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Policy after legislation: A case of accommodation?

A case study of a school's response to externally imposed
educational reform between 1994 and 1996

A dissertation presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Index

Chapter 1

Introduction..... pp 1...4

Chapter 2

The Educational Policy context in South Africa before and after 1994..... pp 5...16

Chapter 3

Literature Review..... pp 17...38

Chapter 4

- Research methodology..... pp 39...56
- Introduction..... pp 39...40
 - Data collection **strategies**..... pp 41...50
 - Interviews..... pp 41...42
 - Unstructured interviews..... pp 42...46
 - Focus group interviews..... pp 46...48
 - Questionnaire..... pp 48...49
 - Review of school documents..... pp 50...51
 - Participants: Teachers..... pp 50...51
 - Students..... pp 51
 - Principal..... pp 51
 - Governing body..... pp 51
 - Ethical considerations..... pp 51
 - Data analysis and interpretation..... pp 52...54
 - Criteria for validating qualitative research..... pp 54...56

Chapter 5

- Findings..... pp 57...86
- Introduction..... pp 57...58
- The context..... pp 58...59
- The experience of, and attitude towards the externally imposed change..... pp 60...66
 - The main change: controlling class composition..... pp 60...63
 - Controlling class size..... pp 63...64
 - Controlling consultation..... pp 64...66
 - Missing the circulars..... pp 66
- The school's perception of itself and its place in the process of educational reform..... pp 66...77
- Perceptions of the externally imposed policies and factors which shaped these perceptions..... pp 77...83
 - Seeing the policy..... pp 77...79
 - The medium..... pp 79...81
 - Lack of agency..... pp 81...82
 - "Slow down you move too fast!": The pace of change..... pp 82...83
 - Communication..... pp 83
 - Missing the overall picture..... pp 83
- The path of policy inside the school and the attitude towards the national policy-making process..... pp 83...84
- Factors facilitating the change process..... pp 84...86
 - What helped..... pp 84...85
 - What would have helped..... pp 85...86

Chapter 6

- Discussion..... pp 87...108
- Introduction..... pp 87
- The response to the legislated reform : a case of accommodation?..... pp 88...89
- Implications in terms of policy process paradigms..... pp 89...66
 - Multi text vs singular text..... pp 89...90
 - Sites of generation..... pp 90...93
- The "model C" school discourse..... pp 93...102
- Re-constructing spaces to accommodate and contain change..... pp 102...105
- Points of resistance..... pp 105...108
- Conclusion..... pp 108

Chapter 7

Conclusion.....pp 109...113

- Further research.....pp 111...112
- Going beyond the policy gap.....pp 112
- Relevancy to South Africa.....pp 112...113

References.....pp 114...124

Appendices and Tables

Abstract

The study investigates the response of a former white Model C school to externally imposed educational reforms contained in the Education White Paper (1995); the South African Schools' Bill (1996) and the South African School's Act (1996). The study examines the path of policy-making after legislation. Drawing on the work of Bowe *et al.* (1996) as a key text, the study investigates the dynamics of the policy process within the school. The study uses as a conceptual framework Bowe *et al.*'s (*ibid.*) argument that the policy text is multiple, and that the legislated policy text is one of a number of representations of the policy. As such, the study seeks to identify the sites of text generation and the dynamics involved in the formation and maintenance of the dominant representations of the legislated policy texts. The research examines the impact of perceptions of the external policy changes and of the institution on the manner in which the school responds to the change. The relationship between power and policy-making referred to by researchers such as Ball (1994) and Blackmore *et al.* (1994) is clearly evident in the response of the executive of the school to challenges to the dominant discourse. The dominant discourse is described as a discourse of "Model C" schooling: predominantly white, and relatively progressive in so far as selected black students are permitted to attend the school. Linguistic exclusivity and the limited agency in the policy process are the two main strategies used to protect this dominant discourse. The study examines the strategies of resistance to this dominance and the ways in which these dissenting voices are marginalised. The study identifies the response of the school as "adaptive accommodation" whereby the school not merely reshapes the legislated policy to fit the structure of the school, but physically restructures the school so that anticipated policy change can be contained. The study concludes that the legislated policy has failed to challenge the policy paradigm of the previous education system.

Chapter 1

Introduction

It has become almost a truism to state that the field of education and educational policy in South Africa is a highly contested one. The fact remains however that education and educational policy have been, and still are, sites of contestation. Research and academic debate have centered largely on the content of educational policy in South Africa, taking the form of critiques of the apartheid education system and suggestions for an alternative. Debate in the years after 1994 has centered around the extent to which the present government has met the expectations of the democratic movement's blueprint for "post apartheid education" In particular, debate has focused on matters of curriculum formation (see for example, Jansen (1997); Soudien and Baxen (1997) for the content of the education policies introduced after the 1994 elections).

What is missing from the debate is an analysis of what happens to policy "post-legislation". Although some attention has been paid to the processes involved in policy-making prior to legislation (see for example, Samoff (1994; 1997) and Donn (1995), very little has been said about the path of this text after the act of legislation. Research into the question "How is policy received and read and rewritten after it has been legislated?" has taken place at a regional level (see Donn (1995)) but little attention has been paid to responses at a local level.

This dissertation examines the response of a former model C high school to externally imposed reform. The dissertation aims to gain an understanding of how a school community makes meaning out of legislated policy reform; it examines the negotiated

settlements and the compromises as well as the strategies adopted by the school community in reaching these. It defines the school community as the executive staff (the principal and heads of departments); teaching staff; students and parents. Through an analysis of the responses to a semi-structured questionnaire, focus groups and individual interviews, the dissertation traces the factors which have shaped the school's responses to the legislated texts. I have used Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) research as a framework which contends that the policy text is multiple, and that the legislated policy text is one of a number of representations of the policy. I have also examined the factors which influence the school's representations of the policy. The research attempts to identify the strategies used by members of the school community to support and protect the dominant discourse which positions black and white as "different" and the school as a progressive "white" school. The dominant paradigm at the school as well as the way this paradigm has affected the response of the participants to the reform measures is discussed. The motivation for the dissertation was the need to interrogate the "wider picture". I argue that the discourse of educational policy making dominant during apartheid reflected the political discourse of the government. This discourse was characterised by extremely limited consultation and negotiation with parties affected by the policy. An inspectorate policed the terms of the policy, making alternative readings of the legislation very difficult to realise. Furthermore, the system of teacher appraisal was based on one of patronage: teachers who attempted to resist the dominant discourse of policy making by rewriting the policy within their classrooms had at the best, all prospects for promotion firmly squashed, and at the worst were "removed" permanently from the teaching corps.¹ Despite this pressure, there are a number of accounts of ways in which the dominant discourse of policy making was challenged.

The dominant discourse placed policy making strictly in the domain of the politicians and ministers of education. The legislated policy was transmitted to the schools via departmental notices. The path of policy-making was linear and unidirectional : top-down.

¹ Numerous accounts of such intimidation abound. Particularly illuminating is the account of the persecution teachers faced as told by Ezekial Mphahlele (1959).

The discourse of national policy was reflected within the schools.² The dissertation sets out to examine to what extent the discourse of policy making as reflected in a previously House of Assembly school has changed under the first democratically elected government.

The dissertation will argue that it does not necessarily follow that a legislated policy with democracy on its agenda will encourage or produce a democratic society. The dissertation argues that one has to move beyond accepting the gap between policy-making and implementation as inevitable and begin to explore the nuances and complexities at work in the structuring of the response at a local level to externally imposed reform.

The dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapters 1 and 2 contain the outline of the aim of the research dissertation and an analysis of the policy terrain and context of educational policy making in South Africa.

Chapter 3 examines the body of literature related to change, the policy making process and educational reform. It begins by discussing the relationship of research into policy and research into change. It examines the shift in focus of the theory from perceiving change as a once-off event, to viewing it as a process. It argues that this shift in thinking holds implications for research into policy. Research into policy begins to focus on the process of policy, and the relationship between policy generation and implementation. In doing so, the literature begins to examine the individuals involved in the process of change. As in the case of the literature concerning the schools' effectiveness debate, the concept of the "school" is interrogated. Whereas earlier research marginalised the role of schools in the policy process, research moves to viewing the school as a unit or

² Although there were the individuals who resisted the dominant discourse, by and large the administration of most schools reflected the top-down approach to decision making characteristic of the department of education.

community involved in the change process, shaping the change as well as being shaped by the change. The work of Hall (1984; 1992; 1995); Fullan (1993; 1995) and Bowe *et al.* (1996), amongst others is examined.

The chapter discusses, with particular attention to Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) work, the growing debate around the value of examining policy generation and implementation as separate and distinct activities. The literature which examines the relationship between policy and power is reviewed, as it is particularly significant in terms of the research. The work of Ball (1990; 1994), Bowe *et al.* (1996) and Foucault (1977; 1981) is focused on in this section of the discussion.

The chapter also contains a brief review of literature pertaining to policy development in South Africa, and examines the concerns which researchers have voiced about educational policy making in the post-election period in South Africa.

The research methodology is discussed in **Chapter 4**. The rationale for using the data collection strategies is discussed. Attention is drawn to the limitations of those strategies. The exploratory nature of the research is stressed. The choice of site is explained. The chapter discusses the importance of an approach which allows for a triangulation of data, and as such, the research methodology has used a multiple research methods approach in order to increase the validity and reliability of the data. The chapter discusses the data collection strategies used. viz. semi - structured questionnaire; unstructured interviews; focus groups and review of the school's written policy material.

Chapter 5 outlines the responses of the participants interviewed and attempts to identify themes from the responses.

The results of the research are discussed in **Chapter 6**. The conclusions in **Chapter 7** drawn from the findings, are related to the literature discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 7 discusses the potential research areas this dissertation indicates.

Chapter 2

The Educational Policy Context in South Africa before and after 1994

This chapter examines the recent context of educational policy, policy-making and the associated debates. It examines the policy-making process prior to, and during, the "transition period": (1990-1994); the period following the 1994 election and the factors influencing that process. Whilst not dismissing what I consider a valid argument for policy analysis to include texts not legislated as part of the policy process, the dissertation examines the response on a local level to an externally imposed reform, specifically the legislated acts passed after 1994. Thus the focus on legislated reform after 1994 at the end of this chapter should not be seen as a privileging of legislated policy over non-legislated policy but as necessary to understanding the context in which the response of the school that was studied is located.

To gain a clearer picture of the present policy context, it is useful to examine the process of educational policy-making prior to the 1994 elections, and the context in which the policy was written. Education policy in South Africa has been the site of intense contestation and struggle, much of which has occurred outside the framework of parliamentary process. The struggle over the education policy was concerned not only with the content of the policy, but the process of policy-making as well.¹ It is the latter concern however that is often overlooked in an analysis of the period under discussion.

¹ The NEPI reports.

The period prior to the 1994 elections was characterised by a growing crisis in so-called "non-white" education. The rejection of the apartheid government's educational policy was not confined to school boycotts or the actions of students. A major part of the struggle to develop an educational policy that challenged the apartheid education system took place in non-government organizations which were representative of the wider community. Samoff (1997) in an informative essay which gives a broad overview of the policy process in the last two decades, points to the gap between the formal policy of the National Party Government and the alternative policies which were being developed by community based organizations, whose members included teachers, academics, parents and students. The formation of the National Education Crises Committee (NECC) is considered significant as it served to focus the voices of protest for a democratic education system² (Samoff *et al.*, 1994, p 12). The continuing education crises influenced the development of official educational policy as well. An important policy response from the National Party government to the crisis was the De Lange Report (1981). However, despite stating its support of the principle of "equal opportunities for education irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed" (HSRC, 1981, p 14), the Report's insistence that academic education for "Africans" was irrelevant, and its emphasis on vocational training indicated that the De Lange Report continued to support the apartheid discourse. Although the De Lange Report was a significant move away from the Verwoerdian model of apartheid education, (Donn, 1995, p 4) in that it recognised the need to develop a

² A discussion of these "alternative" policy texts is based on the assumption that "policy" is multi textual, and that the movement from formulation to generation to implementation is not linear and closed. If one is to make an analysis of the development of educational policy in South Africa, and use a model that does not accommodate non - legislated policy texts, one will fail to reflect the dynamic nature of the policy process prior to 1994, and fail to understand the tension of the policies legislated since 1994. Samoff (1997, p 4) comments that "documents do not tell the whole story... a fixation on documents can be critically self limiting, rendering inexplicable what should be reasonably comprehensible". Nowhere is this clearer than in the South African example.

skilled work force, Buckland (1982) argues that the policy's thrust is firmly located in an emerging technicist discourse which places the market as the primary definer of education and training policy. The De Lange Report suggests change but its discourse suggests little difference: the ruling elite remain white and Afrikaans speaking even though they now belong to a "technocratic clique operating in a modernising society" (Collins and Gillespie, 1984, p 634).

The National Party government's policy of "divide and rule" continued to shape government educational policy into the 1990's. By 1990 there were 19 separate education authorities with "unequal access to resources - both human and financial" (Donn, 1995, p 5). Education remained racially segregated. However, unlike the early 80s, the context for the beginning of the "period of transition" (1990 - 1994), was characterised by the declining state of the economy, political pressure and intense social unrest. The period of transition (1990 - 1994), from a National Party government to a multi-party democracy, was a time of much negotiation and compromise. The political negotiations were reflected in the number of alternative educational reform initiatives mooted by non-governmental organisations (the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) reports drawn up by the NECC; the Implementation Plan for Education and Training (IPET) drawn up by the ANC's Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD)), as well as a number of reports issued by the National Party government on education and training.

Two such reports issued by the National Party government were the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) and A Curriculum Model in South Africa (CUMSA). Both of these were written under the auspices of the Committee of Heads of Education Departments (CHED). Although written almost ten years later than the De Lange Report, the ERS and CUMSA reflected its discourse, stressing the importance of education in meeting the needs of the (free market) economy and advocated vocationalism in the school curriculum (Christie, 1994). Christie (1994, p 48) argues that "the importance of these documents lay not in

their actual policy suggestions but rather in their attempts to shift and control educational discourse at a time of change and to re-articulate existing racial ideologies”.

Samoff (1997, p 4) supports Christie's analysis of the policy initiatives of the National Party by describing them as a “last minute government effort(s) to control the education system's evolution through a limited education reform and curriculum revision strategy”.

An analysis of the context of policy-making prior to 1994 indicates the development of policy by both government and non-government organisations. Academics such as Christie (1994) and Samoff (1994; 1997) describe this period of policy initiatives as a struggle between maintaining the status quo and limiting the change, as in the case of the official policy texts, and an attempt to forge a new education policy, as in the case of the NEPI reports. The analyses focus on the content, as well as the discourse in operation, of the policies. What is of relevance for the purposes of this study, however, is an examination of the process of policy-making and the discourse at play in that process.

The process by which the different policies came to be written differs noticeably. Both the ERS and CUMSA were written by a small, powerful group of senior government officials with little attempt made to consult with teachers or the community. By contrast, the NECC in drawing up the NEPI reports, made particular attempts to make the process as widely accessible as possible. It is significant to note that the NEPI reports in this way did more than challenge the content of apartheid education; they offered an alternative to the undemocratic, non-inclusive process of policy-making characteristic of the National Party Government's education policy-making processes.

Samoff (1997, p 4) argues that there was a “[w]idely shared general expectation” that post-apartheid education policy would replace the “morass of multiple, racially differentiated education departments” with a “single, unified education system”. This dissertation would argue that the expectation went further than that to which Samoff points. The process by which the Nationalist Party government made policy had been exclusive in nature and characterised by a top-down approach whereby schools, at the bottom of the ladder received notification and instructions on how to carry out the new

policies. The implementation of the policy was controlled through an inspectorate. The roles of teachers and principals and students were cast as passive recipients, and in the case of the school staff, as technicians. This dissertation will argue that the expectation of the new government extended beyond the restructuring of the curriculum to a restructuring of the process by which policy decisions were made. The expectation that the new government would democratise education extends to the way in which educational policy decisions were made. The unspoken expectation was that the process of making the new educational policy would be mediated democratically. In Samoff's (1997) view the present policy terrain is fraught with problems. He contends that South African policy-making has moved away not only from the goals or aims suggested by the key documents written during the period prior to the 1994 elections (the NEPI reports), but that the process which had informed the NEPI reports viz. one of consultation, has fallen by the way. Gilmour (1997) develops this criticism further by arguing that the discourse informing the nature of the policy-making process has shifted from that which "distinguished the early democratic movement discourse from that of the apartheid state" (*ibid.*, p 14).

Both theorists point out that despite the "several hundred pages of implementation plans completed" (Samoff, (1997), p 1) at the time of the elections, and a "plethora of education and education - related policy discussion documents" (Gilmour, 1997, p 5) in the time period thereafter, the previously developed recommendations have yet to be implemented.

Whereas Gilmour (1997) argues that the conflation of the concepts "equality" and "equity" in the new education policies is the main factor responsible for the lack of progress, Samoff (1997) posits that the reason for the lack of progress can be found within the way in which the policy suggestions have been developed. He argues that the numerous frameworks which have been designed with the intention of facilitating consultation have hampered the progress of policy. He contends further that the frameworks have provided a convenient smoke screen for political cowardice: frameworks "are guidelines...[the development of which] permits extensive consultation, debate, and review" (*ibid.*, p 1),

but developing frameworks is also an effective strategy for avoiding commitment to issues which are potentially divisive. Samoff (1997, p 1) concludes that political systems can "...proceed much more rapidly toward addressing directly the highest priority issues." Samoff (1997) presents an interesting challenge to the notion that policy exists only when legislated. Despite his contention that the policy-making process of the democratic movement has been ignored in the path of educational policy under the new dispensation, and his criticism that the participation in the process of policy formulation narrows as it nears the point of legislation³, his subsequent argument does not address the matter of democratising the policy-making process. He suggests that the South African government follow Namibia's early pattern of educational policy-making, whereby "the new education leadership moved quickly to modify policy ...and then to implement those policies well before the new legislation had worked its way through parliament" (*ibid.*, p 1). Samoff's (1997) example makes apparent a number of problematic assumptions in his argument: he assumes as unproblematic the "quick modification of policy" as well as the "implementation of policy". A "quick modification of policy" requires little consultation and assumes agreement. Samoff (1997) also assumes a direct path from "modification" to "implementation". His argument dismisses the contested nature of policy-making, contestations and power struggles which continue long after the official policy text (be it legislated or not) has been agreed upon.

Although not dismissing these flaws in Samoff's (1997) argument, that his concern over the slow start of post-apartheid education is valid is a contention shared by others, (see for example, Gilmour (1997) and Samoff, Groener and Rensburg (1994)). Much attention is paid to uncovering reasons for this delay. In a paper written in 1994, Samoff, Groener and Rensburg point to a number of factors which may be responsible for the delay. One of these they argue, is the appointment of senior officials who were not centrally involved in the education debates of the democratic movement. They make reference to the surprising choice of candidates for Minister of Education, and Director General, as neither had been involved in the educational movement, nor in the drawing up of the key policy

³ Samoff points out that the initial wide discussions characteristic of the Hunter Commission were discounted and replaced by the opinions of "experts".

documents of the NECC and the CEPD, and speculate on the effect these choices might have on the shaping of policy after the election. The question begging is the impact these appointments had on the policy-making process as well.

A second factor suggested as contributing to the delay of post-apartheid education is that of the "apparent political indecisiveness of the new ministry" (Samoff (1997), p 1). Samoff (1997) suggests that Bengu's inability to take action sooner led to the development of what Donn (1995, p 33) describes as the "chasm at the centre" of policy direction. Samoff (1997) argues that the hiatus allowed those resistant to change to solidify their resistance.

An aspect which Samoff (1997) overlooks is the impact of decentralisation of power to the provinces. This policy decision resulted in certain provinces beginning to make their own policy, as the wait for national policy to materialise took longer than anticipated. Donn (1995) examines the implications of this particular aspect of educational policy. Using the introduction of the interim syllabi as an example, Donn (*ibid.*) discusses the response of Gauteng, the Western Cape and Kwa Zulu Natal. She concludes that "all three provinces reacted to the introduction of the interim syllabi in the context of their own political, cultural, economic and social concerns." (*ibid.*, p 14)⁴

The nature of the transition in government is also considered as a factor in shaping the policy-making process after the 1994 election. Samoff (1997) contends that educational policy was constructed in the spirit of national unity. He argues furthermore that the policy process is one of negotiation and that the final legislation is a compromise which has as its aim political appeasement. It may be good political compromise, but it may not necessarily be in the best interests of education.

⁴ The extent to which the provinces adopted the discourse of policy-making which places the agency outside the classroom and the teacher's ambit is not examined.

Gilmour (1997) posits that political pressure may also have encouraged the eventual conflation of the principles of equity with equality, as is evident in Professor Bengu's response early in 1997 to the resistance of the teachers to the redeployment programme:

Equity was not related to affirmative action...All that equity says is that we reduce the budgets of the provinces that were funded above average and increase the budgets of those that were funded below average.

(Interview: Weekend Argus: 8 March 1997)

Gilmour (1997) argues that the collapsing of the concept of equity into the concept of equality is significant in understanding why the discourse of the educational policy of the present government has shifted from that of the democratic movements'. Whereas the literature of the democratic movement had made clear the distinction between the two concepts, Gilmour (1997) contends that this distinction had disappeared by late 1996. Gilmour's (1997) contention is significant when placed next to Secada's (1989) argument that when the concepts "equity" and "equality" are inter-changed, the discourse prohibits the "ability to consider other fundamental issues that should fall under the rubric of educational equity" (Secada, 1989, p 74). The focus shifts to the structural or technical level. The assumption is made that change will happen once the structures are in place. Following on from this assumption is the idea that the practice must be made to conform to the structures (Gilmour, 1997).

This conception of change is problematic in that it denies any agency or active involvement of those who would be practising the change (eg. the teachers). Gilmour (1997) suggests that it is this "objectification" of schools and teachers that has "struck a raw nerve" and has resulted in the resistance of teachers to the government's redeployment policy. However, the objectification is hardly new policy practice in South Africa. I would argue that contributing to the sensitivity of the metaphorical nerve is the expectation held that the new government's educational policy, in terms of its content, but

also in terms of the policy-making process it adopted, would provide an alternative to the previous regime's. The resistance, I would argue, has as much to do, if not more, with the legacy of policy-making processes characteristic of the apartheid education, as it does with the conflation of key concepts by the present government.

A significant factor in the equation of policy past and present is the role the media has played in mediating the educational policies. The period after the 1994 election has been marked by periods of intense media coverage. This coverage has focused largely on the policy of redeployment of teachers and included coverage of teachers' perceptions of the policy reforms. The print media has also carried supplements issued by the education department to explain certain policy initiatives or sections of the Schools Act. The media has served to pressurize the education departments into explaining policy initiatives (an example of which would be the interview of the 8th March 1997 in the *Weekend Argus*, by Minister Bengu, explaining the redeployment of teachers.) Although the media has made visible policy and debate around certain policy issues, it has not seriously challenged, or encouraged a challenge of, the discourse of policy-making. The media has portrayed the policy process as consisting of the generators: the ministry, and on the other side, the poor, hard-done-by, angry but essentially passive receivers and implementors of the change: the teachers. Research does not indicate the impact the portrayal of teachers in this light, or for that matter, the department, has had on the teachers' perceptions of their role in the policy-making process or of their attitude towards the new policies.

A further factor which must be taken into account when examining the context of educational policy, is the discourse of the legislated policy documents themselves.⁵ The role of teachers and schools is that of all-round healer: healer of the nation's economic, social and political woes. Whilst calling for a recognition of the role teachers must play and thus the need for broader acknowledgement, the policy documents begin a series of strange double-speak whereby the teacher is cast more as the "vessel which will bring

⁵ the Educational White Paper (1995); the School's Bill (1996) and the School's Act (1996)

democracy to our children" than as active agents in their field. The document specifies very little in terms of how teachers are to learn the skills of teaching democracy, non-sexism and non-racism; nor is there any indication of the way in which teachers will be supported in their endeavours. The language of the introduction to the White Paper is filled with the inclusive "we" and "our" but does not extend this sharing to the teacher and his/her role in the classroom. The policy fails to acknowledge in any real way the complexities of teaching in a classroom, within a school, which is within a country which has undergone fundamental change. Instead it appears to hide or negate these complexities by appealing to the need of all to make sacrifices; to take responsibility.

It is significant to note that Professor Bengu's response to initial signs that the resistance to the policy decision to teachers was far greater than anticipated, was not to address the frustration and fears teachers felt, but rather to encourage teachers to make the sacrifice that was necessary.

The defensive manner in which the Minister of Education responded was met with greater resistance. The political nature of the debate was heightened by the entry into the debate by other political parties. The criticism leveled at the policy decision was that the process had not been consultative enough. It is important to note here, that the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) had been involved in the discussions, and national consultation had taken place before the Hunter Commission. However, the consultative nature of the latter was severely undermined when the opinions of "experts" from outside South Africa were privileged over the opinions of those initially consulted. The downplaying of the role of SADTU and other teacher unions in negotiations, and the highlighting of the grievances of teachers by the press, was arguably responsible for the notion that the policy decisions had not been consultative enough. The media played a mediating role not only in terms of relaying the content of the policy to teachers and schools, but also in shaping opinion of the policy decisions.

The emphasis in the debates has been on the legislated texts, as opposed to other texts existing at other levels of the education front. It appears that the CEPD's model of policy-making whereby policy is conceived as a "hand over exercise" (Donn, 1995, p 33) where the specifications are developed and handed over to a new government for its selective implementation has influenced the model of policy-making presently being followed. Donn (1995, p 29) argues that this can be illustrated by the process whereby the interim syllabi was introduced to the provinces: "...it transpired that the new syllabi were given to the provinces as de facto final." This model holds certain implications for the development of policy as well as the way in which the policy is received and mediated. The message it sends to teachers, principals, communities is that the only agents in the policy-making process are those "at the top". This seems very similar to the policy process discourse of the apartheid government. The comparison is concerned with the way the policy process is perceived by the department and ministry of education, and argues that this opinion shapes the way the policy is perceived just as much, if not more than the content of the policy itself.

The manner in which the policy was mediated to schools played an important role in fueling the resistance and sense of outrage felt and expressed by the majority of South Africans. However, this can easily be obscured by the anti-education nature of the education system under apartheid - a system which so clearly reflected, supported and perpetuated the inequities and inequality of the apartheid policy.

The dissertation argues that the literature has neglected to examine the impact legislated policy is having on schools, particularly those schools where the policy change has brought about significant changes to their internal policies. The reference in the literature to the "period of transition" as being closed is symptomatic of the neglect of an area of debate which this dissertation argues is important to an analyses of educational policy and policy-making in a democratic South Africa. The dissertation would argue that the transition continues: the election may have marked a change of government, but the discourses that characterised the making of formal policy have still to make a fundamental shift. Examining the way in which legislated policy is mediated in a school which is

traditionally not supportive of the policy changes instituted will provide useful insight into whether the present policy makers are safe in assuming that having democracy on the agenda and in the lines of the law books is enough to ensure the schools learn their lines and how to live the lines.

Perhaps what is most telling about the context of educational policy-making in South Africa presently is the lack of debate about what education is valuable, and what constitutes knowledge. The debate may be raging in the halls of academia, but what of the silence within state schools? Which schools are silent? Why? Why not? These questions are significant in understanding the way in which transition is being mediated by schools through legislated policy.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

The literature informing the dissertation is extensive. It covers theories of change and the change process, examining in particular educational change; it extends to theories of policy and the process of making policy, in particular educational policy; it examines the politics of policy-making; it explores the discussion of who makes policy, who reads it, and what influences the way policy is read and written. The aim of this dissertation is to focus on the process by which people's perceptions of externally generated policy texts are developed, and how particular groups of people read and interact with these texts. The process by which these perceptions are developed is placed within the context of the political developments in South Africa from 1994 - 1997. The literature chosen for review is pertinent to the aim of the dissertation. As such, the review also examines literature pertaining to education policy-making within South Africa.

The first body of literature examined is that which has developed in response to the growing awareness of the relationship between the analysis of change and the analysis of policy-making. Research into factors which encourage or inhibit change has a direct bearing on research into reform (including educational reform). It follows that research into theories of change will inform an analysis of policy and evaluation of the policy-making process. Hall (1995, p 101) argues that "(a)n understanding of how change takes place ...is vital to those who are concerned about achieving success with policy initiatives."

An increasing awareness of the relationship between theories of change and the analysis of policy-making can be linked to a shift in the theory concerning policy-making. Hall's (1995) study of educational reform in the United States not only provides an historical account of policy-making in the United States, but also traces

the development of the understanding of policy and change. Hall (*ibid.*, p 106) observes that “[p]rior to 1970 change was rarely viewed as a process... but as an event.” This interpretation of the nature of change was reflected in a particular understanding of the path through which policy moved from adoption to implementation. “Earlier research,” Hall (1995, p 107) argues, “explicitly assumed that widespread adoption and use would follow [policy generation] automatically.” In other words, it was assumed that change was contained in the act of legislating the policy. Once the legislation was passed, the change would happen. Hall (1995, p 106) suggests that this understanding of policy-making was possible as the “innovations were simple and adoption of the innovation was done by the individual”, but as the arena of educational reform became increasingly complex, so the inadequacy of the model of change and policy as a once - off event, in dealing with the nuances of educational change, became evident. Hall (1995) identifies two major research studies - the Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement (DESSI) and Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM), conducted after 1970 - which he presents as evidence of a shift in research towards an examination of the process of the implementation of policy. Hall (1995) argues that research conducted in the 70s and 80s was characterised by a growing recognition and documentation by researchers of a special phase in the policy process which was described as “implementation”. The conclusion generally reached was that the implementation phase could be assessed, planned for and facilitated (Hall, 1995, p 109). Hall (1995, p 109) posits that the assumption underlying the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) was that without the phenomena of implementation being addressed, the development of a policy and the creation of new curricula did not automatically lead to successful change processes in schools. As the view of policy shifted to incorporate an understanding of policy-making as a process, so the need for research into change as a process increased.

Combined with the growing awareness of change as a process, was a shift in focus in the literature to the people involved in the change process, as well as the nature of the change process. Here the work of Hall (1995) and Fullan (1992; 1993) are important references. Hall (1995) suggests that early studies (eg. Mort, 1953) were inadequate in their conceptualisation in dealing with the increasing complexity of the educational milieu. Furthermore, the focus on classroom practice and the individual

schools as units of change was limited (Hall, 1995, p 108). Hall's (1995) comment is supported by Bowe *et al.*'s (1996, p 273) observation that "[i]mplicit in most of this research is the notion that schools are marginal to the policy process".

Hall (1995, p 109), citing the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM), argues that it introduced a "concerns-based perspective" which stated that a school "has not changed until the individuals within it change and that change is done on an individual basis" and indicates that in this way the theory began to shift its focus towards a more dynamic view of the "black box" notion of the school.

More recent literature examining the process of change continues to explore similar themes looked at in the CBAM regarding the nature of change. Key texts which characterise this approach include Hord (1995); Hall (1995a); Hall and Carter (1995) and Fullan (1993) who stress the importance of viewing change as a process, not an event. Furthermore, an analysis of change, they argue, must involve an analysis of the individuals involved in the process of change. Hord's (1995, p 92) point is that "change is really about ... people ... each and every individual who will be involved in implementing new policies, programmes and processes." Hall and Carter (1995), Hall (1995a) and Fullan (1993) agree with this analysis and emphasise the importance of understanding the perceptions of the individuals involved in the policy process. They stress the significance of these individuals having a shared understanding of the change they are experiencing. The focus of their research is thus an attempt to address the question, "What makes people change?"

The research has focused on identifying factors that influence the way people change. Hord (1995), Fullan (1993) and Ball (1994) argue that the positions people occupy influence the way they change. This literature has examined the relationship between the role people play in the change process and the success of the policy (see Fullan (1993); Hord (1995) and Hall (1995). Fullan (1992; 1993) takes this further and asks, "What makes people in education change?" In answering this question, attention shifts from the generation of policy to the implementation of policy.

One approach in answering why people in education change has been to examine the nature of the policy itself. Hord (1995) posits that there is a "need for an intelligent combination" of pressure and support within the policy, if the change is to be implemented (*ibid.*, p 94).¹ Fullan (1993A; 1993) in turn, contends that policy must be sensitive to the way in which people or organisations respond to change. Other researchers have approached the issue of change in the educational arena by attempting to develop categories to identify general responses to change. Saunders (1985) suggests three broad categories to indicate how schools generally respond to externally initiated change²:

Adaptive extension:

A strong interpretation of the policy³: it has been used to change the whole school structure.

Accommodation:

The policy is adapted to fit the general shape of the existing school structure.

Containment:

The policy is absorbed by the existing school pattern.

Researchers have pointed to the importance of the context in which the policy is introduced in determining whether it is implemented and the way in which it is interpreted. Kingdon (1984) refers to "windows of opportunity" : optimal periods for change. He states that the political situation, the problem and an alternative must be moving in the same direction to create "windows of opportunity". He goes on to add

¹ See also Crohn *et al.* (1989); Huberman (1992).

² Saunders' focus on the response to externally initiated change is pertinent to the dissertation and is for this reason quoted. This is not to preclude the number of studies which have examined responses of schools to policies initiated from within.

³ "policy" refers here to the legislated act.

that these "windows" can be created: there is evidence that some of the factors can be manipulated. This assertion is supported by research conducted by Miriam Ben-Peretz (in Carter, D, 1995) into intermediate school reform in Israel. She identified three broad groups involved in the restructuring of the system who had to be persuaded to act in concert to generate the synergy to produce a successful reform:

- central and local authorities (ministry of education, parliament and local municipal authorities)
- stake holders (teacher organisations, principals, teachers and parents)
- external factors (political parties, supreme court, institutes of teacher education)

The relationship between the implementation of the policy and the nature and scale of the innovation is also cited as influential in determining whether it is implemented or not. Hall (1995, p 112) argues that greater clarity is needed about the term "innovation". He distinguishes between the concept of an "innovation bundle" and "large-scale innovations". Instead of a particular change being one innovation, a number of distinct innovations are packaged in the "innovation bundle". The "large scale innovations" are characterised by innovations that tend to be "big", requiring all participants to make changes from what they are currently doing (*ibid.*, p 112). A further distinction between the two concepts is that of the length of time given to the implementation of the innovations. Whereas the innovation bundles are disseminated a couple at a time over a short period, a "5 -10 year commitment is given on the part of the policy level to support the implementation of 'large scale innovations'" (*ibid.*, p 112). Along with the expectations of large scale change comes a "structuring of the entire educational system to support the change effort." Hall (1995, p 113) concludes by stating that the greater and more complex the innovation or change being considered, "the greater the need for ongoing support by the principal, from those in the school district, and facilitators beyond the school's district." Thus should the innovation require "whole school use" the greater the need for support will be (*ibid.*, p 113).

What is significant about Hall's (1995) work is the stress he places on the need for leadership to understand the systematic nature of change: that it is not done solely by individuals in isolation, but that there is an interconnectedness of subsystems which affect the change process as it unfolds (*ibid.*, p 114).

A number of theorists (see for example, Fullan (1993), have, like Hall (1995), placed more emphasis on the internal context in which the policy is placed as opposed to the external context, in analysing the process of policy. The assumption shaping this body of literature is the argument that the way in which the policy is implemented will depend on the way the policy is understood. Thus the impact of the perceptions of those involved in the change policy on the change process is the focus of this body of literature. Hall's (1995, p 116) position that "the innovation is in the mind of the beholder" is characteristic of the position held by the literature. Influencing the analysis of this body of literature are the principles of constructivist theory where innovation is defined in terms of "the meaning attached to it by the participants in the change process" (Hall, 1995, p 117). Hall (1995, p 117) asserts that each teacher, principal and policy maker (and developer and researcher) "will base his or her own definition of the innovation and its implications, ... on their past experiences [and] perceptions of the interventions (e.g. memos, announcements and workshops)". Haddad's (1994) work concurs with Hall and Carter's (1995) point, stressing the need for the "recognition that educational providers, consumers, politicians each have their own legitimate "rationality" for understanding an educational initiative" (Haddad, 1994, p 8). Hall and Carter (1995), in discussing the experiences of those involved in the change process as existing along a continuum with the policy makers at one end and the practitioners at the other, stress the importance of all to "understand... how the world is constructed from the [different] point[s] of view" (Hall and Carter, 1995, p 173).

Thus, a significant theme of this body of literature, is the experience of the change process as being both a group and individual one, with participants constructing meaning of the innovation and interpreting the innovation differently at different times (Hall, 1995, p 117). Theorists such as Fullan (1992; 1994) and Hall (1995) suggest that an awareness of this holds direct implications for the principal at a school, in terms of his/her ability to guide the response of the teachers to the innovation. Hall (1995, p 117) concludes that, "ultimately, if the principal and others do an effective job of change facilitation, the concerns of teachers and others may shift to having more 'impact' perspectives, where there is an analysis of the innovation in terms of its consequences and effects upon students," as opposed to viewing the innovation only in terms of the personal or logistical impact it will have.

The literature identifies a number of factors which shape the perceptions of individuals of a policy (see for example, Hall, (1995a); Hall, Rutherford, Hord and Huling -Austin (1984); Hord (1995); Fullan (1993). Hall (1995) identifies ongoing support from leadership as key to the success of the innovation. The emphasis on the role of leadership is a theme taken up by a number of researchers investigating the change process (see Hall (1995); Hall and George (1988); Vandenberghe (1988); Hall *et al.* (1984)

Fullan in The New Meaning of Educational Change (1993A, p 76) asserts that principals can be the "main agents (or blockers) of change." The literature places emphasis on the facilitative nature of the role of the principal. Principals are seen as "change facilitators" (Hall *et al.*, 1984, p 114). Hall *et al.* (1984, p 115) argue that the "change facilitator style of the principal is important". The principal needs to facilitate "leadership by many" in the form of a change facilitator team. This notion is supported by Van Wiljick (1987) who has documented the importance of external factors in his work, "The activities of internal change facilitators: an analysis of interventions".

A number of researchers have attempted to identify the qualities of a "good" leader. Hall and Galluzzo (in Carter and O' Neill (Eds), p 114) refer to the concept of "strategic sense" which some principals have, who are able to "envision the larger picture and to [place] consciously the day - to - day actions into the whole." Hord (1995, p 94) in turn identifies six strategies used by the leaders to facilitate change and policy implementation in classrooms and schools successfully. The strategies are:

1. developing and communicating a shared vision
2. planning and providing resources
3. investing in continuous staff development
4. assessing progress
5. providing ongoing assistance
6. creating an atmosphere for change

Fullan (1993A; 1993) supports a number of Hord's (1993) assertions, in so far as he argues that principals are necessary for effective implementation because they are "most likely to be in a position to shape the organizational conditions necessary for success, such as the development of shared goals, collaborative work structures and

climates and procedures for monitoring results" (Fullan, 1993A, p 76). However, Fullan stresses that a number of studies have indicated that principals do not always play an active role (1993A, p 76). He suggests that the lack of preparation for dealing with the psychological and sociological problems of change that confront the principal lead many principals to feel misunderstood and helpless (1993A, p 76). Fullan's caveat throws into relief the shortcoming of the research which attempts to identify features of a successful principal: it fails to acknowledge the circumstances which limit and shape what should be. Fullan's point is particularly relevant from a discursive practice for the implementation of policy. An analysis of factors impeding on facilitating change must be sensitive to conditions which may counteract the good intentions of potential change facilitators in order for the analysis not to be a flawed recipe and the change a half-baked affair.

Implicit in the literature that investigates the role of the principal is the notion that people change not only because the policy tells them to do so, but because of the way their perception of the policy is shaped through the actions and reactions of others involved in the change process. Hord (1995, p 94) lists as an important strategy, the ability of the principal to create[e] an atmosphere for change; Fullan (1993A, p 76) cites the potential of the principal to "shape the ... conditions necessary for ... collaborative work ... climates." Fullan (1993), however, indicates that it is not the principal alone who shapes the perceptions of those involved in the change process. Teachers influence each other, either through their support of one another, or their isolation (*ibid.*, p 78-79). Fullan (1993, p 79) concludes by stressing the importance of the recognition of the "subjective worlds" of each person involved in the change process, be it government, principal, teacher, parent or student, and the dialectical nature of the relationship between these "subjective worlds." Without this recognition, "reform will fail" (Fullan, 1993, p 79).

A necessary distinction that recent literature has made is to understand the particularities of introducing change in the field of education (Fullan, 1993A; 1993; Usher, 1996; Ball, 1994). Fullan (1993, p 3) argues that the tension that arises when change is introduced within an educational setting is understandable as the education system is inherently conservative. The tension is heightened further when placed in the context of a post modern society. Fullan (1993, p 3) states that dealing with

change is “endemic in a post-modern society”, but, he adds, as the education system is fundamentally conservative the system is more likely to retain the status quo than change. Usher *et al.* (1996) in their work, Postmodernism and Education agree with Fullan's conclusion in their discussion of the difficulty of interpreting educational issues in terms of a postmodernist paradigm. They too comment on the conservative nature of education systems. Haddad (1994) concurs with Fullan's (1993) interpretation and states that the “studies of educational policy-making all point to the complexity and multifaceted character of this process due to the nature of both the educational system and the educational change” (Haddad, 1994, p 8).

An important development in the theory has been the challenge of the assumption of earlier work about the nature of the policy text and the policy process. The main issue at stake according to Bowe *et al.*, (1996) is that “the policy” is not simply a single text. Bowe *et al.* (1996) argue that a distinction needs to be made between policy and policy texts, as “policy” is often collapsed into legislated text.

Bowe *et al.* (1996) point out that policy texts represent policy. The representation takes a number of forms:

- 'official' legal text and policy documents
- formally and informally produced commentaries which offer “to make sense of the 'official' texts”
- the speeches made by public performances of relevant politicians and officials
- “official” videos (*ibid.*, p 285)

They argue that the multiplicity of policy texts and the distinction between policy and policy texts gets obscured by the construction of the debate or analyses of the policy-making process as consisting of separate and distinct processes, viz. policy generation and policy implementation (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 273).

The shift in focus of Ball's (1990; 1994) works provides an interesting illustration of the way in which the analysis of policy-making can polarise policy generation and policy implementation. A key modern work, characteristic of the literature which Bowe *et al.* (1996) critique is S.J Ball's Politics and policy-making in Education (1990). By means of a Macro-based analyses of policy documents, Ball examines the generation

of policy; explores the activities and organisations of groups of policy-makers and analyses those whose interests have been included or represented and those whose interests have been excluded, or marginalised.

Ball's focus shifts from the macro - scale to the micro. His work, Education Reform (1994), is an important contribution to the body of research which has focused on the area of policy implementation. This research has taken the form of a micro- based ethnography involving detailed analyses of how intentions behind policy text become embedded in schooling, or how aspects of the schooling situation "reflect" wider developments in the political and economic arena. The research has also examined the potential teachers have to subvert the economy / state (Ball, 1994). Such research has concluded either that teachers speak as "theoretically over-determined mouthpieces of a world beyond their control", or that teachers are free and autonomous resisters of the status quo (see for example: Fullan, 1993). The work of Ball (1990; 1994) is challenged by Bowe *et al.* (1996) who argue that Ball supports a paradigm of policy-making which presents as separate the process of policy generation and the process of policy implementation by focusing attention on one area and not the other. Bowe *et al.* (1996) suggest that the separation between policy generation and implementation is a distortion of the process of policy-making. This distortion supports the model of the policy process as linear in form, either top-down, or bottom- up, or a relative autonomy of bottom from top.

In support of their contention, Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 274) refer to Dale's "state control theories" which portray policy generation as remote and detached from implementation. Alford and Friedlan (1988) argue that the separation between investigations of generation and the implementation of policy has tended to reinforce the "managerial perspective" of the policy process. This perspective views generation and implementation as "distinctive and separate moments", with the "moment" of generation being followed by that of implementation. Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 286) in turn, argue that policy is not "done and finished at the legislative moment", but that generation and implementation are continuous features of the policy process, "still taking place after the legislation" (*ibid.*, p 279) evolving in and through the texts that represent it (*ibid.*, p 286). Bernstein (in Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 352) points to the same interpretation, contending that texts are appropriated, after which "the text is no longer

that same text." Bowe *et al.* (1996) posit that the "organisational / bureaucratic" model whereby the policy decision is seen to emanate from the organisational entity, viz. the government, is essentially a static model. They argue that the static nature of the model limits analysis to the "instance of decision-making," (*ibid.*, p 249) and renders it inadequate in providing an analysis of the activities preceding and proceeding from that moment. The state control model tends to "freeze policy texts and exclude the contextual slippages that occur throughout the policy cycle" (*ibid.*, p 279).

Whilst it can be argued that the construction of the policy text involves different parties and processes to that of the process of implementing policy, "the opportunity for reforming and re-interpreting the text means policy formation does not end with the legislative moment" (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 279).

Like Bowe *et al.* (1996), Blackmore *et al.* (1994, p 184) describe the dominant paradigm of policy generation and implementation as assuming that generation and implementation are carried out by two different groups viz.: policy makers in central agency or the ministry of education (bureaucrats, researchers, specialists, curriculum developers, consultants and teacher union representatives) and practitioners who work in the school. Bowe *et al.* (1996) do not take issue with the dominant paradigm but rather with the portrayal of policy generation as remote and detached from implementation, something that "gets done" to people by a chain of implementors whose roles are clearly defined by legislation (Bowe *et al.* , 1996, p 274).

Cunningham in Framing Culture: criticism and policy in Australia (1992, p 169) argues that to

treat policy from a critical perspective, it is necessary to appreciate the coordinated impact of economics, administrative law, cultural history, entertainment, financing, government and parliamentary procedures ... on the development of public policy

Whilst agreeing with Cunningham, Bowe *et al.* (1996) make the point that the process of the policy after it has been developed is also contested; that the influences which Cunningham describes continue to impact on the policy after the act of legislation.

A major theme explored by researchers such as Bowe *et al.* (1996) and Rizvi and Kemmis (1987) is the need for policy analysts to "grasp the significance of the policy as a text, or a series of texts, for the different contexts in which they are used" (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 276). Knight *et al.* (1991, p 134) refer to "competing texts" thereby acknowledging a plurality (not an infinity) of readings. The policy process is one of "policy-making and remaking" (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 278). Rizvi and Kemmis (1987, p 14) conclude that for many practitioners their response to texts will be constructed on the basis of "interpretations of interpretations". Bowe *et al.* (1996) support this conclusion and observe that "many of those towards whom the policy is aimed rely on these second hand accounts as their main source of information and understanding as intended" (*ibid.*, p 285).

As the second hand accounts are the main sources of information about the policy, Bowe *et al.* (1996) argue that texts have to be read in terms of the nature of policy contexts. Furthermore, understanding how texts operate "with and against one another" (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 286) is crucial. Bowe *et al.* (1996) add that there must remain an awareness of the ways in which texts change contexts and the relations between contexts. The point that Bowe *et al.* (1996) are making, one also made by Blackmore *et al.*, (1994), is that "policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts, ... parts of which will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood" (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 286). Blackmore *et al.* (1994, p 185) argue that conventional policy paradigms which view the teacher, parent and student as "passive recipients of policy who either implement the policies or resist them in their totality" are not adequate in their analysis of who makes policy. Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 286) contend that practitioners do not confront policy texts as "naive readers" but have vested interests in the meaning of policy, informed by their histories, experience, values and purposes of their own. While agreeing that policy production occurs at both a micro and macro level, and that the process is a continual one, "in which the loci of power are continually shifting" (Bowe *et al.*, p 279), Blackmore *et al.*, (1994) point out that this does not mean that all players are equally "empowered" by this shifting of the loci of power. They state that "policy constrains what can be done by the producer of policy text at the school level in that only certain activities are legitimated and that the policy text itself is limited by the selective readings of the majority" (Blackmore *et al.*, p 199).

Bowe *et al.* understand the policy cycle as follows: educational policy, decided on through a process of compromise and negotiation is translated into legislation (the key text: the Act). This then becomes a working document for politicians, teachers, unions and bodies charged with "implementing" legislation (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 277). The process is a continual one, "in which the loci of power are continually shifting" (*ibid.* p 279).

Later work by Fullan (1993) and Haddad (1994) indicates a shift in the focus of research from studying "factors associated with the success or failure of the latest innovation or policy" (Fullan, 1993, p vii) to an appreciation of the existence of "multiple rationalities which can be seen as relevant for any particular policy process" (Haddad, 1994, p 8). Haddad (1994) posits that, "rather than assessing which rationality is correct, policy analysis seeks to understand the process through which tradeoffs are accomplished among the interests underlying the various rationalities relevant for a given policy choice" (*ibid.*, p 8).

Key texts such as Bowe *et al.* (1996) stress the need for a dynamic framework for policy analysis to cover the pre-policy decision, the decision process, as well as the post decision activities.

Haddad (1994) introduces an "analytical framework that unravels the predecision and postdecision activities" (p vii). Although Haddad's concluding section identifies factors that contribute to successful policy-making he avoids falling into the trap of compiling a "recipe list" in so far as he acknowledges the dynamism of change and the need for an analytical frame to reflect this dynamism. By employing his analytical frame to discuss different case studies, the conclusions he draws are sensitive to the context and complexity of change initiatives that might be employed.⁴ This development within the theory can be interpreted as a necessary tool for analysis within a post modernist paradigm.

The focus of a growing body of literature has been on the political nature of policy-

⁴ See in particular his discussion of the reform initiatives in Peru in ch 6 of Dynamics of Educational Policy making: Case studies of Burkina Faso, Jordan, Peru and Thailand (1994)

making. Implicit in the call for a dynamic frame of analysis which is sensitive to the complexity of policy-making is the notion that the area of policy-making is contested. A major theme of literature on policy formation is the argument that policy-making is not a neutral activity. This literature examines the politics of the policy process and investigates and interrogates the relationship between policy and polity (see for example, Ball (1990, 1994); Stone (1994); Lingard *et al.* (1987); Cunningham (1992); Sarason (1990); Apple (1992); Peters (1992)). The relationship between social, economic and political position and policy indicates the relationship of power to policy-making process. Kogan (1975, p 55) maintains that policies involve "authoritative allocation of values" and consequently, policy-making involves a process of defining these values and thereby legitimating them. Ball (1990, p 13) argues that "policies typically posit a restructuring, redistribution and disruption of power relations so that different people can and cannot do different things."

Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) analysis draws on Foucault's use of the term "discourse". According to Foucault, a discourse excludes some knowledge and privileges others (Usher, 1994). Ball (1990, p 17), in referring to Foucault's position on discourse, states that

[d]iscourses are ... about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when and with what authority. [D]iscourses construct certain possibilities for thought. They order and combine words in particular ways and exclude or displace other combinations.

Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 276) argue that "who becomes involved in the policy process and how they become involved" (*ibid.*) is not a matter of following a fixed policy text or "putting the Act into practice" (*ibid.*), but that it is a "product of a combination of administratively based procedures, historical precedence and political manoeuvring, implicating the State, the State bureaucracy and continual struggles over access to the policy process" (*ibid.*) and control over the sites of policy-making. A reading of the "outcomes" of a legislated policy using a paradigm of policy which maintains that the policy process is linear, fails to make problematic the discourse of the policy or the

assumptions underlying the policy. The policy texts are the outcome of "struggle and compromise" (Bowe *et al.*, p 286). Examining the process whereby control is established over the representation of policy is essential in unmasking the power struggles behind the policy process.

Approaching the debate from a different angle, Bowe *et al.* (1996) contend that interpreting legislation as but one aspect of a continual process leads to understanding "policy" as a discourse - "a set of claims of how the world should and might be" (*ibid.*, p 279). Bowe *et al.* (1996) refer to Kogan's (1975, p 55) view of policies as "operational statements of values", statements of "prescriptive intent". An understanding of policy as a discourse illuminates the contestation of the policy in and between the arenas of formation and implementation (Bowe *et al.* , p 279).

Blackmore *et al.* (1994) argue that the conventional paradigm of the policy process identified by Bowe *et al.* (1996) which constructs generation and implementation as separate, defines and limits the role of those outside the state apparatus, and legitimises those within, making those voices more authoritative. It positions certain people as actors and others as passive recipients. Furthermore this paradigm conceives any discrepancy between policy and outcomes as an "implementation problem", variously interpreted as teacher resistance, inadequate organizational control and/or lack of accountability to central control (Blackmore *et al.* , 1994, p 184). Acceptance of this paradigm by those affected by the policy, be it on the local level of the school (principal, teacher, student, parent) or on a provincial or national level (researcher, ministry of education, Education Department) obviously shapes the way the policy text will be perceived. Further, the acceptance of one's position either as "doer" or "receiver" in terms of where one sits, will affect the way one responds. It is much harder to respond critically if one views one's position as receiver. This body of literature argues that people respond to the policy text, not only in terms of what the text says, but in terms of the discourse which it represents. The way people engage with the text, will be specified by the discourse. The discourse of the policy as it is interpreted, will define the role played by various individuals in the process, and will define the limits of their response. Thus for example, it might appear as if a teacher is resisting the policy by not teaching in the way the legislated policy requires the

teacher to do. However, if the teacher does not feel that s/he could engage with the policy, but views it as a *fait accompli*, then the teacher is not challenging the discourse of the policy, should the policy discourse set the generation and implementation of policy as two distinct and disconnected procedures. In the context of this argument, Foucault's (1974) explanation of discourse holds implications for the policy process. Since discourse is

for those who speak it ... a given - it operates "behind their backs", it is an "unthought", [i]t is not questioned although it is the means by which questions are asked. One consequence of this is that discourses ... conceal their own invention. (*ibid.*, p 49)

The text thus can have as its stated aim, democracy, but because the discourse informing the written text holds the policy paradigm whereby generation and implementation are distinct and disconnected and the path from the two to be linear, the process will undermine the aim of the legislated policy. Following from this argument, Fullan (1993A) supports Peter's (1992) contention that the policy may well aim to bring about a democratic society, but that the policy process is far from democratic. The paradox of policy is that the document may well intend change, but the process may serve to entrench the ideological status quo. Thus although the discourse of the policy documents can support the state programme of social change, as Carnoy (1990) and Graham-Brown (1991) illustrate in their discussion of reform in Cuba and Mozambique respectively, it cannot be assumed that the state is employing consciously its discourse in the policy document as a political strategy. This assertion would be supported by Foucault's claim that "discourse speaks us". This point is well illustrated by Yates (1993) and Yeatman (1987) in their analysis of educational reform in Australia, where they argue that whilst the intent behind the policy changes may have been progressive, the conservative discourse visible once a deeper analysis of the policy is done, undermined this.

Closely related to the argument of the body of literature of which Yates (1993) and Hall (1995) provide good examples, is the emphasis on the need to differentiate between "change" and "transformation", or "meaningful change". They argue that it is

possible to have "change without difference". Fullan (1993A) and Hall (1995a) refer to the need for "meaningful change" (Fullan, 1993A, p 102) which they define as the internalisation of change. This act of "internalisation" both by individual and institution is the act of taking on a discourse.

The dissertation has also drawn on the discipline of spatial theory which provides an interesting analysis of the interface of policy text, people and space. Key texts by Lefebvre (1991); Soja (1989) and Massey (1992) examine critically the interaction between spatial practices (what people do in a space), representations of space (the official 'map' of a space) and representational space (the conception or understanding of a space : the way a space is understood). This body of literature is relevant to the study as it provides an alternative conceptual framework for the analysis of the formation of perceptions and the maintenance and institutionalisation of the dominant perception. The body of work drawn from this discipline also draws attention to the dynamic nature of the relationship between policy texts, space and people.

Key texts like Ball's (1990; 1994) have focused on the politics and discourse of policy-making. An interesting development in the literature has been work like Bowe *et al.* (1996) which interrogates the process of policy analyses. The work of Bowe *et al.* (1996) is a key text in that it prises open the contradictions embedded within paradigms of policy analysis. For this reason, this study has relied heavily on the text. Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) argument develops that of Ball's (1990) who, drawing on Foucault's theories on power and policy, argues that an analysis of policy must involve an investigation of "whose values are validated in policy and whose are not" (*ibid.*, p 3). Bowe *et al.* (1996) assert that policy analysts are also involved in the construction of values by legitimating certain policy areas over others. Thus, Bowe *et al.* (1996) argue, the process of distorting the policy process by depicting it as consisting of separate and distinct generation and implementation phases, serves an ideological function. They state that

the image implicit in the conception of distinct and disconnected sets of policy-makers and policy implementors actually serves the powerful ideological purpose of reinforcing a linear conception of policy in which theory and practice are separate and the former is privileged.

(*ibid.*, p 276)

In the next section of the literature review I examine the literature which has focused on educational policy and change in the South African context. The theories or analyses put forward on the development of policy in South African education are also examined.

Analyses of policy development in South Africa have tended to be either largely descriptive and uncritical (as in the case of Nieuwenhuis's The Development of Education systems in Post Colonial Africa (1994), where policy is described as being "widely accepted" (without specifying by whom) as a "plan or general course of action adopted by a government... a plan devised to serve a specific purpose" (*ibid.*, p 15); or, focused on the macro context and the inequities of the apartheid government, providing an analyses of the legislation and responses to the legislation. Buckland (1994) provides an analyses of the approach of the Nationalist Government to education policy and labels it as marked by technicism, categorising the De Lange and Education Renewal Strategy as technicist, in that state officials, academics and researchers became the arbiters of the needs of the mass of the people.

The contested nature of the terrain of education in South Africa is referred to in most of the literature (see Christie (1994); Samoff (1997); Marshall *et al.* (1986). The focus has been on illustrating this in terms of access to education and achieving equity and equality within a system which under the apartheid years had been structured to reflect and support the legislated divisions, inequalities and resultant inequities within the society (see for example, Metcalf (1991) and Lemon (1995).⁵

Literature written during the early '90's examined the policy options available to the government victorious in the 1994 election (see for example, Unterhalter *et al.* (1991); Christie (1994). The work of the Educational Policy Units (EPU's) and their quarterly reports provided analyses of policy as well.

Post 1994 literature has examined the consequences of the apartheid education system. Research into identity formation amongst school children has received particular attention (see for example, Soudien (1995)). Analyses of the new

⁵ Jacklin (1997) provides a useful spatialised account of education in South Africa.

legislation has included analyses of influences on its formation as well as its implications (see for example: Samoff (1997) and Donn (1995)). This body of literature has continued to focus on the content of the legislated policy documents and has paid little attention to the policy process, or policy texts generated which are not legislated.

Nieuwenhuis's (1994, p 15) contention that education policy "in the African context ... may be contained in acts, white papers on education, development plans or in national commission reports" ignores the relationship between policy generated outside the legislated policy. Furthermore it supports the notion that "policy" is a single text complete in its legislated form to be implemented. This "immaculate conception" of the policy process ignores the contestations prior to the act of legislation and those post legislation. Nieuwenhuis's (1994) conception of policy not only validates and privileges the legislated text over any non-legislated text, it also positions the legislated text as an apolitical document.

"The Struggle", as the anti-apartheid movement is referred to, involved a number of struggles. Within the education context, it could be argued that the struggle for "[F]ormal authority for education policy" was the focus for contestation (Samoff *et al.* (1994), p 37). This would appear to support Nieuwenhuis's (1994) argument that the legislated text is all important; however, Samoff *et al.* (1994) and others differ from the trajectory of commentators such as Nieuwenhuis's in their assumptions about the nature of the policy process and their understanding of the shaping influence of the contestations on the legislated act. Samoff *et al.* (1994, p 31) argue that "policy change is a function of both content and process. Inattention to the content marginalises the process. But inattention to the process undermines and delegitimises the content".

The article by Samoff *et al.* (1994) argues that the movement from apartheid to post apartheid education has involved a "series of transitions, overlapping but not identical, and all contested" (*ibid.*, p 40). They posit that policy-making is "necessarily a continuing *process*" (*ibid.*, p 40) which includes the setting of broad objectives, planning, decision making and policy analysis. Samoff *et al.*'s (1994) article is characteristic of a body of literature which begins to focus on the process of policy,

and the existence of policy beyond the act of legislation. Furthermore, an unpacking of the power relations at work in the construction of policy, both that which is legislated and that which is not, begins to take place. This is illustrated in Samoff *et al.*'s (1994) analysis of the "transition period" (1990-1994) in which they ask the question, "[i]n this context [of transition] **who** makes education policy?" (*ibid.*, p 1) (my emphasis). They provide what they consider many commentators, both South African and foreign would consider the obvious answer: "[u]ntil the majority rule election in April 1994, the apartheid government set educational policy" (*ibid.*, p 1). However as they show in the rest of the paper, the apartheid government may well have legislated their written policy, but a number of organisations and groupings developed and implemented their own policy. In other words, as Samoff *et al.* (1994) argue, there were a number of policies "written" as alternatives to the National Party's legislated policy, which were implemented by many South Africans involved in education. Samoff *et al.* (1994) observe that as critical as the earlier protests of 1976 and the 80s were, it was the National Education Crises Committee (NECC)⁶ which became the political centre for a national initiative to chart a new education agenda which set and led a new plan for transforming education. The NECC assumed the national role of an independent mass based education policy centre.

The influence of the alternative policy texts on the development of legislated policy is a focus for much of the literature (see for example, Walker and Jeppie (1992); Wolpe (1991) and Samoff *et al.* (1994). The NEPI documents; the work of the Educational Policy Units (EPU) and the Centre for Educational Policy Development (CEPD) were instrumental in providing alternatives to the education policy of the National Government. Furthermore, the work of the Educational Policy Units established by the National Education Crises Committee (NECC) and certain universities to develop educational policies for the transformation of South African education played a central role in analysing and criticising alternative educational policies. Reviewing the NEPI documents, Samoff *et al.* (1994, p 31) argue that despite contention, "the NEPI process did stimulate considered discussion of policy alternatives." Samoff *et al.* (1994) contend that the NEPI process contributed to the development of new

⁶ later known as the National Education Coordinating Committee.

educational policies for South Africa in that it "focus[ed] attention on the policy directions put forward by the democratic movement [and] sensitized [the] progressive forces to the particular demands of policy-making" (*ibid.*, p 31). The unbanning of the ANC and other organisations in the 1990's is seen as marking a shift in the principal focus of attention from mobilisation to planning and policy development (see for example, Lemon, A (1995) and Samoff *et al.* (1994)). The active participation of the NECC in building the new ANC Education Department contributed to the transfer of NECC legitimacy and authority to it (Samoff *et al.*, p 13). The establishment by the ANC of the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD) in 1993, marked a further subsuming of the NECC's role by the ANC. A number of key documents were written during this time: the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) reports (1993), the ANC's A Policy Framework (1994) and the human resources development section of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. The work of the Centre for Education Policy development (CEPD) was to have particular influence in policy post 1994, however.

Samoff *et al.* (1994) point to the CEPD's policy document, the "Implementation Plan for Education" (IPET) as playing a significant role in the determination of policy after the 1994 election. Samoff *et al.* (1994, p 33) argue that the IPET's weakness lay in the fact that it did not conceive policy as a process in which the development of policy itself includes "contestation over priorities and in which that contestation is expected to continue after the recommendations reach the decision makers", but rather that policy was conceived as a "hand over exercise" (*ibid.*, p 33) where the specifications are developed and handed over to a new government for its selective implementation. They argue that a detailed plan for transforming the white dominated apartheid education bureaucracy was absent, as well as an "apparently relatively simplistic and generally uncritical understanding of the policy process" (*ibid.*, p 35).

Work by Wolpe (1993) and Samoff (1997) represent a body of literature which recognises the impact of non - governmental agencies on policy-making; that policy-making is not linear; that what happens before and after the legislated act is as important as the act itself. However, the literature concentrates on the bigger picture and despite observations like Samoff *et al.*'s (1994 p 39) that "[t]he institutions of the education system itself are also sites of contested transitions", there are very few

ethnographies. The focus instead has been on the macro level (see for example, Kahn, M (1996)⁷. That the agencies consist of individuals is recognised, but not foregrounded in this body of literature. The literature discussing educational policy has moved in focus from analysing why apartheid education policies were educationally and morally unacceptable to assessing which policies would be workable in a post apartheid setting. (see for example, Lemmer, (1993); Marcum, (1993); Donn (1995), Christie (1995)) The debates have moved in character from that of alternative policies of resistance to policy-making and political transition. Recent work on educational policy in South Africa has acknowledged the possibility that the "process of policy-making may be more consequential for the society than the decisions themselves" (Samoff *et al.*, p 40). However, as this review of recent literature around educational policy in South Africa indicates, the debate continues to favour an analysis of CONTENT and the implications thereof over an analysis of the process of policy-making despite an awareness of a more critical approach to policy-making which examines and interrogates the process.

⁷ Eyber's dissertation (1997) is an example of the exception: it examines by means of a discourse analytic approach, how teachers at two former model C schools construct educational changes rhetorically in order to contain and restrict change at the school, points to what could hopefully become a growing field of study. What is also significant about Eyber's work is the cross disciplinary nature of her study (see also B. Druker (1996) .

Chapter 4

Research methodology

Cohen and Manion (1992, p 42) define the aim of methodology as "helping us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific enquiry but the process itself". The function of this chapter will be to discuss critically the process of enquiry followed in the writing of this dissertation. The chapter will address the choice of site of the research; the methodological approaches adopted; the process whereby data was organised and interpreted and the rationale for these choices.

The research took the form of a case study of a school. The nature of the research into the school chosen for the case study was exploratory. Furthermore, due largely to time constraints, I conducted the research at one school only. These two factors render it inappropriate to attempt to generalise the findings. However, I believe that the research will be useful in pointing to areas of further research.

Before discussing the site chosen for research, it is important to define what I refer to as the "school", a definition which draws closely on Sarason's work (1990). It attempts to capture the dynamic nature of the school community. "The school" refers to the notion of a school as a community shaped and shaping the larger community within which it is located. The school community in turn consists of sub-units or sub-communities placed within different physical spaces: the classrooms; the play ground; the administrative offices; the staff room. The sub-units have a dialectical relationship with one another.

This series of interactions is illustrated in figure 1.

The dissertation distinguishes the sub-committees as follows:

“the executive staff” refers to the principal and the Head of Departments (HOD's)

“the teachers” refers to the executive staff and the other teachers

“the students” refers to the learners at the school

“the close community” refers to the local community

“the broader community” refers to the national concerns: political, economical and social.

Research was conducted at Empire High School¹. I chose Empire High for two main reasons: its location, and my familiarity with the school. A brief discussion of these reasons will follow. Empire High is the only English medium secondary State school in Bankerstown, a town in the North West Province. As the Bankerstown area is a traditionally conservative area with a large mining and farming community, the likelihood of the educational reform measures having considerable impact was high.

My familiarity with Empire High was an important factor in choosing the school as the site of investigation. This relationship had implications in terms of scale: I believed that my knowledge of the area would be useful in terms of the school as well as the broader community. As I had grown up in the Bankerstown area, I felt that I would have a particular understanding of the context in which the changes of the 1994 elections occurred. As a past scholar at Empire High, I felt that I would be accepted with less difficulty than in another school. I explore the implications, both positive and negative, of my familiarity with the school for the research, in the following section which discusses the methods used in conducting the research.

¹ I have used pseudonyms where necessary in order to protect participants' confidentiality.

Data collection strategies

The design of the data collection strategies is such that there is a triangulation of data as well as an attempt to use multiple research strategies. The use of multiple research strategies is advocated by a number of researchers (see for example, Cohen and Manion (1994); Smith (1975); Adelman *et al.* (1980)). Triangulation allows for the researcher to combine both quantitative and qualitative data, making use of the most valuable features of each. Denzin (1978) and Measor (1988) argue that a process of triangulation whereby multiple research strategies to collect multiple sets of data on the same phenomena is used, can increase the validity of social research data. Triangulation of the data collected will contribute to the reliability of the data obtained, as well as to the validity of the data collection strategies. As such my data collection strategies were as follows:

semi structured questionnaire given to a group of 32 Grade 12 students

focus group interviews with the same 32 Grade 12 students

unstructured interviews conducted with:

the principal

selected teachers

the chair of the governing body (1992-1996)

a review of policy statements generated by Empire High

a review of relevant media material

Interviews

The unstructured interviews and focus group interviews took place at the school. Due to time and logistical constraints², the interviews could only be conducted on one day of each

² The grade 12 class was only available once in a 6 day cycle. The dates of the interviews were constructed around this constraint. Furthermore, my teaching commitments in Gauteng limited the amount of time I could spend in Bankerstown during the week.

week. The period devoted to the research lasted six weeks. The participants were informed of the date of their interview well in advance. The interviews and focus group interviews were taped. The interviews lasted between 40 - 60 minutes. The focus group interviews lasted between 15 -20 minutes. The principal was interviewed at the beginning and end of the research period. As the principal was the only person with whom I did not have a prior relationship, the two interviews facilitated better rapport. I was able to compare his statements from the first interview with the statements made in the second interview. Similarly I was able to cross check other participants' statements, and gain a clearer picture of the perceptions and the influences on these perceptions.

According to Cohen and Manion (1994, p 309) the interview may serve three purposes

- 1) the principal means of gathering information by providing access to what is "inside a person's head";
- 2) [i]t makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs);
- 3) testing of hypothesis or to suggest new ones or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationships
- 4) may be used in conjunction with other methods

As the focus of the dissertation was on the perceptions of change held by the individuals within the school, the first two functions of the interview identified by Cohen and Manion (1994) are particularly relevant.

Unstructured interviews

Four kinds of interviews that may be used specifically as research are distinguished by Cohen and Manion (1994). These are as follows:

Structured: the content and procedures are organised in advance. The interview is a closed situation, in that the content, sequence and wording of the questions are set and the answers are recorded on a standardised schedule.

Unstructured: the interview is an open situation where the interviewer has greater flexibility. The research purpose governs the questions, but the content, sequence and wording of the questions are entirely in the hands of the interviewer.

non-directive: minimal direction by interviewer. It derives from a therapeutic interview.

focused: a non-directive situation with more interviewer control.

Of these options, the unstructured interview was the most suitable for the purposes of my research. The choice of the unstructured interview as the primary source of data was closely connected to an underlying assumption with which I approached the research, namely that there would be resistance to my area of study and that the subjects might well feel threatened. Based on this assumption, my motivation for choosing the unstructured interview as primary research method, is best summed up by Kitwood (in Cohen and Manion (1994), p 319) who states that

the main purpose of using an interview in research is that it is believed that in an interpersonal encounter: people are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, their feelings and values, than they would in a less human situation.

Thus I assumed that the use of unstructured interviews would contribute to the creation of a non-threatening environment which would best serve the purposes of the study.

Although the name might suggest otherwise, the unstructured interview has to be very carefully constructed. As Meason (1988) points out, the unstructured interview demands careful planning, as it must facilitate the building of a relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. Meason (1988) stresses the need for the interviewer to structure the interview in such a way that potentially controversial questions are not asked at the beginning of the interview, as this might lead to the interviewee becoming defensive. This demands that the researcher be aware of what the contentious issues might be. Often these areas of contention are context-specific: what might be contentious for one school could be quite neutral for another; similarly what might confound one person, might be meaningless for another. Thus it is no surprise that Meason stresses the need for the

researcher to enter the interview situation well informed. Saran (1989, p 223) agrees with Meason's point and suggests that "being well prepared helps the researcher to Research judge the accuracy with which a respondent is able to reconstruct past events from memory". It may also allow the researcher to assess the degree of frankness with which evaluative answers are given. This is significant, particularly as the disclosure which Kitwood (1977) suggests unstructured interviews encourage may not be without embellishments, conscious or unconscious. Greater disclosure does not always mean greater honesty. Thus careful planning and preparation will impact positively on the reliability of the data.

My background knowledge of Bankerstown and Empire High would prove most useful in this regard, as it would put me in a position to be me to be sensitive to the concerns voiced by these researchers.

The main area of concern for the researcher using the unstructured interview is the relationship between the researcher and subject. Meason (1989) identifies a number of strategies the interviewer can use in building rapport with the interviewee, of which a number were employed in the study. The unstructured interview is particularly suitable in that it allows the interviewer to adjust and adapt the questions as the interview proceeds. Thus, if the response of the subject pointed to an angle which I had not thought of in setting up the questions, the structure was flexible enough for me to explore and assess the relevancy of the path down which the subject wished to proceed. The flexibility of the interview created the space for information which was potentially valuable but presented in alternative ways to be accessed.

The interviewer's image can also contribute or impede the interview. Thus, as Meason (1989, p 74) points out, "[w]hat the interviewer is influences and maybe determines the kind of data he or she receives". Factors such as age, gender and race play an important role in this regard. In choosing Empire High as a case study, I anticipated that my familiarity with Empire High would facilitate my access to the respondents and facilitate the

building of the research relationship. As very few of the teaching staff had left since I had attended the school, I entered the school with their trust in my intentions. Thus time, which would under different circumstances have been used to establish my credentials and a rapport with the interviewees, could be spent otherwise. Furthermore, I was identified by the teaching staff and the principal to the students of the school as a past student of Empire High doing research. My role as teacher was by the teaching staff and principal in their construction of my identity which they presented to the students. This appeared to work to my advantage, in that the students saw me as a potential ally and not a teacher figure³. This I believe accounted for the frankness with which a number of the students responded.

It is difficult for me to distinguish the extent to which my age and gender influenced the perception the participants had of me. However, the combination of these factors and my familiarity with the school appeared to have had a positive effect.

It is important to acknowledge the shortcomings of the interview as a research tool. The main problem is that of reliability and validity. Researchers point to the subjective nature of the method as responsible for potentially compromising the data's reliability and validity. Kitwood (1977) discusses the conflict that is generated in using the interview as a research tool and the traditional concepts of reliability. He argues however that attempting to increase the reliability of the interview by greater control of its elements, results in a reduction of its validity. He stresses that it is the "distinctively human element in the interview [that] is necessary to its 'validity'". Thus Kitwood concludes that "the more the interviewer becomes rational, calculating and detached, the less likely the interview is to be perceived as a friendly transaction, and the more calculated the response also is likely to be" (in Cohen and Manion, 1989, p 319).

³ Discussions after the interviews indicated that a number of the students viewed me as such. A number of students wished me to tell them whether Empire High had changed since I had been there. Others asked me questions about my research work.

Meason (1989) is also alert to the tension between the interviewer gaining the trust of the interviewees and the need to obtain certain data. She emphasises the importance of rapport; the building of relationships, trust and confidence, but at the same time, "[t]he interviewer has to stay critically aware' during the interview ... it involves entering another person's world and their perspective, but remaining alert to its configurations at the same time" (*ibid.*, p 63). It is precisely this tension described by Meason which I experienced in data collection: I had to remain objective enough to be a critical listener, yet I was well aware that it was my familiarity which permitted me to hear the intimate accounts of the teachers.

Focus group interviews

The second method of research was the use of focus group interviews. Focus group interviews were conducted with the grade 12 students to whom a questionnaire had been administered the previous week. The student group divided itself into 6 focus groups of between 6-8 students.

Used appropriately, focus groups can elicit information not achieved in the usual interview situation (Hoppe *et al.* (1995); Basch (1987); Folch-Lyon and Trost (1981); McDonald and Topper (1989). One participant's response may "provoke responses from others in the group, resulting in a synergistic effect" (Hoppe *et al.*, p 102). Another advantage identified by researchers (Festervand (1984-85); Folch-Lyon and Trost (1981) of using focus groups is the idea of "safety in numbers" : a focus group "encourages participants to answer questions in more detail than they would divulge in an individual interview (Hoppe *et al.*, p 103). Although Flores (1995) disagrees with this position and argues that, "the pre-existence of relations between people can interfere with the functioning of the group" (p 91), I would suggest that it depends largely on the nature of the relationship between the people and whether there is a difference in their social positions. In other words, in a group of students who are of equal status in the school hierarchy, and have

chosen to be in the group together, the functioning of the group need not be affected. Should a teacher be included in the focus group of students, however, it will be the teacher's position of greater power that will affect the group, more so than the fact that s/he is known to the group. As this was not the case in the focus group interviews conducted with the students, Flores's (1995) concern did not apply.

The nature and composition of the groups can also influence the type of data obtained from the research. Most of the groups were homogeneous in terms of gender, and although Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) caution against mixed groups as being too distracting for some of the participants, the time constraint resulted in some of the groups being mixed. However, the students organised themselves into groups, and in doing so, I believe limited the extent to which power dynamics may have shaped or influenced the degree of their participation. Furthermore, Hoppe *et al.* (date) recommend grouping together children who know each other as this makes the situation more comfortable and less stressful for the participants.

The assurance that the students' participation was confidential, introduced when administering the questionnaire, was reemphasized before the sessions began. This was important as it served to facilitate a sense of trust and encouraged frankness. The setting of the sessions was important in supporting this frankness. According to Hoppe *et al.* (1995, p 108), "[f]ocus groups benefit if the environment is conducive to discussion and does not have the appearance of a test situation". The focus group sessions were conducted in an unoccupied classroom, where the session would not be interrupted. Spontaneity was encouraged by the confidential nature of the data being made clear to the participants and assuring them that their comments would be anonymous.

An important factor to consider is the role the facilitator or moderator adopts in the conducting of focus group interviews. Moderators can

- 1) simply expose the theme;
- 2) not intervene;
- 3) provoke a discussion;
- 4) relieve silences;
- 5) control the development of the discussion to keep within the theme;
- 6) formulate several open questions, carefully thought out, to guide the discussion

(Flores, 1995, p 94).

I considered the latter role as the most helpful and appropriate in terms of the time constraints, and chose to adopt it in conducting the focus group discussions.

Questionnaire

The third data collection strategy used was that of a questionnaire⁴ conducted with a selected group of grade 12 students. The aim of the questionnaire was to develop a profile of the students in terms of their gender, class; relationship with Empire High in terms of their educational history and the level of their political awareness. Through open ended questions, the students' attitude and perceptions of the period of political transition were gauged. The questionnaire was also aimed at establishing the influences shaping the students' perceptions of educational and general policy change.

Only three of the 24 questions of the questionnaire could be classified as open ended questions. The remaining questions were closed questions, and the data obtained was quantitative in nature. The data received from the open ended questions was qualitative

⁴ See Appendix B for questionnaire

in nature. The questionnaire was structured in such a way that the open ended questions could "flesh out" the answers to the closed questions about political awareness and awareness of change in educational policy.

The use of the questionnaire as a method of research has both advantages and disadvantages. The anonymity of the questionnaire can encourage greater honesty, and in this way the data obtained can be more reliable. However, as Tuckman (1972) suggests, open items on the questionnaire may meet with resistance and the respondents may be unwilling to write their answers for one reason or another.⁵

The confidential nature of the questionnaire meant that it was only possible to gain an understanding of the group of students as a whole. However, as Knight *et al.*, (1991, p 137, points out,

[re]sponses to and interpretations of particular texts should not ...be understood simply in terms of individual psychologies. Rather, individual readings will be framed by cultural formations and practices which are derived from the objective position of the individual reader in the social structure.

The data obtained was useful in sketching the "objective position" of the students, both inside and outside the school. Furthermore the data verified statements made by the principal and teachers about the path of policy within the school, and the perceptions of students' understandings of this. The data obtained from the questionnaire was also used to develop and adapt the questions for the focus group interview.

⁵ This appeared to be the case in the way in which some of the questionnaires were answered. Of the 33 questionnaires handed out, only two participants did not complete all the questions. The only questions not answered were the last two questions. These were two of the three open questions in the questionnaire.

Review of school documents

The school magazines of Empire High from 1992 - 1996 were reviewed as well as certain notices given by the principal. I was only able to study the notices given to me by the principal, and acknowledge this limitation. However, the unstructured interviews with the principal and other teachers verify the tone and content of the notices. The documents were used as sources of nominative data, for example, the number of teachers. Furthermore an analysis of the documents was aimed at examining the way in which official policy was presented. To this end, the message of the principal and the governing body chair printed each year in the school magazine proved useful in distinguishing the school's official policy response.

Participants

As important as it is to acknowledge the limitation of certain research methods, or to discuss the differences between research methods, so it is appropriate to discuss the participants chosen for the study and the motivation for their selection.

Teachers

Eight teachers were interviewed. They were chosen according to the number of years they had taught at the school, as well as their positions in the school. The assumption behind this choice was that the length of experience teaching as well as position held might influence the perceptions of the teachers. Thus I attempted to interview as broad a selection as time constraints would allow. Table 1 provides a summary of the profiles of the teachers selected. All the teachers at the school are white. Three teachers had taught for more than twenty years at the school. Of these, two are heads of departments. One teacher had taught at Empire High for four years. One teacher held a temporary position, but had been teaching at Empire High as a substitution teacher for almost six years. All

the teachers lived in Bankerstown. Of the teachers interviewed, five had attended Empire High as scholars.

Students

A group of Grade 12's were chosen as participants for the study. They were chosen because they were in their first year of secondary school, in 1992. It was thus considered likely that they would be able to discuss schooling prior to the 1994 elections and thereafter. Table 2a provides a profile of the students.

A questionnaire was administered to 33 Grade 12 students. Over the following weeks, the initial group was divided by the students into focus groups of between 6-8 students.

Principal

Two taped interviews were conducted with the principal, one at the beginning of the research, and one at the conclusion of the research period.

The Governing Body

The past chair of the governing body was interviewed. The discussion was taped.

Ethical considerations

I received permission from the principal of the school to visit the school on four occasions. The days were chosen to coincide with timetable requirements which allowed the Grade

12's "free" time to be interviewed. I received permission from the principal to interview any of the teachers I would wish to. The principal also gave me access to school records. Prior to each interview, each participant was given a form which explained the nature and scope of my research.⁶ The confidentiality of each participant in the research was assured.

Data analysis and interpretation

Having discussed the data collection strategies, the manner in which the data obtained was organised and analysed will be examined.

The challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. (Patton, 1990, p 371-372)

The challenge which Patton (1990) identifies is applicable to qualitative and quantitative data. However, the challenge in analysing qualitative data lies not only in coming to terms with the mass of data usually obtained from triangulation of research techniques, but also in finding a way of processing it which is both theoretically sound and sensitive to the qualitative nature of the data. The analysis of the qualitative data obtained proceeded as follows:

- The tape recordings of the unstructured interviews and focus group interviews were transcribed.
- An analysis was made of the transcripts with the intention of identifying themes from the responses as well as the form of the various discourses that might be functioning at the school. Furthermore, the analysis aimed at gaining an understanding of "why, at a given time, out of all the possible things that could be said, only certain things were said" (Foucault as interpreted by Ball, 1994, p 3).
- The analysis was facilitated by developing codes from the data. The codes were derived

⁶ See Appendix C

from the category names which grouped the data according to themes or topics. These themes tended to emerge from the information. However, the codes were also developed with the theoretical perspectives which inform this study in mind. In this way the approach was not entirely one of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) but also inductive in focus.

- Once the data was coded, 28 codes were evident.
- A frequency count of the codes was made. This was summarised into table format (see table 3) so that the codes and their frequencies could be clearly displayed (see Appendix D for full names and explanation of codes).

What is important to note here is that in analysing qualitative work, the distinction between whether the analysis was deductive or inductive becomes quite blurred. This was the case with the analysis as far as coding was concerned. The conceptual framework was both deductive (as it was informed by prior knowledge) and inductive in that it was modified by the themes revealed by the data. Sowden and Keeves (1988, p 514) claim that this blurring occurs when "it is recognised that the conception of the orienting constructs which were used in the process of deduction were themselves a product of induction". The claim made by Sowden and Keeves (1998, p 514) indicate that it is not so much a question of whether this blurring is a good or bad thing, but rather that it is a feature and reality of qualitative work.

The process of reasoning behind the analysis can also be described as abductive in that analogical patterns and similarities were sought in a more circular fashion (Plas, 1986). In this, abductive reasoning dovetails with ecosystemic thinking, which Van der Hoorn (1995, p 166) describes as concerning itself with a "web of indeterminate, interconnected patterns of mutual influence". Both abductive and ecosystemic thinking are relevant in qualitative research as they acknowledge complexity without necessarily adopting a reductionist approach.

The interpretation of the data entailed consulting a variety of theoretical perspectives relevant to the central focus of the study. This approach, whereby more than one

theoretical perspective is used, is known as theory triangulation. Theory triangulation, as is the case with other forms of triangulation serves to enrich the interpretation. Thus despite the initial concern when developing the literature review, that there was not one field of theory which encapsulated the area of study, the interpretation was enhanced through theory triangulation. Theory triangulation is not only a source of methodological strength but also the "appropriate way of entering the circle of interpretation" (Denzin, 1988, p 512).

This study made use of a number of the methods for interpreting qualitative data suggested by Sowden and Keeves (1998, p 523). These include:

- counting of responses or instances
- noting of patterns and themes
- clustering similar responses and/or subjects
- using metaphors to enhance understanding

In terms of interpreting the data, this study chose to identify and report the general trends as far as similarities and differences were concerned as well as to focus on certain subjects whose data it was considered illuminated relevant issues.

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire was analysed by grouping the answers under category headings used to organise the questionnaire (see Table 2a, b, c and d). These headings were translated into codes. The results of the questionnaire informed the structure of the focus group interviews. Table 4 displays the codes used to facilitate interpretation of the data obtained from the unstructured interviews, the focus group interviews and the questionnaire.

Criteria for validating qualitative research

Quantitative research is deemed "good" when it is judged to be reliable, valid and objective. However, the tests used to ascertain whether the research meets these criteria

cannot simply be applied or transferred to qualitative research, as qualitative and quantitative research methods differ greatly. One of the central differences between quantitative and qualitative research is the degree to which the qualitative research depends on the skills, knowledge and competence of the researcher. If, as Patton (1990) claims, the instrument of research in qualitative research is the researcher him/herself, and (as De Landsheere (1988) acknowledges) the researcher is never free from his/her values and sociocultural constructions, how then can qualitative research be validated?

Much literature has been generated regarding the appropriateness of qualitative research methods in educational research (see for example, Burgess (1988), Kitwood (1977); Measor (1989); Cannell and Kahn (1968). Whereas positivist researchers would view the distinguishing characteristic of qualitative research viz, the human element as its weakness, researchers such as Patton (1988) and Guba *et al.* (1988) view it as qualitative research's greatest strength. They argue that validity of qualitative research can be achieved by internal scrutiny and external assessment. Central to their argument is the need for vigilance and rigour on the part of the researcher in terms of his/her procedure. The researcher should aim for neutrality by monitoring his/her assumptions and reactions throughout the research. This "internal scrutiny" is as important as the confirmability or trustworthiness of the data. To this end, Guba and Lincoln recommend the use of a confirmability audit, or audit trail. The confirmability audit, or audit trail entails the keeping of all data and documentation in a coherent form for consultation by those who wish to confirm it (see for example, Guba and Lincoln (1988); Makyut and Morehouse (1994); and Patton (1990)). Such an audit trail was kept during this research and is available on request.

Techniques such as persistent observation, extended engagement at a site and triangulation⁶ are recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1988) in order to ensure the credibility of data ("credibility" is the qualitative equivalent of internal validity). Guba *et al.* (1988) argue that transferability (the qualitative equivalent of reliability) can be achieved by employing theoretical or purposive sampling, as well as furnishing enough information

about a context to provide a vicarious experience of it. Guba *et al.* (1988) suggest that in this way judgments about the extent to which working hypothesis might be transferable to a second, similar context can be made.

By triangulating methods, as occurred in this study, researchers such as Guba *et al.* (1988) and Patton (1988) argue that dependability of the data can be ensured. One technique mooted by Van der Hoorn, (1995) involves the researcher ensuring that his/her raw data is available for scrutiny. This method, known as a dependability audit can be used to ascertain whether the data was collected and stored "in a way which would meet the criteria of good practice" (Van der Hoorn, 1995, p 170)

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to provide as thorough as possible an account of what was done methodologically as well as the rationale for the methods adopted. Although use was made of quantitative data, it was very limited, and could be validated through observation. The primary source of data was qualitative, and since the researcher's account of the process is central in determining the credibility and trustworthiness of the research, it is imperative that a considerable amount of detail be submitted. Patton's (1988) claim that "analysts have an obligation to monitor and report their own analytical procedures and processes as fully and truthfully as possible" captures what is imperative in the conducting of qualitative research, and what this chapter has aimed to do.

Chapter 5

Findings

Cohen and Manion (1994, p 280) state that "with interpretive or qualitative data, ...[the researcher] will endeavour to draw meanings or explanations from the data." The following chapter aims not only to draw out the the perceptions at a local level of externally imposed educational reform, but also to draw a picture of the factors influencing these perceptions. The data obtained from the questionnaires¹ and the review of documents are integrated into this discussion. The theoretical implications of the data are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

I have identified several themes, based on the analysis of the data². These themes relate directly to the aim of the research which was to investigate how the policy changes contained in the Educational White Paper (1995), the South African Schools' Bill (1996) and the South African Schools' Act (1996) were perceived by the community of Empire High and the impact that had on the policy-making process after legislation. Secondly, the research attempted to trace the factors that shaped this perception. The intention of the analysis of the participants' responses was also to identify and examine the discourse/s at work at Empire High; and to trace the way in

¹ Table 3 provides a summary of the responses of the students to the questionnaire. The table is useful as it provides information on the students' perceptions of change and their general political awareness. The intention of the questionnaire was twofold: to guide the focus group interviews which would follow, and to build a profile of the student group.

² The previous chapter explains the manner in which the responses of the participants were analysed.

which this/these shaped the perceptions both of the changes and the factors considered influential by the participants in shaping these perceptions. The broad themes arising out of the responses were:

- ▣ the experience of, and attitude towards, the externally imposed change
- ▣ the school's perception of itself in the context of change
- ▣ the perception of the changes and factors influencing these perceptions
- ▣ the path of policy inside the school and the attitude towards the policy-making
- ▣ factors facilitating the change process
- ▣ the response of the school to the externally imposed policies³

The context

An analysis of the context in which the legislated policy is received is important in that the context will shape the way the legislated text is rewritten. Thus a description of the site is useful. Diagram 1 illustrates the location of the school in relation to the town and surrounding area. Diagram 2.1 provides an illustration of the school prior to 1993; and Diagram 2.2 of the school after 1993.

Bankerstown and the surrounding towns and farms have been the traditional feeder areas for Empire High. Thus an understanding of the spatial, socio-economic and political context of Bankerstown is helpful. Bankerstown is recognised as one of the oldest towns in the province. It is located in what used to be called the "golden triangle", a term referring to the area's mineral wealth (gold) and the flourishing maize farming industry. Bankerstown's planning reflects the divisions of separate development under apartheid. The white inhabitants live near to the town centre. The black township and Indian township lie on the outskirts of the white suburbs. The surrounding towns were established in response to the mining development in the area. Their town planning is similar to that of Bankerstown, with the exception of

³ The response of the school is discussed in the following chapter entitled "Discussion"

the hostels for black miners. Each township has its own primary school. The Indian township has a primary and secondary school, as did the townships of the neighbouring towns. Prior to 1990, very little contact between the schools of the different population groups occurred.⁴ As Empire High was the only English medium state school in the Bankerstown area, the student population reflected a diverse class profile. Although most of the mines in the area surrounding Bankerstown have closed, the relationship between the economy of the towns and the mines remains clear. The closing of the mines in the early 1990's impacted significantly on the enrolment figures at all the schools in Bankerstown and the surrounding towns. Empire High was particularly hard hit. Enrolment figures dropped significantly. Table 5 illustrates the drop in enrolment figures.

One of the consequences of the drop in student intake was the establishment of a crisis committee at the school consisting of members of the governing body and executive staff. In 1993, this body successfully recommended the renting of the ground floor to the local technikon. This resulted in a drastic reduction in the numbers of classrooms. The school went from being able to accommodate over 1200 students to a capacity of 500-600. An existing classroom was converted into a computer centre. This was part of the agreement between the school and the technikon.

In 1997, at the time the study was conducted, the entire staff compliment of Empire High was white. The student body, according to the principal, consisted of 40% "*other cultures*" and 60% white students.

⁶ The contact was made only with the Indian high school, as part of a prefect orientation programme.

The experience of, and attitude towards, the externally imposed change.

The main change: controlling class composition

The first section of the discussion of the findings of the research examines the participants' response to the question, "What has been the most significant change you feel the legislation: (the School's Act and School's Bill and White Paper) has brought to the school?" The first response of all the participants when asked to identify the most significant change which the legislation introduced, was to point to the change in racial composition of the student body:

- *The most obvious change was the inclusion of black students into the school. That was the biggest change we all had to come to terms with. (Mr D.)*

- *For us the big adjustment is racial - there's no getting away from it (Ms E.)*

- *There are more Black students now. (Nomsa)*

However, this response was quickly qualified by the principal and all but one of the teachers who indicated that it was the legislation which barred the administration of any form of admission test which had the biggest impact. One teacher who had come to the school shortly before this particular legislation was passed, commented that

- *[W]hen I went to Empire High, they had already gone multiracial, but it wasn't a big adjustment because at that stage they could choose who they wanted to take in. (Ms L.)*

This change was perceived differently by the various sub communities of the school. The principal and all but two of the teachers viewed the removal of the school's admission tests as a negative change. The policy change was perceived as a loss of control:

-At one time we could still control the sort of proportion...what percentage of other cultures we safely take in without sacrificing our ethos ...English ethos

(Ms E.)

This loss of control over admission was seen as boosting the confidence of the black students making them "*more assertive, even arrogant*" (Mr D.) as more of the black students arrived. Mr D.'s use of the word "arrogant" is telling as it indicates that the increased confidence of the black students was considered a negative product of the policy change.

Most of the students perceived this change differently. Only one of the student focus groups voiced an opinion similar to that of the majority of the teaching staff interviewed. This attitude was summed up by one student in the group who stated that

-A lot of the blacks came to the hostel and ... took over. (Helen)

That this statement came from an exclusively white group would appear to support a teacher's opinion that the increased intake of black students created tension among the students. The teacher, Ms E, commented that

-when the number of blacks increased there was racial tension. I don't think the whites are accepting the pupils without a bit of friction.

What is significant to note here is the lack of awareness of how the black students who came into the school might have felt. None of the student participants commented on an increase of tension among students.

The effects of the loss of control over admission were perceived by all the participants to have impacted on the academic standards, discipline and stress levels within the school.

The intake was also interpreted as placing pressure on teachers in terms of the image of the school.

-The basic concern was the image of the school. Because of the black intake ...the more blacks you have, the fewer whites will want to come to your school
(Ms E)

All the teachers interviewed felt that the change in legislation had forced them to admit children from "township" schools, and that this had caused great stress, not only for the teachers but also for the students. The children from the "township" schools were considered by all the teachers interviewed as less competent academically than the black students who had come from the "white" primary schools:

-if they come from the townships you can notice the difference ...the rate of change was not a problem for kids from white primary schools but definitely the township children. (Ms K)

All the teachers interviewed commented on the effect of the inclusion of students with differing abilities in their classes. This was seen as a cause of stress. One teacher made reference to the role of class status in determining the student's academic and social ability:

-The difference between the kids ...[those] who live in the best part of town and most of those who come out of the township ...little things like homework. In the township their homework is never done because they haven't got the environment which is conducive to - no light, most of them are in shanties ...and those are the kids who do not achieve as well as those who are in the more affluent areas ...if they're better off economically, there's a vast difference, but the kid whose mother is still a cleaner and father uneducated... they are the problem because they've got nothing to go home to (Ms E)

The removal of "screening" is seen by the students and the teachers interviewed as one of the main causes of the decline in discipline. This attitude is illustrated by a student's observation that

-[b]eing able to allow anyone in has meant that trouble makers have come in and now they're giving us a bad name. (Vuyiswa)

Related to the concern about discipline was the removal of corporal punishment. This was viewed as a significant change by both the student participants and the teachers. Who was responsible for the discipline problem was perceived differently by the teachers and the students, as the excerpts below indicate:

-...the discipline has gone down. There is no more corporal punishment and teachers are less strict on children. (Alan) (my emphasis)

-...discipline has decreased - the cause of this is the prefects and corporal punishment was (sic) stopped. (Simon) (my emphasis)

*- Discipline is a problem with whites and blacks and they're very arrogant - whites and blacks - I'm talking kids today and you dare not lay a finger on them
(Ms E) (my emphasis)*

- I find that the pupils because they don't have that sword hanging over their heads they are inclined to take chances which I don't think they would have done previously. (Ms K) (my emphasis)

Controlling class size

The second most significant change was perceived to be the adaptation of teacher - pupil ratio; "right sizing" /redeployment/ and the subsequent change in class size. All the participants commented on this. Although none of the teachers argued with the principle of the redeployment of teachers, the comments indicate that the process at Empire was felt traumatic

It was a traumatic time nobody was safe (Ms L)

The students interviewed responded negatively, and echoed Alice's sentiments that "[it's] unfair - it affected us - our teachers were good and they had to leave". None of the students expressed an understanding of the political context in which these changes occurred.

All the teachers commented on the stress of teaching larger classes. They indicated that they had to adapt their way of teaching. None of the teachers viewed the larger classes positively. The main consequence identified by the teachers was that there wasn't enough time for them to give each student individual attention.

-it's really become at times untenable ... There's so much movement and they don't come in and do exactly what I want them to do immediately. I've got to shout for a while before they react. But I put that down to the large size of the classes. That definitely has had a detrimental effect. You can't give them individual attention. It's physically impossible (Ms K)

-I have had to come to terms with the fact that I can't see every child's work. It's been very difficult (Ms M)

The students had mixed views about size of the classes. Two groups indicated that teachers had left because of the sizes of the classes. One group stated that

-we lost the good teachers: they went to private schools. (Christene)

One group considered it unfair. Another group felt responsible for this:

-We feel guilty, because like we're the ones who come into their school. It's like everything is blamed on us indirectly (Vuyiswa)

Controlling consultation

The third area of change perceived by the participants as significant was the establishment of a Student Representative Council (SRC). The principal and most of the teachers viewed it as inappropriate for the school. The establishment of an SRC was perceived by most of the interviewees as a threat to the established discipline at the school.

-we didn't feel it applied to our school. A child needs discipline. They can't just have what they want. So initially there was opposition (Ms S).

Of the nine teachers interviewed, three supported the idea of the SRC replacing the prefect body unconditionally. One teacher suggested that the media had shaped the attitude of teachers towards the SRC, and consequent they saw it as threatening:

-people have had the wrong perception of the SRC. The media has influenced the way the SRC was portrayed. (Mr D)

The root of the opposition to the idea of SRC's lay in the notion that Empire High was different to the Black schools in that the "group of pupils at Empire High we feel are still children" (Ms S). The reason perceived by most teachers and the principal for an SRC, was to complain about teachers and although "they had valid reasons in the other races' schools for an SRC, the children at Empire High didn't." (Ms S)

The SRC was not only perceived to be a threat by the teachers. It was also seen as undermining the authority and status the grade 12's felt they had:

-We need a prefect body because the representative of Standard 6's would boss us. Authority over others is important. (Tina)

None of the student focus groups supported the idea of the prefect body being replaced by the SRC. Although not dismissing the idea of an SRC, all the student groups felt that there was a need for limits to the power of the student body.

-I think the SRC should be actively involved in the running of the school but not to the extent that they control the school instead of the teachers. The teachers still do know what's best but I think they should let us give input and think about what we say because what seems trivial to them is not trivial to us - it's small things that are important that make the changes (Ryan)

Ryan's articulate response to the issue of the SRC was at odds with the principal's perception of the role of the SRC:

-and you say- "do you want to be involved with the governing body"- talking to groups and individuals, "we need you to come and represent on the governing body or have a say in running the school" - that's not their life, that's not what they're there for. They are there to enjoy their lives on the sports field, in the classroom and so on. The running of the school is really something beyond them and there isn't really interest. (Mr S)

Missing the circulars

The fourth area of change perceived as significant was not the direct result of a piece of legislated policy. The senior teachers and the principal identified the communication system between the schools and the department whereby the legislated policy would be relayed to schools as having changed. Whereas the principal viewed this positively:

-In the modern situation where we've been used to - you know- formal circulars, formal instructions "this is the way it will be done", the situation now is very, very free. (Mr S)

a senior teacher viewed it as negative:

-We worked well in the old system. There was a channel that worked beautifully. Feedback was immediate. Now nobody knows what is happening. When I say nobody, I mean the North West education department in the Bankerstown district. They write letters to Mmambatho and we wait and wait until we get something that might filter through. We don't have circulars, we have papers arriving and not arriving - it's actually quite chaotic . (Ms S)

The school's perception of itself and its place in the process of educational reform

An examination of what the Empire High community understands the legislated reforms to mean is useful in tracing the way the school⁵ has responded to the change. Ball (1994, p 12) points out that the members of a school "individually and collectively make sense of reform". What is significant is the extent to which the large majority of

⁵ The "school", unless indicated otherwise includes the sectors represented by the participants interviewed i.e the principal; the teachers; the students and the governing body.

the staff* interviewed shared an understanding of the meaning of the change. As this understanding was held by the senior and executive staff, this understanding can be viewed as the official understanding of the change. The perception held by all, (except one teacher interviewed) of the change which was needed in education can be illustrated by the comment of a teacher:

-The blacks want what the whites had. (Ms L)

Thus the change is perceived to affect only one group: "the blacks". This is the shared meaning of the change, summed up by another teacher:

- All those disadvantaged pupils needed the same education as the white schools had. I'm all for that. I wanted that. (Ms S)

This understanding of the change positions black students and black schools as having to "do the changing." It positions the teachers as progressive and supporters of the changes, hence Ms S's statement that she's "*all for that*". The assumption underlying this positioning is that the previous system of education for white students was without flaw.

To understand the implications of this perception of the function of the education reforms, it is useful to examine the way in which Empire High is perceived by the subjects of the research. In other words, what is set up as the norm at Empire High? An observation made by a senior teacher is telling:

-I have one of them who is surly, rude and unrefined, but by and large if you closed your eyes and listened to them you would not say they were black students . (Ms E) (my emphasis)

Two points are significant here: the teacher has collapsed the racial category into a way of behaving; and black students are referred to as "them" - the Other. According to the teacher, race is no longer only linked to colour, but can be defined in terms of behaviour. Using this construction of race, it is possible to mistake one "race" for another "if you closed your eyes". Being "black" means that you are surly, rude and

* (except for one teacher and the ex chairperson of the governing body)

uncivilised. If the behaviour differs from that then the student must be "white". Being "white" means thus that the student is not surly but civilised. The teacher's discourse thus polarises black as uncivilised; white as civilised.

The extent to which the discourse of this teacher is shared by the rest of the school will determine to a large extent whether this discourse is a dominant one. The discourse of "setting apart" "black" and "white" is constantly emphasised by the principal and the teachers (bar one) in referring to black students as "them". Other than one focus group and one teacher interviewed, the black students were referred to as having "*a different culture from us*" (Mr S). "Us" included the white students. The discourse sets up the black students and white students as separate, homogeneous groups. "They" are not like "us". A senior teacher commented at length on the need for the black students to be taught "respect":

-We have to teach them very basic principles, for instance greeting. (Ms S)

What the students are being taught is how to be "like us".

The discourse that sets up the black students as outside the norm is recognised by the students (both black and white).

-A lot of the blacks came to the hostel and all of a sudden all the rules started changing. There were rules for the whites and rules for the blacks. (Helen)

Furthermore, interviews with the students indicate that this discourse is for the most part adopted; the only difference being that the whites become "them" and the black students "we" when the students speaking are black. This is evident in the students' response discussed earlier to the teacher's leaving Empire High:

-We feel guilty. Because like we're the ones who came into their school. It's like everything is blamed on us indirectly. Like we hear them saying that something is broken- (Nomsa)

-almost every time something goes wrong: "the Blacks, the Blacks always making noise- (Vuyiswa)

-They complain about the noise. (Lerato)

-If they discuss politics they do it sarcastically- they are not straight. when you look at it critically, it's not a joke- (Patience)

-If you bump into a white person, even if it's just an accident then they say "This is the New South Africa" (Nomsa)

(group of black students) (my emphasis)

Foucault's analysis of the way in which discourse functions: "discourses ...constitute objects and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention" (1977, p 49), describes the apparent contradiction in the sentiments expressed by the participants.

-We talk about cultures not races here (Ms E.).

The insistence of the teacher on the distinction being heard by me was to indicate to me that Empire High was not "racist". However, despite the vocabulary change the attitude expressed towards the students indicated a distinct awareness of race. The only difference is that being white is now a cultural experience. "Black" is a 'culture', and Empire High's "culture" is different to "theirs".

Unpacking what constitutes Empire High's "culture", entails defining the dominant identity of the school. The dominant understanding of the school's identity, or the institutionalised official identity, is expressed in terms of the school's "culture" or "ethos" and contained in the policy documents of the school. The way in which this understanding is constructed and maintained is most clearly illustrated in the documents generated around the changing of governance models in the early 1990's. The documents include newsletters to parents from the principal and the governing body; circulars from the department addressed to the principal, the teachers and the parents. A discussion of these is relevant here.

The model of governance chosen by the school in 1992, enabled the school executive to draw up and administer admission criteria. The school, for the first time, had to make explicit the dominant identity of the school space. Implicit in the school's admission criteria is a vision of what the school space means. The admission criteria drawn up

by the executive staff of the school, is seen as a means of controlling this vision, a way of "moving into a new South African education dispensation with at least some control in the hands of our local school community" ("special notice" from the principal to parents, May (1992).

The dominant vision of the school is explained in terms of its "culture". A newsletter to the parents in 1992, encourages parents to adopt the model B option of school governance as it would protect the culture of the school: "Mother tongue (English) education would be maintained with education remaining with a Christian base and broadly national in character. The current level of education would be maintained with no drop in standard being allowed so as to accommodate a specific individual or group" (Newsletter 2 "Empire High School - the future?", 12/3/1991). The "culture" is also referred to as the school's "ethos". The meaning of this is explained in the "Admission Policy (entrance criteria)" document:

4. Pupils of other race groups must abide by the ethos and rules of the school:
 - 4.1 Uniforms are to be worn as prescribed in school policy
 - 4.2 Same disciplinary action will apply to all
 - 4.3 Pupils and parents to be socially acceptable as determined by the interview
 - 4.4 Education to remain broadly Christian and national in character
 - 4.5 There may be no militant or political activity on school property or while associated with the school

A number of interesting observations can be made from this document. The "culture"/"ethos" is defined linguistically: "mother-tongue (in our case English)" (newsletter from principal to parents: 1992); and is firmly placed within Christian National Education. The ethos is also defined in terms of behaviour as point 4.5 indicates. The mission statement refines the definition of "cultural ethos" as including "language, sport, dress, behaviour". The introductory letter to the parents of prospective students states that

parents and pupils identify with the traditional values and the ethos of the school - which is that of a typical English speaking South African community
("Broad overview of Empire High", 1992)

A "typical English speaking South African community" is a concept flexible enough to exclude Black second language speakers whilst including "European" second language speakers.⁷

Interviews with the principal, teachers and students provided further information about the perception of the school's culture, and echoed to a large extent the definition set out in the admission policy, collapsing race into linguistic categories: "We are providing a sound education base...and will continue to do so in an English cultural ethos." (Principal's message, school magazine, 1994) (my emphasis). The Parent body - the PTA - also shares the concern for maintaining the dominant identity and state as their main objective: "[T]o promote a typical, traditional English ethos and education at Empire High School". (School magazine, 1994) (my emphasis)

The response of the school to the governance options introduced by the National Party Government in the early 1990's, provides another insight into the construction of the meaning of the school's culture. The policy of school governance whereby ex-DEC schools such as Empire High were granted ownership of the school property, allowed for the restructuring or reshaping of the school buildings.⁸ An agreement was

⁷ The mines had regularly recruited a number of Polish, Greek, Italian miners whose children were accepted without query into the school.

⁸ Empire High had chosen to be a "model C" school. This model of school governance allowed the school to draw up and administer its own admission policy. Lemon (1995) argues that the National Party Government used the introduction of the model C governance option to DEC schools as a means of creating a metaphorical space for DEC schools to find ways of containing the desegregation of schooling which, Lemon (1995) argues, the National Party saw as inevitable. In the light of Lemon's claim, Bankerstown's political character is particularly interesting: although there is a strong ANC constituency visible after the 1994 elections, the white community was traditionally nationalist with strong conservative leanings. This history suggests that the conservative nature of the National Government's policy changes would find support within this community.

reached with the local technikon whereby the ground floor of the school building would be rented out to the technikon. The reason given for this decision was financial. The school was restructured to fit the drop in student numbers. However, the reduction in size of the school also held political implications in that the numbers of potential prospective students could be controlled. Whereas Empire High had been able to accommodate up to 1200 pupils prior to the subdivision, it now only had the capacity for 500-600 pupils.

The report of the chair of the governing body gives the need "to optimise available space" (School magazine, 1994) as the main reason for the establishment of the technikon at the school. However, the crisis committee's report indicates that there had been other options available to "optimise the space":

In the first instance the school could lower its recruitment criteria and fill the school from its local community though a hard focused recruitment drive. This will have the effect of having a 50% non-white, non-English speaking contingent which will change the culture of the school significantly.

(Evans, 1994, p 57)

This option was rejected in favour of the option which would allow for only 25% of the school population to be "other than English speaking [w]hite children". (Evans, 1994, p 57). What is particularly significant, however, is the reason given for the acceptance of this option: "It gives the school the opportunity to retain its identity" (ibid., p 57) (my emphasis). This option entailed the reshaping of the physical space of the building. Thus, I argue, the executive staff's response to the possibility of desegregation was to restructure the actual physical school space in order to "retain its identity". In retaining its identity, the degree of desegregation was controlled.

The interviews conducted with the principal, teachers and students in 1997, indicate that the dominant identity of the school remains unchanged. The dominant identity of the school is that of a "White" school which allows a certain number of "acceptable" black students to attend. An analysis of the interviews indicated that the majority of

the students shared the dominant identity of the school. The implications of this for black students in particular are poignantly expressed by one group of black girls:

-The teacher told us that she was leaving because of the big classes (Hlalo)

-How do you feel when they say that? (TP)

-Guilty. Because like when we're the ones who came into their school. It's like everything is blamed on us indirectly like we hear them saying something is broken. (Anita)

-How do you feel you fit in? (TP)

-I feel part of [Empire] but internally something that other people don't realise we are the ones who are experiencing difficulties- (Anita)

- for instance sports- blacks are not fit for the first team- (Vuyiswa)

- Nothing has changed (Hlalo)

-Almost every time something goes wrong: "the blacks, the blacks" always making noise (Anita)

-they complain about the noise (Tsolo)

The conceptual framework of spatial theory provides an interesting interpretation of the response of the students. The girls are describing the pressure of being within "monumental space". Lefebvre (1991, p 220) defines this as "a space which offers its members "an image of that membership". The defining characteristic of monumental space is its "ability to prescribe a certain use for a space, and the manner and style in which it is used" (Allen and Pryke, p 460). The monumental space of the school requires its "members" to be "white", "English" and "quiet". The feeling of being an outsider is quite explicitly articulated by Anita when she says, "[B]ecause like when we're the ones who came into their school". (my emphasis) The monumental space reflects the discourse of separateness of apartheid education. Despite the Model "C"

form of school governance being a thing of the past, the monumental space still functions as a Model C school. As such, the white students are "full members", the black students merely "visitors".

The identity of the school is also linguistically exclusive. The interviews indicate that the dominant identity and perception of the culture of Empire High continues to be maintained; the most noticeable maintenance strategy being the school's attitude towards language:

- I do believe that the people who are English-speaking have the first right to be here. Those who are Afrikaans or Tswana or whatever other languages have access to other schools. Our pupils don't. So the - particularly - the white English-speaking pupils don't have anywhere else to go. So they obviously must be catered for first and then open up from there. (Mr S)

What is significant to note about the principal's statement is that there is no acknowledgement of the inequities and inequalities between the schooling system of the schools of "Tswana or whatever other language" groups. Furthermore, Empire High does cater for Afrikaans speakers in that it offers Afrikaans as a language. Setswana is not offered at the school, and students have to make arrangements for tuition outside the school. Language remains a political matter, as no white students are taking Setswana as a Matric subject. Thus, by refusing to include Setswana in the curriculum, most of the Black students are marginalised, and the culture or identity of Empire High as an English speaking school (and thus White) is maintained.

Many of the teachers and students made reference to Empire High as a "Model C" school, which although legally inaccurate, when read in terms of the dominant discourse at play at Empire High, the error appears quite appropriate. The dominant perception of Empire High as a "white" school and the dominant perception of the change as being something that the black schools and students have to do, holds implications for the way Empire High responds to the change. Recognising the legal obligation to make certain changes,

-it's law, so now we have made the changes, (Mr S)

the executive staff of the school and the majority of the staff interview see little point in

transforming what they perceive Empire High to mean. There is also little need to begin to examine whether the system of education for white students was at all problematic.

The assumption that the "white" schools were without problems, is expressed in the attitude towards SRC's. An SRC was something "*disadvantaged schools had*" (Ms S) who had pupils over the age of 21. The root of the opposition to the idea of SRC's lay in the notion shared by most of the teachers interviewed as well as the principal that Empire High was different to the Black schools in that the "*group of pupils at Empire High we feel are still children*" (Ms S). The reason perceived by these teachers and the principal for an SRC, was to complain about teachers (Ms E) and although "*they had valid reasons in the other races' schools for an SRC, the children at Empire High didn't*" (Ms S)

The perception of Empire High as being different to "Black" schools is supported by the principal's contention that it is not the white parents who want this but the black parents as well:

-An interesting comment from black parents who come for interviews - and we interview all parents at the beginning of the year or at the end of the year when they come to enroll and a number of the black parents said, "when you become a predominantly black school, when you have black teachers in your school, then we'll take our children to a school where there aren't black children in the majority". That's what they're saying. So, you know, it's not as though we're looking at it from this point of view; it's what the actual black parents are after. They're looking for - they see quality in the white education and their comment is that we'll take our children away and put them to a school that's predominantly white. (Mr S)

Although the parents' attitude might reflect the realities of apartheid education in which white schools were better resourced, the reaction of the principal is purely to defend the values and practices of Empire High. The significance of this assertion is that it reflects a belief in the apartheid education system for white children, and a lack

of awareness of the shortcomings of that education system. Empire High is not only seen as a "model C" school, but also as a progressive school, "*ahead of its time*" (Mr S). The perception of the school as progressive is held with mixed feelings:

-the other schools look down on us... but, they tend to be rigid'(Ms S).

Of significance here is the maintenance of the perception of Empire High as a school that has already changed (when it became a "model C" school) and no longer needs to. This is given official sanction by the principal. The principal's insistence that the major change in the school had occurred prior to the 1994 elections, allows him to downplay constantly the implications of the radical political shift after the elections.

-I walked almost straight into the changes because we started -um- in 1991, I think it was- that we started with the model B movement sort of trans-opening the school up to all races and having the right to govern your own school so we moved to model B -um- and then from then on very slowly thereafter the department came in with the idea of model C 1992... it's around about then that we started with that. (Mr S)

-and after 1994 with the introduction of the Education White Paper, the School's Bill and the School's Act, what were the major changes that you found as a result of that legislation? (TP)

-none really as we were already going that route- You know the schools that hadn't gone that route...we'd taken the model B side of things - we'd already changed the school from a single race school into an open school completely and - uh- I think we'd- I'd like to say we'd gone the right route where the change- you know if change is too major and too drastic then it affects-it hurts everybody but we grew slowly through the changes. (Mr S)

Perceptions of the externally imposed policies and factors which shaped these perceptions.

Seeing the policy

The second section of this chapter examines the participants' **perceptions of the externally imposed policies**, and attempts to identify possible **factors which shaped these perceptions**. In researching the perception held of the legislated policy, one is examining the way in which the document is "seen". The participants were asked to indicate the form in which they had "seen" the document - had they seen it with their own eyes, or through someone else's gaze? Only the principal, the Head of Departments (HOD's) interviewed and the ex chairperson of the governing body had actually seen the legislated texts. Only two teachers expressed their wish to read the documents. The others shared the opinion of a teacher who said,

-I assumed that he [the principal] was telling us what we needed to hear. I found that was enough. (Mr D)

None of the students interviewed had seen the documents. The questionnaires indicated⁹ that of the 33 students questioned, seven had heard about the School's Bill, and only five students indicated in the focus group interviews that they had heard of the School's Act. The students all expressed their wish to know more about the policy although none requested to see the legislated text during the focus group interviews. None of the students could comment on the contents of the legislation. Indicative of the lack of knowledge about the legislation, is the point that only one group knew that the establishment of an SRC was a legal requirement.

The limited knowledge of the students was shared by the teachers and indicated by the lack of specificity in their responses to questions about the legislation. None of the staff referred to specific sections of the Act but rather responded generally.

⁹ See Table 3

The interviews illustrated the path the legislated policy text took in Empire High. The principal and the executive staff discuss the policy at a closed meeting. Discussion between the principal and the governing body chair may precede this. The principal then takes the discussion to the staff in a general staff meeting. The principal may relay the information directly to all the students at assemblies, or instruct the teachers to do so, or reinforce what he has said, or he may inform the prefect body who inform the rest of the student body. However, as the students' responses indicate, the policy is often decontextualised, and relayed without relating it to the legislated policy document. The teachers discuss the policy as described by the principal with each other, or at home. The teachers were also addressed by an "expert": a lecturer from the nearby university.

The official school response to the policy change takes the form of notices sent to parents and a page written by the principal in the school magazine. The governing body may comment on the policy in the school magazine as well.

The questionnaire revealed that teachers were the sources of information about specific educational legislation for the students. The focus group interviews showed however, that very few teachers appeared to engage with the students about any form of political change.

All participants had heard of the policy changes via the media. The principal and eight of the nine teachers considered the media the first source of information.

-We see it in the newspapers first. The very last place you hear it from is your education department. In fact that is the biggest problem today is the lack of communication. We always hear the rumours, read it in the newspapers and then you see two points of view depending on which newspaper you buy and then only do you get the official sort of communication. (Ms L)

-Televisie, koerante, dagblaaie het mens van dit gehoor voor dit in die personeelkamer gehoor was.¹⁰ (Ms N)

You heard about it through television, the newspapers, magazines, before you heard about it in the staff room

- We came to hear about policy changes through the press, unfortunately. It never came to the schools first. (Ms S)

One teacher felt that the information had been

-leaked to the press by the government to see what the reaction would be and if the reaction was good then, go ahead. (Ms S)

Only one teacher had seen this as a positive factor:

-Dit het gehulp - die media het presies geweet wat aangaan. Dit het tot 'n mate gehulp (Ms N)

It did help - the media knew exactly what was going in. That helped to a certain degree.

The medium

Participants were asked to identify the factors they considered had influenced their perceptions. Six teachers considered the manner in which the text was translated to them as influential in shaping the way they perceived the policy initiatives. Some identified the manner in which the principal relayed the policy to them as influencing

¹⁰ Ms Naude felt more comfortable in being interviewed in Afrikaans. Her responses where quoted are provided in the language in which they were recorded. In order to facilitate readers who do not understand Afrikaans, an English translation is provided below each Afrikaans quotation.

negatively the way they felt about the policy. They viewed the principal's reading of the legislated policy as

-inadequate and patronising. We are told that this is what has happened, and the rest we do not need to know about. (Ms Z)

The medium by which the policy was transferred was also considered influential. The fact that news about the policy was first received in the media was also considered a factor in the teacher's perception of the change.

-We would have felt better if we'd have known what was going on, and not have had to read about it in the newspaper. (Ms K)

Like Ms King, other teachers mentioned how unprofessional they felt not being the first to know about the policy changes. All the teachers acknowledged the greater degree of influence the media had on their perceptions, as the first source of information:

-You heard or saw it in the newspapers first. The very last place you hear about it is from your education department. We always hear the rumours, read it in the newspaper and then you see two points of view depending on which newspaper you buy and then only do you get the official sort of communication. (Ms E)

The governing body was perceived by some teachers as having influenced their perception of the change:

-I found the attitude towards us very patronising and I resented it. Mr Jones [the chair of the governing body] told us about the White Paper. He came to the school and discussed it with us. It came at an inopportune time 'cos it was the last day of the year when we were all sort of relaxing and starting to have our end of year party and he put a dampener on our proceedings. (Ms K)

Another senior teacher, however, felt that the involvement of the governing body had created a sense of a team in approaching the legislation, and found that made her feel more positive about the changes.

For the teachers who are members of a teachers' association, the Association of Professional Teachers (APT), was considered, as helpful in terms of explaining the policy changes, but not really effective in negotiations.

Lack of agency

A factor which teachers identified as shaping their perceptions of the legislated reform measures was the lack of input they felt they had in the national policy-making process.

- *Jy het nie 'n keuse gehad nie, jy moes maar net verander.* (Ms N)

You didn't have a choice. You just had to change.

This lack of agency is echoed in the comments made by a number of teachers who felt that the change had to happen, but that it still came as a shock:

- *Jy weet dit gaan kom, maar as hulle dit vir jou se is dit 'n skok* (Ms N)

You know that it's going to happen, but when they tell you, it comes as a shock.

Although the media was a source of information about the external policy changes for the students, teachers and parents¹¹ were as important. Thus the students did not identify the media as influencing their perceptions of the change. The factor which appeared to influence their perceptions of the changes the most was the frustration they felt at only being told what to do, and not having the reasons explained to them. The comments of the students appear to reflect the frustrations at the lack of agency in the change process felt by some of the teachers.

- *We get told what it [the policy] is* - (Christene)

- *the teachers expect us to know things but we don't* (Neil)

- *no one explained why* (Dylan)

¹¹ The influence of the home on the student is an important element. However, such an analysis is outside the scope of this study.

One student expressed his frustration at the lack of information about the policy changes which brought about the election of the SRC:

- They never told us what to do. They just told us to vote. (Robert)

Some felt that teachers often expected them to know about the educational policy changes. The questionnaire indicated a very low interest in current affairs amongst the students. However, none of the teachers commented on the student's awareness or lack thereof of educational policy change. Thus the students' complaints that the teachers expected too much of them appears plausible.

“Slow down you move too fast!”: the pace of change

The pace of the change was considered another factor in shaping perceptions. The principal and six of the nine teachers commented on the pace of the reform and felt that had the change happened more gradually, they would have felt more positive about the reforms. One senior teacher commented that

-We need to stop and assess what we have done. We can't carry on having all these changes. (Ms S)

Her comment was supported by other teachers and the principal:

-you know if change is too major and too drastic then it affects - it hurts everybody (Mr S)

A senior teacher commented on the negative effect of the pace of change on the black students, yet none of the students commented on the effect of the pace of the reform on their perceptions of the reform.

Thus, it would appear from the responses that the pace of change was a problem for the the staff, more so than for anyone else. The comments of the ex-chair of the governing body appear to support this conclusion. He expressed his frustration at the pace at which the staff at the school were prepared to change.

- If you want to change, you must move. (Mr J)

Communication

Better communication between the department and the school was identified by the senior teachers and the principal as influencing the way they felt about the changes. Furthermore the senior teachers commented that the isolation the junior teachers were experiencing might have been allayed had there been more direct communication evident. The interview with the junior teacher¹² corroborated this:

-policy gets passed and you try to adapt to what it means, but I feel as though it's just "trial and error and try for the best" (Ms L)

Missing the overall picture

A sense of a plan or structure held both by the school and the education department was mentioned by many teachers as important in shaping their perception of the change in educational policy. As Ms L's comments illustrate, many of the teachers perceive the school as having no long-term plan. A senior teacher echoes her sentiments:

-it's hit and miss all the time: that's the problem ...we crises manage all the time.and that's not good for any school. (Ms S)

The principal supports this observation:

-at this stage - one's living at the moment, you know, keeping things running as smoothly as possible. (Mr S)

The path of policy inside the school and the attitude towards the national policy - making process

An important aim of the research was to identify the perception of the process of change held by the various members of Empire High. The process of change in the school environment and on a larger scale is perceived as a top-down process.

¹² I have taken "junior" to refer to anyone with less than five years experience.

The Principal describes the policy process as follows:

-As much as it's supposed to be down...bottom- up, it tends to be very much top-down: "you will accept it and that's the way it is ... It's almost a top-down situation where "there it is "now we've got to make the best of the situation that we've got at the moment. (Mr S)

An HOD perceived the regional offices to be disinterested in the school's applications against the rightsizing. She viewed the path of the legislated policy as top-down,

-[coming] from the central government and therefore... it will be done. It was suddenly put onto us to implement. (Ms S)

The perception of the teachers and the students of the internal policy process echoed the principal's perception of the external policy process almost to a word. Lebo captures the frustration mentioned by a number of staff and students alike:

-We're not consulted: "this is what's happening - do it or get out".

The principal and the executive staff discuss the implications the external policy decisions hold for internal policy. The outcome of this discussion is then relayed to the rest of the school for implementation. Thus the principal and the executive perceive the process as more lateral than do the rest of the staff and the students.

Factors facilitating the change process

What helped

The third section of this chapter examines the responses of the participants when asked what had helped them deal with the changes. The principal identified the discussions with the

executive staff as very helpful. However, he found the support group established by the white headmasters from the surrounding schools as most helpful:

-The pressures do get to you. We, the ex-TED heads- need to get together just to talk about the problems, because there is no sounding board elsewhere. We need to be able to talk amongst ourselves just to get it off your chest, so that you've spoken to somebody - a problem shared is a problem halved sort of thing (Mr S)

Of the nine teachers interviewed, only one teacher felt that discussing the changes with the other teachers helped. One teacher said that her support came from her husband. One teacher felt that she had had to deal with the changes entirely on her own, as she did not feel that she could discuss issues with her colleagues.

-It makes me sick: they assume I agree with them when they say the racist things they do, and they say it openly in the staff room, and I have to sit there and listen to them. (Ms Z)

Two teachers identified the teachers' association, Association of Professional Teachers (APT) as being helpful. Six teachers, including the two who viewed APT as a source of help, felt however, that they had had to motivate themselves ultimately.

The students indicated that they felt unprepared for the changes:

- we don't know anything that goes on (Anton)

- we hear it when the teacher tells us what to do (Byron)

What would have helped

The participants were asked to identify the factors that would have helped in their dealing with the legislated change. All the participants indicated that improved communication was necessary. Four teachers identified the need for more information about the legislation. All but one of the teachers indicated that more support in the

form of workshops and discussions prior to the proposed reforms being legislated, would have made them feel prepared. Five of the teachers indicated that they felt that workshops which helped them develop teaching methods for dealing with large classes and of mixed abilities would have been helpful.

The principal, two senior teachers (both language teachers) and an HOD commented on the need for some form of bridging class. The principal was the only participant to suggest that a syllabus be drawn up for this year. However the respondents mentioning the need for a bridging class, all commented on the difficulties involved in doing so. The difficulties identified were logistic:

- *they³ all use bus transport and so can't stay* (Ms E)

and political:

[the black students] will see it as discriminatory (Ms K)

None of the student participants mentioned the need for a form of academic support. Instead all the students responded to the question by indicating their frustration at not being told enough:

- *we're expected to know , but we don't* (Sarah)

- *we're just told: do this or get out.* (Clinton)

and the need for them to be informed. Lebogang summed up the student's attitude, in his answer to the question, "if you were introducing the changes, how would you do it? by saying, "*I'd talk to the people, I'd talk to us*".

Other than the principal, the respondents all expressed a sense of frustration and helplessness in relation to the externally imposed reforms and expressed the need for greater agency in the policy-making process. However, at the same time the teachers expressed a strong sense of abandonment by the department. The responses indicate a conflict between the need for greater involvement in the process and the desire to be told what to do. The following chapter examines more closely the responses of the participants and the way in which this tension is played out.

¹³ the children who would need the bridging classes. The teachers and principal mooted this idea spoke only of the black children as needing bridging classes.

Chapter 6

Discussion

The school is not a passive mirror, but an active force. (Apple, 1986, p 70).

This chapter discusses the implications of the findings of the research. Ball (1994) warns of the danger of concentrating on the interpretational responses of individual actors. This could "lead to a neglect of the compound and structural changes effected by state policies" (*ibid.*, p 24). The discussion will obviously attempt to avoid this trap, but will also suggest that the responses of most of the participants indicate an attempt to institutionalise the containment and minimisation of, the "compound and structural changes" which the state policies have effected. As such, a deeper understanding of the responses of the individuals is pertinent. Prunty (1984, p 1) states that "[e]ducational policy-making is an exercise of power and control directed towards the attainment or preservation of some preferred arrangement of schools and society." The discussion will examine to what extent the same may be said of the making and remaking of the externally imposed educational reform policy at a local level.

Saunders' classifications (in Bowe *et al.*, 1996) provide a useful place to begin classifying the response of the school to the legislated reform. The implications for the policy process paradigms held at the school are then explored. The dominant discourse of the school is outlined as well as the points of resistance to this discourse. The chapter also examines the manner in which the control of the physical space of the school reflect the form of control the school management exerts over the legislated changes.

The response to the legislated reform: A case of accommodation?

The aim of this research project was to examine the process by which the official policy text was made sense of by a school. As we saw in chapter 5, Saunders (1985) suggests three broad categories to indicate how schools generally respond to externally initiated change:

Adaptive extension:

A strong interpretation of the policy: it has been used to change the whole school structure.

Accommodation:

The policy is adapted to fit the general shape of the existing school structure.

Containment:

The policy is absorbed by the existing school pattern.

These responses to change can also be seen as attempts to control or minimise the feelings of anxiety, loss and struggle which Marris (1975) argues all real change (voluntary and imposed) involves. Empire High's response to the externally initiated reform can be described as "accommodation", whereby the policy is adapted to fit the general shape of the existing school structure. Although the externally imposed reform would suggest that "adaptive extension" is the only response that would be legal, the structural change required by the legislated policy has been met by Empire High, but, responses indicate, the "general shape of the existing school structure" has changed very little. What is significant to note here is that the structural change referred to by Saunders is about organisational change, not the change of a physical structure. What is interesting about Empire High, however, is that the physical structure of the school did undergo a change. The subdivision of the school building resulted in the schooling space being changed. The implications of this move will be discussed further in the chapter. The principal's description of the school's relation to the policy

legislation supports a description of Empire High's dealing with change as accommodatory:

-the situation now is very, very free. As long as you operate within the parameters of the education bill what you do within that is really to a large extent your own doing and you've just got to adapt the broad frame to the requirements of your school, and that's essentially what we've done.

(Mr S) (my emphasis)

Implications in terms of policy process paradigms

The manner in which the school responds to the changes holds certain implications for the policy process paradigms.

Multi text vs singular text

Implicit in Saunders'(1996) system of categorisation is the notion of policy text as being more than one text. Bowe *et al.* (1996) agree with Saunders' (1996) position that policy is multi textual. Bowe *et al* (1996) argue that by collapsing the "policy" into the policy document, the researcher misses the point that the policy itself is a contested terrain, and the document one of many policy texts. "The key point," argue Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 286), is that "policy is not simply received and implemented ... rather it is subject to interpretation and then "recreated". The principal's attitude to the external policy indicated in the quote above, supports Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) observation. The external text is adapted to suit the school policy. The school will accommodate the legislated text within its own policy text. The response of the principal to the issue of a Student Representative Council (SRC) is a case in point:

-We will have one [an SRC] because the law says we must, BUT we will still have a prefect body and the prefect body will have authority. The SRC will have none. (Mr S)

The primacy of the school's policy text is acknowledged by a senior teacher who points out that

-it's now law so now we've implemented it, but we will have two systems running. (Ms S)

However, as the principal points out, the systems will not be equal. The prefect body is given official sanction and carries the authority. The students are aware of the tension between the Law and Empire High's law and even sensitive to the reasons operating behind the two co-existing:

-They want it to be the way it was since it started unless the government says so. They will never - (Nomsa)

- they are afraid of change- (Lerato)

- they're only doing it because they have to do it. (Nomsa)

Two observations are important here, both of which will be discussed in greater detail. Firstly, in order to adapt the external policy text to fit the school's policy, rewriting of the external text has to take place. In doing so the principal and the executive are implicitly challenging the policy paradigm of a single policy text and a policy-making process which has only two stages: one site for generation and many of implementation. This challenge holds implications for the degree of the participants' agency in the policy-making process. Secondly, a description of the response of the school as accommodatory implies that there will be more than one site of policy generation.

Sites of generation

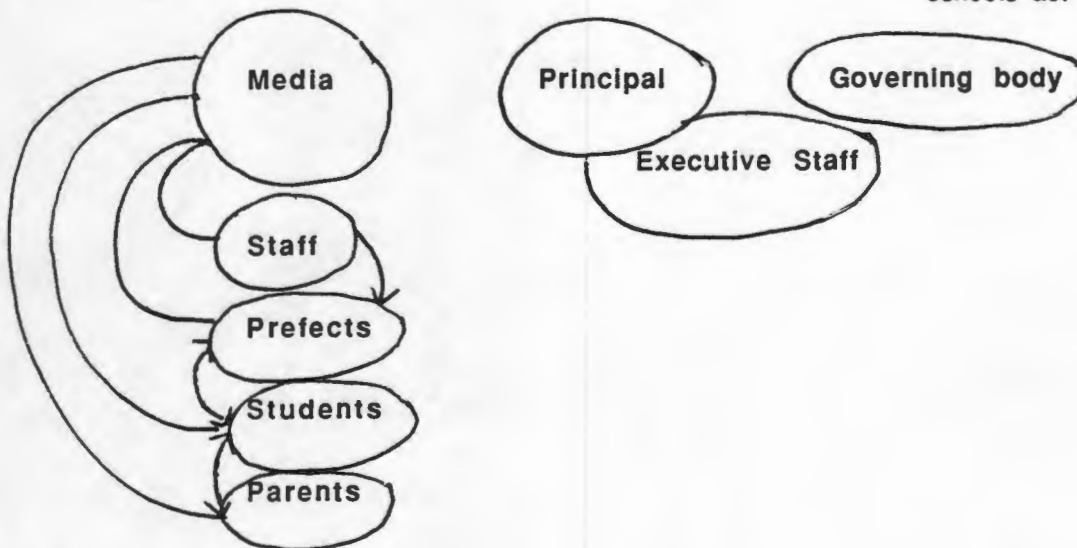
Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 249) argue that "educational development is made up of a series of untidy and overlapping episodes in which a variety of people ... are actively involved in the processes through which issues are analysed and policies generated,

implemented, assessed and redesigned". This section of the discussion identifies the sites where the legislated policy document gets "assessed and redesigned" and in this way, "rewritten", and the process by which certain documents are given legitimacy, and others marginalised. This section will also identify **who** rewrites policy, the "recontextualising agents" (Bernstein, 1982, p 352), and what forms these revisions take. Figure 3 illustrates the various sites of text generation.

Figure 3: Sites of text generation.

1993: SWOT analysis (senior staff; principal and governing body members)

Legislated text and other official texts: white paper
schools' bill
schools' act



I begin the discussion by pointing out the shortcoming of the term "rewriting policy" as the word "rewrite" implies a reaction. The first piece of policy revision that I wish to discuss occurs before the educational reform introduced after 1994. The chair of the governing body at that time, comments on the difficulties of trying to get Empire High (the principal, the executive staff and the governing body) to anticipate future developments. However, in 1993, the principal and a number of the executive staff did develop a plan of action for the school.

A senior teacher who was part of the group describes the group's aim as being to carry out a SWOT analysis of the school and to identify ways

- to **control** what percentages of other cultures we could safely take in without sacrificing our English ethos (Ms E) (my emphasis)

Thus the first site of policy writing lies within this group, and occurs in anticipation of external policy changes to follow. The attempt made by the school to control the anticipated changes by formulating a response prior to the legislation, anticipates the shape of the texts written in response to the legislation passed after 1994. The act of rewriting the text is an act of control, or rather, an attempt to control other readings of the policy. It illustrates the process which Kogan (1975, p 55) refers to whereby values which he argues make up policy, are defined and legitimated.

The legislation is received by the principal from the department and discussed by the principal and the executive staff. It is here that decisions are made regarding the policy. This is an important site of policy generation, as the discussion shapes the form in which the policy will be relayed to the general staff, the governing body and the students.¹ The legislated text is thus reinterpreted at the executive staff meeting. The discussion gets relayed and reinterpreted via the school magazine, notices, classroom discussion, staff room discussion and playground discussion. The texts are influenced by reports in the media, some of which are cut out and placed in the staff room. Thus, "a whole variety and criss cross of meanings and interpretations are put into circulation." (Bowe *et al.*, 1996, p 278)

Bowe *et al.* (*ibid.*, p 285) state that "many of those towards whom policy is aimed rely on secondhand accounts as their main source of information and understanding of policy as intended". It is significant that only the principal, the HOD's and the chair of

¹ Significant during the period 1994-1996, is the extent of the governing bodies' involvement at this stage. The chair of the governing body brought to the attention of the principal the need for an Student Representative Council, as well as directly informing the staff of the implications of the teacher: student ratio.

the governing body actually see the legislated policy text. However, already then the policy has been mediated through the press, television and radio to all at the school. As the findings indicated, the role played by the media in shaping perceptions about the policy and its legitimacy was considered significant.

Missing from the picture, of course, is an analysis of the unofficial policy texts and the mechanisms that keep them unofficial. The official policy text is itself hard to pin down as it gets translated a number of times, by various members of the school. However, the translations that contain in them the dominant discourse and support thereof, receive sanction, whereas those which challenge the assumptions are marginalised.

The "model C" school discourse

Policy authors do make concerted efforts to assert such control by the means at their disposal to achieve a : "correct" meaning and we need to understand those efforts and their effects on readers to recognise the attention that readers pay to the writers' context of production and communicative intent. (Giddens, 1987, p 105)

To understand better the school's response, both official and unofficial, it is useful to attempt to trace the discourse at play and the paradigms of policy-making which inform the reading and rewriting of the legislated policy documents in the school context. The importance of examining discourses lies in identifying "what can be said and thought,...about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (Foucault, 1977, p 49)

Key to identifying the dominant discourse is the principal's response to the question, "What was the most significant change brought about by educational policy change, legislated after 1994?" His answers for the most began with, "*how can I put it?*". How the principal "puts the change" is highly significant in attempting to create a shared understanding of the meaning of the policy. His comment also points to the need of the school management to accommodate the change. *Bowe et al.* (1996)

argue that "policies are the operational statements of values, ...a set of claims about how the world should and might be" (*ibid.*, p 279). Bowe *et al.* (1996) also state that who makes the claim determines to a large degree the legitimacy that claim is accorded. Thus, how the principal "puts it" is influential in shaping how the rest of the school community sees it, and agrees with the allocation of values; that it is the principal who "puts it so", is significant in that his position accords it legitimacy.

However, the position of the principal alone will not necessarily lead to the adoption of the "set of claims about how the world should and might be", Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 279), by the institution, or an agreement on strategies to accommodate the policy. Instead, the literature identifies as significant the ability to develop a shared "vision" amongst the school community of the policy change. One of the six strategies Horde (1995) identifies as used by the leaders to facilitate change and policy implementation in classrooms and schools successfully; is developing and communicating a shared vision. Fullan (1993A) argues that "shared meaning ... goes a long way in making significant change a reality" (p 46). The development of a shared meaning is really the development of a shared discourse, in getting as many people to see the same thing as valuable as well as an attempt to control the discourse used. The development of a shared vision or meaning facilitates policy-making and implementation, and in Saunders' terms, the adaptation of policy to fit the "general shape of the school structure. (in Bowe *et al.*, 1996). A number of factors facilitated the development of a shared vision at Empire High:

1. The path of policy within the school:

- the limited access to, and discussion of, the external and internal policy texts by the general staff which gives more credibility to the principal's version of the legislated text;
- the daily meetings which reinforce the official understanding of the changes;

2. the experience of the teachers:

- most of the teaching staff had grown up in Bankerstown and had gone to school in the area;
- the slow turnover of staff at the school.

Miles (1987) argues that vision involves two dimensions: the first, a shared vision of what the school should look like, and the second, a shared vision of the change process. The question then is what is the vision that the principal would want to foster amongst the school community? Or put differently, what is the dominant vision of the school? The findings suggest that the vision of what the school should look like is closely linked to the vision of what the school is understood to have always meant. Furthermore, the vision of the change process was shaped by the vision of the school's identity. The emphasis was on maintaining a congruency between the vision of what the school should look like, and the vision of what the school had always been. In turn, the vision of the change process could be regarded as a means of entrenching this congruency.

Key to unpacking the response of the school to the reforms is an understanding of the dominant discourse at play. The discourse is the frame through which the reform measures are seen and understood, determining which measures are threatening, which are not. The dominant discourse also indicates the dominant perception of the school's identity. The dominant discourse describes Empire High as a "Model C"² school: predominantly "white" in terms of student profile; exclusively white in terms of teacher profile; progressive in its accommodation of selected black students. The discourse is about maintaining control. As indicated in the findings, this discourse suggests that the black students are different to white students, but that black students can be made white, by teaching them how to behave as the white students are supposed to.

² "model C" : the models of governance named after Piet Clase, the minister of Education and Culture, House of Assembly). Empire High had chosen to be a "model C" school. This model of school governance allowed the school to draw up and administer its own admission policy. Lemon (1995) argues that the National Party Government used the introduction of the model C governance option to DEC schools as a means of creating a metaphorical space for DEC schools to find ways of containing the desegregation of schooling which, the National Party saw as inevitable. In the light of Lemon's claim, Bankerstown's political character is particularly interesting: although there is a strong ANC constituency visible after the 1994 elections, the white community was traditionally nationalist with strong conservative leanings. This history suggests that the conservative nature of the National Government's policy changes would find support within this community.

The white students are viewed as children, politically innocent, unlike the black children who "are inclined to ...make demands and follow in the footsteps of their older counterparts" (Ms S). The black students are perceived to pose a threat to the innocence of the white students and also a threat to the discourse in terms of the understanding of authority. In terms of the "Model C" discourse, authority is hierarchically arranged, with little, if any, consultation between levels. Most telling of the discourse at work is the reaction of the principal to the establishment of a Student Representative Council (SRC). When asked about the SRC, the principal reacted immediately by changing the name to Learner Representative Council

-It's a learner representative council because we don't have students. (Mr S)

The students appeared sensitive to this distinction and their responses were significant in revealing points of resistance to the discourse of the school. The majority of students, black and white, favoured the establishment of a Student Representative Council, as they saw it as a means of communication which, by implication and direct reference, the prefects' body was not. However, not all students responded in favour of a representative council. The language used by these students, indicates the support for the dominant discourse within the student body. The reasons given for their resistance to the SRC were similar to those given by the principal: the democratic nature of the SRC posed too great a threat to the dominant discourse.

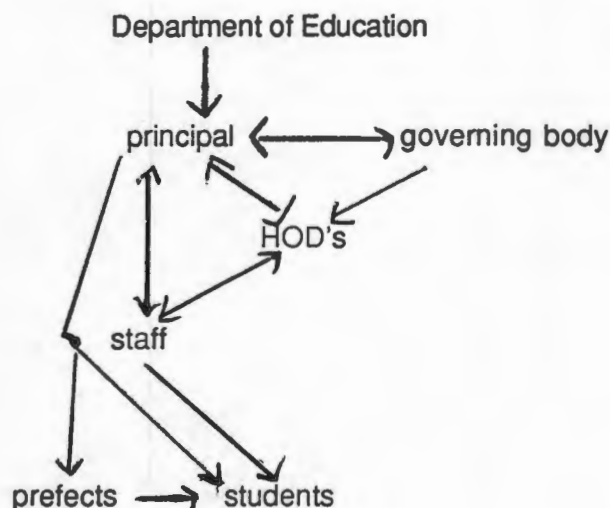
The discourse does not interrogate the education system of former white schools, and explains the reforms as measures intended to allow black students equal access to the education system previously reserved for white students only. The principal's message in the school magazine of 1994 illustrates the attitude towards the education system of white children. He asks, "[W]ill we be given the opportunity to continue with the quality education we have been able to give under the TED³ system, which will be totally dismantled by the end of this year?"

The dominant discourse also prescribes the understanding, or vision, of the process of change. Miles (1987) defines "vision" as a shared understanding of the change process. This implies a process whereby an official vision of the process of policy is developed and maintained, and agency assigned to various roles.

³ Transvaal Education Department

That a common understanding of the process of policy is cultivated and not organic is indicated by the research. The path the policy text travels is perceived differently by various members of the community. Figure 4 illustrates the path of the policy text as described by the principal and heads of departments (HOD's).

Figure 4: The path of the policy text as described by the principal and heads of departments (HOD's):

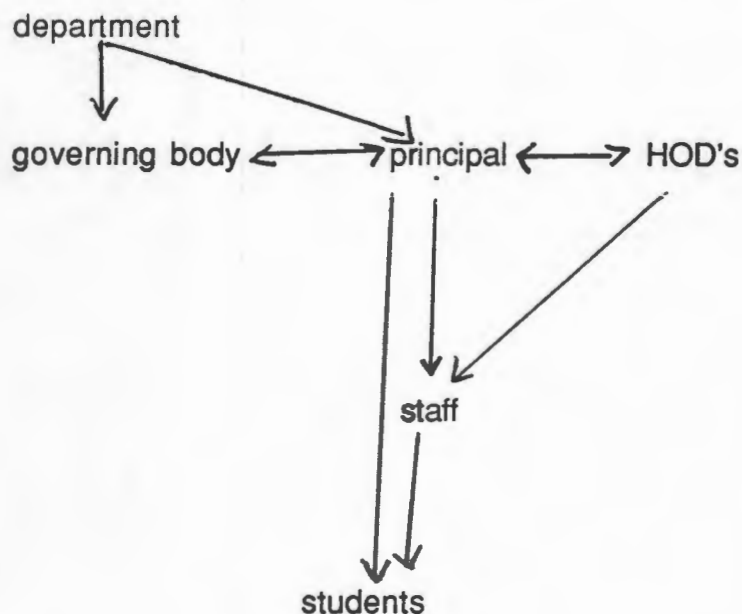


This description affords the HOD's a certain degree of agency in the internal policy process. The description suggests that agreement is always reached at each level. Ball (1994, p 16) warns against the danger of overlooking the dissensus that occurs amongst the "legitimate" voices (the "authorised" voices). This dissent is only mentioned indirectly in the senior teacher's comment that there is little planning other than a day-by-day crisis management style. The other teachers interviewed, who were executive staff, did not make any direct reference to disagreements about the discussion held with the principal, which could suggest that the executive staff and the principal share the same discourse.

According to the principal and the executive staff, there appears to be a degree of discussion between the staff and principal before final policy decisions are made. However, this perspective differs when the teachers are interviewed. According to

the teachers who were not HOD's the discussion did not influence the final policy decision reached at the principal and executive level. Figure 5 illustrates the staff perception of the process.

Figure 5: The staff perception of the process of policy within the school



The actual policy decision was regarded by all the staff as having taken place in the principal's office. The discussion of the policy decision in the staff room referred to by the principal and the executive staff interviewed was considered limited by the teachers interviewed. One teacher viewed this as understandable and acceptable: *"He tells us what we need to know."* (Mr D) Another teacher felt far more strongly: *"he treats us as if we are children. He tells us what has been decided and then tells us that we need not trouble ourselves with the rest of the details."* (Ms Z) The teachers' differing responses indicates a differing understanding of their role in the change process. The first teacher's attitude supports the positioning of teacher as passive recipient of change. The second view challenges this paradigm. A junior teacher's

comments illuminate the process whereby official sanction is given to the specific paradigm of the teacher's role as passive recipients, and any challenge to the dominant paradigm is marginalised, even silenced:

-I've learnt to keep my mouth shut. There was a teacher who spoke her mind. It wasn't received well. Her life was made very difficult and I think it was one of the reasons she left. She'd been at Empire High for 10 years, and was a very capable woman who spoke her mind. I don't think [the principal] liked that. (Ms L)

It is not surprising then that her concluding comments are repeated almost word for word by a senior teacher who observed that: "*most of us go with the flow.*" (Ms S) Although she acknowledges that "*maybe that's the wrong thing*", the pressure perceived to "*go the way of least resistance*" (Ms S) overrides her concern.

The interviewees' responses are significant in that they support Ball's (1994, p 20) assertions that "policies enter existing patterns of inequality. They are taken up differently as a result". The response is also interesting in the light of Bowe *et al.*'s (1996, p 279) statement that the policy process is a continual one, "in which the loci of power are continually shifting". This is clear if one looks at the policy path perceived by the participants. However, as Blackmore *et al.* (1994, p 199) point out, not all players are equally "empowered" by this shifting of the loci of power. They state that

policy constrains what can be done by the producer of policy text at the school level in that only certain activities are legitimated and that the policy text itself is limited by the selective readings of the majority.

The "readings of the majority" are sometimes voluntary, other times the result of "taking the path of least resistance". What is significant is that the text may have been rewritten a number of times by the time it reaches the student, but the extent to which it will differ from the "legitimated" text of the executive staff, is limited.

In terms of Barthe's (1988) theory that literature consists of readerly or writerly texts, the policy text produced by the principal and the executive staff could be seen as a "readerly text", in that it minimises the opportunity for creative interpretation by the "reader", in this case the teacher and the students.

The teachers' perception of the discussions that influence the school's officially sanctioned policy rewrite, is that they are lateral in nature. The process is perceived by the teachers and the students as top down. The paradigm of change held by these participants is that it is something that those in authority do, and those with less authority receive. This paradigm is perceived by the ex chair-person of the governing body as the reason for the executive staff's delay in organising any sort of workshop to discuss the legislated reform. Although the descriptions by the executive staff and teachers of the path of policy in the school differ to an extent, the perception of the path policy-making should travel, remains essentially a top- down model. The path of policy in the school mirrors the paradigm of the broader policy process. This is revealed in the responses of the executive staff interviewed who complain about the lack of communication from the provincial structures, but expect the communication to come only from the top down. The expectation is understandable if there has been little to challenge the legitimacy of the previous system of policy process. The system of Christian National Education supported the paradigm of policy-making and implementation as a top- down process. An inspectorate policed the process. Limited media coverage of policy changes or responses to it, as well as support from the white teacher associations meant that challenges to the paradigm was contained. The system supported a discourse of patronage, which effectively marginalised any dissenting voices among the white teaching ranks. The description of the staff at Empire High by a senior teacher as "*a happy family*" (Ms S) indicates the perception of the school as arranged hierarchically; authority resting in the "parent": the principal. That this view extends to include the department of education is evident in the teacher's comment that the department "*always told us what to do*" (Ms K). The teacher's response implies a particular concept of the way educational change should happen *viz.* that "change is an event; that change simply can be mandated, with a set date for accomplishment" (Hall, 1992, p 104).

The discourse of the principal at first appears contradictory. He comments on the lack of structure and instructions from the department. However, he also considers the gap useful, as it allows him to do his own thing. The aim of the educational reforms as spelt out in the Education White Paper is to encourage the development of democracy. However, the discourse of policy-making evident in the manner in which Empire High has received the legislation, undermines this. Because the legislated policy has not

challenged the way in which policy-making is perceived, the words lose their potency. Simply describing the situation at Empire High as an example of the inevitable existence of a gap between generation and implementation is inadequate. Bowe *et al.* (1996, p 276) would argue that such an analysis [can be very convenient] [as it] does not require an investigation of

who becomes involved in the policy process and how they become involved. [This] is a product of a combination of administratively based procedures, historical precedence and political manoeuvrings implicating the state, that state bureaucracy and continual political struggles over access to the policy process.

An analysis which describes the experience at Empire High as an implementation "problem" would fail to acknowledge the policy-making which occurs within the school. The passage of the legislated text as perceived by the principal allows the principal to accommodate the legislated reform and to contain the threat to the dominant identity of the school.

The response of the principal to the legislated text is given legitimacy by the contradictory discourse of the legislated policy text. A detailed analysis of the discourse of the legislated policy falls beyond the ambit of this study. However, Marris's (1975, p 166) observation that

[W]hen those who have the power to manipulate changes act as if they have only to explain, and when their explanations are not at once accepted, shrug off opposition as ignorance or prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own. For the reformers have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them, perhaps through months or years of analysis and debate. If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions.

can be applied not only to the process of policy at the school but the perceived attitude of the legislators to those at whom the reform is aimed. The discourse at Empire High in terms of what education is valuable, a discourse shaped and supported through the apartheid policy of separate development, has not been challenged in any way by the process of educational reform. The emphasis in the

post election period has been legalistic. No-one at Empire High is questioning the importance of legislated reform. However what the findings illustrate is that although the "state policy [has] establishe[d] the location and timing of the contest, its subject matter and the rules of the game" (Ball (1994, p 21), following the letter of the law is no guarantee that the spirit of the law has been understood, let alone followed.

Re-constructing spaces to accommodate and contain change

Spatial theory provides a helpful tool in understanding the responses of the school to the external changes. A spatialised account of a school's response to imposed educational reform provides a useful example of Soja's (1989) "socio-spatial dialect" at work. Soja (1989) argues that social practices (what people do in the spaces) impact on the way space is organised. The two are mutually contingent: each influences each other. Lefebvre (1991) points to the relationship between the the representation of space (the formalised definition of the space) and the representational spaces (the perceived spaces) of those existing within the representation of space; and the manner in which the spatial practices circumscribe this. The case study illustrates the way in which the desire to retain a particular understanding of a space impacted on the way that space is organised. At the same time, the reorganised space affects the social practices. Furthermore, controlling the spatial practices serves to maintain the dominant understanding of the meaning of the space i.e. the dominant identity of the space (representational space).

Lemon (1995) argues that the National Party Government used the introduction of the model C governance option in 1992, to Department of Education and Culture (DEC) schools as a means of creating a metaphorical space for DEC schools to find ways of containing the desegregation of schooling which, Lemon argues, the National Party saw as inevitable.⁴ Agreeing with Lemon's (1995) and Metcalfe's (1991) interpretation

⁴ Lemon (1995) makes an even more serious charge against the National Party government

- when he argues that the government's educational policy after 1992 which entailed the semi-privatisation of DEC schools held significant implications for any future policy which would entail the redistribution of resources to under-resourced schools.

of the National Government's intentions behind the introduction of these reforms, as being conservative in nature, intent on controlling the rate of desegregation, I argue that the option chosen by the executive of the school in 1993 to restructure the representation of space was an attempt to protect the dominant representational space. Whereas the renting of half of the school's space to the technikon allowed the executive to retain congruence between its representation of space and the dominant representational space, the response of the school to the legislation passed after the 1994 elections was to increase the control over spatial practices in order to control the rate of integration.

Lefebvre (1991) points to the circumscribing effect of spatial practices on the relationship between representations of space and representational space. Before assessing the role of spatial practices in the relationship between the representational and representation of space at the school, it is useful to identify the spatial practices at play at the school.

All the teachers drive to the school. Since all the teachers are white they live in the area previously zoned as a "white area". They live in Bankerstown or in the neighbouring town which is only 10 kilometers away⁵. The spatial practices of the students are less homogeneous. The majority of boarders are black. As the boarding school allows only weekly boarders, the students all travel home over the weekends. Most of them use public transport for this. The majority of black students who live in the neighbouring townships use public transport. Both black and white students who live in the neighbouring towns use the bus to get to school. The rest of the students are either driven to school, cycle or walk. The representation of space in terms of the planning of towns in accordance with the Group Areas Act (whereby the area surrounding the school was designated white) (see diagram 1) impacts on the spatial practices of the students: the majority of students who cycle or walk or are driven to the school are white. The point I wish to make here is that the spatial practices are shaped by the political context.

⁵ See diagram 1

What is particularly interesting is the way in which the spatial practices of the black students who commute are used by members of the staff in maintaining the dominant representational space. The spatial practices of the black students who commute, are cited by teachers and the principal as reasons for the failure of bridging classes as well as the decline in the school's sporting achievements. A senior teacher comments that

-You try - I know Johannesburg schools had remedial English bridging classes but it doesn't work here because they can't stay: transport. The only black students who participate in sport are those who don't stay in the townships and they are the pupils who need the extra attention. 90% of pupils are bus pupils - our sport is suffering (Ms L)

What is significant is that despite the teachers and the principal identifying the lack of transport for commuting students as a problem, no-one has suggested an alternative. This is particularly interesting when the implications which the spatial practices of the commuting students have in terms of the integration of students on the sports field as well as academic achievement are examined. By refusing to address the problem of transport, the executive of the school is able to resist further integration of students.

One of the major changes introduced by the legislation passed after the 1994 election has been the removal of the right of schools to administer any form of admission test. (The Schools Act; Act No. 84; 1996) This change is viewed by most of the staff, the principal and one group of students at Empire High as threatening.⁶ If one bears in mind the first option available to the crisis committee whereby 50% of the students would be black, and the rejection thereof because it was felt that it would "change the culture of the school significantly" (Evans, p 57), the anxiety expressed by teachers and the principal in the interviews seem more understandable. The school had been able to limit the degree of desegregation in 1993 in a number of ways, namely the reshaping of the representation of space; the screening of candidates and by declaring in the school's mission statement that the black students have to "submit to

⁶ Source: Unstructured interviews

activities of the whole school". In this way the spatial practices of the students were proscribed in order to support the dominant representational space of the school. The legislation after 1994 may well have removed the "screening" of students, but to the extent that the spatial practices of the students are controlled by the school, integration within the school is controlled.

The controlling of the spatial practice of the students provides a useful example of the way in which the dominant representational space is protected and maintained. To what extent is this representational space held by the students interviewed? An analysis of the interviews indicated that the majority of the students shared the dominant representational space of the school.

However, alternative readings of the representation of space do exist. Unstructured interviews with the staff and students indicated the existence of alternative readings of the schooling space.

Points of resistance

Ball (1990) describes discourse as constructing certain possibilities for thought, ordering and combining words in particular ways and excluding or displacing other combinations. "We do not speak the discourse. The discourse speaks us" (*ibid.*, p 18). Ball's (1990) analysis says little about possibilities of resisting or developing a new discourse. The structure of Empire High appears to provide little space for counter discourses to exist.

However, as unstructured interviews with the staff and students indicate, alternative readings of the representation of space do exist. These alternative representational spaces and the strategies used to maintain them are discussed in the following section of the essay.

I have argued that the dominant representational space or identity of the school is constructed within the code of a separate "culture" or "ethos". This culture is defined

linguistically. Race is collapsed into this linguistic definition. Thus the "culture" is English, and "white" is "English". It is ironic, or perhaps fitting, that it is around the issue of language that alternative representational spaces are held. A racially mixed group's discussion which began in response to my questioning them as to their thoughts on being in a mixed class, proved fascinating:

-it [mixed classes] doesn't bug me at all -(Cathy)

-I'm sure it's something to the Black people because they have to keep on speaking English, keep on being treated like kids you know -English English - when they speak their own language they get moaned at- (Tina)

-I've been at a multi-racial school since grade one at Mmabatho. There is a big difference- people are more racist here-(Simon)

-teachers and pupils- (Kgothatso)

-They don't want you in their shop but they don't know how to tell you to get out. So they look at you funny and don't help you (Simon)

-ja sometime you have to express yourself in your own language- (Lebo)

*-A while ago we had posters all over the school: "Learn to speak English"-
(Tina)*

-It made me feel like a little animal that needs to be driven to his kraal (Simon)

-We can't even read the posters and we're still speaking Tswana. We should be able to speak Tswana during break. (Kgothatso)

The discussion is useful in a number of ways. It points to spaces in which behaviour can be different. The representation of the school space includes formal spaces of learning for example, classrooms. The informal space are the corridors, the toilets, the playground. It is in these spaces that an alternative representational space is created. The challenge to the dominant representational space plays itself out in the

playground. Being able to "*express yourself in your own language*" (Lebo) challenges the dominant representational space which holds that the school is a white English school. Speaking your own language in the playground makes the space your space.

Blackmore *et al.* (1994) argue that conventional policy paradigms which view the teacher, parent and student as "passive recipients of policy who either implement the policies or resist them in their totality" are not adequate in their analysis of who makes policy (*ibid.*, p 185). The various responses of the students⁷ indicates that while sections of the "official" policy of the school might be received, parts are resisted. Similarly, the response of the students to the issue of the SRC indicated a partial acceptance of the dominant discourse, but also indicated an awareness of the construction of the discourse.⁸

Perhaps most significant is the tension within the teachers' views about the nature of the change. Their complaint about lack of support and direction from the department appears to indicate their support of the discourse of top - down policy-making, in which administrators hold the authority and agency. The discourse is suffused in this particular context with political meaning as it is this discourse which was supported by the apartheid government. However, the apartheid discourse arranged race categorisations hierarchically. Thus, the frustration over the lack of direction from those in authority positions sits uncomfortably next to the discourse that positions those placed by the political transition in the seat of authority as immature. Ironically the combination of the two positions strengthens the questioning of the legitimacy of the authority: "*Who made these decisions? When were they made? I don't agree*" (Ms S). Within these questions lies the seed of a new discourse. Foucault (1981, p 101) points out that

We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.

⁷Refer to findings for detail

⁸Refer to findings for detail

Conclusion

Ball (in *Bowe et al.* , 1996, p 275) asserts that “externally imposed policy was appropriated by the teaching profession for very different purposes to those intended by the policy.” To what extent is this true of Empire High? What were the purposes for which the externally imposed policy was appropriated?

To answer the question, one needs to assess the following:

- How was the externally imposed policy understood by the school? What did the school understand the purpose of the policy to have been?
- How did the school respond to the policy? To what extent did it “both resist[s] and accommodate[s] the reforms” (Levin, 1982 , p 317).

This chapter has attempted to explore and address these questions and has argued that the school's perception of the policy is shaped by the school's understanding of itself, and that the assumptions which make up this understanding in turn affect the school's response to the policy. Furthermore, it has attempted to identify the mechanisms which influenced the responses, and supported or rejected various responses.

What is important to note is that the policy may not necessarily imply change, but may well aim to keep things the same. Sarason (1990) in his research into educational policy, observed that policies did not always transform the situation or system, and resulted instead in a situation where the more things changed the more they stayed the same. The discussion indicates the strategies adopted by the executive of the school to rewrite the legislated policy text to ensure that the more things changed the more they stayed the same, and the measures adopted to silence any voices of dissent.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

-the situation now is very, very free. As long as you operate within the parameters of the education bill what you do within that is really to a large extent your own doing. and you've just got to adapt the broad frame to the requirements of your school, and that's essentially what we've done. (Mr S) (my emphasis)

The research conducted at Empire High would suggest that Mr S's description of the way in which the school management responded to the legislated reforms, is inadequate in capturing the entire story of the school's response. The school management did not only adapt the legislation so that it could be accommodated into the existing school structure. The school management adapted the structure of the school as well. It would appear from this finding then that Saunders' classification of the response to change' falls short in that it only allows for the structural change of the school as a result of the acceptance of policy. The research indicates, however, that the restructuring of the school can be used by the school management as part of a strategy of "accommodation" of the policy. Although the nature of the research does not lend itself to a generalising of the findings, its usefulness

¹ Adaptive extension:

A strong interpretation of the policy: it has been used to change the whole school structure.

Accommodation:

The policy is adapted to fit the general shape of the existing school structure.

Containment:

The policy is absorbed by the existing school pattern.

lies in the conclusion drawn from the findings that policy is not just something that gets done to schools; that schools do not only change because the legislated policy instructs them to, but rather that the school's response to the policy can also include a voluntary restructuring in order to control the impact of the policy. Internal policy is written in order to accommodate external policy texts. This process does not only occur as a result of policy or in response to policy already legislated but can also occur in anticipation of legislated reform.

The research further indicates that the response to legislated reform can vary. This is significant as it serves to warn against viewing the response of a school as static in form. The case study reveals that the school adjusted its response, moving from an anticipatory to an incremental approach. However, the research shows that the intention remained the same: viz. how to control and accommodate the legislated reform. The value of the research lies in its acknowledgement of the nuances of the responses to change.

The findings of the research support Bowe *et al.*'s (1996) argument that policy is multi textual. The research shows that the school rewrites the national policy text before and after it has been legalised. Bowe *et al.* (*ibid.*) stress the importance of analysing the process of policy-making within a conceptual framework which does not view policy generation and implementation as two distinct and separate processes. Although the research chose to focus on the response of a school to legislated reform, it argues that the findings can not simply be viewed as a matter of an implementation crisis. The research indicates that the school is not simply the site of implementation, but also the site of policy generation. The research argues that the legislation of policy is not the beginning of a process of policy which ends with the school either accepting or rejecting it. Rather, as the research indicates, policy generation within schools can occur before policy is legislated and continues to occur after the act of legislation.

Further research

It was not the aim of the research to investigate whether the White Paper and the Schools' Act had been implemented successfully or not. Its aim was to trace the manner in which a school understood, shaped and constructed an understanding of the policy reforms. Areas of future research could examine in greater detail the impact of the media in shaping the perceptions of schools of the external policy texts. Research could also broaden the scope by examining and comparing the ways in which a number of schools have responded to the externally imposed policy. This research could identify similarities and dissimilarities in the responses, and the factors significant in shaping those perceptions. Yet another area of research which could follow from this work, is an examination of the impact of geographical location on perceptions of teachers and students of the externally imposed change.

An important area of further research is indicated by one teacher's response. This was the only teacher who voiced dissent and questioned the dominant perception of Empire High as a model c school:

-I fought for this change. But I realise now that not all children are the same. To say they are the same is unfair. it ignores the very real material differences of many of the black students. And that's not fair to them. I try not to give the class homework because some of the black students live in shacks. They do not have the facilities. So I have to change the way I teach. I have realised that children are different. They have different experiences of the world.

The stress some of the most of the teachers spoke about, was the result of their not feeling able to deal with difference. Research into teaching and dealing with difference on the classroom is a critical area of research, as the experience of many teachers has been one of marginalising difference, of dealing with difference by not dealing with it.

Going beyond the policy gap

The gap between implementation and policy generation is well documented. Although research has focused on identifying strategies to narrow the gap, it places implementation and policy generation as two distinct processes, occurring in different places. Bowe *et al.* (1996) point out that this obscures the policy-making that takes place inside schools. The research has attempted to trace the policy-making involved in remaking the externally imposed policy and the factors involved in shaping this process. Essential to the research conducted for this dissertation was unraveling the process which shaped the school's understanding of the externally imposed reform. The study thus strives to move beyond the dichotomy which Bowe *et al.* (1996) argue is not inevitable in policy research.

Relevancy to South Africa

The study offers its greatest contribution in terms of its relevancy to South Africa. The study examines what happens when democracy is the agenda of the state. It indicates that an agenda is not sufficient, that the will of the people cannot be assumed through legislation alone. The study points to the importance of the context into which the legislated policy text is received as well as the manner in which it is received. The research shows that the readings of the legislated text are not only shaped by external factors but that internal factors can influence the reading of the text as well. The study highlights the complexity of the dynamics at play within the school in interfacing with external reform.

The external policy reform has as its agenda, the democratisation of education. The research has traced the manner on which this agenda is accommodated by the school

executive and rewritten as official school policy which does not challenge the dominant discourse of the school. The discussion suggests that the externally imposed policy has not challenged the policy paradigm of the previous education system.

Ball (1994, p 17) states that "...the physical text that pops through the school letterbox, or whatever, does not arrive "out of the blue" - it has an interpretational and representational history - and neither does it enter a school or institutional vacuum." Research has tended to highlight either the history of the legislated text or the context of the school into which it arrives. This study has focused instead on the process of texts generated by the school in anticipation of, and response to externally imposed educational reform. The findings at the school indicate that the policy-making process is not a linear one, neither is it confined to one group of players either. At the same time, the study shows the influence of the dominant policy-making paradigm on the way in which the school responds to the external policy's aim of greater empowerment.

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Diagram 1: Bankerstown and surrounds.

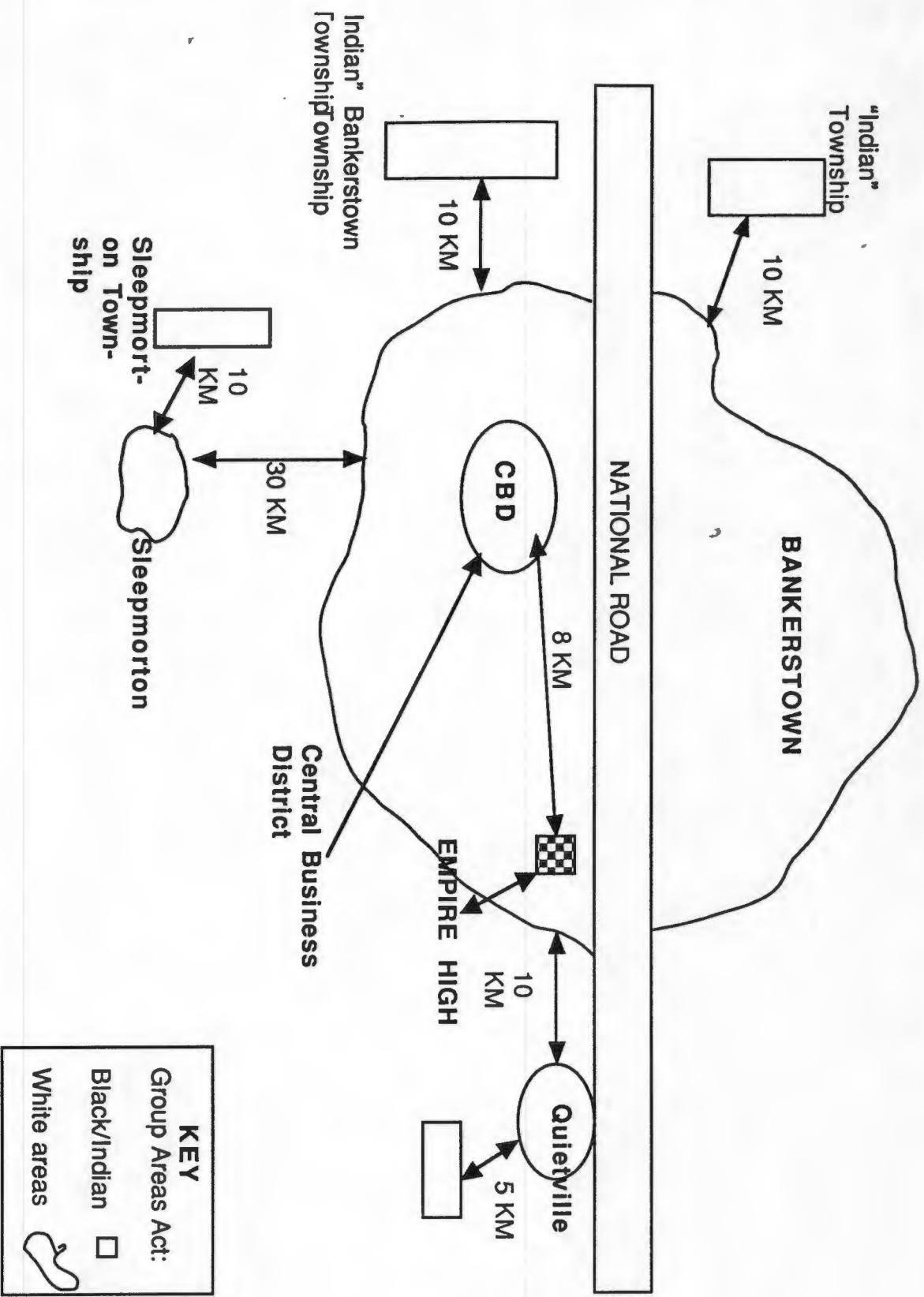
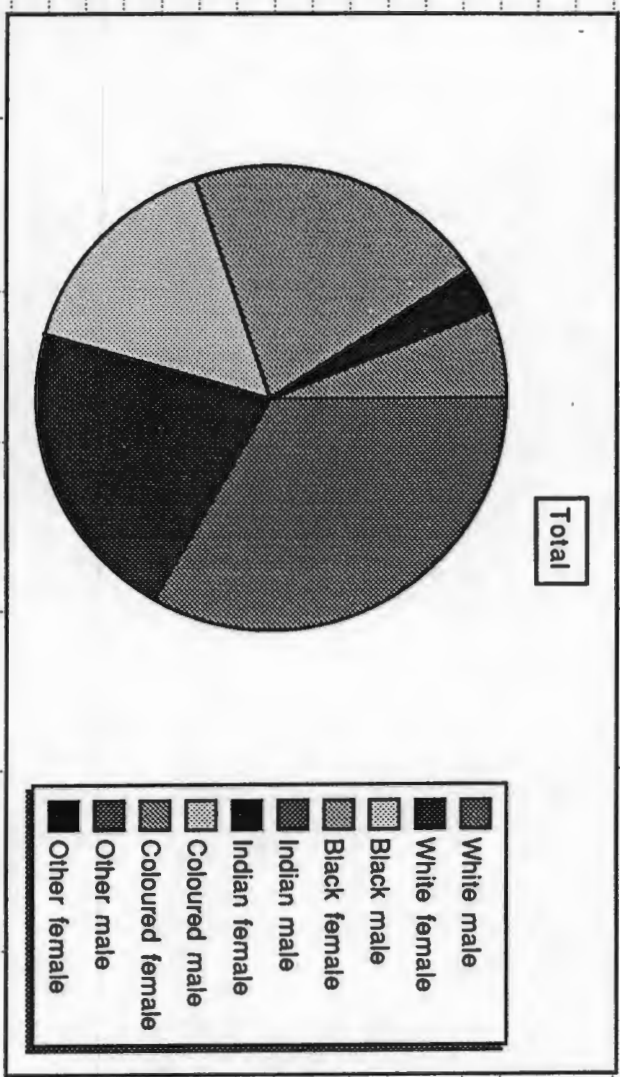
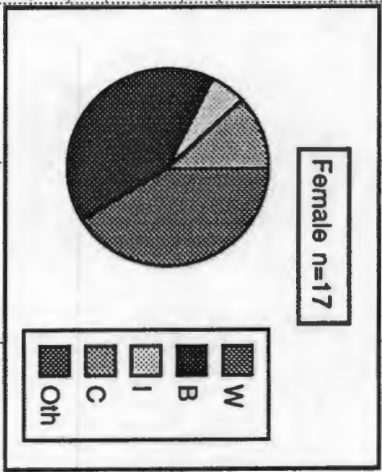
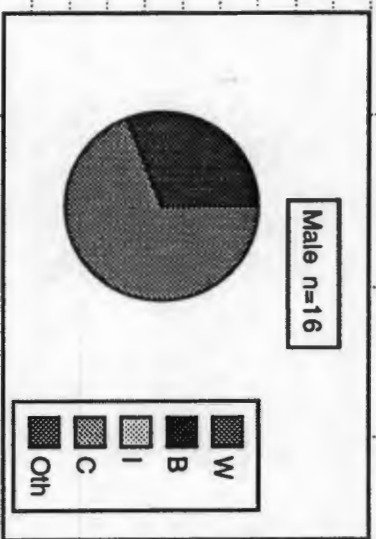


Table 2a

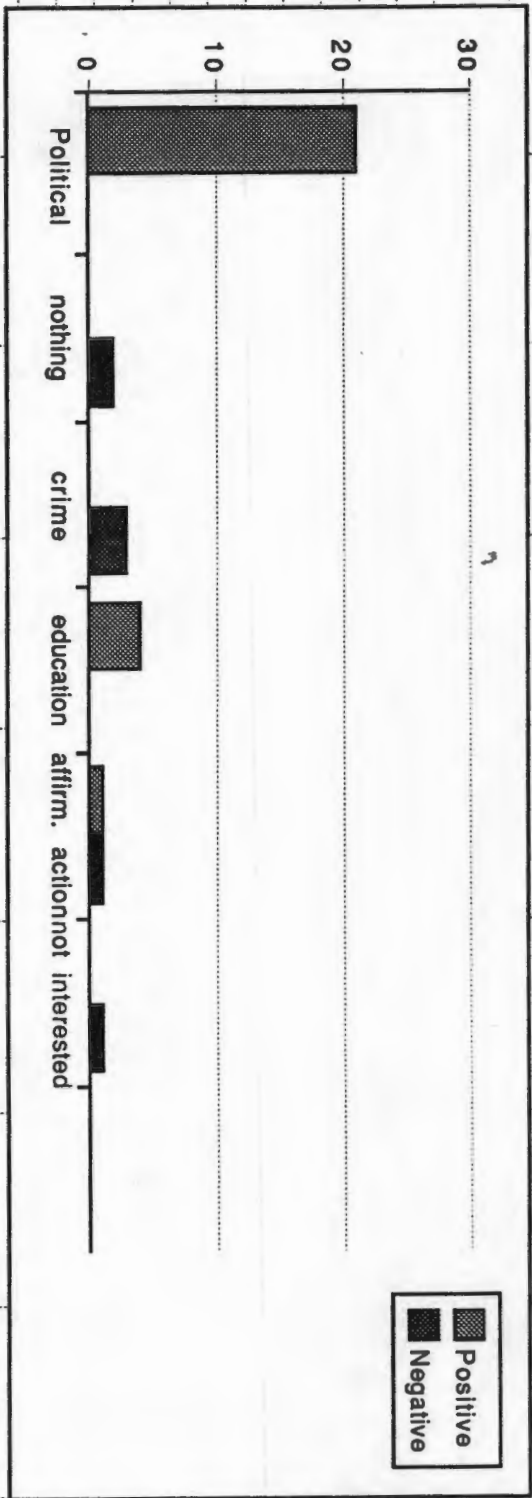
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Male	W	B	I	C	Oth	Female	W	B	I	C	Oth
2		11	5	0	0	0		7	7	1	2	0
3												
4	White male	White female	Black male	Black female	Indian male	Indian female	Coloured male	Coloured female	Other male	Other female		
5	11	7	5	7	0	1	0	2	0	0		
6												
7												
8												
9												
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Student gender and population group

Table 2 b

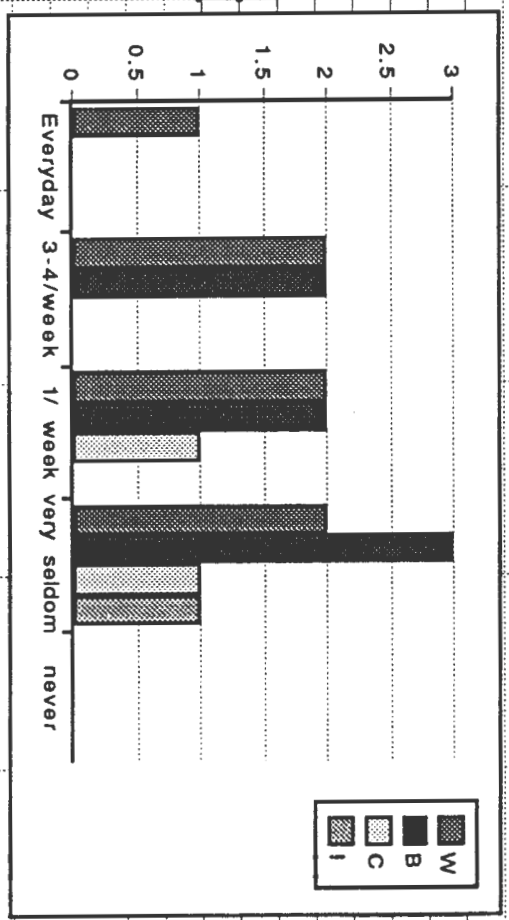
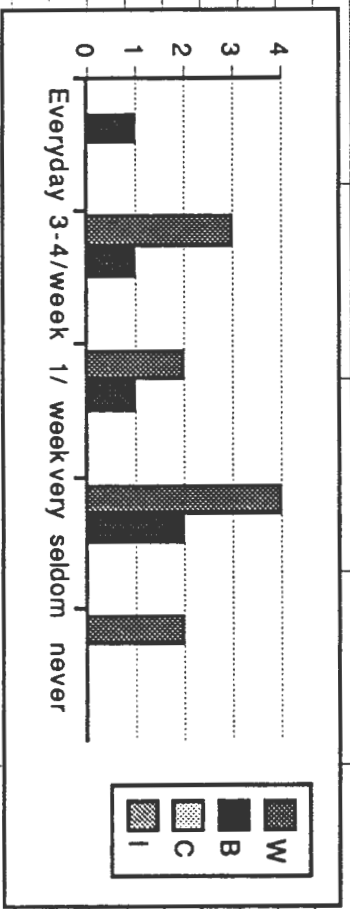
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Political	nothing	crime	education	affirm. action	not interested		
2	Positive	0	0	4	1			
3	Negative	2	3	0	1	1		
4	Total	2	3	4	2	1		
5								
6								
7	n = 33							
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								
20								
21								
22								



Students' perceptions of change

Table 2c

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Gender	Pop. Group	Frequency									
2			Everyday	3-4/week	1/ week	very seldom	never					
3	Male	W	0	3	2	4	2					
4		B	1	1	1	2	0					
5		C	0	0	0	0	0					
6		I	0	0	0	0	0					
7		O	0	0	0	0	0					
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14	Female	W	1	2	2	2	0					
15		B	0	2	2	3	0					
16		C	0	0	1	1	0					
17		I	0	0	0	1	0					
18		Other										
19												
20	Total		2	8	8	13	2					
21												
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												

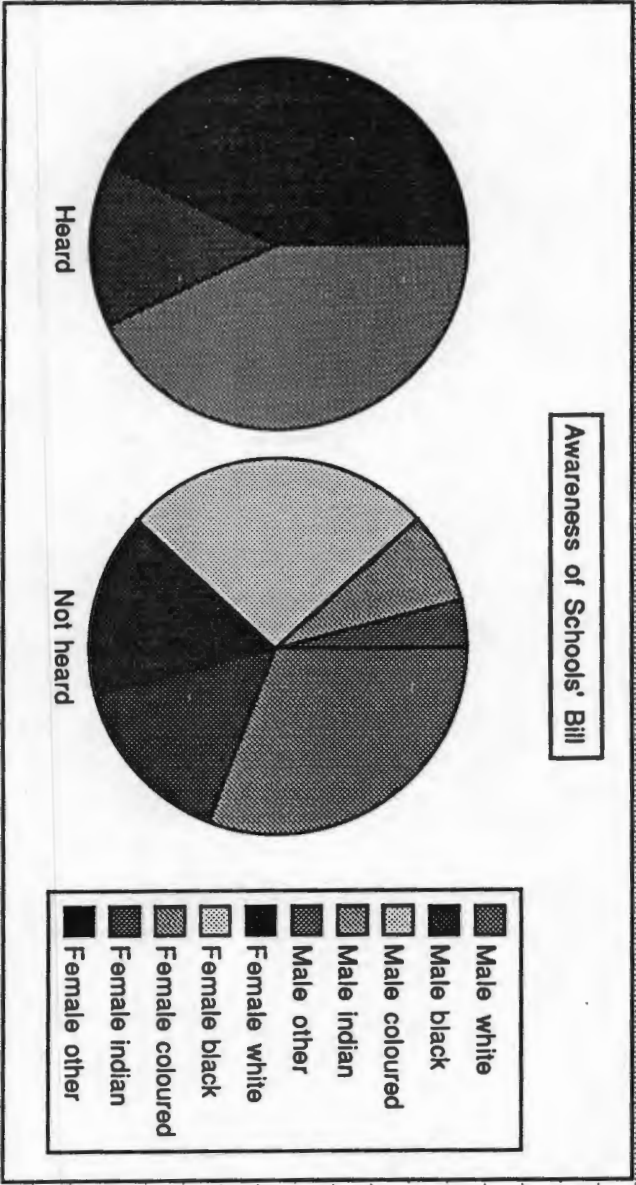


Students' political awareness, gender and population group

Table 2d: Students and the Schools' Bill

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1		Heard	Not heard							
2	Male white	3	8							
3	Male black	1	4							
4	Male coloured	0	0							
5	Male Indian	0	0							
6	Male other	0	0							
7	Female white	3	4							
8	Female black	0	7							
9	Female coloured	0	2							
10	Female Indian	0	1							
11	Female other	0	0							
12	Total	7	26	33						
13										
14		Heard	Not heard							
15	Total of class	7	26							
16										
17										
18										
19										
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31										
32										
33										

Awareness of Schools' Bill



Graph of Table 2d: Awareness of Schools' bill: gender and population groups

Table 3: Themes and codes and frequencies

	A	B	C	D	E
1		Staff	Student focus groups		
2	The experience of, and attitude towards, the externally imposed change				
3	con/pos	1	0		
4	con/neg	7	0		
5	con/neu	0	0		
6	comp/pos	7	0		
7	comp/neg	0	1 group		
8	comp/neu	1	4 groups		
9	ide/cul/pos	2	0		
10	ide/cul/neg	1	1 group		
11	ide/cul/neu	0	0		
12	disc/pos	7	0		
13	disc/neg	0	all groups		
14	disc/neu	1	0		
15					
16	factors facilitating the change process				
17	(lci)	7	5		
18	(lcf)	1	1		
19	bp	4	5		
20					
21	factors influencing these perceptions				
22	mpe	0	0		
23	mp	8	1		
24	mpr	5	6		
25	mdept	1	0		
26	mtea	0	3		
27	mfam	2	1		
28					
29	act/pos	0	0		
30	act/amb	2	0		
31	act/un	0	0		
32	pas/will	1	0		
33	pas/qu	1	1		
34	pas/unqu	5	2		
35	pas/res	2	4		

Table 4: Codes used to facilitate data analysis

	A	B	C	D	E
1	The experience of, and attitude towards, the externally imposed change				
2	con/pos				
3	con/neg				
4	con/neu				
5	comp/pos				
6	comp/neg				
7	comp/neu				
8	ide/cul/pos				
9	ide/cul/neg				
10	ide/cul/neu				
11	disc/pos				
12	disc/neg				
13	disc/neu				
14					
15	Factors facilitating the change process				
16	lci				
17	lcf				
18	bp				
19					
20	Factors influencing these perceptions				
21	mpe				
22	mp				
23	mpr				
24	mdept				
25	mtea				
26	mfam				
27					
28	act/pos				
29	act/amb				
30	act/un				
31	pas/will				
32	pas/qu				
33	pas/unqu				
34	pas/res				

Table 5: Enrollment on 10th school day at Empire High.

DATE	DAY SCHOLARS	BOARDERS	TOTAL
1958	450	N/A	450
1968	898	206	1104
1978	984	173	1157
1988	763	82	845
1991	655	79	734
1993	563	63	626

Table 5: Enrollment on 10th school day at Empire High.

DATE	DAY SCHOLARS	BOARDERS	TOTAL
1958	450	N/A	450
1968	898	206	1104
1978	984	173	1157
1988	763	82	845
1991	655	79	734
1993	563	63	626

Appendix Questionnaire

1	Please indicate your gender: Female _____ Male _____		
2	Into which population group were you placed before 1994? Black _____ White _____ Indian _____ Coloured _____ Other (please specify) _____		
3	To which religious group do you belong? Christian (please specify denomination) _____ Jewish _____ Muslim _____ Other (please specify) _____		
4	What is the occupation of your parents/guardians/caregivers? _____		
5	With whom do you live? with your parents _____ with your guardian _____ with a caregiver? _____ in the hostel? _____		
6	If you are a boarder, are you: a weekly boarder? _____ monthly boarder? _____		
7	Where is your home? in Klerksdorp? _____ elsewhere? (please specify) _____		
8	What is the name of the suburb? _____		
9	Are you a member of any of the following? Church group _____ Please indicate which Youth group _____ Other (please specify) _____		
10	Which primary school did you go to before you came to Milner? Klerksdorp Primary _____ Klerksdorp Secondary _____ Other (please specify) _____		

11	Indicate where you usually get MOST of your news about current events in South Africa (1 = most frequently, 7 = least frequently)		
	newspapers _____		
	radio _____		
	television _____		
	parents and family _____		
	friends _____		
	teachers _____		
	other (please specify) _____		
12	How often do you discuss political developments in South Africa?		
	everyday _____		
	3-4 times a week _____		
	once a week _____		
	very seldom _____		
	never _____		
13	With whom are you most likely to discuss South African politics?		
	parents and family _____		
	friends _____		
	teachers _____		
	other (please specify) _____		
14	Indicate where you usually get MOST of your news about what's going on in EDUCATION in South Africa today. (1 = most frequently, 7 = least frequently)		
	radio _____		
	television _____		
	newspapers _____		
	parents and family _____		
	friends _____		
	teachers _____		
	other (please specify) _____		
15	Have you heard of the School's Bill? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
16	If "yes", where did you hear about it?		
	newspapers _____		
	radio _____		
	television _____		
	parents and family _____		
	friends _____		
	teachers _____		
	other (please specify) _____		

17	Indicate how frequently you do the following: read the news paper _____ listen to the news _____ watch the news in television _____ 1 = once a day or more; 2 = more than twice a week; 3 = once a week; 4 = not at all		
18	Indicate which newspaper you read MOST frequently (1 = most frequently, 8 = least frequently) The Star _____ Rapport _____ Beeld _____ The Sowetan _____ The Citizen _____ The Mail and Guardian _____ The Klerksdorp Record _____ Other (please specify) _____		
19	Indicate which section of the newspaper you read MOST frequently (1 = most frequently, 6 = least frequently) editorial _____ news pages _____ sports pages _____ other _____		
20	Do you read magazines? Yes _____ No _____		
21	Why? _____		
22	Indicate which magazine you read MOST frequently (1 = most frequently, 6 = least frequently) Time _____ You _____ Femina _____ Tribute _____ Cosmopolitan _____ Newsweek _____ Other (please specify) _____		
23	What would you say has been the the biggest change in South African politics in the last 5 years (1993-1997)?		
24	Why do you think this?		

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I agree to participate in a research project about educational policy adoption and change at the local level. I will participate in the interview under the following conditions:

1. I will allow the interview to be recorded. I understand that the interview is taped so that nothing is missed and so that my words are not changed. I can turn off the recorder any time during the interview.
2. I agree to allow **Tracey Petersen** to use the information from the interview in the research dissertation. however, I understand that my privacy and confidentiality will be protected by disguising names and any other identifying information.
3. I understand that I have a right to receive and review a written transcript of the interview. After reviewing and discussing the transcript with Tracey, I can suggest changes for accuracy, clarity or new information.

Signature _____

Date _____

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INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL

1. Following the change of government in 1994, the White Paper, the School's Bill and the Schools' Act introduced a number of changes to the educational system. In your opinion, what were the most significant changes for the school?
2. What method/s did you use to introduce these changes to the school?
ie. how did you set about introducing these changes?
 - * did you focus on dealing with the consequences of the changes, or more on understanding what the changes meant?
 - * how did you do this?
3. Of these methods, which would you say have been the most successful?
4. Why? * Who played the important role/s (inside or outside the school)
5. Which methods were the least successful?
6. Why?
7. In hindsight, what would have helped?
8. Do you feel that the school is still in a process of transition?
9. If "yes", how long do you see the period of transition lasting?
10. What problems do you foresee?
11. What would be useful in overcoming these problems?
12. What is your impression of how the different constituencies (the students, the teachers, the parents, the community) have dealt with the changes the state's educational policy has brought about?
13. Why do you think they have dealt with the changes in the way they have?

INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS

1. How long have you taught at Milner?
2. What have been the main changes in your classroom since the educational reforms introduced after the 1994 elections?
3. How did you first come to hear about the policy changes?
4. Do you feel you were ready to deal with the changes?
5. Did you discuss any of the impending changes to the school with any of your classes?
6. With whom DID you discuss the changes?
7. How have you coped? What have you done to deal with the changes which the various reforms introduced?
8. What helped you in finding ways to deal with the changes?
 - * the principal
 - * other teachersOUTSIDE: gov body / community/ state/ provincial/ media
9. What didn't help? What was difficult?
10. What could've made it easier to deal with the changes?
11. What, in your opinion, is essential in dealing with the changing educational system?
12. Do you foresee problems in your classroom as a result of the changes introduced by the state policy? What could be done to prevent the problems?
13. How long would you see the school being in a period of transition?

GOVERNING BODY

The impact of legislation since 1994 on the Governing Body, in terms of election, composition and responsibilities is significant. The changed role of the Governing body, first outlined in the Schools Bill of 1996 and then finalised in the Schools' Act of 1996 Legislation passed since 1994 has also impacted on other areas of schooling.

1. What are the most significant changes to the school since 1994?
2. Was the Governing Body involved in introducing these changes to the school? In what way? Which part of the school was the Governing Body most involved with, in terms of introducing these changes to the school; the principal/ teachers/ students?
3. Should the Governing Body be involved in introducing policy changes?
4. In what way?
5. What role should they play?

The School's Bill gives guidelines for the election, composition and function of governing bodies.

6. What was the purpose of electing a governing body dealt with?
7. Have members on the governing body received any training re. their positions and responsibilities?
8. Does the governing body feel that the way the changes decreed by state policy, have been introduced into the school successfully?
9. What helped?
10. What hindered?
11. What could have helped?

One of the functions of the Governing Body is to draw up a Code of Conduct.

12. Has the Gov Body drawn up a code of conduct?
13. How did it do so?
14. How will the code be explained to the school and implemented?

15. Has the gov. body had any complaints from the parents and students in connection with the implementation of changes in the school?
16. What have the changes been?
17. How has the Gov body responded?
18. Whose concerns should the governing body represent?

STUDENTS

1. What has been the biggest change at school since you started High School?
What's different?
2. Were you told that the changes were going to happen?
3. Who told you?
4. What did they say?
5. Did what you were told help you to deal with the changes?
How?
6. What would've made things easier?
7. A huge change is the introduction of a student representative council. How is the SRC elected?
8. What do you think about the SRC?
9. Do you think it is representative of the students' needs?
10. What are the students' needs?
11. What role do you think it plays in the running of the school?
12. What role do you think it could/ should play in the school?

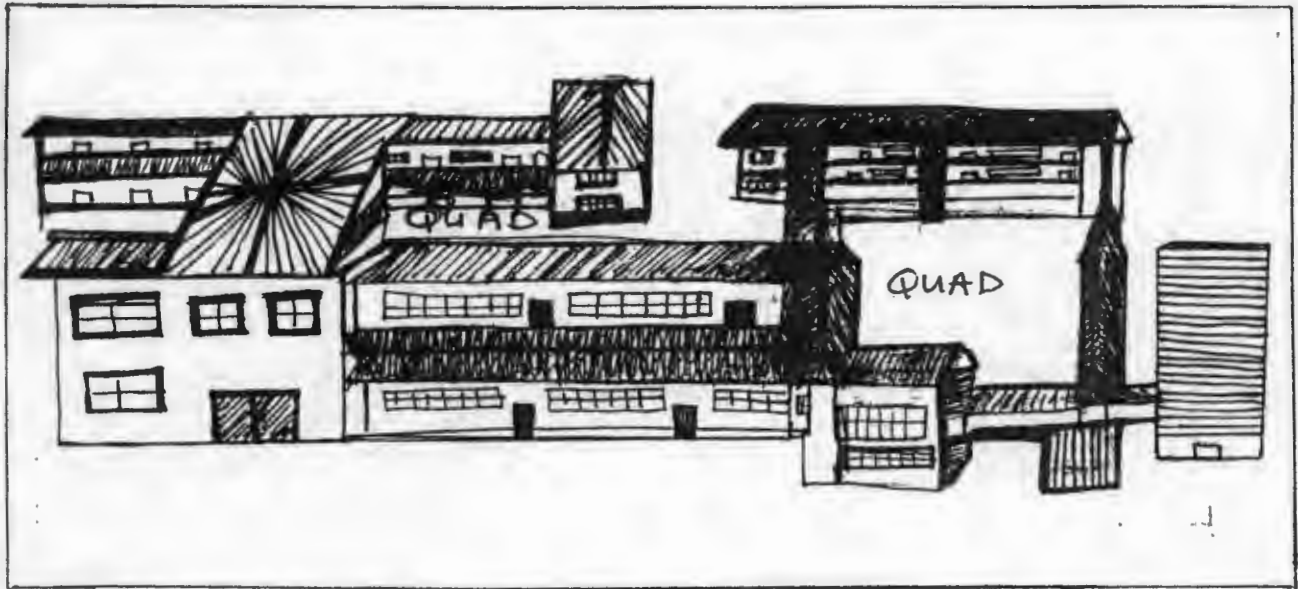


DIAGRAMME 2.1 EMPIRE HIGH PRIOR TO 1993

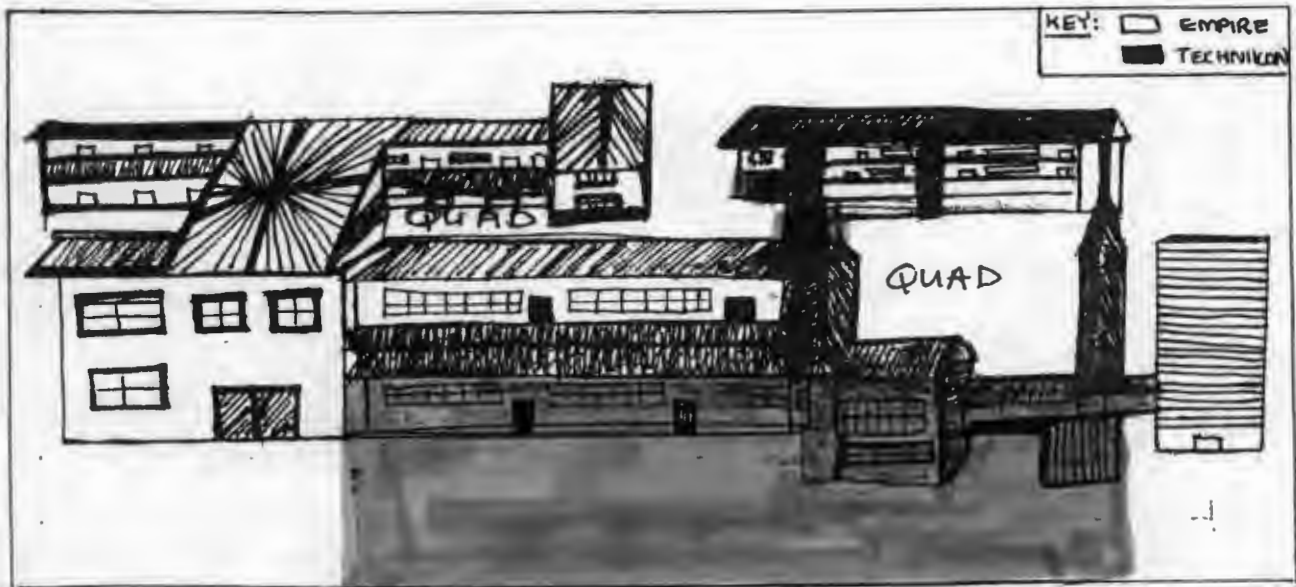


DIAGRAMME 2.2 EMPIRE HIGH AFTER 1993