely to be able to pay the stipulated fees. In this way, consumer choice is reduced as it is now circumscribed by the self-interested behavior of the school. Noted here is the fact that whereas community relations with the schools have been narrowed to parental business-like partnerships, the school too has undergone changes, and also relates differently to the community, selecting whom it wishes to forge links with. The school is able to shape its own community through its admissions policy especially because it is able to determine its own feeder areas, attracting 'desirable' learners and parents. Munn (1993) explains that in very popular schools where there have been more placing requests than places, it may be that schools begin to choose parents rather than vice versa.

In less developed countries, Lillies (1985) observes that marketisation of education has served to alienate people from each other and stimulate individualism, elitism, class consciousness, materialism and social status, rather than agencies of community participation. Consumers are isolated and alienated from, rather than integrated with and emergent from, community concerns, thus making it difficult for schools to become community schools.

With market mechanisms operating in the schools today, the traditional notion of community becomes defined in a particular way. School communities do not refer to the populations in the physical localities of the schools any more, but to those consumers of education at a particular school, namely those with primary interest, the parents and learners. At the expense of the local community, parents in particular have been greatly empowered and recognized, and these parents do not necessarily live in the neighborhood of the school. This means that those populations within the physical neighborhood of the school have decreasing interests and links with the schools.

## 2.7 CONCLUSION

Three understandings of community, and of school community relations, emerge from the literature. School community relationships in schools may be shaped by (a) the spatial location of a school (b) school choice, or (c) the philosophy or religion espoused by a school. Stated simply, possibilities of school community interactions in schools may be a result of locality on one hand, where the school is viewed as a centre of community life. Here the definition of community is broad: it encompasses all those who dwell in the locality whether or not they have children who attend the school. On the other hand, school–community interactions may be shaped by school choice. Here, the community is perceived as consumers and thus the definition of school community narrows down to those who have vested interests in the school, namely the learners and parents. Education is perceived as a private matter that entails only those who are directly engaging it, excluding members of the broader community. Finally, school-community relations may be shaped by a philosophy or religion that a school adopts. Here the community comprises the group that is interested in the particular doctrine that the school supports and mainly enrolls their children at the school for this reason: the parents and learners. All of these aforementioned interactions are further shaped by other determinants, of which school policy features in a big way.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The focus of this study is the question: *What are the features of school community relations in a particular school and how compatible are those relations with those propounded in key government policies?* In the literature review, three types of school community relationships were categorized: the spatially proximate community, the interest community and the consumer community.

First, the case study approach will be discussed as the most appropriate research strategy for this research report. This will be followed by a discussion of the selection of the research site, which will include a brief history of school V. Next, the data collection strategies employed in the study, that is, questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis, will be examined in terms of the information that was gathered through each one of them, with an indication of some of the difficulties encountered in the process. This will include a discussion centered on the advantages and disadvantages of each data collection method. Another section will deal with the aspect of validity.

Analyzing and presenting data was a process. The last section in this chapter will set out to explain in detail how some of the data, particularly that which involved mapping, was prepared for analysis.

#### **3.2 CASE STUDY APPROACH**

Yin (1994) explains that a case study is an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. He explains further that the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be

many more variables of interest than data points. One result of this is that it relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result, it benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. In this sense, the case study is not either a data collection or merely a design feature alone but a comprehensive research strategy.

Yin (1994) identifies three types of case studies: the exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies and explanatory case studies. Yin (1994) explains that the selection of each of these case studies depends on three conditions such as (a) the type of research question posed, (b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events.

Yin (1994) explains that if research questions focus mainly on “what” questions, either of two possibilities arises. First, some types of “what” questions are exploratory, the goal being to develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further study. The second type of “what” question is actually a form of “*how many*” or “*how much*” line of enquiry, the research goal being descriptive. In contrast, Yin (1994) finds that *how* and *why* questions are explanatory.

The question of my study involves both a *what* and *how* question. The primary question reads as follows: What are the features of school community relations in a particular school? Deducing from Yin’s (1994) theory, the case study best suited here would be that of an exploratory line of enquiry. The secondary question asks how compatible these relations are with those propounded in key government policies. Yin’s theory would categorize this question as an explanatory line of inquiry. The case study employed therefore involves two lines of inquiry (a) the exploratory and (b) the explanatory.

### 3.3 RESEARCH SITE

The first part of this study examines the features of school community relations in *a particular school*, which suggests that this research will be carried out at a single site. Marshal and Rossman's (1995) argument that human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs, and that one must study that behavior in situations points to the fact that care must be taken in selection of a site. Marshal and Rossman (1995) provide a rationale for deciding on a specific setting. The ideal site is where (a) entry is possible; (b) there is high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (c) the researcher is likely to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; and (d) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured. This rationale proved useful in the selection of a research site for this study.

Part of deciding on a research site involved choosing between a high school and a primary school. A primary school, school V, was selected on the basis that parents were more likely to send their young children to the closest school at primary level than at high school level so as to avoid a situation where the children would have to travel. The location of the school right at the heart of Khayelitsha, a township in the Western Cape, also influenced the selection of the school as a research site. School V therefore is a public school, which might be assumed to serve its own locality. This research tests this assumption and explores the relationship between the school and the community.

This study is part of a larger project, the Learner Progress and Achievement Study based at the University of Cape Town. Being involved with the Learner Progress and Achievement Study provided sponsorship to the researcher in which access into the school was granted. The Head teacher, teachers and school governing body members accepted the researcher, related to her in an amicable and friendly manner. A limitation that was anticipated was that as a non-Xhosa speaking person in an environment where this is the main language of communication, the researcher would encounter problems building trusting relations with the participants in the study. To ensure that this did not

become too much of a problem, the researcher oriented herself with the basics of the language, which served effectively in situations such as opening conversations and breaking ice at the beginning of interviews.

School V is a formerly Department of Education and Training (DET) school that was established in 1985. The school is situated in the outskirts of the greater Cape Town, beyond the central white and medial colored areas historically. The school was built at a time when the Apartheid government established a new area to house African people in 1980, and provision of schooling was provided as an incentive to encourage people to live in the area. Today, the school draws its learners from further east and not west, that is, from informal settlements such as Makhasa, Makhaya and site B as opposed to the formerly white and colored areas.

### **3.4 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES**

The research questions had implications for the methodology pursued in the field. The main and sub-questions required that it be established where the learners reside, how long they have been at the school, and what is the form of the relationship between the members of the school and those outside the school, that is, the parents and the non – parents in the community. Each data collection strategy focuses on one other of these.

#### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire, which was divided into two sections, was intended to establish where the learners live, whether or not school V is the school closest to their home and reasons for selection of the school. Other data collected covered the number of years that the learners had been at school V, and the mode of transport used daily to and from the school.

From the parents or caregivers living with the learners, data such as their occupation and whether or not they had other children attending the school was required. Other

information included their involvement in the learners' school, such as whether or not they had visited their school the year (1999) and the nature and content of the visit (s).

The questionnaire was completed by learners and parents of Grade Seven learners at school V. These learners were selected on the grounds that they could fill in the questionnaire the most easily in the school in either of the languages: English and Xhosa.

According to Walker (1990), a questionnaire may be considered as a formalized and stylized interview, or interview by proxy. The form is the same as it would be in a face - to face interview, but in order to remove the interviewer the subject is presented with what essentially is a structured transcript with the responses missing. An advantage of employing this strategy in that it tends to be reliable in that because it is anonymous and confidential, it will encourage greater honesty. It is also a more economical strategy than the interview would be particularly in terms of time and money.

A disadvantage of utilizing a questionnaire and particularly in this case whereby the learners will be required to take it home to their parents is that there is frequently too low a percentage of returns. Also if any misunderstanding is experienced by the respondents at home, it will not be possible for the researcher to offer clarification. Another disadvantage of utilizing questionnaires especially in this case is that it presents problems to people of limited literacy, and at times questionnaires are often filled in hurriedly thus missing out vital information.

During the collection of data in the form of questionnaires, the rate of return was quite satisfactory. The first part of the questionnaire was filled in by the learners as respondents under the supervision of the researcher and a class seven teacher at the school. This ensured 100% return. The second section, which was taken home to the parents also yielded a 78.6% return when 70 of the 90 questionnaires were brought back.

The questionnaire was framed both in Xhosa and English and this encouraged a number of parents to fill in their responses in Xhosa. Literacy did not appear to affect the responses in these questionnaires.

### **3.4.2 Interviews**

The interviews were intended to establish the form and content of the relationship between the school and the parental and non-parental community around the school. The Governing body members and in particular the parent members are the people whose role as sanctioned in the SASA as chiefly that of mediating between the school and the community. From each of these members the research question necessitated the collection of accounts concerning the nature of interaction between the school and the community. Here it was pertinent to collect information regarding whether or not the school governing body interacted with (a) the parental community and (b) the local community and the kind of issues commonly dealt with in these meetings.

The governing body was required to furnish information regarding activities or meetings in 1999 which parents attended; the purpose and content of the meetings. The School Governing Body (SGB) members were also asked to account for their view on what they thought affected the high or low turn out of parents at their meetings. Other data pertained to meetings and activities between the school and people who lived around the school area and who were not necessarily parents at the school. Data required here described who came, the numbers, the purpose of the meeting(s) and content. A further question pertained to the role of the SGB members and their dual duty of mediating between the school and the community and the school and the parents. Their views concerning whether or not they perceive their role as empowered or limited by National and school policy was sought.

The principal is a key actor as the agent in the links between the school and the community. This person was instrumental in furnishing information concerning whether the parental community have day to day physical contact with the school, the frequency

of these visits and their content; which parents are likely to visit the school and the ones that are the least likely. The principal's definition of the school community was sought at this point with a view of establishing what she perceived as the kind of community the school related to. Regarding the relationship between the school and the local community, the principal furnished information as to whether there was contact between the school and the people living around the school, whether or not they had children at the school, and the content and context of the contact. The researcher probed whether the local community utilized the school facilities for purposes other than schooling of their children. This was fruitful in giving insight as to how far the local community co - owned the school. As a follow up of this particular aspect, the researcher explored whether school policy serves to facilitate or hinder this relationship.

In-depth interviews were conducted with governing body members and the school principal. Marshal and Rossman (1995) use the useful description by Kahn and Cannel (1957) who say that an in-depth interview is ' a conversation with a purpose'. Cohen and Manion (1995) explain that it is one in which the content and proceedings are organized in advance. Three kinds of items are used in the construction of schedules used in research interviews. These are (a) fixed-alternative items (b) open-ended items and (c) the scale. To enable an in-depth interview it will be prudent to employ the open-ended questions. This is because, as Cohen and Manion (1995) explain, open ended questions have a number of advantages: they are flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that she may go into more depth if she chooses to, or to clear up any misunderstandings; they enable the interviewer to test the limits of the respondents knowledge; they encourage co-operation and establish rapport; and finally, they allow the interviewer to make a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes. Cohen and Manion (1995) further explain that open-ended situations may also result in unexpected or unanticipated answers, which may suggest hitherto unthought-of relationships or hypotheses. In this study which is largely exploratory by nature, the open-ended interviews proved to be useful in probing possible propositions of what shapes school and community interactions, and in so doing, unearthing quality data.

Marshall and Rossman stress that, due to the fact that interviews involve personal interaction, co-operation is essential. The researcher ensured that each respondent was put at their ease at the beginning of each interview to break the ice before embarking on the actual questions for the interview. Another disadvantage according to Marshall and Rossman (1995) is that the interviewer may not ask questions that evoke long narratives from participants either because of a lack of expertise or familiarity with local language or because of lack of skill. By the same token, responses to the questions or elements of the conversation may not be properly comprehended by the interviewer. In order to secure responses that were full and comprehensive enough, the researcher at times asked for clarification on some answers, sometimes requesting elaboration or additional explanation. Also, when the respondent did not understand a question, the researcher paraphrased it to ensure full comprehension and a relevant answer.

### 3.4.3 Documentary Evidence

While conducting the interviews, it became clear that there would be need to supplement the data that was being gathered from the School Governing Body (SGB) members. This was essential in exploring the nature of the relationship between the school and the community, where respondents could not remember with clarity much of what had transpired in the course of the year.

To verify and corroborate their information and to include that which was crucial but had not been mentioned, it was relevant to utilize official documents such as minutes of meetings held at the school, the school log book, and the school newsletter for the year 1999. The advantage of utilizing this material is that since it provided a permanent record of events that had taken place, as had been recorded, it could be relied on for the extra information required to complete data which was not very clear, or which even appeared to be contradictory. An example here is that some respondents felt that the fence was not such an issue at the school and tried to play down the fact that the school was in fact in the process of building one. From the records of the minutes, it was possible to establish that on the contrary, this was an issue of such import that the school had gone to the extent of requesting funds from the Education Department, and was actually in the process of planning to raise funds to cover the difference between the amount required and that which the Department had provided.

Data for this study included three documents, or primary sources. Finnigan (1996) distinguishes between 'primary' and 'secondary' sources in the use of documentary sources. Primary sources according to Finnigan (1996) form the basic and original material for providing the researcher's raw evidence. Secondary sources, by contrast, are those that discuss the period studied, but are brought into being at some time after it, or otherwise somewhat removed from the actual events.

One way of approaching a given source that was adapted in this study was to seek information directly from the factual content in a document as suggested by Finnigan,

(1996). However, Finnigan (1996) cautions that although documents may look authoritative, it is important to keep in mind that in effect, all these sources are the results of human activity. They are produced by human beings acting in particular circumstances and within the constraints of particular social, historical or administrative conditions. Thus Finnigan suggests that sources have to be *interpreted* not just consulted, and she expounds that:

“.....one fundamental criterion for how sensibly the sources are thus interpreted....is precisely what the researcher has used them for, and how far he or she *has* taken of how they came into being; by whom, under what circumstances and constraints, with what assumptions, and how selected” (Finnigan, 1996:141).

In assessing the validity of these sources, questions such as who produced these documents, when, how and for whom, need to be looked into (Finnigan, 1996). These are the criteria which were used to assess the viability of three documents which were utilized in the study. Of the three documents, it was the minutes of the meeting that were found to be the most valid in terms of the laid down criteria.

On investigation, it was found that minutes of the meetings had been recorded during the course of the meetings by a member of the School Governing Body for future reference. All matters that were discussed and agreed upon were documented for future reference by management, parents, members of the public, and the Education Department. The openness of the whole procedure, the fact that every item discussed at the meeting was recorded, lent credibility to the accounts therein, and rendered the document valid.

From the logbook, it was easy to access information that was difficult to obtain elsewhere, such as facts about the number of meetings held outside the school, at the informal settlement, Makhasa. The logbook is a kind of a school diary where the daily events of the school are recorded by the school principal. The only disadvantage of this document is that the information recorded therein represents to a large extent the principal's perception of the kind of events or happenings at the school that were relevant, or what constituted a recordable 'event' to her. This could mean that other

information that could have been relevant for this study may have not been recorded. Another shortcoming of this document is that the information that was reported in the logbook was very sketchy and brief, often leaving the researcher with unanswered questions. Due to these reasons the document can not be relied on in entirety to provide all the relevant information, but could be used optimally to supplement information gathered elsewhere.

The Newsletter (1999) which was released towards the end of the year provided an update on some of the issues that came up in the interviews that had been conducted earlier in October. From the Newsletter also, it was possible to analyze whom the school considered to be its community, from the framing of the report, and looking at whom it addressing.

### **3.5 CRITERIA FOR VALIDITY**

At the data collection stage, Yin (1995) explains that it is important that measures are taken to ensure that “subjective” strategies are side stepped. Thus to increase construct validity, Yin suggests that three measures be taken during data collection. These are: the use of multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence and to have the case study report reviewed by key informants, an example in this case being the Principal of the school.

The use of multiple sources of evidence according to Yin (1994) has the advantage of the development of *converging lines of inquiry*, a process of triangulation. This means that any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more accurate if it is based on several sources of information. In this research, multiple sources of data represented the inclusion of learners, parents, the School Governing Body members and the Principal increase the validity of the study. In addition, methodological triangulation through the use of questionnaires, interviews and documentary evidence was designed to increase the construct validity of this report.

### **3.6 INITIAL PREPARATION OF DATA FOR ANALYSIS: MAPPING OF LEARNERS' RESIDENCES**

While preparing to analyse data, it became evident that there was need to establish the approximate distance that learners live from the school. It was realised that obtaining this information from learners in the questionnaire was not likely to yield accurate data, since a majority of them would find it difficult to correctly estimate the distances from their homes. From their addresses, it was not easy at a glance to make estimates as one would need to know the location of all the roads in the area, since a majority of learners indicated that they live in Khayelitsha, the township where the school is located. As it may not be easily appreciated that some of the learners live long distances from the school, the learner addresses were mapped using a Geographical Information Systems data set based on Metropolis Mapstudio data produced by Geographical Information Systems (GIMs) to the University of Cape Town (UCT).

While it may have been desirable to achieve complete accuracy in placing the exact dwellings on the map, this was obstructed due to certain factors:

- (a) The data set itself had inherent inaccuracies, one of which was that settlement areas which had very recently been developed and others such as squatter camps or informal settlements were not digitized. This meant that roads and streets within these areas did not appear on the map. Another source of inaccuracy was that in more formal areas of the township where street names were available on the data set, the exact addresses such as the house numbers of dwellings on a street were not provided.
- (b) On their part, some of the learners did not fill in their full addresses as required, which served as a detriment to the mapping of their addresses.

These factors combined with the fact that many learners resided in informal settlements such as Macassar, Makhaya, Site B and Site C ensured that mapping was a formidable task. However, certain steps were taken to ensure that the learners' dwellings were located as closely as possible on the map. These included:

(a) Utilizing the knowledge of helpful informants who knew the area well and complementing this with several self-orienting visits to the area by the researcher. This involved drawing separate maps, which could later be incorporated on the final map of Khayelitsha, the aim being to locate dwellings that were not available on the data set in a careful manner.

Using this method proved invaluable in placing learners' dwellings from the fore-mentioned informal areas such as Makhaya, Khanya Park, Litha Park, Site B, Site C, Luzuko Park and Town 2 on the map.

(c) While using the data set to place the addresses of learners on the map, certain rules were decided on in the process to ensure consistency. Some of the rules observed are displayed below:

#### Rule 1

On the particular street that a learner resides, the middle of it is indicated or placed as their actual dwelling or address.

#### Rule 2

If several learners live on one street, then the list of the address range is made prior to placing their dwellings on the map in a consecutive fashion.

While complete accuracy is not claimed in the actual mapping of learners' dwellings, nevertheless this map is useful in two ways:

- (a) In providing a general idea of where the learners reside in relation to where School V is located; and
- (b) In determining the approximate distance that learners in Grade Seven have travel to and from school.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, data will be presented and analysed. The analysis will take place in two sections: (a) the analysis of government policy documents, and (b) analysis of data collected at the research site, school V, through questionnaires, interviews and school documents such as minutes of parental meetings, material from the school log book and newsletter.

The analysis of the government policy documents which will involve reviewing of the current national education policy documents vis-a-vis the most recent document expected to shape policy in the future, will seek to extract, interpret and compare the understanding of school community relations apparent in them.

The rest of the chapter will focus on analyzing data from the field, mainly describing the features of school–community relations exhibited at school V.

#### **4.2 PART ONE: ANALYSIS OF POLICY DOCUMENTS**

The analysis of government educational policy documents will focus on three key documents, namely, Call to Action: Mobilising Citizens to Build a South African Educational and Training System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (1999), South African Schools' Act (1996) and The Western Cape Provincial Act 12 (1997).

#### **4.2.1 Selection of Policy documents**

The selection of these policy documents was confined mainly to those with directly address the issue of school–community relations. The first document, ‘Call to Action: Mobilising Citizens to Build a South African Educational and Training System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ (1999), was selected on the basis that it was a new policy document in education. It is expected to shape policies and structure relationships between schools and their communities nationally in the future. The second document, ‘The South African Schools’ Act’, (1996) was selected for analysis mainly because it was the document responsible for the current structures of the relationship between schools and their communities, nationally. The third document, ‘Western Cape Provincial School Act 12’ (1997) is a provincial act which has not seriously influenced policy in schools as it mainly reflects The South African School’s Act (SASA) without any notable deviations or additions. However, it has been included here for completeness, providing the act at a provincial level. This document and the SASA act will be grouped together, as part of the existing policies.

#### **4.3 CONTRADICTIONS AND TENSIONS IN THE POLICY DOCUMENTS**

The South African Schools’ Act (SASA) and the Western Cape Provincial Schools’ Act (WCPSA) on one hand, and the National Director of Education’s (NDE) recent proposal in press on the other are policies containing certain contradictions. These include differences in the historical forces that helped influence their coming into being, their separate definitions of school community, ways of community participation, how they deal with fee introduction and use of school facilities. At the root of these contradictions is the understanding of the concept of ‘school community’.

### **4.3.1 Historical Differences**

These contradictions in school policy could perhaps be traced to their history. Sayed (1999), who explores this aspect, finds that two inter-related, though potentially contradictory, notions feed discourses of educational decentralization. First, both the previous ruling National Party and the opposition anti-apartheid movement shared a commitment to some form of educational decentralization albeit for very different political and ideological reasons.

For the National Party, the clearest expression of a commitment to educational decentralization was to be found in its model B and C Regulations and its Educational Renewal Strategy (1991). In these regulations, Sayed claims that the National Party argued that the educational decentralization allowed for greater control of schooling by those who had to pay and that it would enhance efficiency, effectiveness and quality. Underlying this ideal was the notion of the 'individual as consumer' reflected in the discourse of 'parental choice' and consumer power. It would be safe to conclude at this point, that the National Party ideals were expressed in the SASA document.

With the ANC on the other hand, the commitment of the progressive anti - apartheid support for policies of educational decentralization was, by contrast, rooted in the very trajectory of resistance politics. Such politics operated on an oppositional discourse that drew upon local community support and participation. It is not surprising then that that Asmal (1999), following this tradition, uses such vocabulary as 'community' to rally commitment to protect schools.

### **4.3.2 Differences in Defining the School Community**

The two documents carry separate definitions for the school community. The South African Schools' Act (SASA) distinguishes between the parents in the school and the non-parents living around the school, seeing them as separate entities. It allocates to the

parents a more important status because they are seen to have vested interests in the school. This is displayed through the voting policy:

“The number of parent members must comprise *one more* than the combined total of other members of a governing body who have voting rights” (Department of Education, 1996:18)(Emphasis mine).

In the SASA, parents are given a primary role in school affairs, while the non - parent members of the community who could include future parents, parents of former learners, old students and organizations are given no formal role.

This is contrary to the National Director of Education’s (Asmal, 1999) understanding of ‘school community’ that does not distinguish between the non – parents and the parents within the school, and prefers to give them uniform status. His understanding of community refers to people who live in the same geographical area, not necessarily implying common bonds or sense of purpose (Lillis, 1985). Thus Asmal says:

“The school governing body, led by parents, exercises a trust on behalf of the parents of the community, and functions as the indispensable link between the school and the community” (Asmal, 1999:9).

In this statement, policy understanding of the community is defined in terms of spatial proximity to the school. There is an inferred presumption that learners in the school reside in the neighborhood of the school, and it is clear, therefore, that parents in the school, by virtue of having their children attending at the school, are regarded rather naturally, as the representatives of the community in the school. In contrast, the SASA narrows the definition of school community to the parents and learners, since it seeks to exclude the members and representatives of the spatially proximate community.

### **4.3.3 Opposed Perceptions of Community Participation**

Community participation is understood in contrasted ways by the different documents. While the National Director of Education's (NDE) proposal calls for increased participation by all members of the community in schools, the South African Schools' Act (SASA) undermines this by limiting community participation through the denial of voting rights. In looking at SASA, Sayed (1999) finds that the notion of community as an expression of participatory democracy is weakened for two reasons. One reason is that community participation in government structures is made conditional upon the agreement of the school governing body, and even then, this is limited by the fact that they cannot even vote:

“A governing body may co-opt a member or members of the community to assist it in discharging its functions”

“Co-opted members do not have voting rights on the governing body” (Department of Education, 1996:18).

The second reason is that community participation as encouraged by the SASA is reduced to an instrumental search for such representatives as can render expertise to the school governing bodies. This expertise is such as legal advisory or auditing, and excludes participation by other lay members of the community.

### **4.3.4 Fee Introduction and School Choice**

In order to fully explore forms of community participation, it is important to study the influence of user fees. Whereas the South African Schools' Act (SASA) document makes important recommendations on it, Asmal's (1999) document makes no reference to this issue, the omission of which heavily influences his conception of the school community.

The idea of user fees is premised on the assumption that parents who wish to provide quality education for their children over and above the state subsidy are able to do so (Sayed, 1999). According to the South African school's Act (1996), a responsibility is

imposed on all public governing bodies to do their utmost to improve the quality of education in their schools by raising additional resources to supplement those which the state provides from public funds. All parents, but particularly those who are less poor or who have good incomes, are thereby encouraged to increase their own direct financial and other contributions to the quality of their children's education in public school.

The SASA document directs that governing bodies are not required to charge fees in fulfilling their obligation to raise supplementary resources, and further stipulates that whether or not to charge fees is a matter for the parents of the school, here implying that parents as a group have a choice not to pay school fees. However, identifying this as a key tension of the SASA, Sayed (1999) considers the notion of user fees as an instance of market forces in educational provision in South Africa. While user fees were apparently justified on the grounds that monies raised in this way would effect savings that could be expended on equity, Sayed (1999) puts forward the argument that what the SASA reflects is the ways in which public education takes on characteristics of the free market. Parental participation under this logic is turned to that of 'consumer', as opposed to 'citizen'.

This particular understanding of community which is based on the assertion of purely sectional interests, for example that of the parents as (transient) consumers as opposed to the development of an active citizenship geared for the welfare of the broader community is not acknowledged in the National Director of education's (NDE) (1999) Call to Action : Mobilizing Citizens to Build a South African Education and Training System for the 21st Century.

An important feature of the introduction of user fees is that parents come face to face with the element of choice. Those who can afford to will send their children to any school in their province. It is presumed in the SASA that learners may attend any school in the province, and not necessarily in their locality or area. The document directs that: 'Every member of the Executive Council must ensure that there are enough school places so that every child who lives in his or her *province* (italics mine) can attend school as required by subsections (1) and (2)', and, 'a public school must admit learners and serve their

educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way'. (Department of Education; 1996:6)

The introduction of user fees by the SASA suggests that the actual location of school attendance is an individual prerogative. Individuals are free to make a choice of any school within the province that they would wish to attend, and, as a direct result of this, learner migration may be anticipated. Nonetheless, in complete disregard of this important aspect in previous school policy, the 'Call to Action' document presupposes that parents send their children to schools that are closest to their homes, and thus learners live within the localities of their schools. Hence Asmal recommends that the panacea to the crisis in primary school is in ensuring that schools become the centers of community life (1999).

### 4.3.5 Conflicting Conditions for the Use of School Facilities

The use of school facilities is important in assessing the relationship between a school and those residing in the school proximity. The SASA stipulates that the school facilities strictly belong to the school and not the public, and hence the use of these facilities is for a fee:

“The governing body may allow the reasonable use of the facilities of the school for community, social, and school fund-raising purposes, subject to such reasonable and equitable conditions as the governing body may determine, which may include the charging of a fee or tariff which accrues to the school” (Department of Education, 1996:16).

The question of ownership of the school is therefore dealt with clearly, in that it is understood that the school facilities are owned only by those directly engaging it, such as learners and parents. Non-parents are allowed to use the school facilities for something in return, or are otherwise kept out of the school.

In the NDE’s document however, the school is opened up to all members of the local community, that is, both parents and non-parents alike:

“The school will truly become a center of community and cultural life if its facilities are being put to use for youth and adult learning, community meetings, music and drama, sports and recreation’ (Asmal, 1999:9).

The utilization of school facilities by the public is viewed as a mechanism to counter the problems of security in schools, especially as Asmal (1999:9) suggests that an idle school is a vulnerable place inviting vandalism. Keeping the local community inside the school gate busy utilizing the school facilities is understood to be beneficial to the security of the school.

The tensions and contradictions in educational policy documents as discussed above bring to sharp focus the fact that ‘school community’ is not an agreed upon concept, but a problematic one.

## **4.4 PART TWO: ANALYSIS OF COLLECTED DATA**

This section will focus on the data collected from school V through questionnaires, interviews and documentary evidence.

### **4.4.1 Proximity of learners homes to School V**

This sub-section will analyse geographical aspects such as where learners live in relation to school V. This will involve exploring through an address analysis of learners residential places, whether or not learners live in the locality of their school, and if school V is the school closest to their homes. In this part also, the reasons for selection of school V will be analysed.

### **4.4.2 An address Analysis of Learners' Residential Places**

Although there are 126 learners in Grade Seven, only 90 learners were present on the day the questionnaire was administered. Two learners did not fill in their addresses, leaving the space blank. A majority of the learners who successfully completed this section of the questionnaire indicated that they reside within the township of Khayelitsha.

#### **Figure 1**

This is a map of the township of Khayelitsha, indicating the location of school V

#### **Figure 2**

This map locates the dwellings of the Grade Seven learners of school V. The buffer zones of four kilometers indicate the distances from their homes to the school.

Figure I: The location of school V

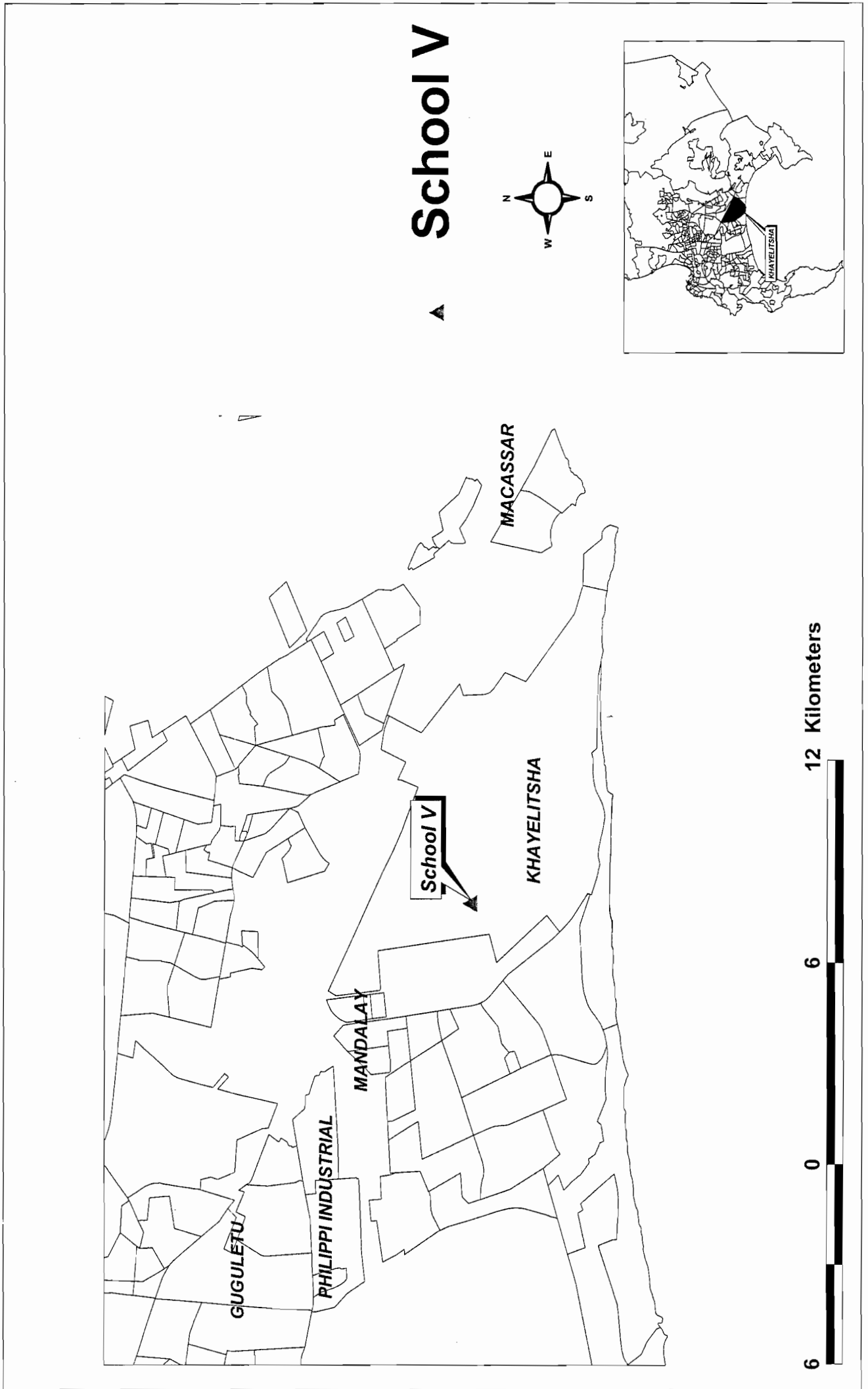
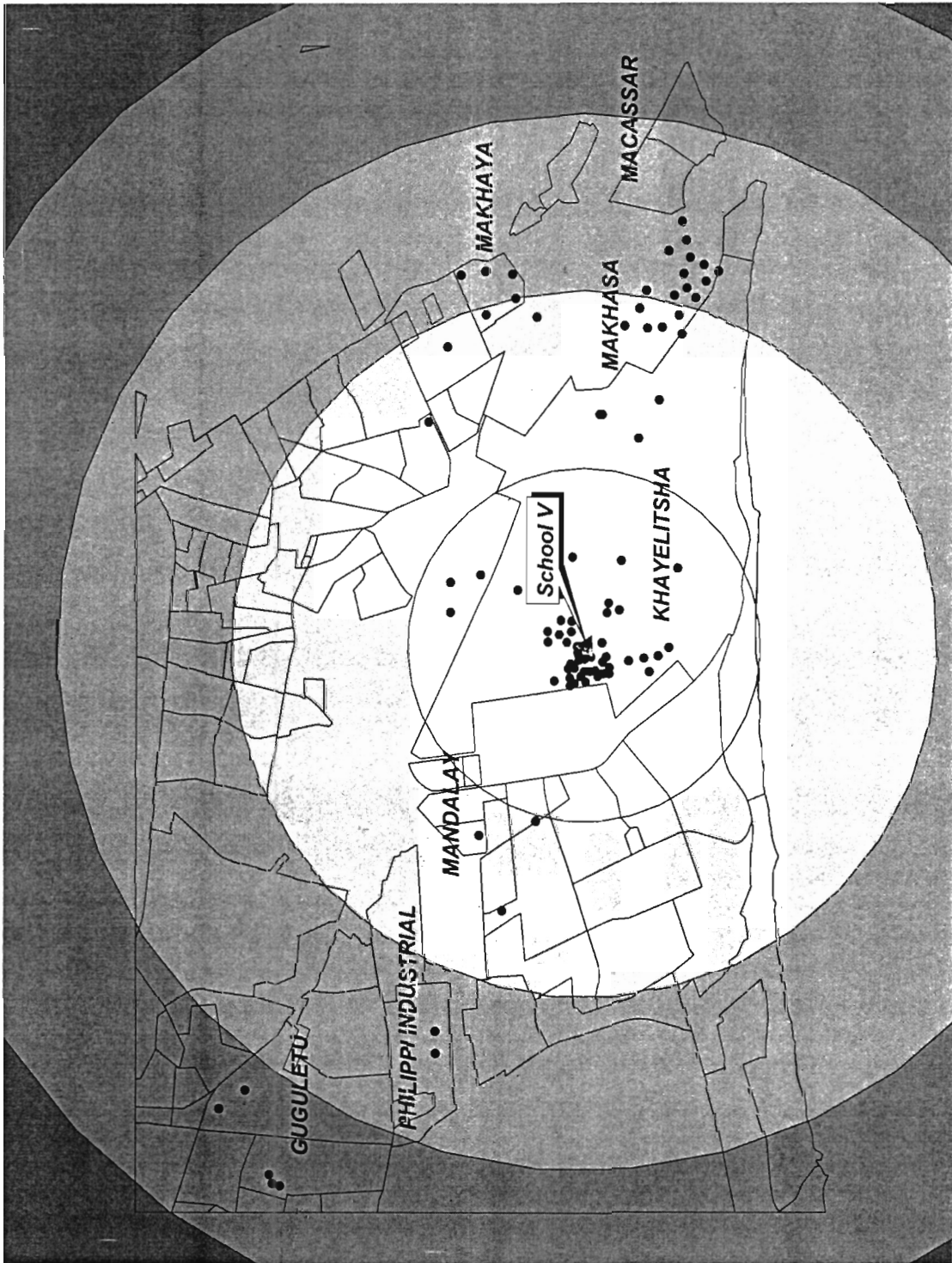


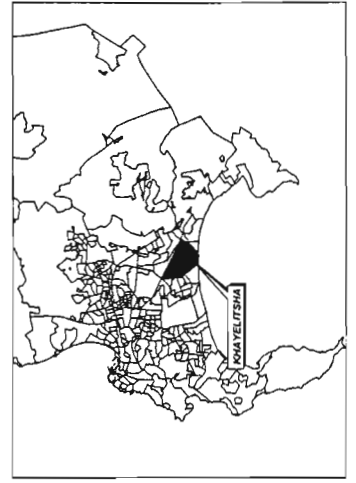
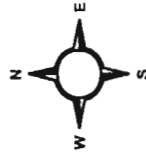
Figure 2: Estimated student distribution



▲ School V  
 • Grade 7 Learners

Distance Zones (km)

48	19	18	5	0
4 Km	8 Km	12 Km	16 Km	20 Km



12 Kilometers



**Table 1**

**Count of students by distance**

<b>Buffer Distance</b>	<b>Count</b>
<b>4 km</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>8 km</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>12 km</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>16 km</b>	<b>5</b>

The results of the application of buffer distance zones on the map indicate that slightly over half of the learners who correctly filled in their addresses (52.2%) live within four kilometres of the school; while the rest reside between the radius of eight kilometres and sixteen kilometres from the school (47.7 %).

**4.4.3 Reasons for Selection of School V**

This part of the questionnaire was an open-ended question in which parents were at liberty to furnish any response that they deemed appropriate in their situation. Of the 70 questionnaires that were returned, two parents left this section blank.

**Table 2**

**Choice makers' responses**

<b>CHOICE MAKERS' RESPONSES</b>	<b>COUNT</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>PERCEIVED ACADEMIC STATUS OF SCHOOL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
<b>NEARNESS TO HOME OF SCHOOL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19.1%</b>
<b>OTHER SCHOOLS WERE FULL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
<b>NO REASON FOR SELECTION</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
<b>FAMILY MEMBER WAS FORMER STUDENT</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.4%</b>

#### **4.4.3.1 First Response: Perceived Academic Status of the School**

Responses that reflect the fact that parents perceive school V as a quality school account for a significant 67.6%. Responses touch on areas such as curriculum, teaching and learning and availability of resources to express the academic status of the school. Below is a breakdown of the type of responses that were given in this category.

##### **4.4.3.1.1 The School Offers A Good Education**

Although choice makers did not elaborate on what they consider to be a good education with only a few of them making reference to school achievements, 25 choice makers indicated that this is what drew them to the school. It can be inferred that they perceive the school to be of a high academic status.

##### **4.4.3.1.2 Efforts of Teachers to Uplift the Standard of Education**

Ten choice makers decided that the school is a quality one because of the culture of teaching and learning at the school largely fostered by what they perceived as quality teachers.

##### **4.4.3.1.3 Resources**

Four choice makers selected the school on the basis that they perceived it to be an advanced school, with the use of computers, and the activities and sport offered at the school.

##### **4.4.3.1.4 A Caring Environment**

Four choice makers indicated that they selected the school because it is a caring environment. They mentioned that they chose the school because of the way their children are treated there.

##### **4.4.3.1.5 Physical State of the School**

Three choice makers said that they selected the school because it is clean and neat.

#### **4.4.3.1.6 Finance Friendliness**

Three choice makers selected the school because they said it tolerated parents who struggle financially and fees are kept low at the school.

#### **4.4.3.1.7 School Feeding Program**

For one choice maker, it was the school - feeding program that motivated selection of the school.

#### **4.4.3.1.8 Like the School**

Three choice makers indicated that they liked the school without providing any details to elaborate on this.

#### **4.4.3.2 Second Response: Nearness to Home**

This category of choice makers scored a distant second to the first category (perceived academic status) with only 19.1% of parents indicating that they selected the school because of proximity to their homes. Due to the open - ended nature of this particular question, some choice makers gave more than one reason for the selection of school V. Of this group, 5.8% indicated that they were motivated by the combined reasons of what they perceived as the academic status of the school and closeness of the school to their homes.

#### **4.4.3.3 Third Response: Other Schools Were Full**

8.8% of the choice makers indicated that they are at the school V because other schools were full. This school shortage particularly in the informal sections of Khayelitsha may be attributed to the fast expansion of the settlement which houses ever increasing numbers of migrants from other provinces, while social facilities to cater for this expansion, such as schools are built at a much slower rate.

#### **4.4.3.4 Fourth Response: Other Reasons**

Two choice makers indicated expressly that they had no reason for selection of school V in particular, while one felt that the fact that a member of the family had gone through the same system was enough to persuade them to select the school.

#### **4.4.3.5 Conclusion**

In concluding this section, the results of this analysis indicate that the majority of these learners are at the school V mainly because it is perceived to be a quality school, as opposed to its being close to their homes. The fact that there is another primary school next to school V further serves to compound the argument that parents would have made a choice between this school and its neighbours.

#### **4.4.4 LEARNER MIGRATION**

In order to determine whether learners remain at the school throughout their primary school career, Grade Seven learners were asked to register the year of their enrolment. Due to the simplicity of this particular question, all the learners completed this part successfully. An outstanding feature in the responses is that only three learners who started out at the school in 1991 as Grade One pupils were still at the school. The table below is a breakdown of when the Grade Seven learners enrolled at the school.

**Table 3**

**Years of enrolment of Grade Seven learners**

<b>Year of Enrolment</b>	<b>Count (learners)</b>
1999	20
1998	10
1997	7
1996	8
1995	6
1994	4
1993	21
1992	11
1991	3

Half of the Grade Seven learners joined the school in the last four years alone, an indication of the high levels of migration into the school, and which also alludes to migration out of the school. It may be reasonably correct to conclude that these learners actually find places in the school due to the fact that some of these positions may have been vacated by other learners. The degree of learner mobility would suggest that the learners relate to the school in a way which is governed by the logic of school choice rather than by the logic of 'the community school'.

## **4.5 CONTACT BETWEEN PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL**

In this sub-section, the form and content of relations between learner families and the school were studied. Two key areas were examined: the relations mediated by the School Governing Body, and the relations mediated by the school management.

### **4.5.1 Relations mediated by School Governing Body**

In this part, contact between members of the School Governing Body (SGB) and other people whether they are parents or non-parents will be examined. The analysis will focus on three points: what was the reason for the contact; who was involved in the contact, and the form of the contact. Seven areas will be discussed, namely school fees, fundraising, the financial report, staff employment and promotions, recruitment, learner progress and services.

#### **4.5.1.1 Fees**

The main issue concerning school fees in 1999 was whether the amount should be raised. It is a requirement of the South African Schools' Act (SASA) that parents be consulted by the School Governing Body (SGB) as far as whether the school will charge fees first and foremost, and what those fees should be. In accordance to this requirement, this issue was placed in the agenda of one of the parent meetings at the school. The matter was tabled and an unanimous decision was reached by a majority of parents and SGB members that the amount of R120 per year should remain.

#### **4.5.1.2 Fundraising**

Fund-raising is also one of the agenda at the parent meetings led by the SGB. Mainly, discussions centered around ways and means that money can be raised. This money is needed in such areas as the maintenance of school grounds and buildings. During the year 1999, for example, the school received R15,000 from the Western Cape Education Department for fencing the school, but still needed to raise a further R24,000.

Through interviewing the SGB members, the various ways in which funds were raised in 1999 through different agents have been compiled for analysis. These are:

- (a) Parents' direct contributions;
- (b) Requesting donations from the community using money collection forms: parents made a decision about the amount of money that each household would collect;
- (c) Hosting entertainment items such as plays at the school by learners, and opening the doors to all members of the community;
- (d) Selling sweets, sandwiches and soft drinks to the community during sports functions. Here business involvement is evident in the example of Coca Cola company which gave drinks to the school at the give away wholesale price of approximately R 1.50 so that these could be re- sold at a retail price of R2.50 to the benefit of the school;
- (e) There was mention of an individual donation by one well-wisher of the school and former parent who runs a successful uniform making business.

On the issue of fund-raising, it is clear that the school has relationships of varying depth with these groups of people: the student and parent community and the neighbors and friends of the parental community. It is significant that the matters reported to parents relate mainly to finances and employment and not, for example, to the learning process. Thus, while parents interests are acknowledged, these interests are constituted in a particular way. In other words, when parents interact with the school collectively they do so in a way which is similar to shareholders in a company, that is, as consumers who are protecting their investment.

#### **4.5.1.3 Financial Report**

The financial report is an annual report of how money was spent and the current financial status of the school. Included in this report are details such as interest and expenditures, including some written off debts. At the school V, this report is presented during parent meetings convened by the School Governing Body (SGB). Although this is in keeping with National policy in the South African Schools' Act (SASA), which stipulates that school financial statements are public documents, it is this particular group, the parents, who receive the report.

#### **4.5.1.4 Staff Employment and Promotions**

In 1999, the discussion of staff employment and promotions featured prominently. This was particularly due to the fact that there was a vacancy in the all-important position of school principal, and there was need for a Head of Department as well.

The SGB handled this matter during a parental meeting in which a report was made, furnishing parents with details of how the recent vacancy of principal was applied for and taken by the current principal. Her former job of deputy principal was subsequently announced and advertised, including the details of the procedure that would be followed in filling in this post. The confirmation of the position of H.O.D was also announced.

The retrenchment of teachers was reported to the parents. The school had lost four members of staff due to the declining numbers of learners at the school. Also discussed at the meetings was the issue of finding the right person to take up the position of caretaker the following year, as the current person holding the position was due to retire. At the same time parents were informed that the government was only willing to pay for one person to perform duties in the school such as care taking, cleaning and performing odd jobs.

While it is clear that parents were not involved in the process of employment of staff except through their SGB members, the school took the time to communicate to them what was happening as far as the staff was concerned. This relationship is akin to a business relationship whereby the shareholders of a company are briefed on details of their common interest. The procedure of filling in the post indicates the openness of the whole proceeding to public scrutiny, and increases the sense of involvement and participation in the parents. However, the non-parents who live around the school were completely left out in the whole proceeding.

It is the parent community that also shared the concerns of the retrenchment of teachers, and became involved in the school efforts to increase learner numbers at the school, a prerequisite for retaining members of the staff. This concern found expression mainly with the issue of transport, which was strongly linked to the issue of dwindling numbers of learners.

#### **4.5.1.5 Parental Employment at School**

Part of the duty of the School Governing Body (SGB) according to the South African Schools' Act (SASA) (1996), is to encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school. At school V, voluntary services were encouraged and accepted in areas such as cleaning the school, tending the gardens and cooking the school lunch. However during 1999, very few parents at the school offered their voluntary services, apart from the members of the SGB. Two mothers tended the garden, and were also during the time attending workshops in gardening so that they could share their skills with the pupils, and four other mothers cooked the school lunch. Of the cooks, two worked on a voluntary basis, while the other two who started out as volunteers were now on the school pay roll. In an interview with the school principal, it transpired that in the past, there was a group of parents who had volunteered to clean the school. However, this came to an end when the school management decided to take up one of the parents as a paid worker in the school. The rest of the parents promptly terminated their voluntary services out of 'resentment that they had been left out', according to the school principal. This suggests that the voluntary services offered at the school by the parents, were indeed

hardly out of concern and involvement for the effective running of the school, but rather strongly tied to seeking job opportunities.

A group of parents took up paid work at the school during such times as when the school buildings were undergoing repair and other face-lifting maintenance periods during 1999. These parents were those who had in the past, volunteered their services in such areas as sweeping and cleaning the school. The school 'rewarded' their services by calling upon them for paid work when the need arose.

Some parents however had jobs of a more permanent nature at the school, two such examples being the caretaker, who doubled as grounds man and general laborer, and the school cleaner.

Again, the logic of parent participation fell within the logic of a business paradigm, with the school as employer of parents.

#### **4.5.2 Relations Mediated by School Management**

##### **4.5.2.1 Learner Recruitment**

The issue of dwindling numbers of children at school V was of great concern in 1999, and triggered discussions by parents and school management on scouting for and registering more children at the school. Already as a result of declining numbers, a number of teachers were facing imminent retrenchment. The decline of student numbers at the school could be attributed to certain factors:

- (a) School V was among four other schools, which were built to serve a formal section of Khayelitsha, sections A – E. This section was however small, and thus the members of the school going population were too few to share among the four schools.
- (b) The people living in the formal section of Khayelitsha could generally afford to send their children to the 'better' schools in formerly House of Assembly (HOA)

and House of Representatives (HOR) schools, thus decreasing the numbers of enrolments in nearby schools.

Due to increased urban migration leading to the development and expansion of informal settlements such as Town 2, Harare, Site C and Makhasa in places surrounding the formal sections, the schools in these places became overcrowded to the extent that the platoon system was applied to these schools. This forced learners in these settlements to seek enrolment opportunities further in the emptying schools in the formal areas.

This was at a time when school V urgently required to increase their enrollment numbers at the school. The school management recognized the potential for a ready supply of learners from the informal areas, and this motivated a series of active recruitment campaigns in these areas at the beginning of 1999, when teachers went out mainly to scout and register learners to the school.

The school began to bus in learners from further afield in order to increase enrolment numbers.

As a direct consequence of the introduction of bussing services at the school, in addition to the four meetings held at the school in 1999, five parental meetings were convened at one of the informal settlements, Makhasa, from where approximately 175 learners at the school resided. Makhasa was approximately seven kilometers from the school, and the attendance of the group of learners who resided there was dependent on the provision of the buses that were fully subsidized by the Western Cape Education Department. These buses collected the learners from their homes and returned them in the evenings.

At these meetings, the parents and educators of school V joined together in a decision to meet the Director of Education early in 1999 regarding the bussing of learners, and went as far as to stage a protest in Cape Town to pressurize the Western Cape Education Department to fund this project. As a direct result of these protests, in April 1999, the bus services were restored to the pupils. However, not long after this, the bussing services were withdrawn in the month of August 1999 when the Western Cape

Education Department stopped payments for transport services. With the majority of the learners coming from families which could hardly afford a loaf of bread “let alone taxi fare”, according to one SGB member, only two options were left open to them:

(a) They had to walk to school at the high risk to their lives in the face of exposure to crime in the large open fields and bushes that had to be traversed in the seven kilometre walk to get to the school. For children of all ages, both girls and boys, this was no doubt a dangerous and exhausting exercise.

(b) Some were forced to drop out of the school. In 1999 alone, seventeen Grade Seven learners dropped out of the school due to this problem.

Prior to, and subsequently after the buses withheld their services, the numerous meetings that were held both at the school and at Makhasa to discuss this issue were indicative of how seriously this matter was considered at school V. The matter of the bus was pursued persistently and at the end of the year, a group of teachers and parents representing the school visited the Education Department to discuss and press matters concerning this issue. Their efforts though determined were however fruitless in the end, as the Education Department maintained their stand that they did not have the finances to assist these learners. These events point to the pressures on schools to extend access to learners who live further afield in order to maintain teacher pupil ratios and to retain staff.

#### **4.5.2.2 Learner progress**

Parents sometimes visited the school, particularly the class teacher of their children, seeking to know their children’s progress. These visits were mainly on the initiative of school management, where parents were invited. However, there were parents who turned up on their own prerogative. In these meetings with teachers and sometimes with the school principal, issues concerning their children’s health and learning problems were dealt with. Some parents made visits to discuss financial issues.

An open-ended question was formulated in the second section of the questionnaire to elicit the nature of these visits by parents. Nineteen questionnaires were either incomplete or blank. 25 parents (49%) said that in 1999 they went to the school for

the sole reason of their individual children's progress, registration, fees and individual problems. 23 parents (45.09%) said that they went because of their individual children as well as attended parents' meetings. Among these were parents who, although they did not attend the meetings, visited the school for the express purpose of finding out what had been discussed at the meetings that they had missed. Three parents (5.8%) indicated that they visited the school only to attend parents meetings and nothing else.

#### **4.5.2.3 Conclusion**

Slightly more than 50% of the parents attended the parents meetings, while 49% of these did not. The 1% difference would be open to the interpretation that it was only a slight majority of the parents who showed interest in the general matters pertaining to the school and its effective running as opposed to the 49% who only wish to know about matters pertaining to their individual children, with little or no concern about the overall running of the school.

### **4.6 CONTACT BETWEEN SCHOOL AND NON - PARENTS**

To study the form and content of the relationships between the school and non - parent residents in the school environment, two areas were looked at: the school notice board, and the relations mediated by the SGB.

#### **4.6.1 Signboard at the School**

##### **Notice**

**No unauthorised person is allowed on the school premises or in school buildings.**

**Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted.**

**By order Director General**

**Department of Education and Training**

**Private Bag X212**

**Pretoria**

This signboard was revealing of what kind of relationship the school had with non - parental community living in the vicinity of the school, and other visitors. As a rule, they were kept out of the premises unless they had the permission of the school management to visit the school for whatever reasons. However, the parental

community had an implicit understanding that they were always welcome to visit the school any time to discuss individual issues.

#### **4.6.2 Use of School Facilities**

Accessibility into the school was granted through the hiring of school facilities by non-parents living around the school.

At a fee of R30 a month, community meetings such as house owners' meetings were held once or twice a week at the school. Other meetings held in the school classrooms included Club meetings, Burial societies, R.D.P meetings and church meetings. These groups rented the classes for a small fee.

The school grounds were utilized for sport, such as soccer, basketball and tennis by local community members. While they did not pay for the use of these facilities in 1999, the school management was considering the possibility of asking all the teams to pay a certain fee for use of the field in the future.

### 4.6.3 Exclusion of Local Youth from Grounds

Although community members were allowed into the school to utilise the school facilities such as the classrooms and fields, there was an unwanted group, particularly the youth, which was perceived as a source of trouble to the school. It is this group that was thought to be responsible for cutting the fence in order to use the soccer field without obtaining authorisation; and the group that was mainly suspected to have been involved in the robberies and thefts that had occurred in the school. They had been accused of vandalising the tennis courts and ruining the grass on the fields. Due to these problems, the school had considered setting up an electric fence to keep out unwanted 'neighbourly' visits to the school.

In an interview with the researcher, one of the School Governing Body Members (SGB) explained that the school had allowed one of the soccer clubs to use the field in the hope that they would protect the school from vandalism during the weekends. However, this plan failed when the coach of this particular team took the opportunity to arrange to let other teams from other areas use the field as well. This, in the view of the school management, only served to expose the school to further risks of vandalism and burglaries.

To support their need for the fence, the SGB board members noted that theft in the school had been considerably reduced with the setting up of an electric fence in the next school, which bordered school V. However, the issue was still one of contention with some members being of the opinion that the fence would be a threat to the small children that the school served.

Contact with the adjacent community therefore mainly took two forms: (a) groups within the local community which paid to use facilities, and (b) efforts to keep out the rest such as the youth who used the facilities illegitimately. This was mainly through efforts to erect a school fence and the notice board.

## **4.7 CONTACT BETWEEN SCHOOL V AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Relationship between school V and outside organizations such as government officials and agencies, non-governmental organizations and private enterprises mainly took two forms: those that specialized in offering academic assistance and those that gave aid of non-academic nature.

### **4.7.1 Non - Academic Aid**

There were organizations and individuals who visited the school mainly to offer some form of assistance, such as the nurses from government hospitals who came to immunize the learners against diseases such as tuberculosis; and social workers from the Trauma Department of the Western Cape who brought awareness campaigns in a bid to advise parents on how to deal with problem children and child abuse issues. Other assistance came in form of companies which came either to make donations -for instance, Total donated the beautiful school garden and also presented the school with some cardboard desks-, or to give career talks to advice learners on their future work options.

Apart from such organizations, there were individuals who visited the school mainly to offer expert assistance of a particular nature. These included an auditor, and the former school principal of the school.

### **4.7.2 Academic Support**

From the minutes of the meetings it became apparent that an issue that was accorded time at one of the meetings and which pertained directly to the improvement of the academic work of the learners at the school, was a detailed report to the parents, of the contacts that the school had had in the year 1999 with outside organizations for this particular purpose. These have included:

- Mathematics Learning and Teaching Initiative - MALATI - sponsored by the University of Stellenbosch: the school got involved with this institution of learning, in working to improve and develop Mathematics and in training learners in independent problem solving;
- Teacher Support Programme - TSP: this is an organization which involves itself with developing teachers, empowering them and re-training them in the new teaching methods;
- READ: the school is also involved with the center for upgrading English;
- Child to Child: this is a health programme that is concerned with enabling learners in learning and taking care of their health , empowering them with skills for helping other children; an example here is that of the class representative who is equipped to spot illnesses affecting their classmates and to promptly report them to the organization representatives or school authorities;
- The Dutch School - Kapstad. The school works closely with the Dutch school in Cape Town and recently three children who performed at the top levels at the school in Grade 4 were selected and invited to study at the Dutch School, as a way of rewarding their efforts and improving their academic chances in a 'better' school. So far, one learner has already left school V through this venture.
- Western Cape Music Literacy Project: Through this project, children have the opportunity to play musical instruments such as the Guitar and the Violin, which would otherwise have been very expensive.

A point worth noting is that the majority of these projects and institutions which have involved themselves with school V, contributing to the upliftment of the academic standard of the learners are not necessarily located in the neighborhood of the school, and come from as far as Cape Town and Stellenbosch, approaching schools such as school V with their own projects, plans and agendas. Usually it is up to the parental community of the schools to consent to getting involved, and hence the necessity for the school management of reporting to them the work and progress of these organizations. Many of these organizations provide their services for no financial gain from the school or the learners, but it is evident that they do obtain sponsorship from elsewhere in order to provide the means for their projects.

There however are those organizations, which demand a fee up front for their assistance. One such organization, ORT- Step, a government allied NGO project, proposed to the school what can be described as a business motivated project. The school stood to benefit by having the NGO install some equipment in their premises while in exchange, learners at the school could be encouraged to get involved with acquainting themselves with technological skills at a certain stipulated cost. This project did indeed take off, but failed after a short period of time because of failure on the part of some of the parents to keep up with the payment of their children's fees. The focus of the project was therefore instead shifted to the training of four teachers from the school at the cost of R2000 per person for a period of two years, with the prospect that these skills are later transferred to the learners.

School contact with these organizations has been on the basis of improving the academic performance at the school, or broadening the curriculum options that are offered, hereby proving that there is a role for the organizations in the school. However, the basis of this involvement is at times commercially motivated, while others offer their services for no cost to the school.

#### **4.7.3 Conclusion**

With the consent of the parents, school V has been considerably involved with organizations that have been beneficial to the learners in one way or other. Although some projects were not successful mainly due to the lack of finances by some of the parents as in the ORT - Step project, the general consensus at school V is that the input of organizations is welcomed and found useful.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research project. The features of the relationship between school V and its 'community' and those prescribed by the policy documents will be compared. This will lead to locating the said features in those prescribed by the policy documents. The chapter will conclude with some recommendations for policy.

#### **5.2 SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS BASED ON SCHOOL CHOICE**

Through analysis of three principal areas: where Grade Seven learners live, their reasons for selection of school V and learner migration, there is strong evidence of exercising of school choice as opposed to the automatic sending of children to the school closest to their homes.

##### **5.2.1 Where Learners Live**

Almost half of the Grade Seven learners (48.4%) do not live close to the school. The analysis of their addresses clearly shows that almost half of the Grade Seven learners live between the radius of eight kilometers and sixteen kilometers from school V. This is open to the interpretation that the learners have obviously bypassed other schools closer to their homes to attend school V, a clear implication of the use of school choice.

The fact that these learners do not come from the territorial locality of the school contradicts the notion of school community as referring to those living in proximity to the school.

### **5.2.2 Reasons for Selection of School V**

A majority of learners (67.6%) indicated that they selected school V because of the perceived academic status of the school, as opposed to 19.1% who selected the school mainly due to nearness of home to school V. Again, this is an indication that the majority of learners at the school exercised some kind of choice in enrolling at the school, as opposed to automatically attending the school physically nearest to their homes.

### **5.2.3 Learner Migration**

The fact that only three grade seven learners who had enrolled in 1991 as grade ones were still in the school by 1999 strongly alludes to high levels of learner migration both in and out of school V. This evidence further corroborates the theory that a majority of grade seven learners at school V are attending the school because they have chosen it, as opposed to the fact that this school is nearest to their homes.

## **5.3 COMPARISONS BETWEEN HOW PARENTS AND NON – PARENTS RELATE WITH SCHOOL V**

Comparing the way the school relates to the parents of the school and the non – parents living around the school helps to emphasize the differences and in features of the relationship.

One of the differences between the two groups is in the level of participation in essential school matters. In school V, it is evident that parental participation is particularly high and intimate, while non–parents are almost completely left out and treated almost with apathy. This is in such areas as policy making, financing, problem solving, evaluation and employment.

### **5.3.1 Policymaking: Setting the Fees**

In policy making, parental input is required to decide on whether fees should be raised or not. Through a voting system, an important decision is reached: the fee remains the same for the year 1999. While it is a matter of national policy that this issue should be conducted in this particular manner, all stakeholders of education including people who may not have children at the particular school are excluded. The decision-making is left to those whose children learn at the school, namely the parent community of school V.

### **5.3.2 Financing**

In financing, the parents and learners are highly involved in fundraising through various means including parents' direct contributions and requesting donations from the community using money collection forms.

While the non-parent community indirectly participates in financing operations in the school through their contributions, it is the parental and learner community who are the principal fundraisers in that they are the group that have to come up with the ideas and the plans for fundraising: it is the parents who will procure the items to be sold for this purpose, while their children involve themselves in the plays for entertainment.

Fundraising therefore becomes a collective issue with the parents at the forefront, followed by members of the broader community. While it is clear that both the parent and non-parent community have a collective interest in the school, nevertheless their levels of commitment for its effective functioning through fundraising are not equal. The parents and learners have a greater commitment than the non-parents in that while each household of parents at the school will be required to contribute an agreed upon stipulated amount, members of the non-parent community and the business community only do so out of volition. Nothing is mandatory, but only depends hugely on their level of goodwill, and amount of money available at their disposal to make donations. This means that certain members of the non-parent community will not make a contribution nor feel obligated to do so. On the other hand, with the parent community, whether or not they have ready money, they are committed to paying a

certain amount of money to the school to cater for various needs, including maintaining the school grounds and fence. The school is therefore 'owned' by the parental community in this respect, as it is they who are expected to raise funds by the school.

### **5.3.3 Financial Reports**

The school SGB presents the financial report to the parents annually. Clearly, the non-parents are excluded in this exercise such that even though they may have contributed to the school in any way, the school does not feel obliged to furnish them with a report. It is only the parents who are given this financial report, and afforded an opportunity to make queries for clarifications on spending and other areas of interest. This closely suggests that this is a privileged group at the school, and their relationship closely resembles that of a business in which members are updated of their investments in the company. Parents here are viewed as having ownership in this educational enterprise, while the non-parents are left out of the picture.

### **5.3.4 Staff Employment and Promotions**

While it is clear that parents were not involved in the employment of staff except through their SGB members the school took the time to communicate to them what was happening as far as the staff was concerned. This relationship is akin to a business relationship whereby the shareholders of a company are briefed on details of their common interest. The procedure of filling the post indicates the openness of the whole proceeding to public scrutiny and increases the sense of involvement and participation in the parents. However, the non-parents who live around the school were completely left out in the whole proceeding.

The parent community also shared the concerns of the retrenchment of teachers and became involved in the school endeavors to increase learner numbers at the school. This issue was mainly expressed with the issue of transport, which is strongly linked to the issue of dwindling numbers of learners.

### **5.3.5 Voluntary Services and Parental Employment at School**

In evaluating the services offered to the school it becomes clear that this is mainly a prerogative of the parents of the school. While only a negligible number of parents offered their services in 1999, the majority of whom worked for the school for a pay, it is notable that non-parents were not involved in providing services of any kind at the school, whether for a pay or not. It is noted however that services offered to the school by the parents were largely of a self interested nature whereby parents' concerns were for themselves and their children, rather than exercising their role purely as citizens: offering voluntary services to the school.

### **5.3.6 Bussing Learners to School**

Meetings pertaining to this issue and held at Makhasa were mainly to report and give progress of the efforts of the SGB members and teachers in trying to get the department to recommit it self to paying for the bussing of the children. At these meetings, parents' suggestions, opinions and involvement were actively solicited. The relationship between the school and parents of the learners who resided in the informal areas such as Makhasa was one that is mainly dependent on the existence of the bus services. The withdrawal of the bus threatened this relationship and in some extreme instances had led to the severance of it through learner dropout and migration. Parents who could not afford the taxi fares and who would not risk their children's security by having them walk to school withdrew them from the school.

The meetings at Makhasa reveal a highly intimate relationship between the school and the parent community from this place. This is to the extent that the teachers and parents join together to get the Department to fund the bussing of the learners. Non-parental members of the community are not involved in this struggle for the bus, leaving the problem to those who are directly benefiting from the project.

### **5.3.7 Conclusion**

The comparison between how parents and non – parents relate with school V has demonstrated that it is the parents who are regarded as the school community. However, interactions between the school and parents as a collective relate largely to finances and teacher employment. This suggests that the nature of the relationship follows the logic of consumer investment in a business rather than shared interest in educational processes. The educational concerns of students are dealt with in individualized interactions with parents. The only exception to this is the issue of the bus.

## 5.4 LINKING THE DOCUMENTS TO FEATURES OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

This section will focus on the compatibility of features of school and community relations to the two policy documents: the South African School's act (SASA) and the National Director of Education's (NDE) 'Call to Action' document. The discussion will first look at aspects such as where learners live, why they selected school V and learner migration. Next, the relationship between school V and its parent community, non-parents and organizations will be discussed in the light of the two documents.

While the NDE's document makes the assumption that learners are drawn from the immediate environment of the school, the address analysis proved otherwise. The results showed that about half of the learners of Grade Seven lived outside the immediate neighborhood of school V. This analysis is more compatible with the SASA which accepts that learners will be drawn from anywhere in the province (Department of Education, 1996).

Within the NDE's assumption that learners are from the school neighborhood is the presumption that learners tend to automatically attend the nearest school to their homes. In contrast, results of the study show that enrollment at school V by majority of the Grade Seven learners was based on the fact that choice makers perceived school V as a quality school as opposed to being the closest school from home. In anticipation for and to facilitate school choice, the SASA provides that public schools may not discriminate *in any way* in the admission of learners. This clearly includes learners from outside the school zone or district.

Learner migration is hardly mentioned as a factor in the NDE's document clearly because the assumption is that learners enroll and stay at the local school. The data however indicates high levels of migration in and out of school V. Although this is not directly mentioned in the SASA document, migration, an aspect of school choice, is indirectly acknowledged by encouraging the payment of fees and by placing the responsibility of the admission policy in the hands of the School Governing Body.

In the contact between the 'School Community' and the school, it is indeed the parents who feature greatly at school V, in total contrast to the assumptions of the NDE's document, which applies the term to include both parents and non-parents in the school neighborhood. The school contact with parents through the SGB is very high. Parents are highly involved in decision-making concerning fees and participate directly in fundraising. The financial report is presented to the parents. They are also involved in staff employment even though their participation is nominal, limited to receiving a report from the SGB. Parents are offered temporary and even permanent employment at the school, while a few offer voluntary services. All these aspects highly conform to the dictates of the SASA document, which states that among the functions of all governing bodies, is to:

- Encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school;
  - Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Educators Employment Act, 1994 (Proclamation N0 138 of 1994), and the labor relations Act 1995 (Act N0 66 of 1995);
  - Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non - educator staff at the school, subject to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation N0 103 of 1994), and the Labor Relations Act, 1995 (Act N0 66 of 1995)
- (Department of Education, 1996:16)

The governing body must also function in terms of a constitution that must provide for, among others,

- Meetings of the governing body with parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school, respectively, at least once a year; and
- Rendering a report on its activities to parents, learners, educators and other staff of the school at least once a year (Department of Education, 1996:16)

Thus the non-parental community does not feature at all in the SASA, except perhaps to keep them out. Those who wish to use the school facilities are expected to pay for them as the governing body may determine (SASA, 1996). This is reflected in the results of the study at school V that displays a notice board at the school gate motivated to keep the non - parental community out of the school. The youth that are particularly excluded from using the school grounds and other persons are charged a certain fee to use any of the school's facilities. Clearly this contradicts the NDE's

document which states that the school facilities should be put to use for youth and adult learning, community meetings, music and drama, sports and recreation (Asmal, 1999).

Contact between the school and outside organizations is high at school V. While the SASA document makes little or no provision for it, it is the one aspect that the NDE's document acknowledges and lauds, viewing this liaison as a means to support the school. He says that ' there is a role in a community school for religious bodies, businesses, cultural groups, sports clubs and civic associations, both to serve their own requirements and to contribute to the school's learning programme both in and out of school hours' (Asmal, 1999:9).

In conclusion, contact between school V and the community corresponds to the recommendations of the South African Schools' Act (1996) rather than the National Director of Education's document, Call to Action: Mobilizing Citizens to Build a South African Education and Training System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Asmal 1999).

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

In the ‘Call to Action Paper’, Asmal’s bid to summon the aid of the community to rally around the schools in order to combat crime may in actuality be less feasible in the case of school V than imagined. This study has demonstrated that the school – community links at school V is mainly with the parental community, which comprises of caregivers and learners, the characteristics of which fall in more typically with the typology of the consumer community than the other two, the interest and spatially proximate or local community as developed in chapter two. This is a community that has been shaped mainly by school choice policies. Contact is increasingly between the school and parents because through the payment of fees, they have invested in the system, while the broader community, who seemingly have not directly invested in education do not engage with the system at all, except perhaps in their role in organizations. Plank (1996) finds that affirmations of community in contemporary policy debates may often be damaging rather than helpful, for two main reasons. First, the community that is commonly invoked by policy analysts does not exist, either because it has vanished forever or because it remains to be created. Second, the community that exists is in fact often very different from the one imagined by analysts. Plank (1996) adds that shifting power and responsibility to the community may therefore have unexpected and pernicious consequences.

This study on school–community relations at school V finds these assertions by Plank to hold water to a great extent. With choice, learners can attend the school they wish to, in this case school V, and this rules out compulsory or automatic attendance at the local school. With school choice, choice makers can migrate, such that they have no loyalty to any particular school. Moreover, ownership of the school is transferred to the parents and learners, and not the neighbors of the school.

School choice policies as advocated in the SASA have far reaching consequences in the relationship between school V and its community to the extent of narrowing the term ‘school community’ to refer to the parents and caregivers and defining this in terms of consumer protection of investor interests.

School choice policies therefore undermine the NDE's call for the revitalization of the 'local community' particularly in the case of school V because this community no longer exists.

For the new policy to exist therefore, school choice policies in South Africa would have to be revoked, an almost impossible task, considering that this is a deeply entrenched policy and that privatization of education is a worldwide trend today.

## 5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY

1. There is a huge discrepancy between the two policies, the SASA on one hand and the 'Call to Action' on the other. The SASA supports school choice and fee payment while the 'Call to Action' acknowledges neither. This discrepancy points to a lack of coherence in educational policy. Instead of incrementally developing policy, the 'Call to Action' effectively contradicts all that the SASA stands for and in doing so fails to acknowledge the effect of SASA in schools. Clearly the 'Call to Action' cannot be implemented in school V because of the irreversible consequences of school choice policies introduced by SASA.

There is therefore an imperative that future policy directives be more carefully drawn, taking into consideration all former and existing policy in order to avoid contradictions and to arrive at more feasible strategies for education.

2. The second recommendation for policy is that policymakers should take into consideration that communities have changed, and that educational responsibility cannot be shifted on to them. This study has shown that the calls for schools to become centers of community life (Asmal, 1999) are incompatible with reality, in the case of school V, a public school situated right within a viable community. Non-parents living in the vicinity of the school do not always enroll their children at the school closest to their home, in this case, school V. By the same token, the learners at the school do not always live close to the school. This points to a conflict of interests among the local community in that their support will be rather invested at the school which their children attend, while those who have no children at the school find that they have nothing to do with the school at all, except perhaps when in need of facilities for their own interests. Plank (1996) admonishes that

“ It is comforting to think that communities rich in social capital are all around us, simply awaiting the call to renewed social responsibility, but in many places they are not, and assigning large public responsibilities to communities poor in social capital may make them worse rather than better off” (Plank, 1996:15).

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## APPENDIX I

### SAMPLES OF QUESTIONNAIRES

This research is being done by a project at the University of Cape Town. Its purpose is to help the Education Department understand the schools better. The information you give will be kept secret. *Olu phando - lwazi lwenziwa yidyunivetithi yasekapa. Undoqo walo kukuncedisa isebe lezemfundo ukuba liqondisise ukuba izikolo zisebenza njani. Ingocombolo oyakuyinika iyakugcinwa ifihlakele.*

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GRADE 7 LEARNERS OF SCHOOL V / Imibuzo kubafundi base Vusumoya Primary bebanga igrade 7.

1. FULL NAME / Igama lakho elipheleleyo : -----

AGE / umdala kangakanani: -----

ARE YOU A BOY OR GIRL? Uyinkwenkwe okanye intombazana:

BOY / inkwekwe [ ] GIRL / intombazana [ ]

2. ADDRESS / idilesi yakho : -----  
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3. IS SCHOOL V THE SCHOOL CLOSEST TO YOUR HOME? / ingaba iVusumoya sesona sikolo sikufutshane nekhaya lakho? YES [ ] NO [ ]

4. IN WHAT GRADE WERE YOU IN YOUR FIRST YEAR AT SCHOOL V? / ukuqala kwakho ukufunda e Vusumoya, wawukweyiphi igrade?-----  
-

5. WHAT YEAR WAS THAT? / kwakungowuphi unyaka? 19 -----

6. HOW DO YOU COME TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY? / uyanjani esikolweni mihla le?

I WALK TO SCHOOL/ ndimamba ngenyawo [ ]

I TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL BY BUS/ ndisebenzisa ibhasi ukuya nokubuya [ ]

I TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL BY TRAIN / ndisebenzisa uloliwe ukuya nokubuya [ ]

I TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL BY CAR/ ndisebenzisa imoto ukuya nokubuya [ ]

This research is being done by a project at the University of Cape Town. Its purpose is to help the Education Department understand the schools better. The information you give will be confidential. *Olu phando - lwazi lwenziwa yidyunivesithi yasekapa. Undoqo walo kukuncedisa isebe lezemfundo ukuba liqondisise ukuba izikolo zisebenza njani. Ingcombolo oyakuyinika iyakugcinwa ifihlakele.*

**QUESTIONNAIRE for parent or adult who looks after / imibuzo kubazali okanye umntu omdala ogcina u**

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There is no correct or wrong answer. Your co - operation will be highly appreciated / *inxaxhepha yakho kolu phando - lwazi iyabulelwa kakhulu. Khumbula ukuba akukho mpendulo ilungileyo okanye engalunganga.*

1. WHAT IS YOUR NAME? / ngubani igama lakho?

---

2. WHAT WORK DO YOU DO? ? usebenza phi, usenza umsebenzi onjani?

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3. HOW MANY CHILDREN IN YOUR HOME ATTEND PRIMARY SCHOOLS?/ ekhayeni lakho, bangapi abantwana abahamba isikolo e primary school?

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4. HOW MANY OF THE CHILDREN AT PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTEND VUSUMOYA PRIMARY?/ ekhayeni lakho, bangapi abantwana abahamba isikolo e Vusumoya?

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5 WHY DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY CHOOSE THIS SCHOOL?/ zizathu zini ezenza ukuba nikhethe esisikolo? -----

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6. HAVE YOU BEEN TO SCHOOL V TO SEE THE TEACHERS OR PRINCIPAL THIS YEAR?/ukhe wandwendwela e Vusumoya ukuya kubona inqununu okanye ootishala? YES/ ewe [ ] NO/ hayi [ ]

(a) IF YES, WHO DID YOU SEE? / ukuba ewe, wabona bani?

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(b) WHAT DID YOU SEE THIS PERSON ABOUT?/ nanixoxa nantonina nalomntu owambonayo?

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7. IF YOU HAVE BEEN TO THE SCHOOL MORE THAN ONCE THIS YEAR, WHAT WAS YOUR REASON FOR GOING THE OTHER TIMES?/ ukuba ukhe wandwendwela esikolweni amatyeli amaninzi, zizathu zini ezazikwenza undwendwele khona?

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## APPENDIX II

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

1(a) HAVE YOU HAD AN ACTIVITY OR MEETING AT THE SCHOOL THIS FOR THE PARENTS?

(b) WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING?

(c) WHAT WAS DISCUSSED?

(d) HOW MANY PARENTS ATTENDED MORE OR LESS?

(e) WHY DO YOU THINK THERE WERE SO FEW / MANY?

2. (a) HAVE YOU HAD A MEEETING(S) THIS YEAR WITH PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE AREA WHO ARE NOT PARENTS AT THE SCHOOL?

(b) WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING (S)?

(c) HOW MANY PEOPLE CAME, MORE OR LESS?

(d) WHO CAME?

(e) WHAT WAS DISCUSSED?

9. AS A SGB MEMBER, WHAT KINDS OF CONTACTS HAVE YOU HAD THIS YEAR WITH OTHER PARENTS? (apart from any meetings mentioned above)  
[EXPLORE ISSUES]

10. AS A SGB MEMBER, WHAT OTHER KINDS OF CONTACTS HAVE YOU HAD THIS YEAR WITH OTHER PEOPLE WHO LIVE NEAR THE SCHOOL WHO DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOL?  
[EXPLORE ISSUES]

11. DO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY USE THE SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR ANY PURPOSE?

12. WHAT DO THEY USE THE SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR?

13. ARE THE PEOPLE OR ORGANISATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL INVOLVED IN THE RAISING OF FUNDS FOR THE SCHOOL IN ANY WAY?  
[EXPLORE ISSUES]

14. HAVE MATTERS CONCERNED WITH SECURITY EVER COME UP IN THIS SCHOOL? [EXPLORE ISSUES]

15. HOW HAVE THEY BEEN DEALT WITH?

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

1. HOW OFTEN DO PARENTS COME TO THE SCHOOL?
2. WHICH PARENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO COME TO THE SCHOOL AND WHICH ARE LEAST LIKELY TO COME?
3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN THINGS THAT PARENTS MOST OFTEN COME TO THE SCHOOL ABOUT?  
[EXPLORE ISSUES]
4. (a) WHERE DO MOST LEARNERS IN THIS SCHOOL LIVE?  
  
(b) HOW DOES THIS AFFECT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL?
5. WHO, WOULD YOU SAY, MAKE UP THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY?
6. (a) IS THERE ANY CONTACT BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND PEOPLE WHO LIVE AROUND THE SCHOOL, WHOSE CHILDREN ARE NOT AT THE SCHOOL?  
  
(b) REGARDING THE CONTACT: WHAT WAS IT ABOUT, AND HOW DID IT HAPPEN?  
[EXPLORE ISSUES]
7. IS THERE A SCHOOL POLICY CONCERNING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL?
8. DO PEOPLE FROM THE AREA EVER COME ONTO THE SCHOOL PREMISES ? [EXPLORE ISSUES]
9. DO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY USE THE SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR ANY PURPOSE?
10. WHAT DO THEY USE THE SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR?
11. ARE THE PEOPLE OR ORGANISATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL INVOLVED IN THE RAISING OF FUNDS FOR THE SCHOOL IN ANY WAY? [EXPLORE ISSUES]
12. HAVE MATTERS CONCERNED WITH SECURITY EVER COME UP IN THIS SCHOOL?
13. HOW HAVE THEY BEEN DEALT WITH?

## APPENDIX III

### SAMPLE LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Janet Shauri  
7 Marlow Road  
Kenilworth 7708  
Cape Town  
6<sup>th</sup> December 1999

Ms Lulu Silwana  
School V  
Khayelitsha  
Cape Town

Dear Ms Silwana,

**Re: Appreciation For Your Time and Assistance**

I refer to our interview on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1999, in which our discussion focused on the relationship between your school, School V, and the community. On behalf of the Learner Progress and Achievement project at the University of Cape Town, I wish to extend my gratitude for your availability and co-operation. I found the discussion that we had to be very stimulating and of great interest and value to our work.

At the request of one of your fellow SGB members, I am presenting the school with a publication which may be of use to you as SGB members. It is titled Governing Schools In the Western Cape. It will be available for you to study it for the benefit of your school.

Thank you again, and I wish you a happy festive season.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Shauri