

The impact of learner transport on Grade 3 learners' physiological, emotional and educational well-being: a case study of a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, South Africa.

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**(PRTCAR020)**

A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education Policy, Leadership and Change.

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2017

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Heinie and Ilne Portwig, who always encourage me to go beyond what I believe I am capable of doing, for always sharing their wisdom, and for making me believe I can do anything I put my mind to. I honour you.

Also a special dedication to the farmworker, whom I did not know personally, but witnessed the loss of her precious life in the early hours of 18 May 2015. I thank you that you opened a new world for me, and that you sparked the passion for pedestrian safety within my heart. Your life was not in vain.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and thank the following people for guidance, patience and support during this process of writing this dissertation.

Firstly this dissertation would not have been possible without God, my Saviour, my first Love and my Helper. He was the one who revealed the public need for information about this topic to me in 2015. He was my Refuge when I grew tired and frustrated, my Helper when I did not know what to write next and my guidance to set out the headings. Glory to Your almighty name.

Then I would like to thank UCT and the NRF for the scholarships to finish my master's over two consecutive years as well as Rapport Onderwysfonds for their financial contribution towards my studies. Without this assistance, this research would not have been possible.

Thirdly, I would like to thank the school where I conducted my research. Thank you for always welcoming me into your school, for being patient when I needed more information, for giving your time and your opinions and explaining exactly what your experiences are. I appreciate your honesty and openness towards this study.

Then to all the learners who were willing to participate in the focus group discussions and their parents who gave permission, I appreciate your input, stories and sharing with me your deepest hurt. I pray for God's divine protection for all of you.

Also to my supervisor, James David Gilmour, who contributed largely towards this piece of work in being patient, sharing his expertise, time and knowledge. He was the one who guided me in my thoughts and spent hours in conversation. Your support, interest and enthusiasm kept me strong, I thank you.

I would like to thank my aunt, Marissa Greeff, for her input into this dissertation by proofreading it and critically analysing my thoughts. Thank you for your time.

Furthermore, a special “thank you” to my loving and always-willing-to-help-and-listen father and mother; thank you for being part of this journey, for encouraging me to do a master’s and always praying for joy and the multiplication of my time., I love you so much.

Lastly, I want to thank my loving husband, Hein. Thank you for your patient ears, loving eyes and broad shoulders. Your unconditional love and encouragement while I was writing my dissertation pulled me through. Thank you for running the household, taking me on outings after a long day in the study and providing in every possible need of mine. I honour you and love you.

## ABSTRACT

The impact of learner transport on Grade 3 learners' physiological, emotional and educational well-being: a case study of a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, South Africa.

This dissertation examines the impact of various modes of transport on Grade 3 primary school learners' well-being in a rural school in the Cape Winelands district of the Western Cape, South Africa. The study moves beyond this narrow frame of physical transport to include the physiological, emotional, and educational domains of learners' lives. The individuals' physiological, emotional and educational well-being are utilised as analytical categories. The research used a mixed-methods design in a case-study approach. The qualitative data was derived from learner focus groups, open-ended interviews, and learner and teacher questionnaires. The quantitative data was derived from school records of learner attendance, Western Cape Education Department (WCED) term schedules and the WCED Systemic test results for the school. The main findings were as follows: **(1)** On a physiological level, irrespective of the mode of transport, access to school was found to be difficult but not impossible due to dangers and similar safety issues for all learners including pedestrians **(2)** On an emotional level, again all learners faced similar fears and trauma possibilities, and lacked the support of professional counsellors **(3)** Educationally, the bus passengers performed worse than other MoTs, whereas the pedestrians were the highest performing group. Also, seasonal change influenced learner absenteeism and similar attendance patterns were found for all MoTs in summer but in winter the pedestrians came to school more often than the bus passengers.

Key words: South Africa; Western Cape; National Learner Transport Policy; Learner transport; Education; Primary; Rural.

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>ART</b>	Anti-retroviral Treatment
<b>Bakkie</b>	Light Delivery Vehicle (LDV)
<b>EE</b>	Equal Education
<b>CASE</b>	Community Agency for Social Enquiry
<b>JET</b>	Joint Education Trust
<b>CEMIS</b>	Central Education Management Information System
<b>CWL</b>	Cape Winelands
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>DoT</b>	Department of Transport
<b>FAS</b>	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
<b>G1</b>	Grade 1
<b>G2</b>	Grade 2
<b>G3</b>	Grade 3
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>Km</b>	Kilometre
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>KZN</b>	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>LTSM</b>	Learning and Teaching Support Material
<b>LTs</b>	Learner Transport Schemes
<b>MTSF</b>	Medium Term Strategic Framework
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NIDC</b>	National Inter-departmental Committee
<b>NHTS</b>	National Household Travel Survey
<b>NLTA</b>	National Land Transport Act
<b>NLTAB</b>	National Land Transport Amended Bill
<b>NLTsf</b>	National Land Transport Strategic Framework
<b>NLTTA</b>	National Land Transport Transition Act
<b>NLTP</b>	National Learner Transport Policy
<b>NLTAA</b>	National Land Transport Amended Act
<b>NRTA</b>	National Road Traffic Act
<b>PHC</b>	Physical Health Care
<b>PLTF</b>	Provincial Land Transport Framework
<b>PTP</b>	Public Transport Plan
<b>RSE</b>	Road Safety Education
<b>T,B,C</b>	Truck, Bakkie and Car (private transport)
<b>Q1</b>	Quintile 1
<b>SA</b>	South Africa
<b>SACMEQ</b>	South African and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
<b>SES</b>	Socio-economic Status
<b>SGB</b>	School Governing Bodies

SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TB	Tuberculosis
TQ	Teacher Questionnaire
UK	United Kingdom
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

# CHAPTER 1

## ON A JOURNEY TO SAVE LIVES

### 1.1 Introduction

This dissertation examines the impact of various modes of transport on Grade 3 primary school learners' well-being in a rural school in the Cape Winelands (CWL) district of the Western Cape (WC), South Africa (SA). The issue of learner transport remains a key challenge since post-apartheid given that the "majority of the society [*lives*]... in areas [*that are*] largely inaccessible" (NLTP, 2015:8). Equal Education (EE) (2017b) notes that there are many learners whose lives are at risk every day due to long travelling distances by foot and in Light Delivery Vehicles (bakkies) and vehicles that are not screened or approved by anybody. As a consequence, learners are unnecessarily victims of hurtful crime, and also arrive tired, hungry and unable to concentrate at school (also see Porter, 2002).

This is a countrywide issue. The National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) 2013 shows that of the 13 043 million learners in South Africa (SA), about 8 724 million walk to school (NHTS, 2013a:17-18). In the Western Cape (WC) 56.2% of learners walk to school, of whom 18.3% of these are from rural areas (NHTS, 2014a:24). In the Cape Winelands (CWL), the area of study, 78% of learners are in school of whom 20.1% are located in rural communities and 11.9% of learners walk all the way to school (NHTS, 2014a:18-24).

Walking to school exposes pedestrians to serious physical issues such as road accidents (16.5% of accidents for ages 1-14), (Statistics South Africa, 2015a:46); crime; victimization, and dangerous weather conditions. Therefore, this dissertation contends that the impact of poor or non-existent transport goes beyond the physical conditions of transport itself, being literally getting learners to and from school, into the domains of the individuals' physiological, emotional and educational well-being in a more general sense.

Given this, an initial assumption was that when learners are provided with safe and reliable transport, sparing them potential traumatic experiences through physical danger, many more

are likely to succeed in the educational system. The research was inspired by this assumption, leading to the investigation of the key questions of precisely how the type of transport affects learners' domains of well-being. The context within which this was investigated is discussed below.

## 1.2 Context of this study

Policy now fully recognises that “[l]earners, especially in rural communities experience transportation challenges in accessing education” (NLTP, 2015:12 also see EE, 2017a-c; Proudlock, 2014:125; Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2017). EE (2016:6) further notes that, “the lack of adequate and sufficient scholar transport cripples a learner’s ability to access schooling, and consequently violates many South African learners constitutionally protected right to a basic education”. The provision of learner transport is therefore crucial to ensure that all learners are able to reach school safely, and timeously, and afford them the opportunity to achieve their academic goals without being tired and hungry, and unable to concentrate in the classroom (EE, 2017b:279; also see Proudlock, 2014:125).

As indicated, the largest impact of transport policy falls on rural learners and their well-being, and for this reason the study focusses on a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, SA.

## 1.3 Purpose of the study

Typically most research on learner transport has focused on the physical availability and supply of learner transport itself i.e. the modes of transport (MoT) supplied, the number of learners transported, the accessible routes to transport, the screening of the drivers and the contracting of the tenders, thus taking on a ‘literal’ perspective of learner transport (cf. NLTP, 2015 also see Equal Education, 2017c; Spocter, 2007).

The purpose of this study is to move beyond this narrow frame and investigate the nature of the impact of learner transport systems on different domains of learners’ well-being in a rural primary school. As evidence from elsewhere has demonstrated, (Porter, 2002; Behrens, 2004a-b; Rogan, 2006; Gibbons & Silva, 2008) it is important to understand the consequences of transport

on the learner beyond simply getting the individual to and from school. This gap is addressed in this dissertation.

#### 1.4 Significance of the research problem

As noted above much of the literature and research about transport is written in the narrow frame of transport itself, categorised as the 'physical transport conditions' in this dissertation. In SA there has been little work done to link the National Learner Transport Policy (NLTP) (2015) to a broader frame of impacts on learners (also see Behrens, 2003 & 2004a/b). Mashiri, Zukulu and Buiten (s.a:1) agree and note that "children and youths under the age of eighteen have received remarkably little attention in transport and mobility studies in low income countries, apart from limited work on road safety".

Within the scope of this dissertation the domains of well-being are expanded to include the physiological, emotional, and educational aspects of learners' lives. It is important to consider these three domains of well-being in order to provide a more comprehensive response to the initial problem, as well as information and knowledge that could be taken further.

#### 1.5 Research question

The main question is 'How does transport affect the learners' well-being in the domains of physiological, emotional and educational health?' Sub questions include:

- How do the travelling conditions impact the physiological health of learners?
- What emotional support mechanisms are available to learners?
- What is the impact of different forms of transport on learners' educational performance?

The main areas for investigation are detailed in Chapter 3, Table 1, in what is used as the conceptual framework for this dissertation.

#### 1.6 Research design

The key frame was a qualitative case-study of a single primary school using a mixed-methods approach. The qualitative data was derived from learner focus groups, and open-ended interviews with selected staff, the bus driver, and from teacher and learner questionnaires. The

quantitative data was obtained from school records of learner attendance, Western Cape Education Department (WCED) term schedules and the WCED Systemic test results for the school.

## 1.7 Overview and Conclusion

This dissertation investigates how, the physical conditions of transport impacts the learners' well-being in their physiological, emotional and educational domains.

The dissertation proceeds in the following way:

- Chapter 2 describes the South African transport policy context since 1994 with specific focus on the NLTP 2015 and Western Cape Education Department policy and its contractual conditions.
- Chapter 3 elaborates on the literature in this field of study, using the conceptual framework of the three domains of well-being.
- Chapter 4 gives a detailed account of the design and the methodology.
- Chapter 5 reports on the findings from the case study.
- Chapter 6 contains the summary and conclusions and suggestions for further research.

These chapters use a travel metaphor because this dissertation represents a journey, not only for the learners and protagonists of safer transport for school-goers, but for myself as well.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE JOURNEY TOWARDS A LEARNER TRANSPORT POLICY

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the learner transport policy on the national and provincial levels, highlighting the difficulties and the complexities in the development of national legislation since 1994 as well as detailing the consequent provincial focus areas and the obligations of both the WCED and the schools.

#### 2.2 SA Transport Policies and Legislation since 1994

Proudlock (2014:125) notes that in rural SA “the lack of transport, poor roads, high cost of public transport, and risks to *[rural learners]* safety along the routes to school, impact learners’ ability to attend school and participate fully and effectively” (also see Chapter 3 and NHTS, 2014:125 for statistics). These types of issues motivated ‘The Constitution of South Africa’, 1996 to require from the Department of Transport (DoT) to develop a ‘White Paper on National Transport’, 1996 and the National Road Traffic Act (NRTA), 1996. The White Paper aimed to be inclusive of all the people of SA, while firstly addressing the subsidies of groups and secondly, appointing a task team to determine areas of focus (DoT, 1996a).

In 1999, the ‘Moving South Africa: the Action Agenda’ was released proposing general transport action plans for SA (DoT, 1999). It was then seen fit to develop a ‘National Land Transport Transition Act’ (NLTTA, No.22) in 2000 where after in 2006 a third version, the ‘National Land Transport Transition Amended Act’ (NLTTAA, No.26) was published. In 2007, the ‘Public Transport Strategy’ was published and in 2009 the ‘National Land Transport Act’ (NLTA, No.5) (2009a) was released along with the ‘National Land Transport Act: Regulations’ (2009b). In 2014 the ‘Amendment of the National Road Traffic Regulations’ (NRTR) was released based on the 1996 ‘White Paper on National Transport Policy’ leading to the ‘National Land Transport Amendment Bill’ (NLTAB) in 2016. Most recently there has been a ‘National Land Transport Strategic Framework’ (NLTSF) 2017-2020 that was released in February 2017 (DoT, 2017).

### 2.2.1 The National Learner Transport Policy, June 2015 (Gazette 39314, Notice R997)

The long history of drafting policy documents to get to the implementation of a National Learner Transport Policy (NLTP) is sketched below. The history reflects the intense and complex situation that learner transport has created across different legislative fields.

The NLTP (2015) was based upon the 'White Paper on National Transport Policy', 1996; the 'NLTA', 2009<sup>1</sup>; the 'NLTSF', 2009; 'World Health Organisation: Decade of Action for Road Safety', 2011-2020; the 'Medium-Term Strategic Framework' (MTSF), 2014-2019; the 'NRTA', 1996<sup>2</sup>; 'South African Schools Act' (SASA), 1996; the 'Children's Act', 2005, and the 'National Development Plan' (NDP), 2030, to seek safe, reliable, cost effective, and accessible transport for all (NLTP, 2015:12). This complex net of related legislation has probably contributed to the long overdue development of a national learner transport plan.

Learner transport was given a heading in the 'White Paper on National Transport Policy' in 1996 but this focus was minimal and definitely lacking in urgency. However, in 2000 in the NLTTA No.22 important reference was given to learners in the following ways:

- All reference to public transport also refers to learner transport.
- Learners are grouped under 'special categories of passengers' together with other groups such as persons with disabilities and the aged.
- Learner transport should be part of a holistic approach to public transport.
- All role players should consider the needs of the 'special categories of passengers'.
- Provincial and local level authorities should develop strategies on a local level for learners transport – this includes the Provincial Land Transport Framework (PLTF) and the Public Transport Plan (PTP) on local level.  
(Mngaza, Dhlamini & van Zyl, 2001:2-3)

Despite these guidelines and before the official NLTP (2015) was released all provinces worked on individual Learner Transport Scheme's (LTS) based on province's needs and managed learner transport through the general legislation and policy frameworks governing public and land transport (DoT, 2011:12). According to the NLTP (2015:11) this led to "fragmentation in management, poor coordination and diverse funding methods" ending in unsustainability and

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<sup>1</sup> It prescribes "national principles, requirements, guidelines, frameworks and national norms and standards" (NLTP, 2015:13)

<sup>2</sup> Provides information about traffic matters

collapse. After the need for a uniform approach became clear, discussions started in 2009 for the development of a learner transport policy, led by the DoT in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and other stakeholders. Since then three drafts, that were open for comments, have been released and a 'Learner Transport Safety Norms, Standard and Operational Guideline' is currently being developed.

Nonetheless in June 2015 the official NLTP was accepted and set out 10 Policy Focus Areas specifically for learner transport. The policy's primary objective is to "provide a uniform approach to norms and standards, promote coordination and cooperation among stakeholders, and provide a framework for monitoring and evaluation of learner transport services" (NLTP, 2015:8).

The key 10 Policy Focus Areas are:

1. Learner transport planning
2. Learner transport safety and security
3. Criteria for beneficiaries of subsidised learner transport services
4. Service design for learner transport
5. Procurement of subsidised learner transport services
6. Remuneration of subsidised learner transport operators
7. Funding
8. Modal integration
9. Universal design
10. Law enforcement

These have become the guidelines for all provinces to follow.

However, for implementation, the DoT recognises some of the problems of previous policy making. These include:

- Operational issues: unauthorised, un-roadworthy vehicles, learners walking long distances, insufficient services and non-standardised tariff formulas.

- Planning issues: uncoordinated transport planning and unscrupulous operations, route plans that do not meet the transport needs.

Capacity issues: the demand exceeds the supply, lack of management, monitoring and law enforcement, funding and responsibility.  
(NLTP, 2015:11-12)

- Road safety: NLTP (2015) notes that planning with regards to safety and security not only for transport but also at drop-off and pick-up points is of vital importance and “the need for a more inclusive and holistic approach regarding learner transport” is identified as to “comprehensively address the matter of learner safety and security” especially when they are part of the public transport system.  
(NLTP, 2015:20).

These issues have also been taken up by other agencies such as EE with ‘The case for a conditional grant and inter-departmental collaboration’ (2016:17), the Parliamentary Monitoring Group’s Conversation (2017), and Joseph and Carpenter in the Basic Education Rights Handbook (2017:284) all of which have highlighted other gaps within the policy. EE’s forceful opinion is that “the lack of adequate and sufficient scholar transport cripples a learner’s ability to access schooling, and consequently violates many South African learners constitutionally protected right to a basic education” (EE, 2016:6).

The NLTP (2015) notes that the national Government (DoT and DBE) oversees and monitors the implementation of the policy’s KPI’s with help from the different stakeholders.

Despite this, the gaps remain and are a matter of public concern. Issues include:

- Policy advises that transport should be available to ‘needy’ learners who walk ‘long distances’ but the meaning of ‘needy’ and ‘long’ is undefined, creating uncertainty of who qualifies for transport.
- The criteria of the complex geographical areas that need to be covered.
- Transport is only provided when there is no public transport available – costs are not taken into consideration, leaving the ‘poor’ learner to walk once again.

- The relationship between provincial education departments and national departments and the legal consequences for the state in providing learner transport.
- Split responsibility/collaboration between policy groups and multi-stakeholders (provinces, municipalities, SGBs) leading to a National Inter-Departmental Committee [NIDC] set up to resolve issues is a problem especially when terminology is not clearly defined, a framework isn't set out sufficiently and responsibilities divided (considering the need for a NIDC, already speaks to the complexity of this situation).
- Much responsibility sits with the school Principal and the School Governing Bodies (SGB) for the implementation of policy (the degree of responsibility and administration that accompanies the registration of learner transport and the availability of transport schemes is lengthy and detailed, and most likely discouraging).
- There is not an open channel approach towards learner transport, thus parents and learners do not feel comfortable or welcomed to raise transport constraints or needs to the district offices.
- The criteria within policy do not emphasise the interests of the individual, but rather a group (and the requirements are inadequate). It is the Principal's responsibility to identify learners in need of transport, rather than parents or learners who are the active participants, but the Principals are also overworked and do not have the capacity to investigate individual cases.
- The policy states that transport is provided to the nearest school. This is problematic because parents choose schools that give their child the best possible education. Factors such as overcrowding, lack of resources and poor performance are determinants of choice.
- The time frames within which the development of the additional policy and progression will take place is noted for future purposes but not specified.
- There is insufficient guidance (no clear guidance to basic requirements and considerations) for provincial development, leading to variance between provinces (Joseph & Carpenter, 2017:284).
- "There are no mechanisms stipulated to ensure adequate funding and budgeting". The EE 2016 notes that all provinces are responsible for their own payments of the learner transport, but this leads to confusion within the multi-stakeholder committee when extra grants are needed. Within the Western Cape the DBE is

responsible for the payments to contractors of learner transport schemes whereas in other provinces the DoT is responsible, with funds coming from different budgets. Nationally there is urgent need for a more “uniform approach” (EE, 2016:17).

As the research shows in detail and as the legislation recognises, the need for improved transport is clear and strong efforts have been made to improve the situation. In the 2016/17 financial year R2.6 billion was allocated to learner transport (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2017:6 July) but as EE (2016:7-8) notes that funding was one of the main challenges in the discussion for learner transport, which was why there were now discussions around receiving conditional funding. Nonetheless, despite the billions that are allocated to learner transport, and the need that has been identified and is addressed, there are still large numbers of learners walking to school.

With reference to the above discussion it is clear that these gaps and challenges should be urgently addressed, especially where the required criteria are underdeveloped, to generate a successful learner transport system<sup>3</sup>.

In the next section the policy history of the Western Cape is discussed.

### 2.3 WCED Learner Transport Schemes (LTS) and Standard Operating Procedures Manual(s) (SOP)

The latest WCED transport policy document is the 2015 ‘Western Cape Education Department Policy on Learner Transport Schemes’ along with the associated ‘Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual for Learner Transport Schemes (LTSS)’. Both these documents conform to the objectives of the NLTP (2015) while addressing the unique context of the Western Cape. These documents are the latest policy acts that are based on the ‘Road Traffic Act’, 1989, ‘NRTA’, 1996 and the ‘Western Cape Provincial School Education Act’, 1997 as well as the ‘WCED Policy for the

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<sup>3</sup> For more information about the policy such as the types of transport provided and the desired outputs, the policy principles and the criteria for transport allocation, see Appendix 1, no. 1.1 – 1.4

Management of Admission and Registration of Learners at ordinary public schools’, 2012 and ‘WCED Learner Transport Policy for Ordinary Public Schools’, 2012/2013.

The WCED prescribe documents such as ‘Regulations for the Transport of Learners’, 2016; The Vehicle Inspection Checklist, A Vehicle Inspection Report, and Claim forms for learner transport (WCED 061-063).

The SOP for LTS (2015) is based on the 10 Policy Focus Areas of the NLTP (2015) and aims to provide transport to learners who conform to the following criteria (SOP for LTS, 2015:7):

- Rural learners in ordinary public schools who are 5km or further from the nearest school.
- Learners where no public transport is available.
- Learners residing in a geographical area that qualifies for learner transport.
- Learners who do not receive any transport or hostel bursaries.

Again there are various role players in the provision of transport including the school Principals; IMG Manager; District Deputy Director: Corporate Services; District Director; Head Office: The Directorate: Procurement Management; Institutional Resource Support, and the WCED Bus Committee; SGB; parents; education district offices; Head office; transport contractors, and road traffic officials (WCED, 2015:14-22). Within the SOP the responsibilities of all parties are set out clearly and definitively. However, while the requirements may be clear, the obligations make the application onerous, especially for schools.

For example the Principal is expected to drive the initiative for a transport scheme at the specific school by complying with 20 requirements and tasks (see SOP Manual for LTS, 2015:14-16). This added administrative burden means that some schools may simply choose not to try to access WCED transport, exposing learners to unprotected and unsafe situations. The contractual requirements of the WCED, bus contractor and the schools obligations are detailed below.

### 2.3.1 WCED obligations - the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

The ‘Standard Operating Procedure for Learner Transport Schemes’ (2015) clearly stipulates the requirements for all interested transport companies to tender for the WCED contracts, and to

specify routes with a specific number of pick up points. When the tender is approved and assigned to a specific route, the WCED will pay the bus owner the negotiated tariff.

The tariffs are calculated as follows: number of learners x distance x tariff x number of school days = total payment received (SOP for LTS, 2015:10) (there is also a penalty system in place e.g. for when the transport arrives or leaves and when the vehicle is impounded).

The transport company is expected to submit a claim form (WCED - 063) and invoice to the Principal on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month (or the last school day prior thereto) (SOP for LTS, 2015:13) to then be compensated for the appropriate number of registered learners who were transported over the previous month (in accordance with the register kept by the school Secretary).

This seemingly clear system does however experience many implementation issues and these are discussed in Section 2.2.3. Below some of the bus contractor obligations are discussed.

### 2.3.2 The bus contractor's obligations

The WCED Policy on LTS (2015) prioritises the safety and security of learners in point 10 pg. 8-9, noting seven clear obligations detailed below:

- Contractors must provide an efficient, safe and reliable means of transport in line with the requirements of the Service Level Agreement and in the best interest of the learners, the school and the Western Cape Education Department.
- Every learner on the bus must have an appropriate seat and no learner must be allowed to stand when transported to and from school.
- All approved contractors must at all times comply with the National Road Traffic Act, 1996 (Act 93 of 1996) and relevant regulations.
- Contractors must ensure at all times that each driver is in possession of an appropriate, valid driver's licence and Public Driver's Permit.
- At least once a month, the principal or his or her delegate must conduct a visual inspection to ascertain the roadworthiness of all vehicles transporting learners, using the official Western Cape Education Department's roadworthy checklist, attached as LTS. 1.

- The principal must immediately report an un-roadworthy vehicle, via the official reporting lines, to the district director, who must immediately report the condition of the vehicle to the directorate responsible for contract management of the Western Cape Education Department, and the traffic authorities.
- Contractors must have sufficient insurance cover for claims that may lead to liability resulting from the operation of a learner transport scheme and must be insured for the duration of the contract.

Along with the bus contractors' obligations, the schools also have responsibilities towards the learners' transport, this is detailed below.

### 2.3.3 General obligations

These include: the distribution of indemnity forms to parents; to ensure a once monthly inspection of the busses condition and road worthiness; the filling in the WCED checklists and reports (see Appendix 1 no.1.5), and reporting any issues regarding the bus to the official reporting lines.

As noted in Section 2.2.2, the safety and security of learners remain priority and mainly the responsibility of the Principal but the responsibility of discipline, supervision and safety on the transport is split amongst various role players. Together with the bus driver, the school and parents must ensure discipline and supervision on the bus and at the bus stops. To clarify, safety is defined as the "exposure to external factors such as hijackings, rape, violence and other potential life threatening incidents that may pose a threat to the safety of learners" (NLTP, 2015:20). This definition is expanded by the perception that safety influences the physiological, emotional and educational peace children reach when they don't feel the urge to fight or flee from a situation. It is important to notice that safety, as defined above, does not solely apply to safety within the school setting (educational well-being) but also safety outside of schools which includes the learners' patterns of movement as they move to and from school. This means that

their SES and home environments directly influences their well-being and therefore their ability to perform educationally<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.4 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter highlighted the complexity of legislation due to the large number of stakeholders involved and the extensive administrative burden which fall upon the schools. Apart from the technical requirements of the legislation, central to its purpose is the safety issue for learners the responsibility for which falls largely upon the school principals. As indicated, 'safety' is more than literal transport and Chapter 3 expands on these physiological, emotional and educational aspects of the impact of learner transport.

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix 2 for Cape Winelands background information that are part of the Childs home environment

## CHAPTER 3

### THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE EYES OF OTHERS

#### 3.1 Introduction

In 2016, in SA, Hall found that 71% of SA learners walk to school, only 2% use school busses or transport provided by Government and 8% use public transport (p. 215). Also, 929 000 learners of 10.9 million travel more than 30 minutes to get to school including about 63 000 primary school learners in the Western Cape (Hall, 2016:125). Clearly, this is a large scale problem. In the Cape Winelands 11.9% of 143 000 learners walk of whom 77.4% – 80% of these are learners from the poorest communities coming from Quintile 1 and Quintile 2 sectors (NHTS, 2014:23).

However, for rural people in particular, transport is more than a means of getting from one place to another. Vasconcellos (1997:127) explains that rural transport is vital for the rural population to attain their basic needs. As an ‘off-road’ citizen in Saharan Africa once said, “[t]o live off-road is to be invisible” (Porter, 2002:291). There is now general recognition that transport has a direct impact on the growth and development of a rural individual on different levels such as economic growth, educational development and access to services that cater for basic human needs (Dieltiens & Meny-Gibert, 2008 also see Titheridge, Christie, Mackett, Hernández & Ye, 2014; Booth, Hanmer & Lovell, 2000). As Equal Education puts it in their research in KwaZulu-Natal, “the knock-on effect of transport is multiplied, that puts pressure on teachers who in return get pressured from the Department to produce certain results. So scholar transport, although it can be seen as a small part of the whole education sphere, has a very big impact on delivering access to learners” (2017c:04:09 – 04:26).

Despite this recognition, much of the literature and research about transport is written in the narrow frame of transport itself with little attention paid to the broader effects. This chapter through a review of local and international literature expands the concept of well-being to include the physiological, emotional, and educational aspects of learners’ lives. Table 1 set out the conceptual framework for this dissertation, through indication of the selective areas of study

within the three domains of well-being. This framework is used as a guideline for continual discussion within the dissertation.

Table 1: Domains of learner well-being and conceptual framework

Key Domains of learner well-being	Indicators
<b>Umbrella concept</b>	
Physical transport conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WCED and the schools contractual responsibilities (C2)</li> <li>• Physical access for all learners (C5)</li> </ul>
<b>Domains of learner well-being</b>	
Physiological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangers and safety hazards on the routes</li> <li>• Distance and time travelled</li> </ul>
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional support</li> <li>• Professional support</li> <li>• Parental and teacher support</li> <li>• Effect of emotional instability on learners</li> </ul>
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of MoT on academic performance</li> <li>• The impact MoT, seasons and gender on school attendance/absenteeism.</li> <li>• Other factors that influence educational well-being.</li> </ul>

(Sources: Adapted Inter Alia from Porter, 2002; Behrens, 2004a; Rogan, 2006; EE, 2016)

The indicators as noted above and explained below is important due to its interconnectedness throughout the study. This dissertation views the individual as a holistic and complex being and therefore argues that a broader and widened approach should be considered when dealing with the participants lives. Furthermore, the importance of a broad viewing on transport and its

effects will contribute to the narrow literature scope within this field as well as improve the understanding of transport's effects on learners' lives.

### 3.2 Physical transport conditions and Physiological well-being

Physical transport conditions includes the literal impacts and decisions made around transport e.g. accessibility to schools whereas Physiological well-being refers to the biological well-being of the learners, and covers the areas of the influence of dangers and safety hazards on learners' biological well-being and the impact of long distances and times travelled

#### 3.2.1 Access to education

The White Paper on National Education Policy Act, Government Gazette no. 17118 (Act 27 of 1996) indicates the importance for all learners to have access and available transport to reach basic education. The problem of easy access to an educational institution has worsened though because many rural schools have been closed down since 2002, meaning that learners have greater distances to travel to get to school (Hall, 2016:125). Joseph and Carpenter (2016:279) powerfully note that “not having safe and reliable transport to school has a detrimental effect on learners' access to education, and many are being denied access to schooling altogether. Many learners who don't have transport do not finish school”. In agreement, Rogan (2006:6) states that “transport continues to be one of the largest components of the cost of education and represents a serious obstacle to accessing basic education”.

The problem identified by Equal Education (2016:6-7) is that “the Department of Basic Education's school readiness report for 2017 indicated that despite 524 662 learners being identified as in need of transport nationally, plans for provinces only catered for 405 047 learners in the 2016/2017 financial year” thus not narrowing the gap or solving the problem. Again, this highlights the urgency of the need for intervention.

Because developed countries often have fully functioning and easily accessible public transport systems, research there tends to focus on the health, independence and social aspect benefits of walking to school (see Goldstein, 2004 [UK]; Hine, 2009 [Northern Ireland]; Van Goeverden & de

Boer, 2013 [Netherlands and Flanders]). However, as indicated in the SA case above and in developing countries such as Kenya and Tanzania (Sifuna, 2007) the lack of transport presents great accessibility hazards to learners.

### 3.2.2 Dangers and safety hazards

Spocter (2007:6-7) in SA notes that learners from low SES households are often “road accident victims” due to the lack of pedestrian pavements not only are they run over by traffic but they are also exposed to “physical and sexual attacks as well” (also see NLTP, 2015:20). The data from the Western Cape confirms this noting that in the Cape metropolitan area in 2011 around 41% of deaths in the age groups 5-9 and 10-14 were ‘non-natural’ – car accidents or assault (Statistics South Africa, 2011:11).

This may be because school goers are a high proportion of all pedestrians (1.1 million of 3.1 million walking trips in the Cape Town area) and as Behrens indicated for 1997 to 1999 between 19-33% of pedestrian killings were children aged 12 years or less. This data further indicates that these learners were run over while playing 500 meters from home or on their way to or from school (2004a:260). Statistics South Africa notes that between 1997 and 2011 pedestrian killings in Cape Town and Tshwane area were 9.6% for ages 5-9 and 4.65% for ages 10-14 (2011:43).

Consequently, as Spocter indicates, principals of some rural schools in SA have demanded that transport is a necessity to decrease pedestrian attacks and abuse, a situation made worse in some areas by the possibility of attacks by wild animals and extreme weather conditions (2007:7). He notes that “learners would stay and miss out on school” (Spocter, 2007:7) when exposed to floods, scorching heat and danger in any way. Likewise, Joseph and Carpenter found that “when walking to school, learners sometimes have to cross dangerous, mountainous terrain, in which they encounter snakes and sharp stones. Learners must endure torrential downpours and cross rushing rivers to get to class” (2016:277).

Beyond the geographical dangers, CASE & JET (2007:74) found that “the impact of gang fights (which seems to have a particularly serious impact in the Western Cape) is among the main

determinants of learners who fear for their lives when travelling to school". A story told by secondary school learners reflects the problem of pedestrian dangers. Joseph and Carpenter report (2016:278):

Another female learner explained how she and some friends were offered a lift by a man in a bakkie while walking home. They accepted the lift because they were tired. The driver dropped her friends off but kept her in the truck. He sped off with her, and she became very scared. She struggled and managed to jump out of the speeding vehicle, waking later in hospital, having suffered a broken arm and other injuries.

This issue is not unique to SA though. In other countries where assault and physical danger is an issue various solutions have been attempted. For example, in Auckland New Zealand in 2005 a 'walking school bus' system of adults accompanying pedestrians to school has minimized injury on their way to school (Pucher & Dijkstra, 2003). This initiative also has health benefits and lower injury statistics. For other examples of injury prevention while walking to school and the benefits thereof on learners health also see Pizarro, Ribeiro, Marques, Mota & Santos, 2013 [Portugal]; Rothman, Macarthur, To, Buliung & Howard, 2014 [Canada]).

Generally the possibility of attack or injury on route to school is exacerbated by low SES, the primary population of rural areas (Collins & Kearns, 2005:61 see also see Kingham & Usher, 2005 [New Zealand]; Goldman & Peleg, 2009 [Israel]), highlighting again the urgency of safe transport provision.

### 3.2.3 Distance and time

One of the major problems for learners without transport is the impact of the distance from school and the time taken to get to school. In the SA case, Murambiwa and Hall (2010:96) note that learners who need to walk to school get up early in the morning to be on time for school, and are often physically exhausted and hungry, which obviously affects their academic achievement and learning abilities.

Rogan (2006:6) agrees that "transport continues to be one of the largest components of the cost of education and represents a serious obstacle to accessing basic education", and further

suggests that the time that it takes for learners to move between their homes and the school needs to be assessed. In this regard, Hall showed that 929 000 of the 10.9 million who attend school, travel more than 30 minutes to school and back home (2016:125). In the Western Cape specifically, the NHTS found that on average learners who walk to school needed about 19 minutes; 91.3% needed 1-30 minutes; 7.0% needed 30-59 minutes and 1.7% took more than 60 minutes (NHTS, 2014:30). This is time lost that impacts on the ability of learners to maximise their educational opportunities (see Appendix 2 Table A5).

This is also a problem noted elsewhere. In Northern Ireland for example, Hine noted that the distances learners need to travel to the educational institution is a challenge and that there is “overcrowding experienced on school buses...despite rises in the price of the annual travel pass” (2009:29). The walking distance and the safety of learners on the provided transport remain key concerns.<sup>5</sup>

As literature agrees, these three aspects, including the physical transport condition of access to education, dangers and safety hazards and the distance and time travelled all influences learners’ physiological well-being. These influences do not solely impact learners on one domain but also on a second domain being the emotional well-being of a learner, which is discussed below.

### 3.3 Emotional well-being

The emotional well-being of learners refers to their psychological stability.

#### 3.3.1 Stresses within the home environment and while travelling

The influence of SES on learners’ emotional well-being is a world-wide issue with most authors agreeing that poorer children experience greater levels of stress and anxiety than do more

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<sup>5</sup> By contrast, some international studies such as those by Lucas, 2014; Faulkner, Stone, Buliung, Wong and Mitra, 2013 in the US and Canada focus on the benefits of walking, identifying walking to school as one of the ideal opportunities to increase physical activity despite distance and time travelled to school.

wealthy children (see Mistry, Benner, Tan & Kim, 2009; McLaughlin & Sheridan, 2017; McLaughlin & Lambert, 2017). This can be observed on two levels. Firstly, the impact of home factors on learners emotions and secondly, the added stresses of unsafe travel added to an already unstable emotional well-being.

It is argued that the home environments of poor learners often compound the stresses of going to and from school. CASE & JET (2007:73) note the different illnesses that come from the home environment which hinder the ability of the learner to excel educationally, for example HIV/AIDS; drug abuse; teenage pregnancy, and the lack of parental interest in their child's education. Marinus (2015:5) and Falletisch (2008:61-62) write in the context of rural farming communities that "substance abuse is a major contributor to dysfunctional family life. The families of addicts experience financial pressure, emotional and psychological problems" (see Appendix 2, Tables A1 – A4 for further details of the Cape Winelands).

International studies reveal similar findings. For example, a study done in London with people living in poverty found that stress can have damaging effects on people in low SES circumstances on different levels including educational attainment (Boyden & Bourdillon, 2012:126, also see Miech, Moffitt, Wright & Silva, 1999 [Chicago]). Cohen (2006:201) in the US notes, that a healthy school environment, school and home partnerships and pedagogy informed by ethical and social-emotional concerns are necessary for the motivation and the emotional health of the child. These are factors not often present in low SES communities (also see Coleman & MacNeese, 2009).

The stress experienced in the home situation and dangerous travel conditions are both adding to emotional strain for the learner. In the 'Basic Education Rights Handbook' Joseph and Carpenter (2017:278) write that the dangers faced by many pedestrian learners are heart-breaking, as the story below shows:

When we were about an hour and a half away from the school we were walking in an open area when the man grabbed me. The man raped me ... The man was waiting for us close to

the river. He grabbed the girl that was walking with me and beat her. She ran away. After he beat my friend, he grabbed me and choked me and then raped me. He didn't rape the other girl. She ran away... [Now] I struggle to concentrate in class. Every time when school is about to end, I am worried and scared, because I have to walk home.

They further explain that when learners are exposed to dangerous experiences, it “[strips] them of their childlike innocence and right to be protected” also of “their identity, their dignity, and possibly their lives” (2016:278). Therefore transport is vitally important for all learners who walk long distances due to “ever present dangers, exposing them to the dark side of the world, much too early” (Joseph & Carpenter, 2016:278). The lack of transport influences them holistically and they “are often faced with long, tiring treks to class, dangerous weather which damages textbooks, and violence which hurts them physically or emotionally” (Joseph & Carpenter, 2017:276).

The evidence is clear that the stresses experienced in the learners’ home environment and while travelling contributes significantly to their inability to excel educationally and perform to their optimal abilities. This is discussed below.

### 3.4 Educational well-being

The educational well-being of learners refers to their ability to perform optimally on a personal level. This domain is based on learner performance, attendance and others factors that influence their educational well-being.

#### 3.4.1 Learner performance and mode of transport

Learner performance is a very complex area of study. However, there are a number of influential factors that authors agree on. Significant among these is the student’s SES background. Timothy et al. (2017) note, “[p]arents [with] low ability to finance education coupled with poor status of the physical and instructional resources were inhibiting factors to students’ academic achievement” (2017:2). Aikens and Barbarin (2008) agree that learning material and the school environment is important for learners’ educational growth and development (also see Pribesh, Gavigan & Dickinson, 2011; Ojiambo, 2009; Spaul, 2015).

Obeta (2014:141), from a Nigerian perspective, expands this to suggest that the following factors are important:

Provisions of adequate educational materials to the students, teaching, and supervision of the students work at home by parents, enrolment of the students in a good school, the existence of cordial relationship, love and care in the student's family, the academic level of the student's parents and positive attitude towards education, provision of modern gadgets at home and good communication network in the home among others.

However, this task is made more difficult when, “[learners around the county] must walk punishing distances to access education, vulnerable to severe weather and violent crime, and arriving at their classrooms late and unable to focus” (EE, 2017b:276).

Whatever the detailed reasons, the impact of SES can be seen clearly in the SACMEQ3 tests where Spaul (2012:3) notes that the “the vast majority of South African primary school learners are significantly below where they should be in terms of the curriculum...”. He notes that “in South Africa there is a minority of learners (roughly 25%) who attend mostly functional schools and perform acceptably on local and international tests while the majority of learners (roughly 75%) perform extremely poorly on these tests” (Fleisch, 2008 in Spaul, 2012:4). Spaul (2012:6) and others agree that there is a “bimodal distribution of performance in South Africa, and that there are in fact two types of school systems, largely split along historical-school-system and socioeconomic lines” (also see Gustafsson, 2005; Fleisch, 2008; Van der Berg, et al., 2011; Taylor, 2011). These results are replicated regularly in the WCED Systemic performance tests where learners from poorer areas performed more poorly (see section 5.5.1.1 Table 4-5).

These SES effects are compounded by the poor provision of learner transport which also has a profound impact on academic performance. Some of the learner statements in research conducted by Joseph and Carpenter (2016:279) substantiate why:

I try my utmost not to arrive late, but the journey to school is taxing and I arrive late most days of the week. Often, I am late three times in a row. When I arrive late at school, I am already very tired and I struggle to concentrate in class. I even struggle to keep my eyes open in class at times because I am so tired. We are provided with lunch at school and this provides us with energy for the journey home.

[T]here are extra classes in the morning, at 7am. Living so far, I am always late for extra class. I have received corporal punishment for being so late at school ... I arrive home around 5pm from school. I then have to do my chores, which includes washing, cooking, and fetching water. I also need to wash my school uniform. It is difficult to do my homework in the evenings. My chores take time and I am tired and sleepy. I failed Maths and Accounting, because I do not understand the work.

(Joseph & Carpenter, 2016:279)

This situation is replicated for many learners on a daily basis. Despite these barriers, walking is chosen above other forms of transport because although there are busses or taxis available, the costs revolving around these prohibit learners' use of these (see Smith, 2011; Obeta, 2014). Spocter notes (2007:6):

Costs of shoes and food for learners are also influential factors contributing to learners weak academic achievements. Rural poverty has contributed to learners not having breakfast or having just a cup of tea or coffee before setting out to walk the journey to school. Learners arrive at school hungry and then are required to concentrate on lessons.

These difficulties are often manifesting in learner absenteeism which is discussed below.

### 3.4.2 Absenteeism

Reasons given for the learners being absent are as follows (in order of frequency) and highlight the specifics of SES effects:

Poverty, inadequate transport systems, illness, lack of parental involvement, food insecurity, disintegration of family units, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, classroom overcrowding, violence and bullying at schools, lack of basic services at schools, grant distribution days, inefficient management, negative attitudes among learners, poor academic performance, undefined psychological problems, lack of skill and commitment among educators, and negative relationships between learners and educators (CASE & JET, 2007:90).

In addition to the school related factors seen above, home factors also aggravate the situation. These are issue such as, "the level of household income *[that leads to the]* lack of supervision at homes as parents take any employment opportunities that are available" (CASE & JET, 2007:73). Poverty is identified as also leading to "the disintegration of family units" explaining that,

“unemployed individuals turn to alcohol and drugs, *[involving]* learners *[in]* spending time taking care of younger members of their families and of learners engaging in part-time employment in order to contribute to the socio-economic survival of their families” (CASE & JET, 2007:73 also Rogan, 2006; Van Wyk, Gondwe & de Villiers, 2017).

As would be expected, the lack of transportation is also a hindrance along with, “a school’s location and distance from home may pose a barrier to education” including “poor roads, transport that is unavailable or unaffordable, and danger along the way” (Murambiwa & Hall, 2010:96). These factors directly impact learners and parents choices to attend school, extra-mural activities and after-school events (CASE & JET, 2007:74 also see Marinus, 2015:65; Rogan, 2006:6).

The difficulties of getting to school and the possibility of staying away are made worse by extreme weather conditions. The following story represents the true reality of the effects poor transport conditions or no transport at all has on learners (Joseph & Carpenter, 2016:277):

A learner at Hlubi High School in KZN recounted how she saw a primary school learner drown after being swept away by the river. Her emotions raw, she explained how she was gripped by fear and unable to help the young learner, as she could not swim.

They also note that, “*[learners]* had limited or no shelter to protect themselves on their commute, and that they feared being struck by lightning every time they walked in the rain” (2016:279) leading to their “inability to concentrate in class” and “books are often ruined and become unusable” (2016:279). This hindrance is a disadvantage creating “immense pressure on the educational programme of the school *[to help them pass]*” with the result of frustration for learners and teachers who are expected to “often repeat lessons when learners can’t concentrate or are absent due to inclement weather” (2016:279).

The effects of seasonal change and ‘bad’ weather stretches further than physically being wet or sunburned, it also leads to high absenteeism or late arrival. Parents who decide to keep their

children at home when it rains or thunder are also contributing to low attendance figures. Seasonal change is also noted to be causing illnesses amongst the learners when they are feeling cold and being wet.

The DBE and WCED are aware of these issues for example in support of the 'Arrive Alive' organization, 'Safe School programmes' and involving the DoT in appointing representatives for each district to ensure the safety of schools. Perhaps the most direct interventions in relation to the difficulties caused by poor learner transport which acknowledges too the impact of poverty are the introduction of School Feeding Schemes and the inclusion of Road Safety Education in the curriculum.

As attempts to improve the life circumstances and ability to complete the educational journey these two aspects are discussed below.

### 3.4.3 Other factors

Other factors include support structures such as the WCED attempts to support learners, also the support internally from the school and parents.

#### 3.4.3.1 National School Nutrition Programme

Obeta's (2014:74), in Nigeria, expands on the importance of nutritional programs for increasing learners' willingness to conquer dangerous roads and weather conditions to attend school to receive their daily meals. Obeta (2014:143) see the use of a nutritional program stating that "[a] student, who has not eaten for days and has clothes that do not fit, cannot maintain focus in a classroom" and Mario (2006) believes in factors such as malnutrition impacts learners ability to concentrate and their health (Mario, 2006 in Obeta, 2014:145 also see Walsh, Dunnhauser & Joubert, 2001:1; DBE, 2011a:7; Obeta, 2014:71).

The DBE (2011a:7) values nutritional programs, and no-fee schools, to add to learners' ability to gain education. They note the following statistics:

The National School Nutrition Programme aimed at improving access to quality education. Although the programme initially catered for only primary school learners, since 2008, the budget of the programme has been progressively extended to include poor learners in secondary schools as well. In 2009, it provided meals to more than 7 million learners in over 20 000 schools. 6 million primary school learners benefitted from this programme in 2009/10, while close to 1 million secondary school learners did so. The programme was extended to Quintile 2 secondary schools in 2010/11 and the Department intends to increase the number of secondary school learners who benefit from this programme in 2011/12.

Obeta believes that there are three influencing factors in attendance being: free education for those who cannot afford proper education, the provision of “feeding schemes/nutrition programmes” and lastly the provision of transport assistance to schools”. He found in his study that just more than 50% of schools saw the necessity of a feeding scheme and therefore “food insecurity” was identified as a factor contributing to learners inability to learn when “learners were too hungry to come to school or that when they were at school they were too tired to concentrate or attend for an entire day (Obeta, 2014:72 also see Glewwe, Jacoby & King, 1999).

#### 3.4.3.2 Road safety education

The Malaysian Government states, “road safety education is a life-long process, but it should begin with the young in school, tailoring its message to the audience to teach safe traffic habits from primary school to secondary school, so that safety becomes ingrained as part of the culture and practice of our children” (Pietro, 2009:418; also see Christie, 2002a/b; Van Goeverden & De Boer, 2013:73; Malan, van Dijk & Fourie, 2016). This statement captures the essence of road safety education that should become a habit and not a duty.

In the USA road safety programmes produced a large amount of knowledge but little results therefore it is advised to rather use methods of “legislation and enforcement” along with skill training (Pietro, 2009:419). Schrieber and Vegega’s (2002) research in the USA show that “crashes between child pedestrians and motor vehicles decline after classroom education, but the degree of pedestrian behavioural change was not large” (Schrieber & Vegega’s, 2002 in Pietro, 2009:420). In Australia all pedestrians, until the age of 10 years, should be accompanied by an adult, especially children who do not have supervision available. It therefore encouraged

that teachers identify such learners and encourage them to walk with older siblings (Focus Area 4, Pedestrian Safety, 2013:115).

Unfortunately, despite the need for urgent attention and improvement in road safety education, learner safety with relation to availability and provision of transport facilities is one of the most undeveloped fields in SA (also see Behrens, 2004b; Porter, 2002; Rogan, 2006; Vasconcellos, 1997). However, provincial initiatives include a five-year delivery plan to create crossing facilities (assigned by a traffic officer during school times) where national initiatives includes 'Arrive Alive' who focuses on pedestrian safety, focusing on the identification and enrolment of prioritizing pedestrian locations by applying solutions. These solutions include road safety education and the "delivery of a national reflective armband programme for schoolchildren" (Behrens, 2004a:271).

Safety is included in the CAPS curriculum in 'Life sciences', covering different types of safety since grade R to 3 for example in the second term in grade R the learners are taught about safe places to play and road safety, in the third term subject such as different modes of transport and ways to access school is discussed. In G1 in term one the subject is addressed again by teaching about the MoT and getting to school, along with safety at their homes and for their bodies. In G2 they are taught about different types of transport and road safety issues. In addition, in G3 they are taught about public safety issues and how to handle it (see DBE, 2011b).

The need for more applicable education is of major concern in order for learners to gain the necessary knowledge to succeed in their life's journey and excel beyond which they are capable of.

#### 3.4.3.3 Parental involvement and the home influence

SES and poverty, as seen in Section 3.2.1, is central to impact all the domains of well-being. Around the world the learners' home environments are crucial to their well-being. As Smith (2011:93) notes in the SA context:

The lack of general well-being of the learner (insufficient daily access to good nutrition, insecure living environment and the consequent underlying impact on child health and emotional stability this has), a tendency to have repeated a year and inadequate access to study facilities and literary resources in the communities they live impacts greatly on their capability to learn to their full potential.

Obeta agrees and argues that (2014:143):

Children from families with low socio-economic status are at a greater risk of hunger, homeless, sickness, physical and mental disabilities, violence, teen parenthood, family stress and educational failure. Student from low socio economic background that encounter these environmental factors are four times more likely to have learning disabilities than students from high socio economic background while a combination of these environmental factors accelerate academic success.

Obeta also notes that “students coming from low socio-economic backgrounds are not provided the same tools as the students from wealthy families; they are entering schools already behind those not living in similar conditions” (2014:144). It is not only the material that contributes to successful academic achievement but also the assistance parents are able to provide after school for their children. He also states that “[m]ost families in our society seem not to give adequate attention to the education of their children. It appears that some of the parents have erroneous notion about the performance of their children, [and] they do not know and seem to fulfil their role of guidance and encouragement in the child’s performance in schools” (2014:145).

Timothy et al. (2017:3) and Katanga (2016:22) are in agreement that when the learner’s parents are involved and interested in their education, the learner will most likely perform on a higher academic level than those whose parents are absent, and the child will more likely to have a positive attitude towards education. Therefore, where poor structure, management and interest in the child along with the “lack of skill and commitment among educators” is found the learner forms a negative attitude (aggravated by peer pressure) towards education” leading to “extreme hopelessness among learners that they will ever secure employment” (CASE & JET, 2007:74). The consequence of these attitudes can be seen in learner performance. Parental involvement is

therefore encouraged so that that learners feel supported directly providing motivation for them to learn (Timothy et. al, 2017:3 also see LaRocqu, Kleiman and Darling, 2011).

These findings have been replicated in many other countries (see also Timothy, Nebert & Bernard, 2017 [Nigeria]; Considine & Zappalà, 2002 [Australia]; Van Bergen, Zuijen, Bishop & Jong, 2016 [an International study]).

As literature suggests, poverty leaves communities handicapped and dependent on others for their well-being; excluding them from a society, potential growth, healthy lifestyles and the ability to socially interact and feel accepted. As a consequence low SES groups find difficulty in accessing quality education; they experience dangers and safety hazards on route to school, and are obligated to travel far distances and long hours.

### 3.5 Conclusion

It is clear from the literature that there is some recognition that the impact of transport goes beyond the physical. In all of the domains of well-being, transport impacts learners in various important ways.

Literature suggests that the impact of learners' access to transport, and therefore education, is a necessary pre-condition for success. However, as the discussion on the policy background showed, the issue of learner transport is not a straightforward process, and the difficulties of negotiating a safe and reliable system often inhibits schools for enjoying access to transport.

These issues are explored in Chapter 5 when reporting on the case school.

## CHAPTER 4

### EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOURNEY

#### 4.1 Introduction

This section details the methods used throughout this study. A mixed method case study is used that relates to the links made between the different modes of transport used by the learners and the three domains of well-being as presented in Table 1.

#### 4.2 Case Study

This research uses a case study format, defined as an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1994:13). Eisenhardt (1989:534) defines a case study as “a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings”. Some of the strengths of case studies are noted by Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001:2-7) including that “[t]hey can help us understand complex inter-relationships, [they] are grounded in “lived reality”, [it] facilitate[s] the exploration of the unexpected and unusual, [and also initiates] rich conceptual/theoretical development”.

This method was used because it was the appropriate way to get an in-depth understanding, of the reality of the participants in a particular school.

There are limitations to this method which are discussed in section 4.6 below.

#### 4.3 Methods

This study utilised a mixed method approach with 4 main sources of data:

1. Interviews
2. Focus group meetings
3. Questionnaires
4. Inspection of School Records and WCED data

According to Creswell “[m]ixing means either that the qualitative and quantitative data are actually merged on one end of the continuum, kept separate on the other end of the continuum,

or combined in some way between these two extremes” (2009:207-208). Within this study the methods are combined in such a way that the most accurate explanation for participants’ reactions, behaviour and performances are presented. Furthermore, Creswell adds an explanation for this type of research approach and states that when the researcher integrates “the two databases by actually merging the quantitative data with the qualitative data” the two databases can be more accurately connected (2009:209). Howard White (2002:519) agrees and claims that “both quantitative and qualitative techniques have their place in social analysis. There is no reason to give primacy to one over the other...and combination of techniques will frequently yield greater insight than either one used in isolation.” Baker substantiates both arguments above by stating that “[i]n combining the two approaches, qualitative methods can be used to inform the key impact evaluation questions, survey the questionnaire or the stratification of the quantitative sample...within which the project takes place, whereas quantitative methods can be used to inform qualitative data collection strategies, to design the sample to inform the extent to which the result observed in the qualitative work can be generalised to a larger population...” (2000:8-9).

Clearly the use of a mixed method approach is sufficient in the provision of quantifiable data of this study’s impacts on the context of the learners as well as in describing the processes that contribute to the outcomes of this study.

The table below summarises all sources of data.

Table 2: Methods utilised

Action	Respondent	Total
Interviews	Principal	6
	G3 teacher G3 head Foundation Phase Head	3
	Bus supervisor	1

	Bus driver	1
<b>Focus Groups</b>	<u>G3 Learners:</u> Bus passengers	4
	Pedestrians and T,B,C	3
<b>Questionnaires</b>	Foundation Phase Teachers	2/6
	Learners	20/20
<b>Empirical evidence</b>	<u>WCED data:</u> - WCED term schedules, 2015-2017 - WCED Systemic test results for the school, 2014(b)-2016(b)	-
	<u>School Data:</u> - School transport survey 2017 - Absenteeism and drop-out, 2015-2017	
<b>School visits</b>	Interviews, meetings with the secretary, feeding scheme volunteers, and the learners	25

#### 4.3.1 Interviews

According to Doody and Noonan, “an interview is a method of collecting data in which quantitative or qualitative questions can be asked” (2013:1). There are a number of advantages to this type of research such as the depth that it adds to the available data versus other methods used in research studies (Cohen & Manion, 1994:272). Furthermore, according to Corbetta (2003:267), “the qualitative interview stems more from the need to cover the range of social situations than from the desire to reproduce the features of the population on a small scale”. Interviews as means to data collection were primarily chosen to deepen the understanding of the collected data.

After the research school was identified the first interviews were set up using the interview question guideline based on all the domains of well-being (see Appendix 3 no. 3.3.1 – 3.3.2)<sup>6</sup>.

Interviews were conducted with the following people: the Principal, the Foundation Phase Head (in her capacity of G3 head and G3 teacher), the bus driver and the bus supervisor (in his capacity as G6 teacher). It was handled in a semi-structured and open-ended way which enabled a free flow of conversations with no boundaries. The respondents' home language of Afrikaans was used to make communication easier and allow the interviewees to feel comfortable and enable them to provide more in-depth answers.

The responses were translated from Afrikaans to English.

#### 4.3.2 Focus Groups

There were 2 focus groups with whom meetings were held. It consisted out 20 learners: group 1 (6 pedestrians and 4 T,B,C learners) and group 2 (the 10 bus passengers).

In the focus group meetings a story telling approach was used to allow the learners to openly communicate and interact with each other and the researcher. As guideline for these meetings a questionnaire was used at first to commence learners' thinking and to win their trust. In the follow-up meetings the responses of these questionnaires were used to initiate in-depth conversation, and explanations of particular situations, depending on the responses of the learners. All of these meetings were conducted in Afrikaans.

#### 4.3.3 Questionnaires

The rationale for the use of questionnaires during this study was due to Kumar who states that this method is "less expensive and offers greater anonymity" (2005:130) and Wisker summarises a questionnaires definition by noting that "it gather[s] information directly by asking people

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<sup>6</sup> These questions were piloted with colleagues especially since the interviews were conducted in Afrikaans and the questions were compiled in English.

questions and using them as data for analysis” (2001:147). Furthermore, Baker and Denning refers to the questions asked within the questionnaire and states that it should be phrased in such a way that it inquire specificities rather than a general/average answer (2005:11). The idea in choosing the questionnaire was specifically due to the effectivity thereof thus gathering a substantial amount of data in a short time frame (see Blakie, 2003).

The questionnaires were designed to answer focused questions about the domains of well-being. Specific focus was on the teachers’ experiences and thereafter on their observations with regards to the learners and their behaviour due to the transport means.

The questionnaires were distributed to all Foundation Phase staff (6) of whom 2 questionnaires were returned based on the Foundation Phase staffs’ decision to fill in two forms together, one female questionnaire and one male questionnaire. The questions were set out in English and based on the three domains of well-being within two parts: the first was based on the teachers’ personal experiences and the influences of transport on them and the second part was based on the teachers’ perception of the learners’ experiences and influences of transport on their well-being (see Appendix 3 no. 3.1.1).

Within the learner focus group meetings the learner questionnaires were distributed amongst the learners whose parents gave consent. It was used in Afrikaans and in ‘activity form’ that was appropriately designed for the use of G3 learners. The questionnaire was based on the three domains of well-being and included questions applicable to the learners’ specific mode of transport (see Appendix 3 no. 3.2.1 – 3.2.3).

#### 4.3.4 School Records and WCED data

The quantitative data was used to establish the relationship between MoT and academic performance and attendance. I worked closely with the school Secretary who helped me to collect all the quantitative data. The academic marks - the internal school schedules and the WCED Systemic results – were available electronically. However, the attendance data was hand written in the class registers and had to be hand calculated. Two months, February and August

were chosen to represent seasonal effects – February for summer and August for winter to track the absenteeism.

#### 4.4 Sample

The intention here was to select a site that would be as representative as possible of typical rural primary schools in the District. From the list of primary schools made available by the WCED, five possible schools were contacted as possible sites. The selection criteria for the schools were that they had to be:

1. A rural primary school that utilised WCED transport.
2. A primary school that served mainly learners from low SES circumstances.
3. A school where learners might be exposed to transport dangers e.g. proximity to major roads and a high proportion of pedestrians.
4. The final selection rested on the willingness of the school to participate.

The final school was chosen because of its comparability to many Cape Winelands rural primary school settings taking into account the type of learner expected to be in the school, the school environment, setting and size; the socio-economic circumstances of parents and home environment, and the expected MoT and distance to school.

The focus group of learners were the Grade 3's. It was assumed that younger learners were likely to be more vulnerable due to their small physique and more likely to be more naïve about dangerous situations and therefore targeted when travelling to school. In addition, G3 learners were selected because of the data available on their academic performance through the WCED Systemic tests.

#### 4.5 Validity and reliability

Shenton (2004) emphasises the importance of internal validity when “seek[ing] to ensure that [the] study measures of tests what is actually intended” (2004:64). There are criteria that should be met to ensure the credibility such as “the development of an early familiarity with the culture of the participating organisms, triangulation, random sampling of the individuals to serve as informants, tactics to help ensure honesty in informants when contributing data (such as the person should be allowed to refuse to participate)” (Shenton, 2004:66-67). Bonoma (1985 in

Christie et al., 2000:16) points out, that the validity of case studies is improved through “the use of multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having key external informants review draft case study reports”. Then, triangulation and or the use of multiple sources initiate “a stronger substantiation of constructs and hypotheses assists in generalisability of the research findings” (Bonoma, 1985 in Christie et al., 2000:16). This process is further strengthened by the “prudent selection of the case study interviewees, a structured interview process, and a structured process for recording, transcribing and interpreting the data (Dick, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Christie 2000:17). As suggested, “a chain of evidence can be established from the beginning of the research questions through data collection to the final conclusions” to make the case study more valid (Yin, 1994 in Christie et al., 2000:16).

Reliability means comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods. According to Christie et.al 2000 reliability is based on the realism of the research and the “assumption of a single reality which is studied repeatedly” (Christie et.al, 2000:18). To achieve reliability there needs to be enactment of the chosen research procedures to identify a trail (Christie et.al, 2000:19). A reliable study should lead to cohesion in the explanation of the findings and a dependable understanding of the context within which the study was done (Christie et.al, 2000:19). Le Compte and Goetz comments on specifically the reliability of an ethnographical study stating that it “refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated” (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982:35). This exact point might be a barrier to ethnographic research being that it is hard to replicate the results. This type of research occurs outside in a natural setting, usually used to record some or other process of change, this tightens the reliability of this type of study being that it is a unique setting and situation which cannot easily be reconstructed precisely (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982:35). Some of the external reliability constrains are that ethnographic research are a personal matter and not reconstructable, thus not able to replicate findings precisely as well. The conclusions are usually “qualified by the investigator’s social role within the research site” leading to “other researchers [not being able to] obtain comparable findings unless they develop

corresponding social positions or have research partners to do so” (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982:37).

This study, through the use of the multiple methods described above, followed this protocol (see Eisenhardt, 1989:534).

#### 4.6 Ethics

Permission to do the research was granted from UCT on 13 December 2016 and by the WCED on 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2017. Written consent to participate in the research was obtained from all the school respondents as well as the bus driver whom I interviewed. The parents of the learners who took part in the focus groups also provided their consent (see Appendix 3 for consent letter templates). School and provincial documents were obtained from the school via the Principal.

At all times the anonymity of the school and the participants was preserved.

#### 4.7 Limitations

While the research methods, using a case study, interviews and questionnaires are suited to a project of this kind, there are some inherent limitations that need to be considered. These relate firstly to the case study as a methodological approach and secondly to the techniques used.

Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001) identified limitations to case study sets since it is a context specific study that is difficult to generalise. This study is not a replica of all mainstream rural Cape Winelands primary schools, thus it is not a generalizable case study. Also, when the study is put together the researcher needs to prioritise some aspects thereof, thus following a subjective perspective. This includes key questions, methods of response, methods of approaching the scenario and skills. The reader is subjected to the researcher’s perspective and analysis. Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001:8-10) indicate that a level of trust is needed from the readers’ point of view, trusting the researchers’ analysis and objectivity. However, to eliminate this limitation of subjectivity, “a prudent selection of the case study interviewees, a structured interview process, and a structured process for recording, transcribing and interpreting the data

(Dick 1990, Lincoln & Guba 1985 in Christie, 2000:17) was used throughout this project. Also, when a case study is successfully used, it is unlikely to be used as generalizable theory-building on the topic investigated (Yin, 1981:63).

This study was potentially limited by the acknowledgement that there are many factors influencing learners' well-being on a much larger scale than transport, considering 'transport' to only have a small influence also by a very small sample of learners and available staff that was used due to a small school sample.

By using interviews and focus groups there are several barriers that needed to be acknowledged. Misinterpretation and researcher bias adds potential limitations to the validity of this study. Some other limitations include the honesty and objectivity of the participants: their reactions and answers may differ from 'real-life' conversations due to the pressure of being recorded (it was assumed that when learners speak about their experiences in the focus groups that they are honest and being open about their feelings, I thus took their word as the truth and their perspectives as a reliable source. Also, the skills of the interviewer are critical in developing trust and in the avoidance of bias - the interviewer often wants to prove the hypothesis and asks questions to infer the most appropriate answers and therefore phrase questions in such a way that the appropriate answer is given (Boyce & Neale, 2006: 3-4).

However, in this project there were several reasons why this was not the case:

- Over 25 visits were made to the school which enabled a high level of trust to be built between the researcher and the interviewees and minimal bias.
- The interview questions were semi-structured and open-ended which enabled a free flow of conversations with no boundaries.
- The focus group meetings were held in groups of 10 and followed a story telling approach. The learners felt comfortable and supported by their peers when providing answers, and telling stories of their experiences.
- The use of the respondent's home language (Afrikaans) made communication easier.

There are many limitations involved with using questionnaires as well. Sivo, Saunders, Chang and Jiang (2006) commented on the limitations of questionnaires stating that there might be a possible low response rate which limits the data you work with as well as compromising the validity and the sample of the study. The possibility also exists for the questionnaire to be incorrectly filled out (Sivo et al., 2006:352). In this case study, guidance was provided, where necessary by the G3 head, in the process of filling in the questionnaires and the respondents chose to complete the questionnaires together, providing me with questionnaire answers that consist out of more than one perspective. For the learner questionnaires guidance was provided by me while we were having our focus group meetings, this guaranteed a 100% response rate.

#### 4.8 Conclusion

This chapter stipulated the methodological approach used throughout this study. A mixed method approach combines the quantitative and qualitative designs to accurately reflect the reality of the ethnographic findings. In the next chapter the research results and data are shown and discussed.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE LIVES OF YOUNG TRAVELLERS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings through the lenses of the physiological, emotional and educational well-being of the learners. In doing so, it documents the challenges faced by the young travellers as they attempt to better their lives.

#### 5.2 School Background

The school is situated in the heart of a farming community, accommodating 336 learners from the surrounding farms in a 10.2 km radius from the school. Since it was established in 1960 the school has grown and at present has 10 classes that are managed by 10 teachers, only in Afrikaans first language and English second language. In the Foundation Phase, which is the focus of this dissertation, there are 162 learners in six classes. The G3 learners, with whom I worked closely, number 38, all of whom are in one class.

The school is a no-fee Quintile One school. The DBE states that a no-fee school “is an initiative aimed at improving access to education for poor learners. It stipulates that schools that have a no-fee status are not permitted to charge fees to parents (although it does not exclude voluntary contributions and the hosting of fund-raising events)” (DBE, 2011:7). In this case, the staff encourages the parents to voluntarily contribute R150.00/year to the school. Payment fluctuates by harvest season (October to April), during which time parents are more willing and able to make contributions and to attend functions (usually a maximum R20.00 per function).

The school is situated next to a busy freeway with a speed limit of 100km/h. The freeway is used daily by many cars, trucks and tractors travelling between towns, the farms and the nearby fruit storage facilities. Learners are thus exposed to many dangerous situations while waiting on, and using this freeway as route to their education. Since 2009 they have witnessed five accidents where young learner’s lives were lost and for survivors’ permanent damage done, leaving

emotional scars for many of the witnesses. In 2006 the government had a tunnel built to the school which aid learners when crossing the freeway.

The map below indicates the location of the school to provide a better understanding of interview responses. It shows the freeway, the dangers learners face on their way to school (e.g. the cemetery and the train track) and the 9 bus stops are also indicated (numbered 01-09).

Figure 1: Location of the school



(Source: Google Maps)

There are five different MoTs learners use to get to school. Approximately a third of the learners who live 5km or further from the school on the allocated route are transported by the WCED bus. The other four MoTs vary from privately owned cars (1.7% of learners), farm trucks and bakkies (22.8%), to walking (44.0%). These modes are used when the learner lives nearer than 5km from school or any further distance that is not situated on the WCED bus-route. Below is a summary of the MoTs used by learners in the school.

Table 3: Mode of transport used by learners in the school

Mode of transport	Numbers of learners N = 336	%
Pedestrians	148	44.0
WCED bus	106	31.5
Bakkie	43	12.7
Truck	34	10.1
Private cars	6	1.7

(Source: School data, March 2017)

In the section below the physical transport conditions and physiological domain of well-being are discussed.

### 5.3 Physical transport conditions and Physiological well-being

Literature suggests that rural communities in particular face special challenges when it comes to transport issues (Rogan, 2006; CASE & JET, 2007; NLTP, 2015; Joseph & Carpenter, 2016; Equal Education, 2017a-d). This section firstly discusses the accessibility for learners to school, before examining the impact of the MoT on learners' physiological well-being.

#### 5.3.1 Physical transport conditions

This section should be read concurrently with section 2.2 as those obligations and responsibilities form part of the physical transport conditions for learners and directly influences their well-being when it is not taken seriously.

##### 5.3.1.1 School obligations

Despite having access to a subsidized transport system many frustrations are experienced by management and lengthy negotiations about the subsidized busses have been ongoing since 2015. At the beginning of 2017 the conversation was resumed with four main concerns:

- Un-formalised contracts and understanding of the school's rights.

- A lack of correspondence regarding the number of trips or busses the school can expect.
- The appropriate capacity of the bus(es) that can carry 106 learners.
- The problem that the bus passes some of the pedestrian learners who live 4.9 km (vs. 5 km) from school and therefore cannot use the bus.

These 4 concerns were elaborated on around the following problem areas (between February and April 2017):

- The school's contract with the WCED stipulates that two busses are allocated to the school. According to the WCED Policy on LTS (2015:7) the busses can only be substituted for valid reasons "with written approval of the Principal and confirmation by the district director" (this frequently doesn't happen at the school). At present only one 77 passenger bus, with the wrong registration number, arrives at the school and refuses to do two trips. The school reported that the bus used on their route does not meet specifications, but despite reports nothing changed. As alternative the Principal negotiated for the one bus to do two trips instead of one, but still awaits the approval from the bus contractor.
- The WCED Policy on LTS (2015:8) specifies that "every learner on the bus must have an appropriate seat and no learner must be allowed to stand...". Unfortunately the bus contractor doesn't comply to this specification, due to one bus that transports the learners.
- The bus driver is expected to stay at the school after dropping off the learners in the morning. The main reason is so that when the school closes earlier the transport is ready and learners are not exposed to unsafe situations while waiting for the bus. In reality the bus drops the learners at school and leaves to do other trips. It then returns just before the end of the school day.

Most learners indicated that they do have supervision while they wait for their transport but in reality it is not always possible and sadly not necessarily the safest option for the learners (see incident in section 5.3.2.1 where the older learners, who were supposed to supervise, bullied the younger ones. There was also an incident reported where older learners threw stones at the younger ones while waiting for their transport).

The school appointed transport-prefects and a teacher (for the bus as supervisor) to manage disciplinary problems e.g. when learners from different ages are transported on the same

transport, bullying, vandalism, and scissor-stabbing occur more regularly (the bus driver notes that verbal bullying is quite common under the primary school learners and that when the bus is late learners tend to be less disciplined, and “they fiddle with each other and tease one another... they also scare one another by running into the freeway when a vehicle is approaching”). Any transgressions are reported in the disciplinary book – whenever one learner continuously disrupts the transport the trouble-maker’s parents are called and after three transgressions the offenders are put off the transport for a period of time.

#### 5.3.1.2 Accessibility to school

The assumption was that easy access to transport/school would minimize the exposures to dangers and safety hazards which will result in positive physiological growth and development.

However, the pedestrian learners are usually accompanied by an adult who helps them to cross the road (although one girl confirmed that she likes walking on her own but 3 answered that they walk in a group). 3/6 indicated that they have been exposed to bad incidents while travelling to or from school but nonetheless all of them indicated they still enjoy walking to school. The other 3 learners and all of the T,B,C learners indicated that their route is safe and easy to access.

For the bus learners, 6/10 indicated that they had been exposed to accident-related trauma on their routes to school, and they believe the route is unsafe. They described the situations in detail e.g. bakkies driving over dogs, the bus crashing into a car, and a bakkie rolling over a fence. Some (3/10) also experience difficulty to access the bus stop. They elaborate on these challenges:

**Why is it difficult for you to get to the bus?**

Boy 1: We must walk far to get to the bus stop.

**Does this mean you need to travel on a gravel road?**

Boy 1: Yes Teacher.

**Is the gravel road unsafe?**

Boy 1: Our feet hurt.

**Okay so your feet hurt. And what else makes it difficult to access the bus?**

Boy 2: There are many sharp stones on the roads.

**Okay, so your feet get hurt. What else? Are there dogs?**

Boy 2: Yes, they bark at us and it scares me.

One would assume that learners who receive transport are not regularly confronted with safety hazards but these learners are as exposed and vulnerable on their route to the bus stop and while waiting for the bus as pedestrians.

The teachers felt that in general getting to school was a challenge, due to amongst other things the lack of guidance by a traffic police for learners crossing the freeway, but not impossible. For the Principal, the various routes are never safe and describe the different issues as follows:

1 – Learners' need to travel far on gravel roads to reach the farm where they live - Passing vehicles leave a trail of dust that hinders the learners' sight of vehicles and vehicles' sight of the learners. The learners must also pass by the cemetery where gangsters spend their time in cars with tinted windows. They scare the learners when they pass them and sometimes verbally abuse and chase them. The learners also need to cross the railway line.

2 – Learners are allowed to walk in the vineyards on gravel roads but hindrances are the sharp stones and dangerous dogs.

3 – Learners come from the tarred freeway's side and use the tunnel to cross the road - the ditches next to the road are dangerous especially when learners are forced to walk in them when a vehicle is approaching.

4 – Learners cross the freeway after walking some distance on a gravel road. The pedestrian sidewalk stops after 2km and the learners have to cross the road to walk on a flat, graded surface for approximately 1.5km, where they need to cross the freeway again.

5 – Distance on gravel roads as well as the lack of a pedestrian walkway is a challenge.

Below the domain of physiological well-being is elaborated on.

### 5.3.2 The Physiological well-being of learners

This section reports on three facets impacting learners' physiological well-being when travelling to school. These facets are: dangers and safety hazards on the route and the travel distance and time.

#### 5.3.2.1 Dangers and safety hazards

The assumption was that when individuals are confronted with dangers and safety hazards on their route, it decelerates the learners' ability to grow, develop and reach their full potential. This discussion is categorized into two groups: the pedestrian and the T,B,C learners' experiences and then those who travel by bus.

For the pedestrian learners there were four main areas of concern:

- Violence next to the roads (physical and verbal)
- Alcohol abuse next to the roads
- Victimization and bullying – usually by older learners
- Unsafe crossings and speeding cars

As noted above the pedestrians overall have a positive attitude towards walking to school. 4/6 indicated that some days they felt scared when walking to school but, surprisingly, 5/6 agreed that they prefer going to school despite feeling scared (teachers commented that learners see the school as their 'safe haven' and they receive two meals daily at the school).

Their responses to some of the dangers were as follows:

**What types of dangers are there next to the road, what type of situations do you observe next to the road? Tell me about the dangers.**

Boy 1: There are learners who stab one another with scissors.

**Have they tried to stab you as well?**

Boy 1: Yes Teacher.

Boy 3 raises his hand

**When did they stab you?**

Boy 3: Wednesday Teacher... I ran away but they caught me and stabbed me.

**So what did you do then? Did you run?**

Boy 3: Yes. They also threw stones at us ... it is some of the older learners. They also walk to school.

**Have they thrown stones at you?**

Boy 1: Yes, they throw all of us (class confirms with a "yes Teacher")

Boy 2: They also try to take our backpacks.

In interview two Boy 3 was again asked about the stabbing incident and he explained that he "was scared to walk to school after the incident happened... I was scared that something similar would happen... but it didn't influence my concentration". The learners also commented that they do not tell their teacher about these incidents out of fear that it might happen again when they do.

I asked them to elaborate on the gangsters and the fights they are confronted with:

**Who are the people I hear about at the cemetery, what do they do?**

Boy 1: There were three of them Teacher, they wanted to kill us Teacher... but we ran into the vineyards... nobody got hurt.

Boy 3: The people abuse alcohol next to the road.

**So are you telling me the people are drunk next to the road?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

**Okay, and then what do they do?**

Boy 3: They call us Teacher.

**And do they also want to take your stuff or hurt you?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

(In interview 2, Girl 2 confirmed that “people who smoke [marijuana] next to the road” scares her and in her opinion makes the road dangerous to travel on. They also call her and when they do she runs away “and hides”).

A story about a dangerous situation was told by the Principal:

Last year there was an event where the occupants of a suspicious car parked at the cemetery intimidated the learners causing them to split up and ran in different directions. One grade R learner ran with a group whose homes were far from his own. The police was involved in the search for the learner might have been kidnapped. It was a wake-up call for the parents when the boy was found at someone’s house later that afternoon. The parents since then accompany the learners to school.

I asked other learners about threats from older children:

Boy 4: I think it is unsafe because the learners hit me and each other, the older learners.

Girl 1: The children also swear at us when we tell them to stop fighting.

**Have you felt unsafe when walking past the learners who fight?**

Girl 2: Yes.

**And do they want to hurt you as well when you pass them?**

Girl 2: Yes.

Boy 2: When I walk home in the afternoons the older children take my sandwich and hit me.

**Do you tell your teacher?**

Boy 2: No.

**You must always tell your teacher.**

Another issue was the dangerous road they need to cross and the fast cars on the freeway (3 learners said that they have to run across the road where it is unsafe to reach school but 4 agreed to make use of the tunnel provided):

**You indicated in the questionnaire that you need to walk across the road where it is dangerous, explain?**

Boy 2: Yes, at the area X.

**Why do you say it is unsafe?**

Boy 2: There are many cars, and they drive very fast.

For the four T,B,C learners the assumption was that learners using privately arranged transport will have less safety issues than those walking to school. For them the area of concern was bullying on the transport.

2 learners do not feel safe on their transport despite the appointed transport prefects. Boy 1 doesn't feel safe on his transport because of people who hurt him and apparently the driver can't see or hear the fights (one girl indicated that she wants to ride in the bus because she fears being bullied in the truck in the afternoons). Learners indicated that such incidents cause emotional strain before they arrive at school but apparently incidents are reported to the driver who then, "disciplines the learners".

For the bus learners the assumption was that learners who use subsidized transport will be the safest and most protected

There are four concerns for the 10 bus learners who are expected to wait next to the freeway at a bus stop after walking approximately 1.5km on a gravel road:

- Exposure to regular high speed usage (bus and other vehicles)
- Exposure to dust and gravel roads
- Gangsters (2/10 indicated there are gangsters next to the road)
- Kidnappers.

These learners' portrayed rising anxiety levels when they fear for their own, and their peers, lives due to dangerous situations. These learners specifically fear arriving too early or too late for the bus and being left behind at the bus stop. They believe this exposes them to dangers and unsafe situations.

The following conversation expands on these dangers:

**Tell me why do you think the route the bus uses is unsafe?**

Boy 4: The bus drives too fast and makes a lot of dust which makes me sneeze all the time.

**Okay, so the bus drives too fast and makes a lot of dust. Who want to add anything?**

Boy 2: The good road is closed and then we must use the bad road and we go up and down, we need to drive over a narrow bridge.

Important to note is Boy 4 who states that the bus drives "too fast". Also, the dust that bothers the learners and causes allergies - "it makes me sneeze" was quite an interesting response to consider as a physiological hazard to the child's health.

I asked the learners to elaborate on the dangers next to the road, keeping in mind the four concerns they have raised:

**What types of dangers are next to the road?**

Boy 3: The people stab each other next to the road.

**Who else agrees that there are dangerous people next to the road?**

(6 learners raise their hands)

**Tell me about the people who stab each other?**

Girl 3: The gangsters.

**Are you scared of them?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

**Do you think this kind of event influence you as a person?**

Boy 3: Yes.

**Do you think it has an effect on your academics?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

**Who else wants to add something?**

Girl 1: There is nobody next to the road, I walk alone and get scared.

One would assume that an open road without any people will be safer for the learners to use, but Girl 1's answer contradicts this assumption due to her being scared because she walks alone next to the road without anybody accompanying her.

Boy 1 and 3 explained their fears of being kidnapped:

Boy 3: There are many kidnappers and they drive around, my mother told me last night. She warned me that I should be on time for the bus so that the bus doesn't leave without me.

**Yes, good point. Otherwise you'll need to walk and then the kidnappers can kidnap you. So you always need to be on time for the bus.**

Boy 1: The kidnappers drive around in different cars, like one day a mini cooper and the next a different car with different number plates and they signal us that they will come and get us, my mother warned me, and I must look out for them.

Boy 1: Last time I was waiting for the bus and I saw people approaching so I ran away and hid.

**Who was approaching?**

Boy 1: I saw it was learner Q's mother who brought her because she was late.

**Are you scared the people will steal you?**

Boy 1: Yes.

**For what else are you scared of?**

Boy 1: I ran to the next bus stop where there are more people and the bus picked me up.

(Boy 3 raises his hand)

**You must be safe. What do you want to add (to Boy 3)?**

Boy 3: Teacher, I saw the kidnappers take my aunt's child and then the learners stood in the road and the kidnappers drove slowly to the child and put the child in the car.

**And what happened next? Did you find her?**

Boy 3: No Teacher.

**When did this happen?**

Boy 3: Friday Teacher.

**And how does it make you feel? Scared?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

**Do you still feel scared that they will kidnap you as well?**

Boy 3: Yes Teacher.

Researcher to Girl 3.

**You indicated in your questionnaire that you do not always feel safe, why is that?**

Girl 3: There is a man that chases us with his bicycle.

**So there is a man what chases you with a bicycle, what does he do?**

Girl 3: He looks at us and he follows us.

**Are you scared when you see him?**

Girl 3: Yes.

**Are you scared that he will kidnap you?**

(Class laughs).

Girl 3: Yes Teacher.

Researcher to Boy 1.

### **Why are you scared again to walk to school?**

Boy 1: The children fight next to the road.

Clearly these learners fear for being kidnapped or being hurt next to the road. The evident bravery of Boy 3 to confess that the 'gangsters' scared him and that this fear influences his academics reveals the instability such events causes in his emotional condition (see Appendix 3 Tables A6-A8 for Boy 3's performance marks). The Foundation Phase Head substantiate the above conversation when she speaks about the "black car ("die vang-karretjie") we've had at the school (in the past) but at the moment it is quiet...when the pedestrian learners are in danger they tell us about it and we take them home".

Other learners elaborated on dangers and safety hazards that concern them and Girl 2 added that "[t]he fast cars, when they come so close to me" scare her. Another learner confirmed this danger stating that "cars [*that*] drive very fast scare me and [*they*] don't see us", especially in winter. 6 learners confirmed that they have almost been hit by fast cars while waiting for the bus, and that they "haven't known where to wait for the bus since then". Another concern was "[t]he learners run Teacher, they run across the road!" Girl 3 explained that "one friend ran across the road and the car hooted ... the car was very close to her, it almost hit her" and thereafter she and Boy 1 feel very unsafe crossing the road. These types of situations once again create emotional instability within the learners who experience anxiety and doubts about their safety.

Unfortunately, anxiety doesn't decrease when learners enter the bus. 4 learners indicated that they don't feel safe on the bus and 8 agreed noting that they have been hurt on the bus and feel saddened by some situations that happen on the bus. These types of situations on the bus, as well as at the bus stop, impact not only the physiological well-being of the learners but also on their emotional and educational well-being:

### **Why do you feel unsafe on the bus?**

Girl 3: I get bullied on the bus.

Hmm... So tell me is it the older learners that bully you?

Girl 3: Yes.

**Who else gets bullied on the bus?**

(8 learners in the class raise their hands)

**What do the learners do when they bully you? Do they hit you or say ugly things to you?**

Boy 3: Yes they hit us.

**Okay, so they hit you and is it the older learners?**

Boy 3: Yes.

**And do they sometimes tell you to give them your bread?**

Class responds: Yes Teacher!

Girl 3: If we don't do it they get angry, Teacher.

**It is not right of them. Has anyone stabbed you with a scissor or pencil?**

Class responds again: Yes Teacher!

**Who else wants to add something?**

Boy 1: They stab us. Then you can't sit comfortably in class.

Girl 2: They cut our hair with scissors in the bus.

**What do you want to add Boy 1?**

Boy 1: They take our pencils and then they sometimes stab you with the scissor when they want to take your stuff.

Boy 1 and Girl 2 raised very important points when noting that physical harm is done to them in an act of bullying which impacts their ability to function normally. Another aspect of danger was raised by Boy 2:

(Boy 2 raises his hand)

**Yes?**

Boy 2: Some of the learners talk gangster language, they scare us.

**Are there gangsters on the bus?**

Class respond: Yes Teacher!

Boy 2: They scare us with guns and the language they use.

**Who of you are sometimes too scared to ride on the bus because of gangster on the bus?**

(6 in the class raise their hands)

**So do you sometimes feel you don't want to come to school because you are too scared to ride on the bus?**

Class and dominantly Boy 2: Yes Teacher. I didn't want to come to school this morning because I was angry.

**So you are telling me you are too angry to ride in the bus in the morning, but you then came to school after all... do you struggle to concentrate in the classroom?**

Boy 2: Yes, I think about what happened on the bus.

**Okay, so you relive what happened on the bus. Do you think it has an influence on your academics?**

Boy 2: No Teacher.

**Do you have someone at home who assists you with your homework?**

Boy 2: Yes, I have someone at home who helps me with my homework.

Home assistance for Boy 2 is important since despite bullying behaviour and gangsters on the bus this learner still feels confidence in his academics. His response about his inability to concentrate in the classroom after something happened on the bus is important to note as the impacts of these types of dangers go beyond they physiological into affecting the emotional as well as the educational well-being of learners (this type of thought patterns are quite natural, but could become a learning barrier when it is not managed. The learner might fall behind completely academically without any form of resilience).

Despite dangerous situations the road is in usable condition and safe to drive on, leaving the bus as the most reliable and secured MoT (9/10 of the learners agreed). In general learners' attitudes are positive, as Foundation Phase Head states "they are excited to ride in the bus".

From the above discussion it is clear that the MoT doesn't make a difference to the types of dangers exposures and incidents learners are confronted with, which usually result in anxiety and fear. These types of incidents, as noted above, reduce the learners ability to physiologically function optimally, to perform educationally (since they need to process traumatic events before learning new work), and it also hinders the learners emotional stance.

#### 5.3.2.2 Distance and time

The assumption was that learners who travel on foot will be educationally more challenged when reaching school. This section is divided into two categories: firstly the pedestrians and the T,B,C learners and secondly the bus passengers perceptions about distance and time.

According to the teaching staff the time and distance learners travel are determining factors that influence their motivation to attend school and might be the reason why usually the same learners misbehave in the classroom and sometimes arrive late.

According to the Principal some of the pedestrian learners travel as long as 60 minutes to and from school. In the scorching summer heat their physique portrays a tired and drained attitude described as their "shoulders hanging and their heads tilted, while the oversized schoolbags draw them backwards". In winter they travel approximately the same time but are more exposed to dangers (see section 5.3.2.1 and 5.5.2.2).

In a conversation with pedestrians it was clear that the G3 learners don't have a sense of time or distance and therefore their answers include a variety of perspectives. However, these responses are interesting and important to consider, despite not necessarily being accurate 4/6 learners indicated that they walk more than 20 minutes to school over a distance of 1-2km. They

said that they are tired when they reach school and wished they could have travelled by bus. Despite feeling tired, all of the learners said they were always on time for school and felt excited about school, but some feel that they are more exposed to dangers due to a long travelling time. Interestingly the Principal perceives the learners who walk as less motivated to attend school.

The Principal noted that the learners who make use of private transport travel approximately 20-30 minutes. 2/4 of the T,B,C learners indicated that they don't always come on time for school for the reason that they sometimes "oversleep, Teacher...but the bakkie waits for me" and that "sometimes the tire is flat Teacher... I am scared to pass the cemetery; I am scared of the dead people". Boy 1 confirmed that when the tire is flat "[they] need to walk", which puts them in a similar position of exposure to dangers as the pedestrians.

For the bus passengers, teachers note that the average time on the bus is 30 minutes, "depending on the weather" (5 of the bus passengers indicated that the journey lasts more than 20 minutes, also noting that it is too time-consuming). However, a concern for staff is the gravel roads these learners need to travel on for 1.5 – 2km to the bus stop. In contradiction to what the bus driver said, 7 agreed that the bus is late in the mornings and 3 indicated that the bus doesn't wait for them when they are late, reverting to the fear of being kidnapped or exposed to dangers. It was also found that learners feel intensely saddened, scared and unsure of what to do when the bus is late.

I asked them about this:

**What happens when the bus comes late? How does it make you feel?**

Girl 2: Scared.

**Why do you feel scared?**

Girl 2: I am scared somebody else wants to pick me up.

Researcher asks a general question, Girl 3 answers.

**Who else wants to add something to the conversation?**

Girl 3: I feel sad when the bus is late, because I am scared that they will steal me.

**Okay, so you are afraid they will steal you. And you?** (to Girl 4)

Girl 4: I am scared to be late because then the teachers are mad at us.

**Okay.**

Researcher to Boy 2.

**How do you feel when the bus comes late?**

Boy 2: I am scared because the bakkies on the road travel very fast.

Researcher to girl 1.

**How do you feel when the bus is late?**

Girl 1: I feel scared the bus will tip over.

**Researcher:** So you are scared that the bus will tip over, so are you saying that the bus sometimes goes to fast?

**Girl 1:** Yes Teacher.

Researcher to Girl 3.

**What makes you feel unsafe?**

Girl 3: The bus drives to fast.

**Who else feels that the bus drives to fast?**

Researcher counts the hands rose.

**1, 2, 3, 4, 5.**

**Do you need to sit on each other's laps in the bus?**

Girl 1 and a few learners in the class: Yes Teacher.

Surprisingly the same fears and safety issues, as discussed Section 5.3.2.1, surface in this conversation. From the above conversation it is clear that learners perceive their travelling times and distances as too long and far due to exposure to safety hazards.

### 5.3.3 Summary

The main points to note from sections are:

Accessibility of transport was found to be a challenge but not impossible. For the pedestrians and the bus learners constraints such as sharp stones on gravel roads; the lack of pedestrian sidewalks; dangerous dogs on their route; ditches, and unsafe crossings were of concern.

It was found that the routes exposes all learners to similar potential victimization or assault, especially for the bus learners when the bus is late and for the T,B,C learners when they need to walk due to a flat tire. Bullying on the transport was also a great concern for all the motorized learners. Also, all three groups felt that their travelling time is too time-consuming and they believe they would have been safer when using a different MoT. However, the perception of staff was contradicted findings showed that walking to school was a fun event for pedestrians and definitely not preventing them from attending school.

As indicated in the beginning, the expectation was that pedestrian learners would be the disadvantaged group. However, this was proven unfounded and in contradiction to the beginning assumption, and what literature suggests, since all learners experience similar barriers. The next section elaborates on the emotional impacts of the MoT described above.

## 5.4 Emotional well-being

The emotional well-being of individuals is one of the most complex aspects of humanity and as the literature suggests produces many internal barriers that inhibit growth and development. This section is divided into two interrelated parts. Part 1 reports on the learners' experiences and

staff perceptions of events and factors that have had an emotional impact on them, while part 2 discusses the need for professional support structures after traumatic experiences.

#### 5.4.1 Learners' and staff experiences

The overall indication from learners was that they have experienced emotional trauma but unfortunately have not received adequate professional support to deal with this. This trauma occurs on two levels.

Firstly, as the G3 head noted, the learners' main struggles come from their home environments. Their home environments vulnerably expose especially the younger learners who are easily influenced, to various factors such as partying, drugs, alcohol abuse and sexual activities that create emotional instability. This familial instability she believes hinders their psychological development and causes poor educational performance. Consequently, the school prioritises the protection of the learners (from injury and accidents) but the Principal noted that in the end the learners have to make their own decisions (see section 5.5.4.1 RSE).

Secondly, there are the stresses invoked for learners in getting to school. The TQ's indicated that the learners who walk to school are 'occasionally' traumatized and scared when they reach school, substantiating why they need protection. Fortunately none of the pedestrians in this sample have been in accidents themselves, but they have been exposed to accident-related traumas that as the comments below show, remind them of the accidents that have happened at the school.

Researcher to Boy 2.

**Has there been a fast car that almost hit you?**

Boy 2: Yes, Teacher.

**How did you feel when the car almost hit you?**

Boy 2: Scared teacher.

**So you're telling me you felt scared. And afterwards, did you feel apprehensive about walking to school?**

Boy 2: Yes, I did.

I asked the learners about their emotions after perceiving these accidents:

**How did you feel when you saw learner Y being hit by the car (and die in the road)?**

Girl 1: Very sad teacher.

**Who saw how the accident happened?**

Girl 2: I did. The Red Cross helicopter came to fetch learner Y in the road.... When the helicopter came I saw her lay very still in the road.

Researcher to Girl 2.

**How did your heart feel when you saw this horrible incident?**

Girl 2: Very sore Teacher.

**When you returned to school after the accident, were there some adults who talked to you about the incident, perhaps asking you if you are okay or how you feel about it?**

Girl 2: The teacher talked to us about the incident.... she asked if we felt okay... we told her how we felt (very sad).

Judging from Girl 2's response, clearly there wasn't sufficient debriefing or psychologists for the learners' after learner Y's accident. The G3 teacher substantiated this, explaining that one psychologist visited the school but didn't spend enough time with the learners to really make a difference.

With the T,B,C learners' the topic of the influence of trauma on learners willingness to attend school was necessary for in-depth understanding of the learners perspective of death. It was clear that they grasped the finality of death but that they struggled to process it (they answered all the questions, such as these above, with reference to the deaths of the learners in the accidents).

In reference to the accidental trauma bus learners have experiences, it is important to consider their feelings and emotions following these events, especially considering their willingness to make use of motorized transport again. Girl 5 noted that she was scared to ride in the bus again, after she saw the accident involving the bakkie (see section 5.3.1.1), but she needed to get to school.

Findings shown that learners perceived the school environment as a safe and protected environment and they trusted their teachers, and therefore was willing to overcome their fears, to travel by the bus again, in order to reach a place of safety.

The G3 teacher said that the death of a learner in her class (learner X) left her and her class with major emotional disturbances/scars. She explained that when learner X and a friend had to cross the freeway, they hesitated and ran when a motor passing a truck, and learner X died on the scene. She elaborated on the emotional trauma she had to face after the death of learner X especially to explain to her class why learner X wasn't in her seat anymore and why another learner was occupying the desk. She saw much anger and behavioural problems from some of the learners who could not accept the finality of X's death. This incident left the G3 teacher in a vulnerable position since she was the only adult who could support her class. Both she and the class needed professional help but in this case it was not forthcoming.

#### 5.4.2 Emotional support structures

The importance of emotional support is recognised by the WCED (see WCED, 2014). and the school, but the implementation thereof was found to be a challenge. These emotional support structures include the professional support provided by the WCED. Whenever such supports aren't available or sufficient the responsibility deflects to the teachers and parents and also creates instability within the learner.

#### 5.4.2.1 Professional support

Due to unstable home environments and exposure to potential traumatic events the responsibility rests on the school Principal to report any traumatic events to the WCED who then sends a supporting team to the school (WCED, 2014). The provided WCED professional support team consists out of specialists who include a psychologist, a social worker and learning support advisor. It is expected that this team would counsel, debrief and test learners within an allocated circuit but unfortunately due to time constraints and work overload, or are not always available, they spend not enough time with these traumatized learners to really make a difference to their emotional health. It is ironic that these rural learners, described by the Principal as 'fragile' and 'vulnerable', are the group of people who do not receive adequate trauma counselling and debriefing but who most need it. Despite these lacks the responsibility of support is shifted to teachers and parents.

#### 5.4.2.2 Shifting of professional support to the parents and teachers

When professional help is not available the responsibility for support automatically deflects onto parents and teachers. With respect to parental support, it seems that most learners in the research school are raised by their grandparents who, according to the G3 teacher, do not have the capacity to fully support the learners due to "the generation gap". In these cases, the teacher becomes the significant other. Unfortunately despite their expressed willingness to do so, very few teachers have any training to enable proper support of learners.

In practice, the G3 teacher explained that the staff encourage learners to talk to them about anything. This develops trust and mutual respect between teachers and learners. The learners thus feel at ease to share their emotional burdens with their teacher who then also carries the 'responsibility' of addressing the issue, but this comes at a cost. Findings showed that it isn't solely the learners who need trauma counselling, the staff too felt that they need emotional support.

The Principal elaborated on one of the accidents that happened in front of the school and how it impacted her as a person. She sobbingly explained that when she saw another learner (learner

Y's) accident it reminded her of her brother who has died of a brain clot. The death of learner Y awakened a deep need to talk about what she saw and experienced but she hadn't had the opportunity of counselling (speaking to the lack of sufficient counselling at the schools). She explained that staff always need to look strong and in control for the sake of the learners but in reality are sometimes dealing with their own battles and stresses and therefore need professional counsellors to help them through traumatic events such as the deaths of the four learners as referred to earlier.

In an attempt to succeed in their responsibility of supporting learners, the school invites support specialists to the school to educate the parents on the reality of specific topics e.g. drugs; violence; alcohol, and neglect. This encourages the parents to be more aware of their child's behaviour and signs of emotional instability leading to educational consequences.

#### 5.4.3 Emotional instability and educational consequences

When traumatic events occur, staff noted that learners' ability to perform optimally was affected. The Foundation Phase Head said that emotionally traumatized learners are easily identified by the "vagueness in their eyes" and by being "mentally absent" or having negative attitudes, also by their inability to finish their tasks or participate in the classroom, their lower marks and lastly their low motivation to learn.

Learner responses substantiate this description. Boy 1 explained that "whenever something bad happens, I cannot stop thinking about it ... then when I come into the classroom my concentration is affected and therefore he struggle to work". Practically, the G3 head handles such learners by allowing them a 'time-out', leaving them to rest and assigning easier tasks to them. The Foundation Phase Head and other staff assuredly stated that staff work individually with these learners through the provision of "frequent" academic support.

According to the G3 teacher, these learners are usually those who walk far distances to school or to the bus. It was noted by the learners that their teacher always asks them about their feelings, which helps them to share if they feel it is necessary.

#### 5.4.4 Summary

The need for emotional support for both learners and teachers cannot be ignored. For these learners to rise above their circumstances, they need to be protected from harm and receive adequate professional support. The appropriate specialist should be assigned to school for the appropriate amount of time in order to make an effective difference.

Learners revealed the need to talk to adults about their feelings and emotions, relieving them from the burden of carrying their hurt all by themselves. When learners don't have the opportunity to share their hurt these burdens will influence all domains of their well-being. There are WCED call centre helplines available to report any traumatic event.

The impact of home stresses and the effects of unsafe travel influence the learners on all three domains of their well-being, especially educationally. This is discussed below.

### 5.5 Educational well-being

The literature talks about the influences, such as the home environment, SES, poverty, family structures and substance abuse, and importantly the effect of the availability of transport on learners' ability to perform optimally. The educational well-being of learners is the most important domain to consider within the schooling system. This section reports on three key educational areas: performance, attendance and other factors influencing the educational well-being of a learner.

#### 5.5.1 Learner Performance and MoT

This section reports on the impact of MoT on learner performance with the assumption that pedestrians are more likely to perform poorly than those with motorised transport. Two levels of performance are considered here:

5.5.1.1 WCED Systemic Test performance (to establish the overall accomplishment of the school)  
 The WCED Systemic Test results for mean score and pass rates shown in Tables 4 below indicate that there is a wide gap between the school standards and the desired Provincial and District standards for mathematics and home language.

Table 4: WCED Systemic Mean Scores by School, Cape Winelands district and Western Cape, 2014-2016

Year	Mathematics			Language		
	School	Cape Winelands	Western Cape	School	Cape Winelands	Western Cape
2014	40.4	47.3	52.0	36.5	41.3	45.0
2015	43.6	48.1	53.1	34.1	41.1	45.0
2016	36.1	49.3	53.1	33.1	41.6	45.5

(Source: WCED Systemic Results from School Records)

The pass rates as seen below:

Table 5: WCED Systemic Pass Rates by School, Cape Winelands district and Western Cape, 2013-2016

Year	Mathematics			Language		
	School	Cape Winelands	Western Cape	School	Cape Winelands	Western Cape
2013	29.4	46.6	55.0	11.8	28.1	37.0
2014	38.1	45.6	54.0	19.0	33.3	42.4
2015	41.1	48.7	57.6	17.9	34.2	42.4
2016	25.5	-	57.7	19.6	-	42.5

(Source: WCED Systemic Results from School records)

Firstly, it is clear that the Cape Winelands district is performing *below* the provincial averages and passing rates, and that the school itself is performing *well below* both the expected Provincial and District averages and has been declining. By any standards, this is a low performing school.

The reasons for these results given by staff are interesting and varied. These include:

- Compulsory grade promotion which means some learners is under-prepared for the grade.
- Foetal alcohol syndrome learners who lower the averages.
- Learners being shy and feeling incompetent, and having sexual drives which distract them.
- Learners poor abilities in reading comprehension, memorisation and understanding (curiously not demonstrated in the internal assessment results – see below).
- The test itself which requires a high paced response.
- Changes made to the normal classroom arrangements e.g. writing in a different classroom; sitting in rows instead of in groups of four; and having test supervisors of a different race, all of which cause increased stress levels and intimidates learners.

Clearly teachers recognise the educational weaknesses in their school and have plans in place for improvement. For example, the G3 teacher feels motivated to improve her systemic results in

2017 by at least 10% and to do this she works weekends on her tasks for the following week and attends all available conferences to educate her. She explained that she uses techniques such as individual attention and group work, and she explains concepts visually with beads and pictures. In general the teachers provide assistance to learners whose pace is slower by reading for them and explaining the questions to them. This is possibly because of the G3 head response on her learners who she portrays as very shy and withdrawn due to their home circumstances - she believes that she needs to urgently assist them, for them to excel above their circumstances.

The school prepares their learners for the WCED Systemic tests by swapping classes, covering posters and changing the normal setting of the learners so that they should feel threatened when they write the Systemic Tests. The G3 teacher explains that she teaches for better performance and therefore scrutinises the modules/sections that are discussed at the annual feedback meeting of the Systemic Test outcomes she uses previous question papers to train her learners in answering specific types of questions).

Apart from dealing with the stresses caused by the testing regime, the G3 teacher also noted that learners' home environment, teacher enthusiasm, transport and the age of the learner, the quality of food given to the learners at home and at school, the weather and the distance and time learners travel (sometimes alone) all contribute meaningfully to poor academic outcomes. She mentioned transport specifically stating that learners who walk to transport or school are less motivated to come to school and learners on the bus have higher motivational levels.

While these interventions and awareness are positive responses to the low performance it is salutary to compare these results with the results of the school's internal assessments which are discussed below.

### 5.5.1.2 Learners internal school performance (to see the impact of the MoT)

Table 6 below shows the learners school performance in relation to their MoT from 2015 (G1) to 2017 (G3). For 2015 and 2016 term 4's (final) performance marks and for 2017 the first term (final) performance marks are used (the scores used are those of the National Coding System)<sup>7</sup>.

Table 6: Performance averages by MoT, 2015-2017

		Home Language	1 <sup>st</sup> Additional Language	Mathematics	Life Skills
<b>2015 Grade 1</b>	Pedestrians n=6	6.2	6.4	6.8	6.4
	T,B,C n=4	5.5	5.0	6.5	6.0
	Bus n=10	5.1	5.3	5.7	5.4
	<b>All average n=20</b>	5.6	5.5	6.3	5.9
<b>2016 Grade 2</b>	Pedestrian n=6	5.0	6.2	5.0	5.0
	T,B,C n=4	4.5	5.8	5.3	4.5

<sup>7</sup> National Coding System Grade 1-3

NATIONAL CODING SYSTEM GRADE 1-3		
RATING CODE	ACHIEVEMENT DESCRIPTION	MARKS %
7	Outstanding Achievement	80 - 100%
6	Meritorious Achievement	70 - 79%
5	Substantial Achievement	60 - 69%
4	Adequate Achievement	50 - 59%
3	Moderate Achievement	40 - 49%
2	Elementary Achievement	30 - 39%
1	Not Achieved	0 - 29%

	Bus n=10	3.0	3.6	3.2	3.0
	<b>All average N=20</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>2017 Grade 3</b>	Pedestrian n=6	5.8	4.8	6.5	5.7
	T,B,C n=4	5.3	4.3	6.8	6.8
	Bus n=10	2.9	2.7	5.2	4.5
	<b>All average N=20</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.6</b>

(Source: School WCED final schedules 2015-2017 averages)

These results are shown graphically below:

Figure 2: Performance averages for 2015 by MoT

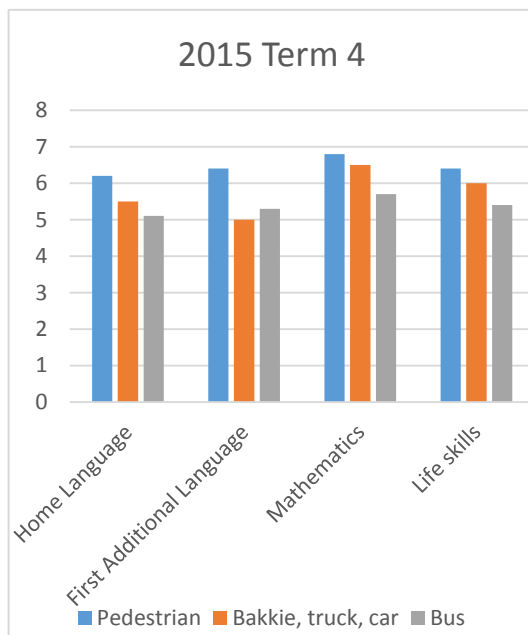


Figure 3: Performance averages for 2016 by MoT

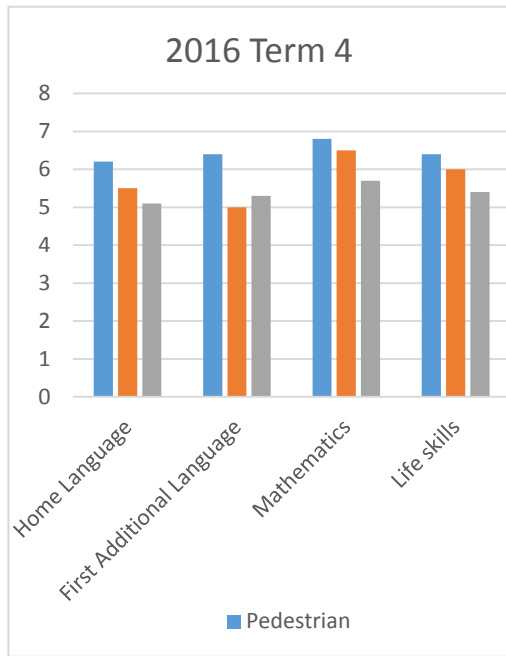
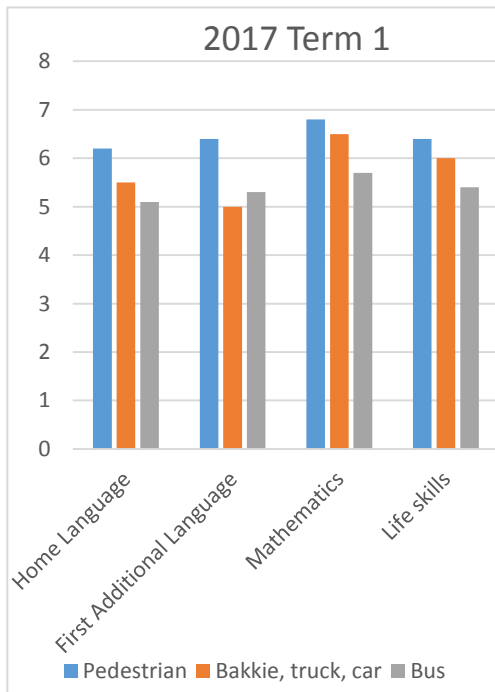


Figure 4: Performance averages for 2017 by MoT



There are 4 key findings to be derived from this data.

Firstly, the school's internal results are much *higher* than the performance on the external WCED tests. For example the internal performance average for mathematics 2015 were, 6.3 ( $\pm$  72%) compared with 43.6% for the Systemic Tests and in 2016, 4.5 ( $\pm$  55%) compared with 36.1%. For language in 2015 the school's results are, 5.6 ( $\pm$  65%) compared with 34.1% for the Systemic Tests and for 2016, 4.1 ( $\pm$  50%) compared with 33.1%. These school-based averages are *far above* the Provincial and District average scores. This suggests that there are pedagogical issues that need to be addressed.

The second finding here is that, in contrast to expectations, the pedestrians performed better than those who have transport. Possible reasons for this surprising result could be that the teachers believe the pedestrians are worse off, resulting in them subconsciously providing the pedestrians with more attention in class, leading to higher performance. Another reason could be the positive attitudes of these learners towards school and their high motivation to attend school despite their MoT, and therefore they perform to their motivation levels.

The third finding is that the pedestrians and the T,B,C learners perform in *similar* performance brackets which suggests once again that the pedestrian learners are not disadvantaged academically relatively to the others, as is believed by the teachers.

Fourthly, what was interesting is how far *below* the others the bus learners are. The reasons for this are not obvious, but may be related to their distance from the school and perhaps more impoverished circumstances.

These findings show that MoT is not the determining factor influencing learners' performance, but rather one influence of many that could ease the learners' school progress. Table 7 below shows the average performance for all three MoT across all four subjects for 2015-2017.

Table 7: Average performance by MoT across all four subjects, 2015-2017

	Average performance across all four subjects		
	Pedestrian	T,B,C	Bus
2015	6.2-6.8 (70-79%)	5.0-6.5 (60-75%)	5.1-5.7 (60-69%)
2016	5.0-6.1 (60-70%)	4.5-5.8 (55-69%)	3.0-3.6 (40-49%)
2017	4.8-5.6 (55-65%)	4.3-6.8 (50-79%)	2.9-5.2 (35-60%)

(Source: School WCED Final Schedules 2015-2017 averages)

As can be seen, the bus learners have performed at a much *lower* level than the rest of the learners throughout their Foundation Phase career. To understand these surprising results, both the staff and learners were asked about the impact of the MoT on their energy and concentration levels and their performance.

#### 5.5.1.3 Staff responses

Both the Principal and the G3 teacher firmly believe that MoT does have a determining influence on learners' achievement marks. Despite the results in Table 7, they believed that the bus learners are the highest performing group because they are "able to rest and think in the bus", while the pedestrians are the weakest learners.

The G3 teacher is convinced that pedestrian learners have a lower motivation to work in the classroom; that these learners have a tendency to work slower and be more tired in the class, and that they are the lowest performing group. She elaborated that she has to explain concepts to them again and again due to their low attention span, and send them back to their desks to re-do their work. The Foundation Phase Head sees five factors as influences on their energy and ability to concentrate:

- Long distances while carrying heavy schoolbags.
- Extreme weather circumstances: "you can see those who live far from school are more tired...especially in the summer when temperatures are very high".
- Lower quality of sleep: "some of the learners must wake up very early (to walk to school) are noticeably more lethargic than the other learners who are sitting up straight".

- The time of night the pedestrian learners go to bed, and the circumstances in which they sleep.
- Parents feeding their children late at night despite a long day at school.

Overall, as these remarks show and despite the evidence, the teachers believe that the pedestrian learners are disadvantaged relative to those who have some form of transport. The learners however have different views.

#### 5.5.1.4 Learner responses

In the focus group with the 10 pedestrian learners focus was on the influence of dangers on their concentration:

**You said in your questionnaire that you feel tired when you arrive at school, are you tired because you walk to school??**

Girl 1: Yes Teacher.

**Do you think you would be less tired if you could travel by bus?**

Girl 1: Yes Teacher.

**Are you able to concentrate on your school work?**

Girl 1: No, I don't struggle to concentrate.

The minority (2/6) of the pedestrians felt tired and struggle to concentrate (they were the highest performing group) whereas the T,B,C learners were found to enjoy school and 4/4 emphasised their high energy levels, although they fear the risks associated with their transport. They also all agreed that they enjoy class and participated in the class discussions. 3/4 explained that they felt privileged to make use of their MoT which leads to them having more energy and a longer concentration span. All of them apparently love school because they know that they will arrive safely at school without any challenges on their route (they perform similarly to the pedestrians).

The 10 bus learners, who performed the worst, elaborated on what influences their concentration in the classroom:

**You have indicated that you have difficulties concentrating in the class, tell me more about your experiences.**

Boy 2: The learners bully me on the bus.

**So when they bully you on the bus, you feel that it is difficult to concentrate on your school work because you are thinking about what happened on the bus, is that right?**

Boy 2: Yes Teacher.

**So do you sometimes feel tired due to emotional constraints and the inability to concentrate?**

Boy 2: Yes Teacher.

**Why do you think you feel tired?**

Boy 2: Because the events are stuck in my head then I don't know what to write and what to do in the classroom.

**Do you tell your teacher about it?**

Boy 2: No, but my teacher yells at me saying "what do you think will happen if you keep on daydreaming?!" but I can't concentrate because I think about what happened on the bus.

**Do you still then feel motivated to do your school work?**

Boy 2: Yes Teacher.

**So you do want to do well in your school work?**

Boy 2: Yes Teacher.

As can be seen the bus learners' perceptions vary widely from the actual data and even more from the teachers' perceptions and what literature suggests. Learners seemed excited about school despite occasionally feeling tense about potential safety risks, which indirectly influences their concentration and motivation (they were found to be the lowest performing group).

#### 5.5.1.5 Summary

Surprisingly, there is no observable link between the MoT and the educational performance of the learners. The pedestrians are just as likely to get the same marks or perform on *higher* standards as other learners. Therefore, the factors contributing to learning and performance are much more complex than a silver bullet like subsidized transport. This means that, with or without transport, schools need to take a more critical look at their internal practices. While external factors such as transport should not be neglected, there are clearly more important issues within the classroom impacting on the learners' performance.

One of these issues is attendance, discussed below.

#### 5.5.2 Absenteeism

An original assumption was that the MoT would have a specific impact on the pedestrian learners who would be more absent than the learners using motorized transport. Although the staff indicated that the school rarely has problems with absenteeism and drop-out, it was important to track absenteeism to see if these beliefs held up.

This section discusses the three issues of (1) how the MoT influences school attendance, (2) and inter-relatedly seasonal and (3) gender impacts. To observe the effect over time, absenteeism was tracked for the same cohort of learners from over three consecutive years from 2015(G1) to 2017(G3). One summer month, February, and one winter month, August, were identified to track the seasonal effects.

##### 5.5.2.1 The impact of the MoT on attendance

This original assumption was based on staff interviews who thought that the bus learners are in general the more dedicated learners who perform higher academically, attend classes more willingly, participate in the classroom and are more focused and relaxed when reaching school. The Principal assigned this behaviour to the assumed "emotional and physical security they receive by traveling on the bus".

Table 8 below shows the average number of days absent for the learners by MoT from when they entered school in 2015 as G1's.

Table 8: Total number of days absent by MoT for February and August, 2015 - 2017

Year and month	Pedestrian (n=6)	T,B,C (n=4)	Bus (n=10)
2015 February and August	36 Avg. 6.0 days/learner	29 Avg. 7.2 days/learner	60 Avg. 6.0 days/learner
2016 February and August	26 Avg. 4.3 days/learner	9 Avg. 2.2 days/learner	30 Avg. 3.0 days/learner
2017 February	11 Avg. 1.8 days/learner	5 Avg. 1.2 days/learner	32 Avg. 3.2 days/learner
2015-2017 Tot. # of days absent	73 Avg. 12.16 days/learner	43 Avg. 10.8 days/learner	122 Avg. 12.2 days/learner

(Source: School's hand written absenteeism records)

As can be seen from the table above, the pedestrians and bus learners had a *similar* number of average days absent per learner (12.16 versus 12.20) and that the T,B,C learners seem to attend school *more regularly* with an average of 10.8 days absent per learner over the 3 year period. Overall it appears that those who have private transport attend school most regularly.

These results contradict many statements made about the disadvantages faced by pedestrian learners (Goldstein, 2004; Hine, 2009; Van Goeverden & de Boer, 2013; Sifuna, 2007, and Equal Education, 2017a-c). Likewise the school staff perceptions that the learners who have subsidized transport will attend school more regularly than pedestrian learners are seen to be inaccurate.

### 5.5.2.2 Seasonal impact on attendance

The assumptions here were that absenteeism would increase in winter. The G3 teacher and the Principal believe that while absenteeism is not a major issue for their school, there are seasonal effects. They explained that in winter all learners are subject to problems with transport due to the weather, but that this does not affect their attitudes to school and their energy levels, noting that in winter learners are “more willing to work, they are less tired” and also “hav[e] a higher concentration span” due to cooler temperatures. However, the Principal said that pedestrians are willing to walk in the rain despite being drenched, but the G3 teacher cautioned that motivation and a positive attitude aren’t always enough to get the learner to school. She finds them less willing to come to school during the winter months, specifically June/July, when the “hard rain comes” or when there are hazardous situations, for example “the time when the river came down like a flood”.

Table 9 below shows the total number of days absent for the whole school (G1-G7) for term 1 and 3 by season from 2015-2017.

Table 9: Total number of days absent for G1-7 for Term 1 and term 3, 2015-2017

Year: 2015	Total number of learners in the grade	Term 1 – January to March (summer)	Term 3 –July to September (winter)
G1	40	69 days	133 days
G2	53	44 days	143 days
G3	55	104 days (1.9)	134 days (2.4)
G4	44	17 days	96 days
G5	29	17 days	108 days
G6	52	75 days	0 days
G7	33	38 days	65 days

Year: 2016	Total number of learners in the grade	Term 1 – January to March	Term 3 – July to September
G1	36	66 days	140 days
G2	36	31 days	50 days
G3	51	121 days (2.4)	89 days (1.7)
G4	50	80 days	119 days
G5	35	17 days	45 days
G6	25	39 days	0 days
G7	48	31 days	0 days
Year: 2017	Total number of learners in the grade	Term 1 – January to March	Term 3 – July to September
G1	57	139 days	-
G2	40	30 days	-
G3	38	79 days (2.0)	-
G4	49	83 days	-
G5	46	69 days	-
G6	35	26 days	-
G7	24	37 days	-

(Source: School's hand written notes)

The data showed that in 2015 there was *greater* G3 absenteeism in winter than in summer, but the reverse in 2016. In summer 2015-2017 there was little variation for the G3's. This makes it difficult to interpret the impact of the weather.

However, despite the data above, which shows a variable impact of weather on attendance, there are other consequences which the teachers noted. The G3 teacher elaborated on the dangerous situations in winter, e.g. pedestrians are less visible and dangers accompanied when

driving in the bus. She stated that “there is more tension, and learners are more stressed when they arrive at school in the winter”. It was noted that specifically the pedestrians need to master various situations which influence their willingness to attend school, their energy levels and also their concentration. They are restricted by physical factors such “damp clothes”, feeling cold and sick, also emotional stress caused by dark mornings without supervision or assistance, vehicles flashing lights of the vehicles and poor visibility that causes anxiety and fear of not knowing whether they will arrive safely at school (this leads to learners who stay at home to avoid the possibility of being exposed to a dangerous situation).

With regards to learners who get soaked, the staff said that they suggest that the learners walk to school in casual daywear bringing their school clothes in a plastic bag. They also have a heater for the learners to warm themselves before entering the classroom. 3/6 of pedestrians indicated that they dry themselves at school and the other 3 explained that they “wear rain jackets” when travelling to school.

The G3 teacher explained that in some of the houses it is extremely cold “with holes in the windows where it the rain comes in ... but in summer it is all right... in winter the learner shivers”. She continued: “learners do get food at school, however, when your body is cold and you shiver, it can’t be ‘lekker’... if we could know where they sleep... maybe they don’t even have blankets”. She also said that in some instances parents are too lazy to get up and dress the learners, thus encouraging them to stay at home.

Summer poses different challenges (see section 5.3.2.1). While the researcher was busy with the field work, the school closed earlier one day due to high temperatures. The Principal explained that the closure was specifically in the interest of the pedestrian learners who had to walk home in scorching heat. However, all of the learners said they come to school every day in the summer and enjoy school more in the summer than winter. The teachers however experience learners “shutting down” in the afternoons due to very hot classrooms and temperatures that can reach 45 degrees.

Overall though and contrary to expectations, the pedestrians indicated a willingness to attend school despite challenging weather conditions:

**And why do you like walking in the rain?**

Girl 1: I love walking in the rain because then I can use my umbrella... it is an orange umbrella.

**Wow! Awesome, then you are visible!**

**Do you feel that you would have been safer (less exposed and vulnerable) on the bus, especially in the winter?**

Girl 3: Yes.

**Okay, yes. Because in the winter we get drenched right?**

Class: Yes.

**How do you feel in the winter when you see it is raining outside but you need to start walking to school? Do feel like coming to school?**

Boy 1: The bakkie brings us in the winter when it rains.

Boy 2: There are people who chase us in the rain... and they scare us. They look at us when we pass the dam.

**Okay, so when they scare you, you are scared to walk, right? But perhaps if you were in the bus then maybe you wouldn't have been scared to walk?**

Class: Yes.

The responses of the pedestrians portrayed a positive attitude towards school.

All of the T,B,C learners said that they do not skip school in the summer or winter since all of them feel excited to learn each and every day. As for the bus learners 9/10 come to school every day in summer but for 6 winter attendance is more of a challenge.

**Why do you come to school in the winter less often?**

Girl 1: It is cold in the winter, and I am scared (of the dark).

**It is cold, so then you stay at home? Do you sometimes feel that the bus stop is to wet and cold and you don't feel like waiting in the rain?**

Girl 1: Yes Teacher.

**Who else wants to add something?**

Boy 1: We must wait longer and then we get wet. Just when we want to start walking the bus fortunately arrives

**Okay, anybody else for who it is a problem to wait for the bus in the rain ?**

Boy 2: Yes teacher!

(5 of the other learners also agree)

**What are some of the different reasons not coming to school in the winter?**

Boy 2: We get wet when it rains.

**How do you feel when you are soaking wet and then need to learn?**

Boy 2: Teacher, our backpacks and our school work get wet when it rains.

**So you books get wet, you are wet. Is it a pleasure to come to school in such circumstances?**

Boy 2 and other learners: No Teacher.

Generally all the learners experience school as pleasant but clearly the bus learners do have their challenges at the bus stop as well. Girl 1 notes that she is scared when she waits at the bus stop. Her fear could reflect in her school work and her behaviour in the classroom. For all learners travelling in the rain produces typical 'winter' challenges/fears e.g. their books are wet which hinders effective learning, they fear low visibility at the side of road and at the bus stops.

In the next section the impact of gender on attendance is discussed.

### [5.5.2.3 The impact of gender on attendance](#)

The assumption here was that male learners in general are likely to be more absent than females (see DBE School Realities, 2014a-2016a; Van Wyk et al., 2007).

The following Table 10 shows the current G3 learners daily attendance from when they were in G1 - by grade, seasons, and gender.

Table 10: Impact of gender on learner attendance from G1 (2015) to G3 (2017)

Year and month	Average number of days absent for male learners	Average number of days absent for female learners	Total number of days absent for male and female learners
2015 G1: February	0.61	0.67	24
2015 G1: August	2.23	2.06	82
2016 G2: February	0.35	0.20	11
2016 G2: August	0.77	0.33	22
2017 G3: February	0.74	0.95	32

(School's hand written absenteeism records)

Two results are apparent here. Firstly, where there are gender differences in attendance, these appear to be related to the season. From the data it is clear that males' attendance in winter is *poorer* than that of females. In February 2015, female learners were on average absent for 0.67 days per learner versus the male learners' 0.61 days per learner, but in August 2015 male learners were on average absent for 2.23 days per learner versus the females' 2.06 days per learner.

Attendance for 2016 was much *better*. For February 2016, female learners were on average absent for 0.20 days per learner versus the male learners 0.35 days per learner. In August 2016

male learners were on average absent for 0.77 days per learner versus the females 0.33 days per learner.

In 2017 female learners were on average absent for 0.95 days per learners versus the male learners 0.74 days per learner.

Secondly, winter has a marked impact on attendance. In February 2015 versus August 2015 the total number of days of absence for G1 increased from 24 days to 82 days, 3.4 times more for the winter month. In 2016, absenteeism of the G2 learners doubled from February (11 days) to August (22 days). This was not, however, the case in the summer of 2017 when the total number of days of absence for G3 was 32 days, an increase of 290% over February 2017, from February 2016. A possible reason for poor attendance, given by the Principal, was the sudden resignation of the previous Principal and an accompanying change in the school structure.

### 5.5.3 MoT, season and gender

As indicated, the 3 areas of MoT, season and gender have inter-related impacts. These are seen in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Absenteeism by MoT, season and gender, 2015-2017

Grade and year	FEBRUARY (SUMMER)					
	Male			Female		
	Pedestrian (n=2)	B,L,C (n=2)	Bus (n=4)	Pedestrian (n=4)	B,L,C (n=2)	Bus (n=6)
G1 2015	2	0	1	1	1	5
G2 2016	0	0	2	0	1	1
G3 2017	1	0	1	6	3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	3	0	4	7	5	10
	Avg. of 1.5 days / learner	Avg. of 0.0 days / learner	Avg. of 1.0 day / learner	Avg. of 1.6 days / learner	Avg. of 1.7 days / learner	Avg. of 1.7 days / learner
	AUGUST (WINTER)					
	Male			Female		
	Pedestrian (n=2)	B,L,C (n=2)	Bus (n=4)	Pedestrian (n=4)	B,L,C (n=2)	Bus (n=6)
G1 2015	5	0	9	5	2	8
G2 2016	1	0	5	0	1	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	6	0	14	5	3	11
	Avg. of 3.0 days / learner	Avg. of 0.0 days / learner	Avg. of 3.5 days / learner	Avg. of 1.3 days / learner	Avg. of 1.0 days / learner	Avg. of 1.8 days / learner

(Source: School attendance records 2015-2017)

This data shows firstly, with respect to the impact on attendance of MoT and season, that in summer (February) (across three consecutive years) the pedestrian learners were slightly *more*

absent than the bus passengers (1.5 days per male learner and 1.6 days per female learner vs. 1.0 days per male learner and 1.7 days per female learner). Those who had private transport were on average the *least* absent (0.0 for males and 1.7 for females). Contrary to expectations however, in winter, August, the pedestrian learners were slightly *less* absent than the bus passengers, with an average of 3.0 days per male learner and 1.3 days per female learner, versus the bus learners average of 3.5 days per male learner and 1.8 days per female learner.

In terms of gender differences, it was found that roughly *more* female learners than males tend to be absent in summer. In winter the male learners were *more* absent. A rough explanation may be that this is because, as the Principal and G3 teacher explained, the school is viewed as a “safe haven” for the learners, a place where they are fed and where they trust the adults and where there is mutual respect.

What was found is not what was expected and the differences were rather marginal. The differences between the MoT had surprisingly *no influence* on learners’ motivation to attend school; findings showed that pedestrians had high motivation and very positive attitudes. Furthermore, pedestrians were absent for approximately the *same* amount of time as the bus passengers, but contrary to expectation the learners using private transport were the *least* absent. With regards to seasonal impacts results were not what were anticipated. The impact of the weather on attendance was *variable*. Data showed that the female learners attend school more regularly in the winter than the males (who attend school more regularly in summer).

One would have expected that MoT, seasons and gender would influence the educational well-being of the learner, but findings showed that having private transport is the only factor that makes a difference in attendance (assuming that attending school makes a difference in the learners’ educational performance). Thus, whether the learner is a pedestrian or travel by bus, MoT has a limited impact in terms of seasonal attendance<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Also see Appendix 3 Table A9 for more absenteeism information

#### 5.5.4 Other Factors Impacting Educational well-being

Thus far, the data has shown that despite what may be expected of a rural school serving relatively poor learners generally positive attitudes towards school prevail. This is notwithstanding the weak results and low seasonal attendance. These outcomes may in part be attributed to three important levels of support that learners receive.

##### 5.5.4.1 WCED School Support

WCED school support includes the school feeding scheme, road safety education and learning and teaching material support.

##### The National School Nutritional Program

As literature suggests, when learners receive nutritional food, they will most likely develop, grow and perform to higher standards (see Obeta, 2014; Walsh, Dunnhauser & Joubert, 2001).

At this school, the National School Nutritional Program (NSNP) offers two plates of food per day to all the learners. The first plate is served by volunteers from 07:00 to 07:45 and the second at 12:20. According to the Principal, for the pedestrian learners who walk relatively far distances to school, the food scheme (and the availability of water) is vital for their physiological and educational well-being. Staff explained that the food scheme contributes materially to growth, development, a higher level of self-determination, motivation and a longer concentration spans especially for the younger learners.

On the other side, learners were asked if they used the Scheme, and their responses were as follows:

- 2/6 of the pedestrians eat *all* their meals at the school.
- 5/10 of the bus learners eat all their meals at the school (the rest bring something from home to eat).
- 3/4 of the T,B,C learners eat all their meals at the school (the others eat at home as well).

Surprisingly, the pedestrians seem to be the least dependent on the food scheme. This is possibly because their parents realise the impact of a long walk to school on their well-being,

and therefore provide them with food at home as well. In contrast to the learner responses, the staff believed that learners have “rarely” eaten when they arrive at school and that the majority of learners eat “90%” of the time at the food scheme. There is thus a disjuncture between the teacher and the learners’ views on the impact of the feeding scheme on learners overall well-being.

Another attempt by Government to ensure safety for learners and ease their educational journey is through the inclusion of RSE into the CAPS curriculum. This is discussed below.

### Road Safety Education (RSE)

The assumption was that the provision of RSE decreases the risk of road accidents due to learners who are more aware of the dangers on the roads.

Within the CAPS curriculum (2011b) there is reference to road safety from Foundation Phase onwards (see Chapter 3). During the research period I observed the G3 class discussing the topic ‘unsafe situations in the street’. They were asked to create their own street with pictures and write sentences about the dangerous situations that may occur. The Foundation Phase Head thereafter explained the topic in more detail:

“Safety is included in all grades CAPS syllabus e.g. we (G3) have the safety of your body and then the rest have safety at school, safety at home, so we focus on the bodily safety... starting with wounds, injuries, diseases people get and then move on to the street... where other grades do traffic regulations we do the dangers on the road. The learners need to identify and then motivate why something is classified as dangerous ...”

Important was the recognition by staff that RSE is a daily task and should be prioritised not only formally, as prescribed in the curriculum, but also informally. (3/6 pedestrians love playing next to the road, but all of them is very careful of fast vehicles and 5 agreed that the teachers warn them regularly about road dangers). The Principal explains that when learners wait for their transport at the side of the road rather than in the school ground, the school highlights these occurrences by addressing them in the weekly assembly using practical examples to explain and encourage the learners not to wait in the road.

Despite this, the Foundation Phase Head, the Principal and the bus driver admit that it is challenging to educate the learners since they “forget all that was taught the moment the bell rings, exposing them once again to dangerous situations”. They said the learners “forget all that was taught the moment the bell rings, exposing them once again to dangerous situations”. The importance of RSE is neither ignored nor unaddressed at this school and the teachers do approach this topic as priority, formally and informally. This contributes largely to the knowledge of learners and subconsciously to their behaviour while travelling.

#### [Learning support teacher and LTSM](#)

The WCED provides Q1 schools with the necessary Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) at the beginning of the year. LTSM includes all educational materials that are necessary for optimal learning such as CD’s, posters, textbooks, stationary, workbooks, computers and software, library materials, and educational board games.

The learning support teacher, who is responsible for learners that experience learning difficulties and challenges, is contracted by the WCED as part of a team of support specialists (see section 5.4.2.1). In the research school the learning support teacher visits the school twice monthly. Unfortunately, the school does not have an after school support programme to assist learners with their homework and keep them occupied until their parents are home.

The G3 teacher feels that the need to equip learners with the necessary professional support, LTSM and trained teachers is of vital importance. She is grateful for the LTSM provided but believes that the need for more trained teachers and a stable and secure learning environment, with the support specialists provided, are much needed and that the learners will then be educationally better off, despite their poor home environments.

In the next section school-based support services are briefly discussed.

#### 5.5.4.2 School-based support

##### Teacher support

The classroom of the G3 learners contained with 30+ learners to one teacher. The teacher feels overwhelmed with a hefty workload, administration and disciplinary cases she needs to handle that lead to her being absent from the classroom. This results in minimal one-on-one attention and poor understanding of the work or any form of in-depth knowledge. Her learners are her first priority and therefore she compromises on all her tasks e.g. by taking them in different groups of competencies, having these groups perform different types of tasks on the same subject. She explains that one group will e.g. be busy with drawing while the other group will be writing and another group will be reading and talking. She does this in order to challenge all her learners at the level they are able to perform and hopefully improve.

For learners to reach a level of self-determination and optimal functioning they need to overcome their daily educational struggles, partly due to poor home environments. Internally, the G3 teacher focuses on equipping her learners through motivation, assistance and positive reinforcement. She maintains a policy of mutual trust and honesty that results in learners with high levels of self-confidence.

She makes use of diary entries (especially in the school holidays) to gain better understanding of her learner's daily living experiences in order to provide stronger support for her learners and their parents. She also uses different teaching methods such as examples of real life situations in group work and focus groups and uses visuals and descriptions to interest her learners and encourages them to write and speak.

The school supports their learners in the provision of transport whenever learners cannot participate in extra mural activities due to transport constrains, and dangerous roads late in the afternoons. The school recognises that these circumstances obstruct individual's holistic development and growth and therefore addresses the shortfall in their system.

### After school care facilities

Due to the lack of an after school care facility which the majority of the farms (on whom learners stay) provides after school care facilities, with a teacher to assist the learners with their homework. This type of afterschool facilities contribute largely towards the learners' educational well-being and also their physiological safety. The Principal notes that the need for an afterschool facility at the school was reported to the WCED and to the school's social workers, and funding was earmarked for an afterschool centre along with a crèche at the school but it is in the process.

In the next section the influence of parental support is discussed.

### 5.5.4.3 Parental involvement and the home environment

Learners' home environment plays a vital role in their development and growth, from all the domains of well-being. Decisions made by parents, e.g. about the MoT their children use, the provision of reflective gear and supervision, and assistance in the mornings, affects the child.

The school staff is convinced that home environment has a determining influence on the learners behaviour, educational abilities and "on learners motivation to attend school and do their work", according to the Principal. These influences are expanded by "the young learners' exposure, after hours, to the wrong crowds, and older children". They describe the home environments of the learners as 'occasionally' excellent (two pedestrians stated that their parents helped them with home-work and one of the learners friend helps her).

The G3 teacher believes in the involvement of parents in children's education, through assistance in their homework that noticeably adds to their success. She urges her learners to "cry in your mother's ears if she doesn't want to help...go cry", when the parents are not involved because she explains her frustration that when learners home work isn't done "it is time lost in the classroom where I could have done something else". She assists parents by being on time with the assessment dates and the work that needs to be covered, regularly encouraging them to visit her after school for any assistance, and she presents extra lessons on Saturdays to assist

anybody who needs support. She believes that “[the school] need more parents to become interested and involved in their child’s life. [Fortunately, it is noted] that in general our parents are involved and comfortable to come to school and talk”. Some of the parents do approach the school for assistance with their child’s work at the parent evenings once a term. However, the lack of interest in some homes is believed to be the reason for disciplinary problems that come from the same learners continually. They are experienced as aggressive, exhibiting bullying behaviour.

From the diary entries (as explained above) it was clear which parents are interested, and who are supporting their children with their homework tasks. Contradictory to finding the G3 head explained that the bus passengers have more time to spend on their diary entries and that they are the learners whose parents are generally more involved in their education.

The importance of support structures across a learners’ life is clearly indicated and a vital determiner for a child’s success.

Below the summary and conclusions of Chapter 5 is provided.

## 5.6 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter the main expectation was that pedestrians would be disadvantaged relative to other learners. However, the findings showed that irrespective of the MoT, physiologically and emotionally *all* learners are disadvantaged to some degree. Significantly, on the educational level there was *no* evidence that the pedestrians were disadvantaged either in terms of performance or attendance. On the contrary, they showed positive attitudes towards school.

For the physical transport conditions and physiological domain, accessibility was found to be a challenge but not impossible for *all* learners and against expectation the bus passengers were exposed to the same types of dangers as the pedestrians, especially at the bus stops (these dangers included victimization by gangsters and kidnappers; alcohol abuse by criminals next to the roads; fast cars; older learners bullying the younger ones, and dangerous dogs that chases

the learners). Daily dangers and safety issues potentially result in emotional stress, tiredness, anxiety and fear and cause a barrier to concentration and learning. All three groups of learners indicated that they would like to reach the school in a shorter time frame because they believe it will minimize their exposure to safety issues.

These learners were described as urgently in need of in-depth trauma counselling and debriefing but the lack of professional support has deflected the responsibility onto the untrained teachers and parents who then become the significant others. Not only the pedestrians, as much of literature focus on, but also young learners using motorised transport are emotionally affected on their journeys to school. The school was found to be a great support system for the learners, with positive and involved teachers who split their role between being the social worker, teacher and a mother. However, it would appear that these supporting roles may have been prioritised at the expense of the educator role. The learners' performance is at a low academic level and they are performing well *below* the Province and District.

Importantly, there was *no* apparent relationship found between the MoT used and performance. On average the pedestrians, surprisingly, were the highest performing group over three consecutive years. While the pedestrians and private transport users performed similarly, the bus passengers performed below both these groups.

In checking these outcomes against attendance, it was found that there were *no* major differences between the 3 MoTs in summer, and that in winter the bus passengers had the greatest absenteeism rates. Surprisingly, the private transport learners were the slightly less absent over both tracked months and. interestingly, this data contradicted staff opinion about the differences between the groups.

As indicated, staff was very supportive of the learners as evidenced by the provision of supporting factors such as a nutritional program; the availability of a learning support teacher; the provision of LTSM including a Road Safety Education programme; after school care facilities;

teacher support at the school, and parental support. All of these might be deemed necessary, and positively affect the learners' educational journey but these have not been sufficient to impact learner performance.

The data demonstrates that where transport does appear to make a significant difference is in the physiological and the emotional domains of well-being, and that these domains are not be to neglected or undervalued.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE FINAL STRETCH

#### 6.1 Introduction

The dissertation began with the main idea that when learners are provided with safe and reliable transport, sparing them potential traumatic events and physical danger, many more are likely to succeed in the educational system. The central question was ‘How does transport affect learners in the domains of physiological, emotional and educational well-being?’

In answering this, the dissertation firstly examined the national and provincial policies for learner transport and secondly and importantly expanded the field beyond the narrow frame of the provision of physical transport alone to the broader impact that transport has on rural primary school learners’ in the domains of physiological, emotional and educational well-being.

#### 6.2 National and Provincial Policies for Learner Transport

It is clear that learner transport provision is not a straightforward matter and definitely not the implied the silver bullet to ‘quality education’. The road to the current legislation is very difficult and complicated because it involves a whole range of stakeholders, from national, provincial and local level. These stakeholders run from School Governing Bodies, through to the Minister responsible for the implementation of the policy and therefore improved communication and coordination between different stakeholders and specific guidelines to divided needs to be set out more thoroughly in the NLTP (point 1.7.1 and 5.1 in the NLTP 2015).

While this legislation does represent an advance in previous legislation it still has the problems that have been outlined in detail in Chapter 2. As suggestion to policy implementation, the NLTP (point 4) recognises that there should be more thorough monitoring and clarification of the policy and provided subsidies in all spheres of implementation so that schools are not so intimidated by the process that they feel unable to go through the application process. Also, clear guidelines that are relevant to all provinces, need to be set to ensure a uniform learner transport structure throughout SA.

### 6.3 Transport and Physiological, Emotional and Educational well-being

The key findings were discussed in section 5.6 above. There are however three important points to re-emphasise. Firstly, *all* learners whether they are pedestrians, private transport or bus passengers are likely to experience both physiological and emotional trauma while they travel to school and at their homes – this ranges from physical attacks from outside, to bullying factors while waiting for and while on the transport to neglect and exposure to violence, drug abuse and alcohol at their homes.

Secondly, from a transport point of view there thus may be ways in which the school in conjunction with the parents can at least begin to address such issues by making sure that learners are supervised by a responsible person while they wait for transport and while they travel. Also, that the schools need to be more aware of incidents such as bullying that might occur on the transport.

Thirdly, in a peculiar way the schools responsibility seemed to almost end when they get the learners on the bus, despite the bus-prefects and the reality of dangers and safety hazards the learners are confronted with. While it is important to make sure learners are emotionally and physically secure, the school ought not to let the external situations of the learners overwhelm their educational responsibilities.

The school was found to be a great support system in recognising and working with emotional and social aspects of the children, which is important and necessary but unfortunately not sufficient. It may also be that without detailed knowledge of the pedagogical operations of the classrooms that the learners SES may be overwhelming for teachers but the converse though are that there are many positive attributes already in place at the school such as the parents who are starting to get involved, the school has a transport system in place, and they have positive and willing teachers and learners, also there are low absenteeism. The question however is how the school could build on these preconditions for a successful school they already have in place.

## 6.4 Further research

This study contributed to the field of learner transport in SA by the production of hands-on knowledge through the eyes of staff and learners. It thus sheds light on how the NLTP (2015), along with internal school practices, could handle learner transport and what the main areas of focus should be in order to support the development of fully developed individuals.

Several areas though still remain to be investigated more thoroughly. Firstly, a larger sample in different settings with a different range of learners (including those from higher grades and those with special needs) is necessary to see how widespread or generalizable these findings are. Secondly, following on from the outcome of this research, more in-depth research is needed on classroom practices and how teachers' pedagogical approaches are adapted in relation to what their beliefs about learners are.

## 6.5 Summary and Conclusions

This dissertation has produced a unique demonstration that it is not only pedestrian learners who are broadly affected by a lack of transport, but also all learners who travel to school. Despite the belief that transport is a silver bullet and an important factor in the provision of quality education it was found to be insufficient to solve individual suffering and necessarily improve learner well-being.

Transport alone was not the 'silver bullet' for academic success, or for emotional permanence or optimal physiological stability. However, what makes transport one of the main sub-determining influences is that it is the medium that links the school environment to the home environment. Whenever safe, with the emphasis on 'safe' and reliable transport can be provided, learners will arrive at school without any avoidable impediments to learning that arise while travelling. This can highly contribute to the continual struggle for better education for all.

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## Appendix 1

### National Learner Transport Policy

This Appendix provides more information about the NLTP 2015.

#### 1.1 NLTP (2015:14): outputs

- Timeous delivery of service
- Rate of road accidents reduced
- A coordinated approach to planning and implementation
- Learner transport operators that adhere to road traffic regulations
- Viable and sustainable operations
- Uniformity of services and tariff structure
- A coherent performance monitoring system

#### 1.2 NLTP (2015:16): guiding principles

- Equity and redress
- Quality and effectiveness
- Operational safety and efficiency
- Operational sustainability
- Multi-modal integration

#### 1.3 NLTP (2015:18-19): types of transport provided

##### 1. Dedicated learner transport services:

- Subsidised group: Operators who are providing a dedicated learner transport service and receives a subsidy from DBE or DoT.
- Non-Subsidised: Operators who are providing a dedicated learner transport service but are not receiving subsidy.
- Class i: Operators who enter into contractual agreements with parents and perform
- Class ii: Operators who have special arrangements with learners. The learners organise themselves into groupings and are picked up and dropped off at designated points. Learners pay fares on a per trip basis.

##### 2. Non-dedicated services:

- Subsidised group: Operators who are providing general public transport services and are transporting learners with special subsidised tickets.
- Non-Subsidised group: Operators who are providing a non-dedicated learners transport service and are transporting learners without any governmental subsidies.

#### 1.4 NLTP (2015:22): requirements for subsidized transport (focus area 3: point 3.3.1)

- Beneficiaries must be needy learners from grade R to 12 'as prescribed'

- Learner transport will be subsidised to the nearest appropriate school only, and not to a school of parental choice (parental choice means when parents prefer to enrol their child at a school other than the nearest suitable school)
- Priority must be given to learners with disabilities, taking into considering the nature of the disability
- Priority must be given to primary school learners who walk long distances to schools
- Existing learner transport services must be taken into account when identifying beneficiaries, as no learner transport services will be provided in areas where public transport is available



## Appendix 2

### Cape Winelands background information

#### 2.1 Health, crime, and basic services

Table 1 below shows the statistics of the health care facilities and the health problems in the Cape Winelands versus the Western Cape.

**Table A1: Health care 2016**

	Western Cape	Cape Winelands
<b>Health care facilities</b>		
District hospitals	34	4
Physical health care facilities (PHC)	275	47
Community day centers	58	6
Satellite PHC clinics	72	6
Mobile PHC clinics	92	28
Fixed PHC clinics	208	41

<b>Child health</b>		
Immunization	88.8%	78.4%
Malnourished children u/5 (2015)	-	1.4 per 100 000
Neonatal mortality rate	6.0 per 1000	6.5 per 1000
Born underweight	14.5%	15%
Alcohol syndrome learners: 2016	-	Since 1997 Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) statistics has shown that 290 per 1000 people have FAS in the Winelands (Oliver, Curfs & Viljoen, 2016:103)

Pregnancy		
u/18 (2015)	5.5%	6.1%
Termination	1.1% per 1000 lives	0.7% per 1000 lives
Maternal mortality rate	58.3% per 100 000 lives	46.5% per 100 000 lives

HIV and TB		
ART (03/2016)	203 565 (pop. 6.2 million) 3.2%	23 172 (pop. 866 223) 2.6%
Mother-to-child transmission of the HIV virus	1.4%	1.7%
TB patients (2016)	43 294 (pop. 6.2 million) 0.69%	7 531 (pop. 866 223) 0.86%

(Source: WC Government, 2016:11-15)

According to the Western Cape Government (2016:23) “crime hampers growth and discourages investment and capital accumulation. If not addressed with seriousness, it has the potential to derail both social and economic prosperity”. Table 3 below shows statistics of the Cape Winelands versus the Western Cape with regards to 6 types of offences.

Table A2: Crime 2015-2016

	Western Cape	Cape Winelands
<b>Crime (Per 100 000 people)</b>		
<b>Murder:</b> 2015	52	37
2016	52	34
<b>Sexual offences:</b> 2015	120	137
2016	115	122
<b>Drugs:</b> 2015	1 449	1 412
2016	1 517	1 456
<b>Residential Burglaries:</b> 2015	780	817 2.2 per day
2016	768	797 2.1 per day
<b>Kidnapping:</b> 2016	-	1 reported kidnapping in 2009 to 10 in 2014 resides in a 1000% increase in the Cape Metropolitan suburb (Afri Forum, 2016)

(Source: WC Government, 2016:24-26)

Access to basic services reveals “the quality of life of the inhabitants in the country” (Western Cape Government, 2016:19). The Table 4 below shows statistics for the basic service provision of the Cape Winelands versus the province for 2011-2016. There are 236 006 households in the Cape Winelands 2016 (Western Cape Government, 2016:1) and in the Western Cape 1 775 000 in 2015 (the latest count for total number of household available) (General Household Survey, 2015:7).

Table A3: Basic services 2011-2016

	Western Cape	Cape Winelands
<b>Basic service for a number of households</b>		
<b>Access to water</b>	1 619 763 to 1 914 055.	196 603 to 232 605
<b>Access to electricity</b>	1 525 980 and 1 866 531.	2011-2016: 183 976 to 218 483
<b>Access to sanitation</b>	2011-2016: 1 478 154 to 1 829 816	2011-2016: 181 418 to 228 650
<b>Access to refuse removal</b>	2011-2016: 1 738 554 to 1 679 520	2011-2016: 158 426 to 192 974
<b>Access to housing</b>	2011-2016: 1 313 637 to 1 593 891	2011-2016: 163 078 to 191 077

(Source: WC Government, 2016:19-22)

## 2.2 MoT

Table A4: MoT for Western Cape versus Cape Winelands 2014

	Western Cape (tot. 1 129 000) (tot. 55 000 rural)	Cape Winelands (tot. 142 703)
<b>Walk</b>	635 000	76 000
<b>Truck or cars</b>	266 000	33 000
<b>Taxi</b>	114 000	18 000

(Source: NHTS, 2014:5,19,23)

In the Table A5 the travel behaviour of learners in the Western Cape versus the Cape Winelands is shown in order to grasp the differences or similarities and understand the necessity of learner transport provision.

Table A5: Travel behaviour for Western Cape versus Cape Winelands 2014

	Western Cape	Cape Winelands
Travel 5 days a week to educational institution	98.9%	97.8%
<b>Times left home</b>		
Before 6:30	4.9%	3.9%
6:30-06:59	12.5%	12.5%
07:00-07:59	75%	77.1%
After 08:00	7.6%	3.4%
<b>Time travelled</b>		
Less than 15 min to reach their first MoT	95.7%	98.8%
More than 15 min to reach their first MoT	4.3%	1.2%
Less than 15 min to reach educational institution	96.3%	97.7%
More than 15 min to reach educational institution	3.7%	2.3%
<b>Pedestrians</b>		
0-30 min	91.3%	94.6%
31-59 min	7.0%	4.7%
60 min and more	1.7%	0.7%

(Source: NHTS, 2014:21,27,29)

## Appendix 3 Research Instruments

### 3.1 Teacher Questionnaires

#### 3.1.1 Teachers

**TITLE:** The impact of the National Learner Transport Policy on Foundation Phase learners' with respect to their educational, emotional, and physiological well-being: case studies of two rural primary schools in the Cape Winelands.

This questionnaire is about learners transport issues and how this impacts their lives and their well - being in various kinds of ways. These ways investigated includes the learners physiological, emotional, and educational due to their physical transport conditions.

**This questionnaire is divided in two parts:**

**PART ONE:** YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

**PART TWO:** YOUR EXPERIENCES OF THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM ON LEARNERS

(Estimated time: 30 minutes)

Part 1: PERSONAL				
Male or female:				
Age:	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-65
Years of teaching experience:				
	YES:		NO:	
<b>General</b>	This is concerned with your transport.			
I know about the national learner transport policy.				
The school has an active transport policy developed for the context school.				

<b>School related</b>	Emotional support from the schools side	
Would you describe the school as a safe environment for teachers?		
If not, please elaborate.		
Does the school have problems with transport in general?		

	<b>1: Never</b>	<b>2 Rarely</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>4 Often</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
<b>Environment</b>	This is concerned with your surroundings.				
The road I travel to school is in perfect condition.					
If not elaborate on some of the barriers.					
I never feel unsafe in the surrounding I access to get to my transport.					

	<b>1: Never</b>	<b>2 Rarely</b>	<b>3 Sometimes</b>	<b>4 Often</b>	<b>5 Always</b>
<b>Physical</b>	This is concerned with your daily travel behaviour and your main mode of transport.				
I have different options of transport.					
Elaborate on your options.					
I use only one mode of transport to school.					
What is that mode of transport you use?					
I arrange my own transport to school.					
I pay for my own transport to school.					
I travel less than 30 minutes to school.					
Elaborate on approximately your					

travelling time.					
I travel more than 5km to school.					
Please elaborate on the distance.					
I feel comfortable with the distance I need to travel.					
I can easily access my transport without any barriers.					
Please elaborate on the barriers, if any.					
I travel along with some of my learners or colleagues.					
The weather conditions do influence my mode of transport.					
Please elaborate on the alternative modes of transport you use in bad weather conditions.					

<b>Safety</b>	This is concerned with your physical experiences and assaults.				
I have been hospitalised due to physical attacks on my way to and from school.					
I have been involved in an accident.					
I have been robbed on my way to school.					
I carry a weapon with me when I travel.					
Please elaborate on the weapon of choice.					

<b>Physiological</b>	This is concerned with your body and health.				
Transport constrains are mainly the determining factor of me feeling exhausted when reaching school.					
Give reasons why you experience your transport as a constrain					
Give examples of other factors influencing your exhaustion levels.					

<b>Emotional</b>	This is concerned with the feelings and emotions you experience.				
The school provide counselling for the teachers when traumatised on their way to school					
Please elaborate on how the school handles traumatised teachers					
I classify my thoughts and feelings as positive when thinking about my transport conditions and mode of transport.					
I perceive my route as safe					
I feel emotionally tired and dispirited when thinking about my transport before I start travelling.					
Transport contributes towards my behaviour at school (positively and or negatively)					
Please elaborate on the type of behaviour you are referring to, in which manner transport contributes.					
Transport is largely the determining factor of my emotional well-being when reaching school or home					
Please elaborate how you feel.					

Educational	This is concerned with the impact of transport on your ability to teach.				
I attend school 5 days a week.					
For the majority of the week I feel motivated to go to school.					
I do not experience discipline problems in my classroom.					
Transport is the reason why learners misbehave in class.					
I do not have regular latecomers in my classroom.					
Elaborate if you do have learners who come late for school on regular basis, what are the reasons for them being late?					
I feel motivated to attend school due to my mode of transport – easily accessible and usable.					
I feel motivated to attend school despite of my mode of transport – difficult to reach school due to transport constrains.					

PART 2:  
YOUR EXPERIENCES OF THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM ON LEARNERS

	1: Never	2: Rarely, in less than 10%	3: Occasionally , in about 30%	4: Sometimes, in about 50%	5: Frequently, in about 70%	6: Usually, in about 90%	7: Every time
<b>Physical</b>	This is concerned with the mode of travel learners' use.						
The majority of my learners do have transport constrains							
Please elaborate on the types of constrains							
Learners have more than one mode of travel.							
Learners have easy access to their transport.							
Learners travel less than 30 minutes to school.							
Learners travel more than 5km to school.							
Learners travel along with some of the other learners.							
The weather conditions do influence their choice of transport.							
The routes the learners travel are physically safe.							
Some of my learners struggle to reach school due to limited availability of transport or unsafe situations.							
Elaborate on whether you refer to the availability or the unsafe situations.							

Physiological	This is concerned with the bodily well-being of the learners in your class.						
Learners have eaten when they come to school.							
Majority of my class eat only at the food scheme in the mornings and at first/second break.							
Learners have had a good night's rest.							
<i>IF APPLICABLE:</i> Elaborate on reasons why not.							
Learners are safe in their homes – protected from victimization, abuse, neglect etc.							
If not, elaborate on reasons why they are not safe in your opinion.							
Most of my learners are full of energy when they arrive at school and enthusiastic to learn.							
Transport does influence my learners' energy levels and motivation to learn.							
The learners, who walks to school are observably more tired, drained and emotionally absent in class.							
In winter most of the learners who walk to school are absent on regular basis.							
Learners are observably more present in class when they use transport to school.							

Emotional	Is concerned with the emotions, behaviour and mental wellbeing of the learner.						
The learners who walk to school behave spontaneously and are talkative in class.							
Learners who walk to school are able to concentrate.							
I counsel my class learners when they seem traumatized.							
I report all transport related situations influencing my learner to the office.							
Learners experience negative influences on their way to school: E.g. Bullying, assault, verbal abuse, crime victimization.							
Elaborate on the type of influences.							
Learners who walk to school are traumatised and scared when they reach school.							
Please elaborate on why this is.							
Learners share their travel experiences with the teacher.							
Please elaborate on the type of experiences.							

Educational	This domain is concerned with the learners and their education::						
The parents of my class are very involved in their Childs life.							
The home learning environment of my learners is in excellent condition.							
Elaborate why or why not.							
I have had learners in my class drop-out of school.							
Please elaborate on reasons for their drop-out.							
I have had learners in my class drop out of school due to transport constrains.							
The learners attend school on regular basis.							
Some of the learners disappear during break							
Elaborate on why they disappear							
Support is given to learners academically when they have been traumatized.							
Elaborate on who gives the support and a time frame in which the support is given.							
Learners who walk to school are less motivated to learn and participate in class.							
Road safety education is priority in my class and I regularly remind my learners of their road safety.							

### 3.2 Learner Questionnaires

#### 3.2.1 Pedestrians

#### Leerder aktiwiteit

#### Dapper stappers

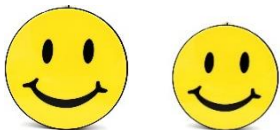
1. Ek stap meer as 20 minute skool toe



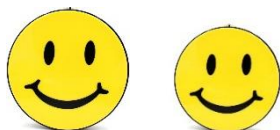
2. Ek is moeg as ek by die skool kom



3. My pad skool toe is veilig, goed en maklik om op te stap



4. Ek stap elke dag van die week skool toe



5. Ek stap in 'n groep skool toe



6. Daar stap 'n volwassene saam met my skool toe



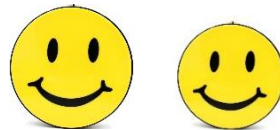
7. Ek kom altyd betyds vir skool



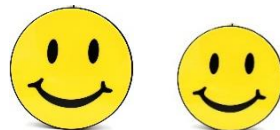
8. Ek voel lus om te leer as ek by die skool kom



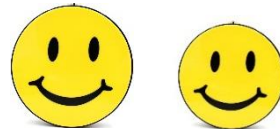
9. Ek voel lus om te slaap as ek by die skool kom



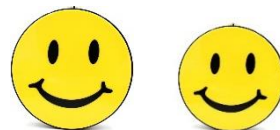
10. Ek voel ek stap te lank skool toe en wens ek kon op die bus ry



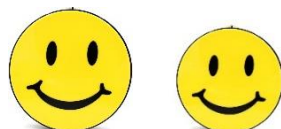
11. Ek voel veilig as ek skool toe stap



12. Daar was al slegte dinge wat met my gebeur het oppad na die skool toe



12. Wanneer ek moeg voel na die oggend se stap is dit vir my moeilik om op my skoolwerk te konsentreer



13. In die somer is dit vir my lekkerder om skool toe te stap as in die winter



14. Ek kom in die somer elke dag skool toe



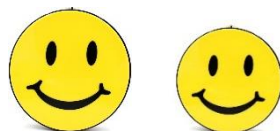
15. As dit baie reën dan bly ek by die huis en stap nie skool toe nie



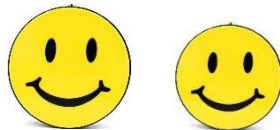
16. Wanneer ek nat geroen het trek ek droë klere by die skool aan



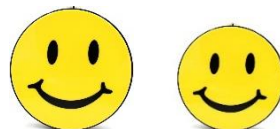
17. Eke et my etes by die skool



18. Ek was al amper raakgery oppad skool- of huis toe



19. Party dae is ek bang om skool toe te stap



20. Ek bly liewer by die huis as ek bang voel as om skool toe te stap



21. Ek hou daarvan om skool toe te stap



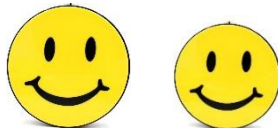
22. Ek en my maatjies speel lekker langs die pad



23. Wanneer ek skool toe stap is ek baie versigtig vir die vinnige karre



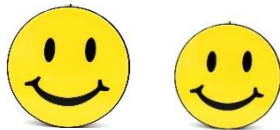
24. My juffrou waarsku my gereeld om versigtig te wees as ek stap



25. Ek moet oor die pad hardloop waar dit onveilig is



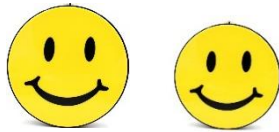
26. Ek gebruik elke dag die duikweg



27. Ek hou daarvan om deel te neem in die klas en met almal te gesels



28. Ek ken n maatjie wat nie meer in die skool is nie, maar moet wees



### 3.2.2 Bus passengers

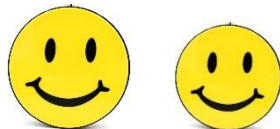
#### Leerder aktiwiteit

#### Die bus-ryers

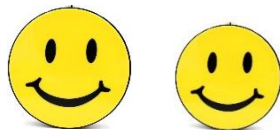
1. Ek ry elke oggend met die bus



2. Ek ry 20 minute of meer op die bus



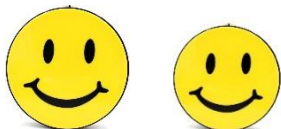
3. Die bus is elke oggend betyds



4. Dit is vir my maklik om by die bus stop uit te kom



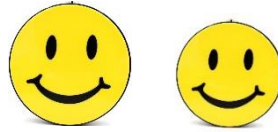
5. Ek voel veilig op die bus



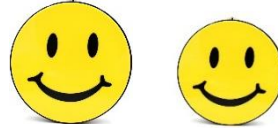
6. Die bus wag vir my as ek laat kom



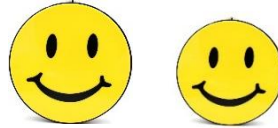
7. 'n Volwassene wag saam met my by die bus-stop



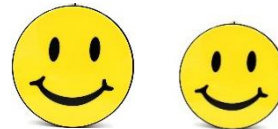
8. Ek hou van skool juis omdat ek weet ek gaan elke oggend veilig by die skool aankom saam met die bus



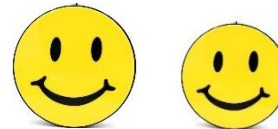
9. Ek moet te lank op die bus ry voor ek by die skool kom



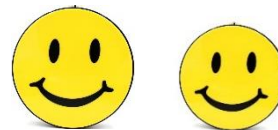
10. Ek kan maklik konsentreer op my skool werk in die oggende



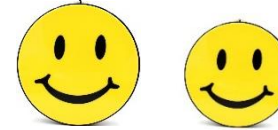
11. Die roete wat die bus ry is veilig



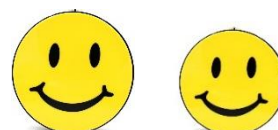
12. Ek was al in 'n ongeluk betrokke toe ek op die bus was



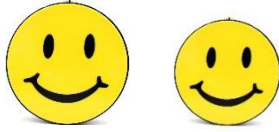
13. Partykeer maak maatjies my seer op die bus



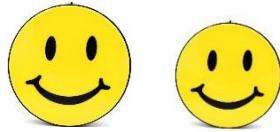
14. Ek voel hartseer as 'n maatjie my seergemaak het op die bus



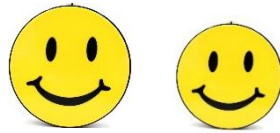
15. My juffrou vra vir my hoekom ek hartseer voel



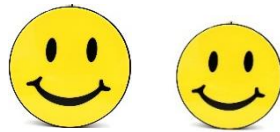
16. In die somer kom ek omtrent elke dag skool toe



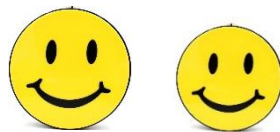
17. In die winter kom ek minder skool toe want dis te koud en nat



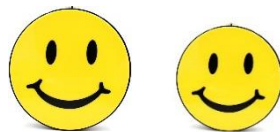
18. Die bus maak ek dat meer energie het as ek by die skool kom want ek hoef nie skool toe te stap nie



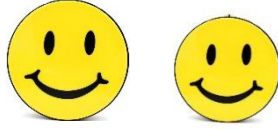
19. Ek eet my etes elke dag by die skool



20. Daar is gevare langs die pad as ons skool toe ry op die bus



21. Ek ken iemand wat nie meer in die skool is nie maar moet wees



22. 'n Volwassene help my in die oggend om reg te maak vir skool



23. Ek wens ek kon liever met 'n ander kar skool toe kom

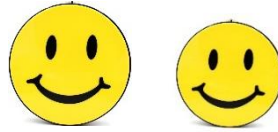


### 3.2.3 Bakkie, truck and car

#### Leerder aktiwiteit

#### Bakkie, Lorrie, Kar

1. My vervoer kom elke dag betyds



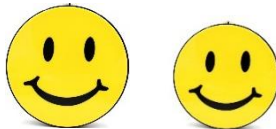
2. Ek voel veilig in my vervoer



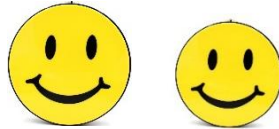
3. Daar is ander kinders wat my seermaak in die vervoer



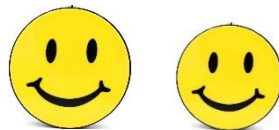
4. Die drywer is baie streng en handhaaf goeie dissipline



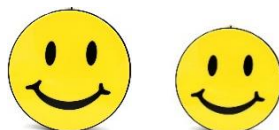
5. Ek was al in n ongeluk betrokke



6. Ek word elke dag op die selfde manier na die skool vervoer



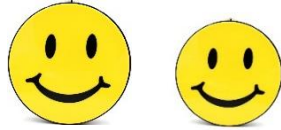
7. In die winter kom ek minder skool toe as in die somer



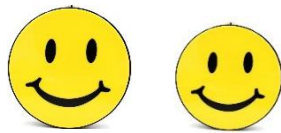
8. Ek voel elke dag lus om te leer



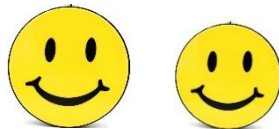
9. Ek ry 20 minute of meer skool toe



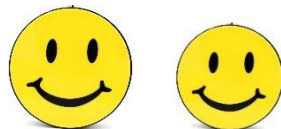
10. Ek kan maklik by my vervoer uitkom



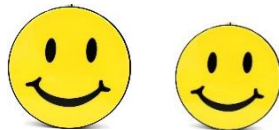
11. Die pad wat ons ry is veilig



12. Ek ken n maatjie wat nie meer in die skool is nie maar moet wees



13. Ek voel party dae moeg as ek moet skool toe kom omdat ek bang is op my vervoer



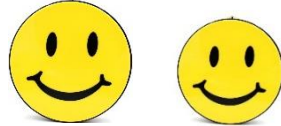
14. Ek hou daarvan om deel te neem in die klas aan gesprekke en om vrae te beantwoord



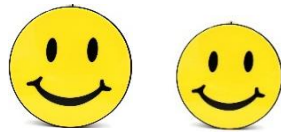
15. Ek eet al my etes by die skool



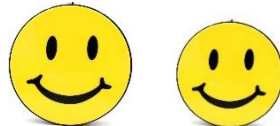
16. 'n Volwassene help my in die oggend om reg te maak vir skool



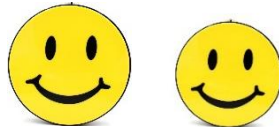
17. Daar is gevare langs die pad as ons skool toe ry op my vervoer



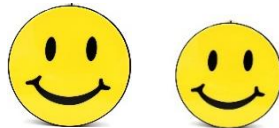
18. My vervoer maak ek dat meer energie het as ek by die skool kom want ek hoef nie skool toe te stap nie



19. Partykeer maak maatjies my seer op die bus



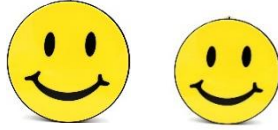
20. Ek voel hartseer as 'n maatjie my seergemaak het op die bus



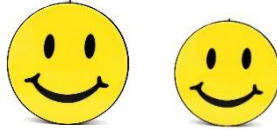
21. My juffrou vra vir my hoekom ek hartseer voel



22. Ek kan maklik konsentreer op my skool werk in die oggende



23. Ek hou van skool juis omdat ek weet ek gaan elke oggend veilig by die skool aankom saam met die bus



24. Ek ry elke oggend met dieselfde vervoer



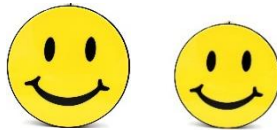
25. Die vervoer wag vir my as ek laat kom



26. 'n Volwassene wag saam met my by die bus-stop



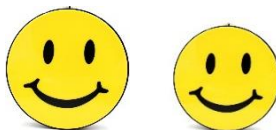
27. Ek kan vir my juffrou enige iets vertel



28. Ek wens ek kon liever op die bus ry of met n ander kar skool toe kom



29. Ek ken n maatjie wat nie meer in die skool is nie maar moet wees



### 3.3 Interview Questions

#### 3.3.1 Principal, G3 head and Foundation Phase head interview questions

<b>General</b>
1. School size
2. FP size
3. Number of teachers
4. Number of classes
5. Number of grade 3 classes
6. Number of grade 3 teachers
7. Grade 3 learners?
8. Number of FP classes
9. Number of FP teachers
10. School starting and ending time daily? For Foundation phase?
11. Fee/non-fee, Quantile?
12. Language medium? 12.1 of teacher 12.2 of learners
13. History of the school 13.1 When was the school planted? 13.2 Who planted the school? 13.3 Why? 13.4 How many Principals have there been? 13.5 How long have you been the grade 3 head/G3 teacher/Principal? 13.6 Describe your responsibilities as FP head/G3 teacher/Principal.
14. Describe the area. 14.1 Social problems these learners and families face? 14.2 Learners mainly from farms of rural settlements? 14.3 Furthest farm distance? 14.4 Mode of transport of those learners?
15. Parent occupation? 15.1 Seasonal farmworkers? 15.2 Parent involvement? 15.3 Can you see differences in the learners' behaviour and hygiene when you compare parents' jobs?
16. Housing situation of the learner? 16.1 How many people in a house? 16.2 Who raises the learners? 16.3 Involvement of the father? 16.4 Involvement of the mother? 16.5 Annual income per household? 16.6 Water and electricity?

<b>Physical Circumstances:</b>	
1.	Describe the transport situation at your school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Do the learners have different options of transport available?</li> <li>1.2 Rate the access difficulty to transport out of 1-10.</li> <li>1.3 Elaborate on the accessibility to the transport.</li> <li>1.4 Who is the main determining parties arranging transport for the learners?</li> <li>1.5 Is the transport usually on time?</li> <li>1.6 Is the transport safe and reliable?</li> <li>1.7 Does the transport wait for latecomers?</li> <li>1.8 Is there supervision at the halting station/point and on the bus?</li> <li>1.9 What is the main mode of transport? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.9.1 Is this mode mainly private or public transport?</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.10 Number of cars?</li> <li>1.11 Number of taxi's?</li> <li>1.12 Number of farm trucks?</li> <li>1.13 Number of busses?</li> <li>1.14 Other transport?</li> <li>1.15 What percentage of the learners walks to school?</li> <li>1.16 What is the main mode of transport for teachers?</li> <li>1.17 Describe your relationship with the bus driver?</li> </ul>
2.	How does the school support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Learners in general?</li> <li>2.1 The transport situation for learners?</li> </ul>
3	Do the learners, travelling by any mode of transport, have supervision?
4	What are the costs involved in the transport situation you've just described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 For the school?</li> <li>4.2 For parents?</li> <li>4.3 What is the amount?</li> </ul>
5	How does the school support pedestrian learners? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Water?</li> <li>5.2 Food scheme?</li> <li>5.3 Advice?</li> </ul>
6	Have you been informed about an accident where one of your learners was involved in? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 What was the reason for the accident?</li> <li>6.2 What happened?</li> <li>6.3 Did the learner die?</li> </ul>
7	Describe one of the routes learners travel to school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.1 Would you say the condition of the route is safe, average or dangerous?</li> <li>7.2 What makes it safe, average or dangerous?</li> </ul>
8	How long does your learners travel to school – time traveled? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8.1 By bus</li> <li>8.2 Taxi</li> <li>8.3 Car</li> <li>8.4 Pedestrian</li> <li>8.5 Other</li> </ul>
9	How far does the learners travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9.1 By bus</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9.2 Taxi</li> <li>9.3 Car</li> <li>9.4 Pedestrian</li> <li>9.5 Other</li> </ul>
<p>10 Have you been informed by any involved party about safety issues/hazards/physical dangers on any route your learners travel on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10.1 What are those dangers? – e.g. Trains, rivers</li> <li>10.2 Are there any records of reported safety issues?</li> <li>10.3 Is yes, can I see it?</li> <li>10.4 If no, why is it not recorded?</li> </ul>
<p>11 Do your learners qualify for government transport?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11.1 What is the situation regarding it?</li> </ul>
<p>13. Grade 3 parents' involvement? and how involved do you experience the FP learners at parent evenings and in their child's growth and development?</p>
<p>14. If the school realize that some of your learners struggle to reach school or continuously comes late:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14.1 What is your plan of action? What do you do?</li> <li>14.2 What are the reasons for them coming late?</li> </ul>
<p>15. Are you aware of any accidents near the school/involved school learners?</p>
<p>16. What type of transport does the FP Learner mainly use?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16.1 Do the learners have different options of transport available?</li> <li>16.2 Rate the access difficulty to transport out of 1-10.</li> <li>16.3 Elaborate on the accessibility to the transport.</li> </ul>

<b>Physiological well-being:</b>
<p>1. Do you run a food scheme at the school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Who pays for it?</li> <li>1.2 Who makes the food?</li> <li>1.3 Whose initiative is it?</li> <li>1.4 How many plates do you prepare per day?</li> <li>1.5 Can teachers also eat?</li> <li>1.6 How late do the learners eat?</li> <li>1.7 Do they eat at school and home or only at school?</li> </ul>
<p>2. Do you experience that learners' look tired, exhausted or drained when they reach school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Would you say their mode of transport has something to do with their energy levels?</li> <li>2.2 Describe how you perceive a learner who is emotionally drained</li> <li>2.3 Describe how you perceive a learner who is physically drained</li> </ul>
<p>3. What influence would you say do low energy levels have on learners in their general well-being?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Specifically looking at the three levels of well-being.</li> </ul>
<p>4. How would you say does weather influence learners in general?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 In their attendance?</li> <li>4.2 Attitude?</li> <li>4.3 Choice of transport?</li> <li>4.4 Are there any shifts or changes when weather change in the Mode of transport used in</li> </ul>

general?
5. Would you say that learner develop better in summer or winter? Keeping in mind how the weather differs. 5.1 How do you handle the wet child? 5.2 Or the child whose feet burned on tar due to walking?
6. We've talked about unsafe situations but please elaborate on the experiences regarding 6.1 Attack on the route? 6.2 Crime? 6.3 Adults or older learners bullying the young ones? 6.4 Victimization? 6.5 Verbal abuse? 6.6 Have you been involved in a case where one of your learners was hospitalized?
7. What do you as a teacher and grade 3 head do when you see learners is wet/sunburned?
8. Would you say that learner develop better in summer or winter? Keeping in mind how the weather differs. 8.1 How do you handle the wet child? 8.2 Or the child whose feet burned on tar due to walking?

<b>Emotional well-being</b>
1. Does the school have a debriefing action plan/counselling to follow when a learner seems stressed or depressed: 1.1 In general? 1.2 After travelling? 1.3 After seeing a traumatic event? 1.4 What is your plan of action you usually follow? 1.5 Do you attend to do follow-ups? 1.6 Do you have psychologists at your school? 1.7 Who handles traumatic situations at your school? 1.8 Have you ever involved the WCED in a situation?
2. Do you do debriefing with teachers?
3. What are learners attitudes towards their 3.1 Mode of transport in general? 3.2 Distance? 3.3 Time traveled?
4. Are the learners able to concentrate when they arrive at school? 4.1 If no, why? 4.2 If yes, do you think their transport system contributes towards their ability to develop faster and continuously or does it withhold them from development?
5. How do you think the learners perceive their route 5.1.1 Safe or Unsafe? 5.2 And their mode of transport? 4.2.1 Safe or Unsafe?
6. How do you perceive their route? 6.1 Whose do you perceive as safe? Travelling from where? 6.2 Whose do you perceive as unsafe? Travelling from where? 6.2.1 For what other reason?

<p>7. What are some of the negative experiences you know of the learners have had</p> <p>7.1 On their way to school and home?</p> <p>7.1.1 Bullying?</p> <p>7.1.2 Verbal abuse?</p> <p>7.1.3 Crime?</p> <p>7.2 What influence do you think it has on their emotional stability and well-being?</p> <p>7.3 Does someone at school ask learners about their travel experiences?</p> <p>7.3.1 How regularly?</p> <p>7.3.2 If yes, how do you handle abnormal situations when something unusual happens on their route to school?</p> <p>7.3.3 If no, why don't you ask?</p>
<p>8. Have there been any reported situations that needed extra or careful attention?</p> <p>8.1 What happened</p> <p>8.2 Records?</p> <p>8.3 Debriefing?</p> <p>8.4 Precaution?</p>

<b>Educational well-being:</b>
<p>1. Describe the learning environment of your learners</p> <p>1.1 At home?</p> <p>1.1.1 Light?</p> <p>1.1.2 Room?</p> <p>1.1.3 Assistance?</p> <p>1.2 At school</p> <p>1.2.1 Desk?</p> <p>1.2.2 Stationary?</p> <p>1.2.3 Support?</p>
<p>2. Afterschool support?</p>
<p>3. Grade 3 results:</p> <p>3.1 Records?</p> <p>3.2 Satisfied?</p> <p>3.3 Factors influencing the results?</p> <p>3.4 Transport one of them?</p>
<p>4. Attendance/drop-out at the school?</p> <p>4.1 Do you have attendance and or drop-out issues?</p> <p>4.2 Would you say that teacher enthusiasm influence learner attendance</p> <p>4.3 Do you think that transport influence attendance and drop-out?</p> <p>4.4 Have some learners not come to school due to transport issues/lack thereof?</p> <p>4.5 How did you handle the situation?</p> <p>4.6 Do you follow – up on absenteeism?</p> <p>4.6.1 On what basis? Daily? Weekly?</p> <p>4.6.2 When do you experience most of your absenteeism?</p>
<p>5. Would you say transport influence academic performance?</p> <p>5.1 If no, what factors does influence academic performance?</p> <p>5.2 What impact do you think transport has on academic performance?</p> <p>5.3 And on motivation to learn?</p>

5.4 Do you think a learners mode of transport lead to lower/higher participation in class?
6. Learner support teacher? 6.1 Regular? 6.2 Weaker or stronger learners?
7. Discipline at your school: 7.1 Describe your structure/system in place? 7.2 What type of disciplinary problems do you most experience with grade 3 learners?
8. How does the school support learners academically who has been involved in traumatic experiences?
9. Road safety education approach? Do you run educational programs regarding road safety at your school? 9.1 How regularly? 9.2 Is it part of the curriculum?
10. What type of challenges do you think a grade 3 learner experience and go through that is different from other grades?
11. Do you think gr 3 learners are more vulnerable on the road than gr 4-7?
12. Do you follow-up when you perceive a learner as emotionally absent in class? Reasons why absent?

### 3.3.2 Bus driver questions

1. How did you get into bus driving?
2. When did you do your PDP?
3. Did you receive training for specifically driving learners around?
4. Do you know the learners on the bus?
5. Tell me about some of your experiences that you've had while driving these learners?
6. Do you drive other errands or routes as well?
7. Do you take responsibility for the safety of the bus?
8. Do you take responsibility for the once a month check and the 6 month check?
9. Does your bus break allot?
10. Describe your relationship with the school?
11. Do you only drive these learners?
12. How long have you been at the school?
13. Tell me about the agreement you have with the bus owner.
14. Tell me about the agreement you have with the school regarding the bus service?
15. Have you been involved in a bus accident where you were the driver?
16. How do you handle discipline problems on the bus?
17. How late do you start in the morning?
18. Do you wait for latecomers?
19. Do you always park on the right side of the road for the learners to get on and off the bus?
20. Do you also warn them about road safety issues and being safe when they get off the bus?
21. Do you think there is a need for adult supervision on the bus?
22. Do you think there is a need for more road safety education at schools?
23. Do you think it is safer to ride with the bus or with a taxi?
24. What is your opinion on the amount of learners what are on the bus?
25. How many stops do you make?
26. Do you wait at the stop until the learners arrive or leave when you see nobody is there?
27. Top speed?

3.4 Performance data collection tables

3.4.1

Table A6: Grade 3 focus group learners achievement marks G1 (2015)

2015 Term 4				
Final achievement score: Pedestrians (n=6)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	6	7	6	6
Girl 2	7	7	7	7
Girl 3	-	-	-	-
Girl 4	6	6	7	6
Boy 1	6	6	7	7
Boy 2	6	6	7	6
Final achievement score: Bakkie, truck, car (n=4)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	7	6	7	7
Girl 2	6	6	7	6
Boy 1	6	6	7	6
Boy 2 (repeater)	3	2	5	5
Final achievement score: Bus passengers (n=10)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	6	6	5	6
Girl 2	5	6	6	5
Girl 3	4	4	5	5
Girl 4	-	-	-	-

Girl 5	5	6	6	6
Girl 6	-	-	-	-
Boy 1	5	4	5	5
Boy 2	-	-	-	-
Boy 3	6	6	7	5
Boy 4	5	5	6	6

(Source: WCED Final Schedule)

### 3.4.2

Table A7: Grade 3 focus group learners achievement marks G2 (2016)

2016 Term 4				
Final achievement score: Pedestrians (n=6)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	6	5	5	5
Girl 2	7	6	7	4
Girl 3	-	-	-	-
Girl 4	6	4	6	4
Boy 1	7	6	7	6
Boy 2	6	4	6	6

Final achievement score: Bakkie, truck, car (n=4)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	7	6	7	6
Girl 2	7	6	7	6
Boy 1	6	5	7	6

Boy 2 (G3)	1	1	2	3
<b>Final achievement score: Bus passengers (n=10)</b>				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	5	5	5	4
Girl 2	5	4	5	4
Girl 3	4	3	4	4
Girl 4	-	-	-	-
Girl 5	5	5	5	4
Girl 6	-	-	-	-
Boy 1	3	2	4	3
Boy 2	3	3	3	4
Boy 3	5	4	6	5
Boy 4	4	4	4	4

(Source: WCED Final Schedule)

## 3.4.3

Table A8: Grade 3 focus group learners achievement marks G3 (2017)

2017 Term 1				
Achievement score: Pedestrians (n=6)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	7	5	7	5
Girl 2	7	7	7	7
Girl 3	5	5	5	6
Girl 4	4	3	6	4
Boy 1	6	5	7	6
Boy 2	6	4	7	6
Achievement score: Bakkie, truck, car (n=4)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	7	6	7	7
Girl 2	7	6	6	7
Boy 1	5	3	7	7
Boy 2 (repeater)	2	2	7	6
Achievement score: Bus passengers (n = 10)				
	Home Language	First Additional Language	Mathematics	Life skills
Girl 1	2	2	6	6
Girl 2	3	2	4	5
Girl 3	1	2	5	5
Girl 4	4	4	5	5
Girl 5	6	3	6	4

Girl 6	4	5	6	5
Boy 1	1	2	3	2
Boy 2	2	2	5	5
Boy 3	4	4	6	5
Boy 4	2	1	6	3

(Source: WCED Final Schedule)

### 3.5 Absenteeism data collection table

Table A9: Total number of days absent in terms of gender and seasons 2015-2017

Year and month	Total number of male learners	Total number of days absent for male learners	Total number of female learners	Total number of days absent for female learners	Total number of days absent for male and female learners	Total number of days absent for the two months
<b>G1:</b> 2015 February	23	14 Avg. 0.61 days/learner	18	12 Avg. 0.67 days/learner	24	106
<b>G1:</b> 2015 August	22	49 Avg. 2.23 days/learner	18	33 Avg. 2.06 days/learner	82	
<b>G2:</b> 2016 February	23	8 Avg. 0.35 days/learner	15	3 Avg. 0.20 days/learner	11	33
<b>G2:</b> 2016 August	22	17 Avg. 0.77 days/learner	15	5 Avg. 0.33 days/learner	22	
<b>G3:</b> 2017 February	19	14 Avg. 0.74 days/learner	19	18 Avg. 0.95 days/learner	32	n.a

(Source: School absenteeism records)

### 3.6 Letters of consent

#### 3.6.1 Audio recording for parents and teachers

**Title:** The impact of learner transport on Grade 3 learners' physiological, emotional and educational well-being: a case study of a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, South Africa.

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDING**

1. I ..... have agreed to be interviewed for this research and have signed a consent form.
  
2. I now give permission/do not give permission for the interview to be audio recorded.  
(Please delete what is not applicable.)
  
3. I understand that the following measures will be taken to ensure anonymity:
  - The audio recordings will be stored by the principal investigator (Carla Portwig). No person other than the principal investigator, their co-researcher and transcriptionist will have access to these files.
  - Both the transcriptionist and co-researcher will be required to sign agreements of confidentiality.
  - In the transcriptions the interviewees will be recorded by number and not by name.
  
4. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary and I may withdraw from it at any point or change my consent for the audio recording, in whole or in part.

Signed:

Date:

### 3.6.2 Letter of consent for parents (ethnographic research)

**Title of research:** The impact of the National Learner Transport Policy on Foundation Phase learners' holistic wellbeing in the Cape Winelands: A Case Study of two rural primary schools.

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

I ..... parent/guardian of  
..... in Grade ..... give permission for my child to be accompanied in his/her travelling by the researcher Carla Portwig for this research.

- I understand that the research is concerned with how transport influences and affect my child as a holistic individual.
- I understand that the research may be presented at conferences and may be written up for publication in an academic journal.
- I understand that the data will be anonymized in the publication in the following way:
  - The schools will not be named – they will be described only in terms of a category, such as, 'School A', as applicable.
  - The real names of interviewees will also not be used. They will be described only in terms of their level of appointment and position.
  - No detail will be included in the article which could be used to identify a particular school or individual.
- The data will be protected in the following way:
  - The interviewer will require the interviewee's permission to record an interview.
  - Audio recordings will be stored by the principal investigator (Carla Portwig). No person other than the principal investigator, their co-researcher and transcriptionist will have access to these files.
  - Both the transcriptionist and co-researcher will be required to sign agreements of confidentiality.
  - In the transcriptions, the interviewees will be recorded by number and not by name.
- I understand that participation in the research is voluntary and that my child may withdraw from it at any point.

Signed:

Date:

### 3.6.3 Learner interview (for parents regarding the learner focus groups)

**Title of research:** The impact of learner transport on Grade 3 learners' physiological, emotional and educational well-being: a case study of a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, South Africa.

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW**

I ..... parent/guardian of ..... in Grade ..... give permission for my child to be interviewed for this research.

1. I understand that the research is concerned with how transport influences and affect my child as a holistic individual.
2. I understand that the research may be presented at conferences and may be written up for publication in an academic journal.
3. I understand that the data will be anonymised in the publication in the following way:
  - The schools will not be named – they will be described only in terms of a category, such as, 'School A', as applicable.
  - The real names of interviewees will also not be used. They will be described only in terms of their level of appointment and position.
  - No detail will be included in the article which could be used to identify a particular school or individual.
4. The data will be protected in the following way:
  - The interviewer will require the interviewee's permission to record an interview.
  - Audio recordings will be stored by the principal investigator (Carla Portwig). No person other than the principal investigator, their co-researcher and transcriptionist will have access to these files.
  - Both the transcriptionist and co-researcher will be required to sign agreements of confidentiality.
  - In the transcriptions the interviewees will be recorded by number and not by name.
5. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary and that my child may withdraw from it at any point.

Signed:

Date:

### 3.6.4. Teacher interview

**Title of research:** The impact of learner transport on Grade 3 learners' physiological, emotional and educational well-being: a case study of a rural primary school in the Cape Winelands, South Africa.

#### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW**

I ..... agree to be interviewed for this research.

1. I understand that the research is concerned with how transport influences and affect me and my learners as holistic individuals.
2. I understand that the research may be presented at conferences and may be written up for publication in an academic journal.
3. I understand that the data will be anonymised in the publication in the following way:
  - The schools will not be named – they will be described only in terms of a category, such as, 'School A', as applicable.
  - The real names of interviewees will also not be used. They will be described only in terms of their level of appointment and position.
  - No detail will be included in the article which could be used to identify a particular school or individual.
4. The data will be protected in the following way:
  - The interviewer will require the interviewee's permission to record an interview.
  - Audio recordings will be stored by the principal investigator (Carla Portwig). No person other than the principal investigator, their co-researcher and transcriptionist will have access to these files.
  - Both the transcriptionist and co-researcher will be required to sign agreements of confidentiality.
  - In the transcriptions the interviewees will be recorded by number and not by name.
5. I accept the researcher's assurance that I will be given an opportunity to comment on a draft of the research product prior to publication.
6. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary and I may withdraw from it at any point.

Signed:

Date:

### 3.6.5 Parents Information Sheet

Dear Ms \_\_\_\_\_ ,

#### **A case study of a rural primary schools' transports situation, and the impact thereof on learners' physiological, emotional, and educational domain of well-being.**

I, Carla Portwig, am a Masters student from the University of Cape Town. I would like to ask your permission to carry out research on the impact of transport situations your child faces on his/her way to school. The research aims to explore the consequences of the availability to safe and reliable transport for some learners versus no transport provision for others, on the learners' performance marks; physiological well-being and their emotional stability as a result of their transport situation.

In South Africa there is a relative lack of research on the area of transport, specifically learner transport. I am passionate about generating data on the effects the lack of transport has on learners in order to improve the current situation within South Africa. I am specifically looking at your grade 3 child due to his/her vulnerability and the tendency of drop-out and decline in school/class attendance.

Data collection will be in the form of waiting for transport or walking and travelling with your child in the early morning between 06:30 and 07:30 with learners - . I would like to audio-record our conversations. I will be walking and traveling with your child, asking him/her questions and observing his/her behaviour. Secondly interviews will be conducted with you child at school - I will use a recorder for clarity sake.

Participation is voluntary and the confidentiality of your child is guaranteed. The school will be given a pseudonym (different name) and pseudonyms will be used for all participants in the writing up of the research. You may withdraw permission for conducting the research on your child at any time.

Please fill in the consent letter to indicate your consent for the research. You are welcome to ask any questions regarding this research by telephone or email to either of me: Carla Portwig – [cportwig@gmail.com](mailto:cportwig@gmail.com)

Yours sincerely,

**Signed by candidate**

Signature Removed

Carla Portwig

### 3.6.6 Teacher Information Sheet

#### **A case study of a rural primary schools' transports situation and the impact thereof on learners' physiological, emotional, and educational domain of well-being.**

Dear Ms \_\_\_\_\_ ,

I, Carla Portwig, am a Masters student from the University of Cape Town. I would like to ask your permission to carry out research on the impact of transport situations on grade 3 learners, and on the experiences they face daily. The research aims to explore the consequences of the availability to safe and reliable transport for some learners versus no transport provision for others, on the learners' performance marks; physiological well-being and their emotional stability as a result of their transport situation.

In South Africa there is a relative lack of research on the area of transport, specifically learner transport. I am passionate about generating data on the effects the lack of transport has on learners in order to improve the current situation within South Africa. I am specifically looking at grade 3 learners due to their vulnerability and the tendency of drop-out and decline in school/class attendance.

Data collection will be in the form of ethnographical research early morning between 06:30 and 07:30 with learners where I will be walking and traveling amongst them, asking them questions and observing their behaviour. I would like to audio-record our conversations. Secondly interviews will hopefully be conducted with teachers and learners at school – I will use a recorder for clarity sake. We also make use of questionnaires for all foundation phase teachers to fill in as part of forming an accurate perspective.

Participation is voluntary and the confidentiality of the school, as well as the teachers and learners, is guaranteed. The school will be given a pseudonym (different name) and pseudonyms will be used for all participants in the writing up of the research. You may withdraw permission for conducting the research at any time.

Please fill in the consent letter to indicate your consent for the research. You are welcome to ask any questions regarding this research by telephone or email to either of me: Carla Portwig – [cportwig@gmail.com](mailto:cportwig@gmail.com)

Yours sincerely,

**Signed by candidate**

Signature Removed

Carla Portwig