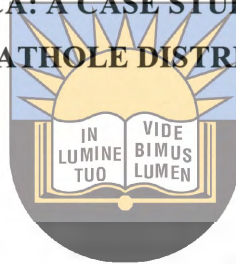




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**AN APPRAISAL OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN SEMI-RURAL POST
APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THREE SCHOOLS IN
AMATHOLE DISTRICT**



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**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE FACULTY OF LAW AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

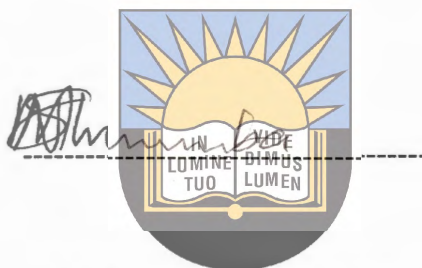
SUPERVISOR: PROF. N.S REMBE

CO- SUPERVISOR: DR. S REMBE

DECEMBER 2007

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which, to a substantial extent, has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma of a university or any other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.



Nyika Machenjedge
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ABSTRACT

This study is an appraisal of the right to education in semi-rural areas of post apartheid South Africa. The objective was to find out the extent to which the right to education is realized and in this regard, factors that hinder access and those that exclude children from school. It was carried out as a descriptive, qualitative research and a case study design was utilized. Data was collected through focus group interviews. There were three categories of focus groups which were interviewed, namely, learners; teachers and principals and school drop outs. Three primary schools within Amathole District were used in the study. Three step data analysis process suggested by Steinberg was utilized as outlined in the study.

The study found out that the right to education is enriched and protected in a number of human rights instruments nationally, regionally and internationally. Apart from being protected in the Constitution, the right to education is also guaranteed in a number of other laws and policies in South Africa. However, the findings indicated that there are a number of factors hindering the full enjoyment of the right to education particularly for children living in rural areas. These factors were reflected in the six main themes that emerged from the process of data analysis, namely; poor school environment; educational costs; children's home background; children's peer and generational influences; community socio-economic situation; and the role of the government in supporting schools.

The study was a modest undertaking but a focused in-depth study aimed at digging deeper into possible factors that cause exclusion, especially among rural schools. Therefore, this study created room for further research. In this regard, the study recommends further exploration of this phenomenon on a wider scale. It is recommended that the drive should be towards attaining a more conducive learning school environment where every child finds a reason to continue going to school. A strict implementation of compulsory attendance rule is also recommended. A stable education curriculum for schools is necessary to ensure a stabilising factor for the enjoyment of the right to education. Issues of children security within and on their way to and from school should also be given attention.

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people for their contribution and or guidance towards the success of this study:

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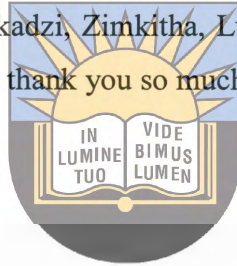
Glory be to God Almighty!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the whole of the Machejedze family, thank you so much for your constant support and understanding when I had to be away from home for so long in order to make this work a success.

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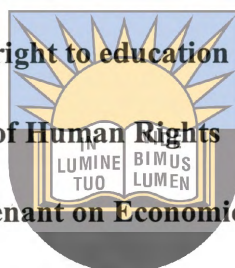
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ACRONYMS

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CESCR:	Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IQ:	Intelligence Quotient
MCRE:	Ministerial Committee on Rural Education
NCESS:	National Committee on Education Support Service
NCSNET:	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NMF:	Nelson Mandela Foundation
SASA:	South African Schools Act
STI:	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund



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CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

South Africa is emerging from an unequal and discriminatory educational and political system of governance. Education was one of the most politicized commodities of this system. Education was previously divided along racial lines. The black population had access to what was commonly referred to as the “Bantu Education”. In 1953 Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, referring to Bantu education said: “Native education should be controlled in such a way that it should accord with the policy of the State. If the native in South Africa today in any kind of school in existence is being taught to live his adult life under a policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake”.¹ Education was one of the most highly politicized aspects of social policy in South Africa. Its impact is shown on the minimal education among young South Africans of African origin. An analysis of the 1991 census suggests that one quarter (25%) of the black population’s children had no education at all. In the former homelands, this number is between 35% and 41% (UNICEF).²

The provision of education is not just a question of who has access, but also the quality of education that one has.

¹ UNICEF: 1993:16.

² Ibid.

The above history of South Africa brought about expectations at the advent of democracy that South African citizens would attain equality of which education is central.

After 1994 the right to basic education was guaranteed in the South African Constitution of 1996. This is clearly outlined in Chapter 2, Section 29 of the Bill of Rights as:

29(1) everyone has the right-

- a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
- b) to further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

(2) everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choices in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account -

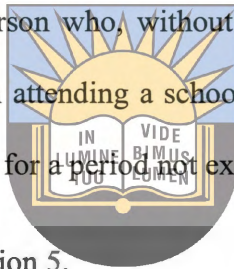
- a) equality;
- b) practicability; and
- c) the need to address the results of the past racially discriminatory laws and practices.³

Redressing such gross inequality as had been caused by apartheid on education needed more than just a constitutional provision. In order to ensure that the right to education is enhanced, the government of South Africa, through its various institutions, put in place policies, strategies and legislation which have been constantly implemented.

³ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

The South African Schools Act of 1996, among others, attempts to redress the previous imbalances in education. It emphasises compulsory attendance which requires that there be enough schools. Section 5 (a) and (b) of the Act also provide that the Education Department shall investigate the circumstances of a compulsory attending age child not attending school and take appropriate measures to remedy the situation. ⁴

Section 6 (b) states that any other person who, without just cause, prevents a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance from attending a school, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.



Non discrimination is dealt with in section 5.

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5. (1) a public school must admit ~~Together and Excellence~~ educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way.

(3) No learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent-

(a) is unable to pay or has not paid the school fees determined by the governing body under section 39.⁵

National Education Policy Act, 1996 ⁶ is the other important instrument put in place by the South African post apartheid government to redress the apartheid legacy and ensure the right to

⁴ South African Schools Act, 1996: No. 84 of 1996.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ National Education Policy Act, 1996: No. 24 of 1996.

education. The Act, among other things provides in Section 4: that the policy contemplated in section 3 shall be directed toward-

(a) the advancement and protection of the fundamental rights of every person guaranteed in terms of Chapter 3 of the Constitution, and in terms of international conventions ratified by Parliament, and in particular the right-

- 
- (i) of every person to be protected against unfair discrimination within or by an education department or education institution on any ground whatsoever;
- (ii) of every person to basic education and equal access to education institutions;
- (iii) of a parent or guardian in respect of the education of his or her child or ward;
- (iv) of every child in respect of his or her education,

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(c) achieving equitable education opportunities and the redress of past inequality in education provision, including the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of the status of women.

No-fee schools initiative is another important action taken by the South African government in trying to ensure the right to education for the poor. No-fee schools first came into being in 2006, in line with the government's long-planned objective to waive fees at the country's poorest 20% of schools. By August 2006, a total of 7 687 schools, with 2 556 550 learners, had chosen to become no-fee schools, already topping the government's target. The August 2006 meeting of Education Ministers agreed on a new target to see 40% of all learners attending no-fee schools in 2007 (National Education Statistics 2005).⁷

⁷ www.southafrica-statistics.co.za.

The government outlined the guiding norms and standards for school funding and fee exception clearly in the South African Schools Act of 1996⁸ (SASA). The Act recognises two categories of schools, public and independent. Independent schools include all private schools and schools that are privately governed. Independent schools with low tuition fees are state-aided and receive a subsidy on a sliding-scale. Traditional private schools that charge high fees receive no state subsidy.



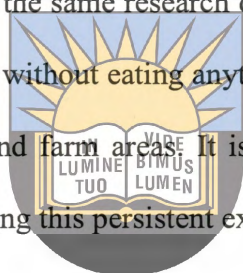
Public schools are all state-owned schools, including section 21 schools (formerly referred to as Model C or semi-private schools). They have a governing body and a degree of budget autonomy, as these are still fully-owned and accountable to the state. The Review Committee proposed a new financial system for public schools based on a partnership between the government and communities, on the basis that nothing else is affordable under the present conditions. Provincial budgets would be structured to secure fundamental constitutional requirements and policy objectives and the fulfillment of each person's right to education. School operating costs would be funded partly by subsidy, and partly by income-related school fees which would be obligatory for all parents who can afford them. Poor parents would not pay fees, and no child would be refused admission to school. The same system would apply in the compulsory and post- compulsory phases, with a reduced per capita subsidy in the post-compulsory phase.⁹

The government also initiated the School Feeding Programs, as a means to improve the effectiveness of education and afford every child access to education. This program is mainly aimed at lower grades. However, siblings from the same family in other senior grades may not

⁸ Note 4 above.

⁹ <http://www.info.gov.za/whitepaper/education>.

have anything to eat before going to school. The research carried by the Nelson Mandela Foundation discovered that in rural areas only “the lucky few have breakfast before going to school. Many children go to school without anything to eat the whole day.”¹⁰ Despite the good attempt by the government, reports and statistics still indicate that a lot leaves to be desired in terms of the circumstances in which children of school going age find themselves, and which keep them out of school. For instance, the same research discovered that in Limpopo about 22% of households, children went to school without eating anything, or only a cup of tea to keep them warm. This is common in the rural and farm areas. It is on this basis that the study seeks to investigate the underlying factors causing this persistent exclusion in rural schools.



The government also incorporated the inclusive education for special needs of disabled learners and those affected or infected with HIV/AIDS. This stance by the government was aimed at fulfilling the constitutional imperative to provide education equally to all children in South Africa without any form of discrimination. However the government has created bottle necks in the system by introducing the inclusive education. The later entails teaching all learners, fast and slow, disabled and normal, learners with high IQ and low IQ, in the same class. However, teachers are not provided with the required skills and training to handle disabled learners in their classes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

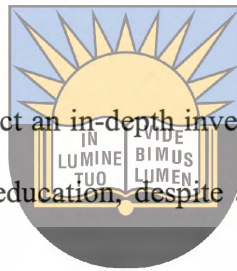
Despite all the policies, constitutional rights, and strategies put in place in South Africa to redress the past imbalances in education, a considerable number of children are still out of school. Some drop out, some perform badly and repeat the same level; others end up not

¹⁰ Nelson Mandela Foundation, (2005) Emerging Voices: A Report on Education in South African Rural Communities. HSRC Press; pg 53.

completing till they drop out; some do not get access to necessary needs and resources; others are left without support and information; others do not even start schooling at all. Therefore given this predicament, the research seeks to find out the underlying reasons why the conditions that lead to the exclusion of children still persist despite all the impressive policies put in place since the advent of democracy.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to conduct an in-depth investigation into the underlying reasons or factors causing exclusion from basic education, despite all the measures that have been put in place to redress past imbalances.



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1.4 Objectives of the Study *Together in Excellence*

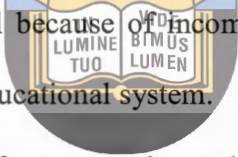
The main objective of the study is to examine the factors' underlying the violation of children's right to education in particular, their exclusion from education. This would be done by examining:

- The school environment; - how teachers teach in rural schools as compared to urban schools. This will include the amount and type of teaching material available, teacher-learner ratio, class sizes, school infrastructure, teacher motivation, teacher qualification and teaching strategies.
- Children's home background- this will include family size, parents or guardian's occupation, family income level and sources, and duties that children are involved in after or before school.
- The children's peer and generational influences.

- The community's socio-economic situation, including the main economic and social activities the community is involved in or value highly.
- The role of the Department of Education and the Government in supporting such schools.

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study

The study proceeds from the hypothesis that:

- 
- Children are still out of school because of incomplete attempts by the government to redress the inequalities in the educational system.
 - Poor school environment and infrastructure in rural schools nullify the right to education
 - Poor social economic conditions in the families and communities hinder children from fully enjoying their right to education
 - Education is a privilege for those fortunate to be born from well off families. Children living in rural areas (poor or disadvantaged societies) do not have the right to education; rather they have right of access to schooling.

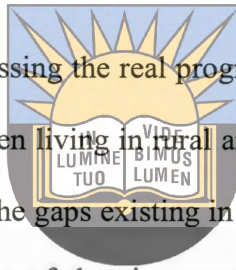
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A lot has been done in assuring the human dignity and human rights in South Africa but a lot still needs to be done particularly with respect to education in rural areas and townships. The very generation of people who were victims of educational discrimination of the apartheid system are parenting and bringing up another generation of illiterate children due to lack of full access to education.

1.6 Significance of the Study

There is a wide range of policies and strategies put in place in South Africa since the dawn of democracy to redress the imbalances in education. However, children are still facing exclusion in education mostly those living in the rural areas. The study seeks to examine the causes of this situation despite the policies in place.

The study will provide a basis for assessing the real progress made during the democratic era to ensure the right to education for children living in rural areas. The study will also inform policy makers by identifying and addressing the gaps existing in the current policies. In addition, it will add knowledge to better understanding of the circumstances befalling children living in rural areas. This study was undertaken with specific reference to schools in Alice and Fort Beaufort areas of the Eastern Cape.



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1.7 Delimitation of the Study

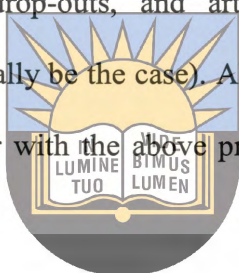
The study is restricted to two junior schools in Alice (Alice Primary School and Davidson School). One former model “C” school in Fort Beaufort (Fort Beaufort Primary School) will be studied for comparison.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Education

The eighteenth General Conference of UNESCO Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding..... of 1974 states:

“The word ‘education’ implies the entire process of social life by means of which individuals and social groups learn to develop consciously within, and for the benefit of, the national and international communities, the whole of their personal capacities, attitudes and knowledge. This process is not limited to any specific activities.”¹¹ As a result, the definition of education is not only limited to instruction delivered within schools (though in the Convention on the Right of the Child Article 28(e), on “school” drop-outs, and article 29(2), on private “educational institutions”, imply that this will normally be the case). Also the South African Constitution and the South African Schools Act concur with the above provision, though they also provide for vocational education as an alternative.



However the researcher in this study is focusing more on the right to basic education specifically looking at the formal education provided within schools, notwithstanding that, since it is a qualitative research discovery might lead the researcher to look at the right for children in other forms of education.

The Convention on the Right of the Child in Article 28 stipulates that “vocational education”, through any means of “... elimination of illiteracy” and “access to scientific and technical knowledge”. The broad aims of education are set out in article 29, but the Convention does not attempt to define the details of a basic curriculum.

Right to education

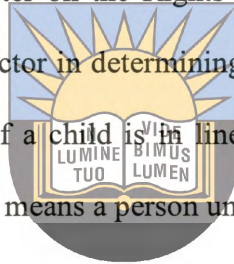
The entrenchment and recognition of the right to education in many national constitutions, including South Africa, is based on the fact that it is a precondition for the exercise and

¹¹ Hodgkin and Newell, (1998). Implementation Handbook for the convention on the Right of the Child. UNICEF. New York.

understanding of other rights. All other rights can only be meaningful once a minimum level of education has been achieved. Through education, individuals can be taught values such as tolerance and respect for human rights.¹²

Child

A child according to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is anybody under 18 years old.¹³ Age is a major factor in determining the extent of the state's obligation to provide education.¹⁴ This definition of a child is in line with the South African Constitution definition, Section 28 (3) "Child" means a person under the age of 18 years.¹⁵



Provision in the South African Schools Act however identifies a child in terms of level of school class and age but, the age is pegged at a lower level than 18 years. Also the Admission of Learners to Public Schools Schedule in the General Note 4138 of 2001¹⁶ concurs with SASA classification of a child in terms of age and grade. It states that Normal Grade Age means grade number plus 6, for example grade 1 + 6 = age 7 and Grade 9 + 6 = age 15.

The definition of a child preferred in this study is outlined in chapter 2 of the South African Schools Act, where it addresses the issue of compulsory attendance:

¹² South African Human Rights Commission (2004): My Rights My Responsibilities: Leaflets pg 16.

¹³ African Charter on The Rights And Welfare Of The Child; Adopted in July 1990 and entered into force on 29 November 1999. CAB/LEG/24.9/49 (1990), www.iss.co.za.

¹⁴ University of Western Cape (1992). International Conference on the Right of the Child: Papers and Reports of a Conference Convened by the Community Law Centre, "Putting Children First" Cape Town.

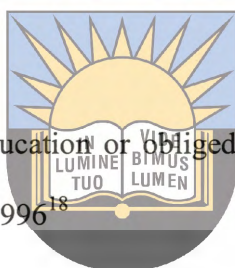
¹⁵ Op. cit. Note 3.

¹⁶ Admission of Learners to Public Schools Schedule; General Note 4138 of July 2001: pg 129.

2(1) Subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.¹⁷

Learner

This refers to any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996¹⁸



Educator

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According to the South African Schools Act (SASA), an educator means any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at a school. However, in this research, this term will be limited only to teachers and principals.

School

This means a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R (reception) to twelve.¹⁹

¹⁷ Op. cit. Note 4.

¹⁸ Op. cit. Note 4.

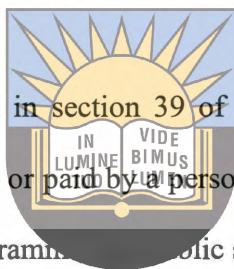
¹⁹ Op. cit. Note 4.

Rural school

An educational institution located in an area outside large and moderate sized cities and surrounding population concentration, generally characterized by farms, ranches and small towns and unpopulated regions.

School fees

This term school fees is contemplated in section 39 of the SASA and includes any form of contribution of a monetary nature made or paid by a person or body in relation to the attendance or participation by a learner in any programme in a public school.²⁰



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Norms and Standards for School Funding

This means the national norms and standards for the funding of schools determined by the Minister of Education in terms of section 35 of SASA.²¹

No Fee Threshold

The level of funding per learner contemplated in the norms and standards for school funding applicable to a public school which enables the Minister of Education to declare a school a no fee school in terms of SASA.

²⁰ Op. cit. Note 4.

²¹ Op. cit. Note 4.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter created the framework of this study by outlining the background to the research problem, the goals and objectives of the research. Central terms of this research were also defined. This paved the way to reviewing the literature, which the following chapter is focused on. The second chapter unravels the existing knowledge and findings in this phenomenon of children's right to education in this new South Africa.

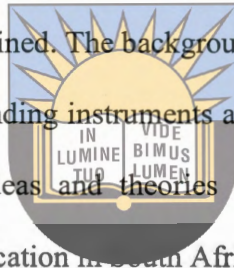


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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter will focus on the literature review, namely what has been said and done in the field of study by other researchers. The researcher will generally focus on the attempt to expose what underlies the exclusion of rural children from basic education. First, working definitions for major concepts of the study will be outlined. The background of the right to education is outlined by means of indicating all legal and binding instruments asserting this right. The researcher will also review related and competing ideas and theories on the right to basic education. An evaluation of the children's right to education in South Africa will take centre stage.



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When the democratic government assumed power in 1994, its aim was to establish a society based on the values of fundamental human rights, social justice, freedom, and equality. These values are entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996. One of the key provisions in the Constitution is the one dealing with equality and non-discrimination.

Section 9(3) reads:

“The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.”²²

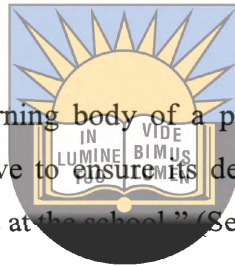
Key education policy documents such as the White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, March 1995); White Paper 2: The Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools (Department of Education, November 1996); White Paper on an Integrated

²² Op. cit. Note 3.

National Disability Strategy (Ministry in the Office of the Deputy President, 1996); and the South African Schools Act of November 1996 stress the principle of education as a basic human right. The principle implies that all learners have the right to equal access to the widest possible educational opportunities.

The principle of ensuring quality education for all learners is equally stressed. The South African Schools Act²³ provides that:

“Subject to this Act, the governing body of a public school must promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school.” (Section 20 (1) (a)).



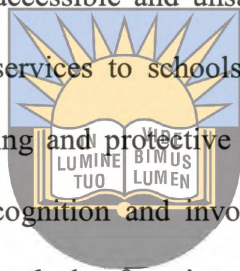
This clause encapsulates a vision of an education system that gives recognition to a wide diversity of needs in the student population, and which ensures a more flexible range of responses. The emphasis on quality education for all learners suggests that schools have to strive to meet the diverse needs of all learners.²⁴

The Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Service (NCESS) argue that the priority of an education system should be to address those factors that lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, or which lead to learning breakdown, or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision. The NCSNET and NCESS conceptualised these factors as *barriers to learning and development*.

²³ Op. cit. Note 3.

²⁴ Muthukrishna, N. 2002. Education for Children from Rural Areas. International Journal of Special Education: 2002, Vol 17, No.1 University of Natal; pg44.

The NCSNET and NCESS identified key barriers to participation in the South African context that render a large number of children and adults vulnerable to learning breakdown and sustained exclusion. These includes: problems in the provision and organisation of education; socio-economic barriers; factors that place learners at risk, such as high levels of violence and crime; HIV/AIDS epidemic and substance abuse; attitudes; an inflexible curriculum; problems with language and communication; inaccessible and unsafe built environment; inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services to schools, parents, care givers; families and communities; disability; lack of enabling and protective legislation; lack of human resource development; and lack of parental recognition and involvement (Department of Education, 1997). The Report explains that it is only by focusing on the nature of these barriers that problems of learning breakdown and exclusion can be addressed.²⁵



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Throughout the world, education is viewed as an instrument to pave the way for a more just and humane social order. This is founded on the assumption that quality education instills in the young crucial humanitarian values such as equity, tolerance and peace. Progress in education is also taken to be essential for sustainable development, environmental protection, improvement in maternal and child health and participation in democratic social and political processes. Education is, according to the World Bank, the single most important contributor to national economic growth.²⁶

*The Afrol News*²⁷ reported that Human rights groups claim the South African government is "neglecting" the right to an adequate education of thousands of rural children living on

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Jo Boyden and Ryder. P. 1996. Implementing the Right to Education in areas of conflict. Oxford: pg 79.

²⁷ <http://www.Afrolnews.com>: 3 June 2006.

commercial farms and rural areas. For instance, inadequate farm schools currently provide the only educational opportunity for farm workers' children in South Africa.

The US-based group Human Rights Watch released a 59-page report on South Africa's "forgotten schools" stating that inadequate education is still given to a large part of the country's black majority population living in rural areas. The report found that the South African government's "failure to negotiate contracts with farm owners impedes children's right to basic education." Children who try to receive education are caught between the landowners' private interests and the state's meager attempt to meet its obligations. The children become the unintended victims of government inaction.



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Policy and legislation pertaining to special needs education in South Africa has been undergoing transformation since the democratic government came into power in 1994. The various policy documents that have emerged have stressed the principles of human rights, social justice, quality, education for all, the right to a basic education, equality of opportunity, and redress of past educational inequalities. The most important development has been the focus on previously disadvantaged learners and associated barriers to learning and participation, including the community based inclusive education agenda. This paper looks into the underlying factors that cause widespread exclusion despite all the action and measures that have been taken by the South African government.

2.1 The right to basic education

Section 29 (1)(a)²⁸ states: “Everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education”. This provision creates a positive right that basic education be provided for every person and not merely a negative right that such a person should not be obstructed in pursuing his or her basic education. Thus, the state is required not only to interfere with an individual’s enjoyment of the right, but it is also obliged to provide basic education.

The term ‘Basic education’ has not yet been decided by the South African courts. But the World Declaration on Education for All²⁹ states that: the basic focus of basic education must, therefore, be on actual learning acquisition and outcome rather than exclusively upon enrolment, continued participation in organized programmes and completion of certification requirements. ‘Basic education’ is accordingly viewed in the declaration in terms of meeting basic learning needs. These needs include both essential learning tools such as literacy, oral expression, numeric, problem solving skills and basic learning content such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Basic learning needs essentially empowers individuals to participate in and interact with the societies in which they live with dignity and equal opportunities for employment in pursuing their life vocations.

Similarly, what constitutes basic education in the South African context cannot be arbitrarily defined in terms of age or the completion of a particular level of schooling. It shall, however, be determined in accordance with the educational interest to be achieved by the guarantee of the

²⁸ Note 3 above.

²⁹ World Declaration on Education for All, (1990); article 4, see also article 1 and 5. (this document is not a legally binding document).

right. The meaning of basic education should be wider than that of primary education. Without the latter an individual's access to the full enjoyment of other rights, such as the freedom to choose a trade, occupation or profession, would be severely limited.³⁰

2.2 The Background/Basis of the right to education

The right to education emerges from a number of international, regional and national human rights instruments which South Africa has ratified.

The recognition of the Right to Education world wide stems from the fact that education enables individuals to develop their full personality and dignity, enabling them to actively participate in a free society, including exercising their human rights and respecting the rights of others. Individuals are able to enjoy many other rights as a result of education.³¹



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2.2.1 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* 1948 established a global human right to education:

Article 26 provides:

- (1) "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit".
- (2) "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote

³⁰ Faranaaz Veriava and Fons Coomans, Right to Education – www.right-to-education.com (accessed 10 May 2007)

³¹ South African Human Rights Commission 2004.

understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”.

(3) “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children”.

2.2.2 The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1996)

This Universal Declaration was reinforced by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) recognises education as a very important financial investment that States can make. Education is seen by the Council as the primary vehicle for the empowerment of individuals by which economically and socially marginalised adults and children are able to get out of poverty and acquire the means to participate fully in their communities.³² Key to education is Article 13 which is herewith reproduced in full:



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1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

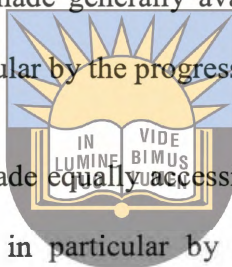
³² Rembe S, 2005. Department of Education (University of Fort Hare 2005). “The Right to Basic Education: A Case Study of the Eastern Cape”. (Unpublished Research Work) pg 83.

2. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right:

(a) Primary education shall be compulsory and freely available to all;

(b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;

(c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;



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(d) Fundamental education shall be encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed the whole period of their primary education;

(e) The development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established, and the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved.³³

³³ The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Geneva) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966.

2.2.3 The Convention on the Right of the Child (1989)

This is the major international instrument that provides for the rights of the child Article 28 provides for the right to education thus:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and freely available to all;

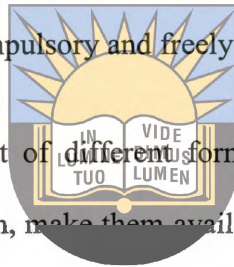
(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.



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3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.³⁴

2.2.4 The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981)

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights is a regional instrument which is not restricted only to the right to education. However, it also echoes other instruments which provide for the free and compulsory education such as the Universal Declaration and other international instruments. The Charter is not silent though about education as it states in Article 17 that:

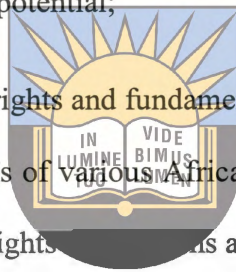
“Every individual shall have the right to education”.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child enumerates the right to education and various States obligations. This is a regional instrument modeled along the rights of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The key provision on the right to education provides:

³⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Convention on the Rights of the Child Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989; *entry into force* 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49. Geneva, Switzerland.

Article VI: Education

1. Every child shall have the right to education.
2. The education of the child shall be directed to:
 - (a) the promotion and development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - (b) fostering respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms with particular reference to those set out in the provisions of various African instruments on human and peoples' rights and international human rights instruments and conventions;
 - (c) the preservation and strengthening of positive African morals, traditional values and cultures;
 - (d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, tolerance, dialogue, mutual respect and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, tribal and religious groups;
3. State parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures with a view to achieving the full realisation of this right and shall in particular:
 - (a) provide free and compulsory basic education;
 - (b) encourage the development of secondary education in its different forms and to progressively make it free and accessible to all;
 - (d) take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates;



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(e) take special measures in respect of female, gifted and disadvantaged children, to ensure equal access to education for all sections of the community.³⁵

In this research much reference shall be directed to the obligations enumerated in 3 (a) (d) and (e) in line with the major objective of the study; which is to examine underlying factors for children exclusion from education.

2.2.5 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996



The right to education is also enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa as:

29 (1) everyone has the right-

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- c) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
 - d) to further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

(2) everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choices in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account -

- d) equality;
- e) practicability; and
- f) the need to address the results of the past racially discriminatory laws and practices.³⁶

³⁵ African Charter, op. cit. pg 11.

The right to education is also strengthened by other government policies and strategies outlined in a number of national documents such as South African Schools Act 1996 and the National Education Policy Act, 1996. All the above instruments and policies are attempts to make the children's right to education a reality in South Africa. However, despite all the provisions and strategies pursued by the government rural children still find themselves excluded.

2.2.6 South African Schools Act 1996

The South African Schools Act was designed to ensure the fulfilment of the right to education in many ways as enumerated below:



Sections 3 and 4 deal with issues of compulsory attendance and conditions of ensuring compulsory attendance:

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3(1) Subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.

Section 5 prohibits any form of discrimination against any person on any grounds, including inability of a child's parents to pay fees

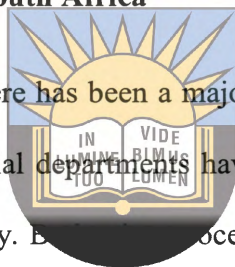
(3) No learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent-

(a) is unable to pay or has not paid the school fees determined by the governing body under section 39;

³⁶ Op. cit. Note 3.

The Act also prohibits corporal punishment in schools. Paradoxically, the same Act which prohibits discrimination by excluding a learner due to failure to pay fees also allows charging of school fees in public schools.³⁷ This is a violation of the very right the Act is trying to ensure. Although it provides conditions of exemptions, the process seems so porous and complicated for uneducated rural parents.

2.3 Education in the democratic South Africa



In just over a decade of democracy, there has been a major overhaul of the apartheid education system. One national and nine provincial departments have been created out of 18 fragmented departments based on race and ethnicity. Educational processes are no longer based on race and curricula or reflect the values of a white minority. Major gains that have been made include improved access as reflected in enrolment figures, accelerated provisioning of school infrastructure, more equitable distribution of resources, improved learner-educator ratios, the introduction of school nutrition programmes and the establishment of democratic structures in the form of School Governing Bodies at local school level.

However rural education in particular lags behind in many parts of the country. This is despite the fact that the vast majority of school-going children in South Africa live in rural areas³⁸ and the emphasis given on a non-discriminatory provision of education.

³⁷ Op. cit. Note 4, Section; 39-40.

³⁸ Nelson Mandela Foundation, op. cit. pg 140.

2.4 The right to education to be achieved “on the basis of equal opportunity”

Education is recognized to be essential for all children; Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child stresses that the right must be achieved, “on the basis of equal opportunity”. This reflects the fact that vast numbers of children suffer discrimination in accessing education (particularly children in rural areas, and among them girls and disabled children being the hardest hit). “Equal opportunity” stresses the general principle of non-discrimination included in the Convention on the Right of the Child. Article 2 (1)³⁹ provides that:

“State parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political, or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status”.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern that specific groups of children are still discriminated against in education, both in terms of the definition of the Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960: “.....of depriving any person or group of persons of access to education of any type or at any level..... (or)....limiting any person or group of persons or group of persons to education of inferior standard” and through less direct forms of discrimination.⁴⁰ The same Committee identified specific groups as suffering discrimination in education.

³⁹ The Convention on the Right of a Child. Article 2.

⁴⁰ Hodgkin and Newell, (1998). Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Right of the Child. Unicef. New York: pg 58.

2.4.1 Rural children

There are often striking discrepancies between the education of rural and urban-based children. Poor educational opportunities for children in rural areas arise from a combination of factors, including the administrative cost and difficulty of servicing remote and scattered farms and villages, a dearth of teachers prepared to live in the countryside, the dependence of poor farming communities on children as laborers and the apparent irrelevance of schools and the curriculum to rural lives.⁴¹

2.4.1.1 The right to education for children living on farms

The working definition for 'rural' in this research encompasses farm areas; hence children living on farms share exclusion as those living in rural areas. Human Rights groups claim that the South African government is "neglecting" the right to an adequate education of thousands of rural children living on commercial farms. Inadequate farm schools currently provide the only educational opportunity for farm workers' children in South Africa. The Human Rights group published a report on South Africa's "forgotten schools" and inadequate education still given to a large part of the country's black majority population living in rural areas. The report found that the South African government's "failure to negotiate contracts with farm owners impedes the children's right to basic education."⁴²

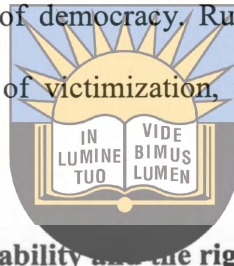
In the worst cases, farm owners have deliberately obstructed farm children's access to the schools. In most of these cases, farm workers and their children were left helpless. The report documents cases where farm owners or managers prevented learners and teachers from getting to

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² <http://www.afrol.com> 4 November 2007.

school by locking school facilities or obstructing access, generally due to a lack of contractual arrangements. Thus learners are caught between the landowners' private interests and the state's meager attempt to meet its obligations. The advances made in public education elsewhere in South Africa have yielded few benefits for children on commercial farms.⁴³

Rural children suffer in all their unique circumstances the consequences of being discriminated against from sharing the large 'cake' of democracy. Rural children suffering exclusion from education, experience different levels of victimization, with female children and those with disabilities being the hardest hit.



2.4.1.2 Rural children with disability and the right to education

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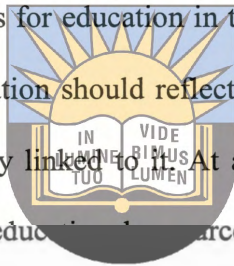
Rural areas are deprived of facilities to cater for disabled children so that they have access to education as other children. The research pays attention also to this (usually forgotten) group of rural children.

All children, no matter how seriously disabled they are, are entitled to education that maximizes their potential. Any law or practice that limits this right, for example, by deeming certain children “unfit for education” or by entitling them only to “healthy treatment” rather than “education”, breaches Articles 2 and 28 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Moreover, the education of disabled children should be provided “in a manner conducive to the child’s achieving the fullest possible social integration” (Article 23(3)). This means that

⁴³ Ibid.

disabled children should, wherever possible, be educated in mainstream schools alongside children without disabilities.⁴⁴

The international standards on equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, which South Africa recognizes, states that: “In situations where the general school system does not yet adequately meet the needs of all persons with disabilities, special education may be considered. It should be aimed at preparing students for education in the general school system”. It goes on to state that: “the quality of such education should reflect the same standards and ambitions as general education and should be closely linked to it. At a minimum, students with disabilities should be afforded the same portion of educational resources as students without disabilities”.



2.4.1.3 **The rural girl child and the right to education**

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Rural girl children, in many cases, start to undertake heavy domestic chores at a very early age and are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities. This often results in poor academic performance and an early drop-out from schooling.

While the figures for the percentage of girls enrolling in primary and secondary education have steadily increased worldwide, the figures for rural areas in developing countries still lag far behind their male peers and other girls in urban areas. Once enrolled, girls in rural areas are more likely to drop out of school.⁴⁵ Others are forced to marry at an early age and this denies them the opportunity to continue with schooling.

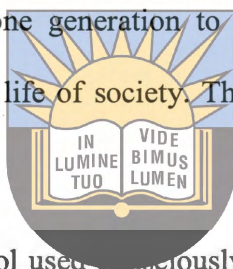
⁴⁴ Hodgkin and Newell, op. cit. pg 29.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

2.5 The Impact of Bantu education

Bantu education has produced generations of marginalized people. The process has now gone the full circle and is still going on. The product of Bantu education now constitute the majority of the teaching profession with devastating consequences for delivery of quality education in black schools, mostly those in rural areas. Efforts to break that cycle have not as yet succeeded.⁴⁶

Education is a tool used to prepare one generation to the next for the participation in the economic, social, cultural and spiritual life of society. This is effected through schools, family and the wider social structures.



Apartheid education was a powerful tool used consciously and systematically to warp people's attitudes from childhood. The differentiated education perpetuated attitudes of superiority and inferiority rather than of equality. Dr. Ken Hartshone said; statistics showed that 40% of black children did not attend school by 1992.

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In this research the researcher evaluates the changes which have taken place on the above statistics, if any. In 1992, Race Relations Survey statistics state that 200 000 children dropped out in the first 4 years of school, the highest being in the rural South Africa. This was a huge underestimation of children since squatter camps were not registered for census.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Ngcuka and Tsukudu (1992) International Conference on the Right of the Child: "Putting Children First"; Papers and Reports of the Conference Convened by the Community Law Centre, Cape Town 1992.

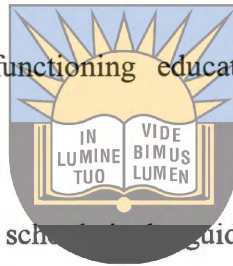
⁴⁷ Ibid.

2.6 Indicators of the basic right to education

The following are elements of the right to basic education, namely, availability; accessibility; acceptability; and adaptability. These are put into perspective below in appraising the fulfilment of the right to basic education for children in rural South Africa.

2.6.1 Availability

Availability relates broadly to the functioning education institution and programmes. It encompasses basic infrastructure.



Provisioning for basic infrastructure for schools is a guiding principle set out in the Norms and Standards for School Funding. The funding policy aims primarily at providing redress to the most underdeveloped and the very poor schools and communities by directing capital expenditure targets to those in need, that is, those areas where no schools exist or where schools are overcrowded. Schools with inadequate infrastructure remain dysfunctional⁴⁸. Basic infrastructure includes adequate classrooms; sanitation facilities; clean and safe water, and electricity.

2.6.2 Accessibility

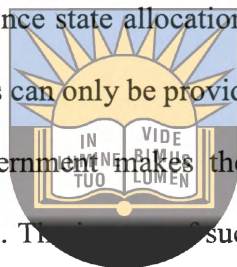
Accessibility refers to education being available to all learners. Accessibility is also premised on the principle of non-discrimination.⁴⁹ The Schools Act has a general prohibition against unfair discrimination of any form. It prohibits the exclusion of a learner from admission to a school on certain specified grounds, such as: the administering of an entrance examination as a basis for

⁴⁸ Faranaaz Veriava and Fons Coomans, op. cit. pg 20

⁴⁹ Ibid.

admission; failure to subscribe to the mission statement of a school; and parental inability to pay fees.

A more complex issue is that of economic accessibility of basic education within the current regulatory framework that allows school fees to be charged but which at the same time provides for a system of exemptions from the payment of school fees for those learners who cannot afford to pay.⁵⁰ In terms of the Schools Act, once state allocations to schools are made, the remaining financial requirements in school budgets can only be provided through charging of fees and other private fundraising methods. The government makes the determination whether or not fees should be charged at a particular school. The inclusion of such provisions may prejudice children from the rural areas. Economic accessibility also includes cost of uniforms; transport costs (these first two are not included on the exemption of fees); and charged school fees.



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2.6.3 Acceptability

Acceptability relates to whether or not curricula and teaching methods are sufficient to meet basic learning needs such as literacy, oral expression or numeracy. The scope of the acceptability of basic education has been broadened in international human rights jurisprudence to include a system of education that seeks to protect the individual rights of learners on issues such as: language choice; parental choice; and discipline of learners.

2.6.3.1 Language rights

The South African constitution provides for the right to receive education in one's own choice of language. Section 29 (2)⁵¹ states that:

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Op. cit. Note 3.

“Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account:

- (a) equity;
- (b) practicability; and
- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices”.

The issue of language among disadvantaged children in rural areas is significant in order to ascertain the factors perpetuating exclusion of these children from education.



2.6.3.2 Parental choice

Parental choice⁵² is a very important element for the realization of the basic right to education, and their ability to access it. The research explored from the parents whether present schools and education that their children receive is their ideal choice.

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2.6.3.3 Discipline of learners

The South African Schools Act also includes a ban on corporal punishment in schools. The impact of this is assessed as a factor in the exclusion of rural children from education.

2.6.4 Adaptability

Adaptability⁵³ in basic education relates to the flexibility of the system of education to adapt to the changing needs in society, and to respond to the diverse needs of learners within their diverse social and cultural settings, most particularly the needs of the more vulnerable segment of

⁵² Faranaaz Veriava and Fons Coomans, op. cit. pg 20

⁵³ Ibid.

society. These include rural children, non-citizens, children with disabilities and girls, among others.

2.7 Educational Needs of Rural People

In spite of the gains made in education and in the fight against poverty, rural development remains a challenge in South Africa. At the centre of this challenge is education for rural people. This is evident in the Social Development Indicators Survey. The latter aimed at measuring rural development in 13 specific areas identified by President Mbeki for accelerated rural development. The objective of the study was to provide baseline information on the current levels of the need, access and use of services in rural areas, and to provide easily measurable indicators for monitoring poverty and the effects of government programmes, projects and policies on the living standards of the people in the nodal areas.⁵⁴ Noted in this survey and crucial to this research is the importance of education for development and the impact of lack of education in the rural areas.

The plight of rural people was further highlighted in two other studies on rural education. The first is by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) which resulted in a report called the Emerging Voices. This study drew a link between rural poverty and education. The other study was conducted by the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (MCRE) commissioned by the Department of Education.⁵⁵

For the purposes of this research, focus is made mainly on some of the elements raised through the preceding research focusing on the challenges facing rural children in accessing their right to

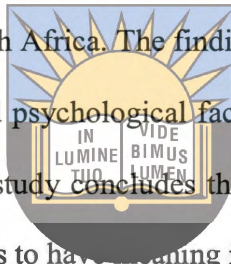
⁵⁴ Department of Education, 2005. Report of the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education: A New Version for Rural Schooling.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

education. It is intended to come up with recommendations that will promote quality education for all learners in rural areas in ways that are consistent with the government's integrated approach to poverty eradication, rural development and children's right respect.

2.8 Challenges Facing Rural Education in South Africa

Kimberley Porteus and others analyse the factors underlying school non-attendance in three poor, marginalised communities in South Africa. The findings reveal that 'poverty', including the interaction between physical, social and psychological factors, has by far the greatest influence on children's being out of school. The study concludes that poverty needs to be addressed as a priority if the very notion of 'inclusion' is to have meaning in South African society.⁵⁶



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A national Department of Education report published in 2000 - *Education for All: The South African Assessment Report* - found that approximately 19 percent of children in rural areas, which include commercial farm areas and former homelands, were not in school, as opposed to 11 percent in urban areas.⁵⁷ The physical and teaching conditions in farm schools are among the poorest in South Africa.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Porteus K, *et al* 2000. 'Out of School' Children in South Africa: An Analysis of Causes in a Group of Marginalised, Urban 7- to 15-year-olds. *British Journal of Learning Support*: Accessed on <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com> 15 May 2007.

⁵⁷ Department of Education. *Education for All – the South African Assessment Report*, 2000 [online], http://education.pwv.gov.za/policies&20and%20Reports/2000_Reports/2000_Reports_Index.htm. (Retrieved 15 May 2007).

⁵⁸ Adele Gordon, "Providing Quality Education in Schools on Commercial Farms," paper presented at a conference on farm schools convened by the minister of education, May 13, 2000.

2.8.1 School Environment

Many learners in rural schools do not have access to educational resources in their homes and in their schools. The largest portion of provisional education budgets is spent on personnel costs, leaving little for infrastructure, school security, maintenance, stationery, equipment and textbooks.

2.8.1.1 School infrastructure



Most infrastructure backlogs were inherited from the former Transkei and Ciskei homelands, where learner: educator ratio was in excess of 80:1. In these schools grossly inadequate classrooms and poorly constructed school buildings are still common.⁵⁹ Many buildings are in serious need of repair, with doors and windows, flooring and toilet facilities being highest on the list of repairs needed. The Nelson Mandela Foundation⁶⁰ found out in a research on rural education that around 76% of schools need proper doors and windows, flooring and toilet facilities. Some schools have facilities like toilets and electricity but their availability does not always mean functionality of such schools.

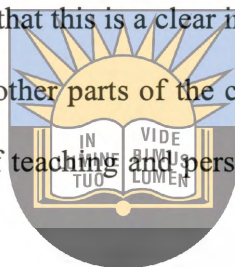
Also lacking are other necessary educational facilities, such as computers, telephones, library, fax machines and photocopying machines. These facilities may be present physically, but for practical purposes they are not available. Invariably in most rural schools, such facilities are stored and only used in the principal's office.

⁵⁹ Rembe S, *op. cit.* pg 25.

⁶⁰ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *op. cit.* pg 71.

2.8.1.2 Learner-educator ratio

In government-funded public schools, the average learner-educator ratio in terms of the country's outcomes-based education system is 32.6 to 1, while private schools generally have one teacher for every 17.5 scholars.⁶¹ The learner-educator ratio in the rural Eastern Cape Province is the highest in the country at (43:1 in primary and 33:1 in secondary schools).⁶² Research by the Nelson Mandela Foundation concluded that this is a clear indication that in rural schools teachers handle larger classes than the norm in other parts of the country. The research emphasised that this has consequences for the quality of teaching and personal interaction between teachers and learners.⁶³



2.8.1.3 Class size

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Average class sizes in the rural areas are relatively large, and many children struggle to find a place.⁶⁴ Nationally, the Eastern Cape province had the greatest shortage of classrooms (15 538) relative to the number of learners and the highest learner classroom ratio (50:1)⁶⁵ This in itself is enough deprivation and reduces interest in schooling among children.

⁶¹ SouthAfrica.info reporter. Updated November 2006.

⁶² Rembe S, *op. cit.* pg 77.

⁶³ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *op. cit.* pg 49.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Rembe S, *op. cit.* pg 99.

2.8.2 Parental involvement and influences

Due to high levels of poverty in the rural areas parents and other family members give preferential attention to issues of daily survival of the family. Hence, school children are left at the mercy of school teachers who equally cannot afford individual attention to children since they have high learner-educator ratios in rural areas. This therefore impacts heavily on both the child's performance and their interest in schooling. In reality, some parents frequently ask their children to help with household chores during school days.



2.8.3 Family Background

Children from families experiencing unemployment, chronic sickness, single parent, those living with grandparents, and illiterate parents or guardians, suffer much education deprivation and high chances of drop-out.

Children who have or whose parents suffer from, HIV/AIDS are at high risk of education exclusion in rural areas. Children leave school early to help their parents who are ill or HIV infected.⁶⁶

Some children are forced to walk far long distance from their homes or to walk through unsafe areas. Transport to and from school is a growing critical area of concern with regard to the basic right to education particularly for children from poor family backgrounds. Lack of state-funded transport from homes to schools further hinders access to education in commercial farm areas.

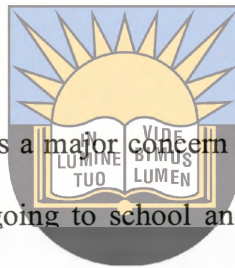
⁶⁶ National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS. Information Leaflets by the Aids Council.

Two-thirds of the children, some as young as eight years old, who attend farm schools in Limpopo Province travel to school on foot up to 30 kilometers each morning.⁶⁷

The survey carried out by the Department of Education in 2000 indicated that many children from impoverished families are denied access to basic education because they cannot afford to *pay fees* or purchase *school uniforms*.

2.8.3.1 School fees and uniforms

The cost of school fees and uniforms is a major concern for parents and learners. They prevent children from poor households from going to school and this in turn creates tension between poor families and schools.⁶⁸



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2.8.3.2 Family sources of income and income levels

Poverty is much more than just insufficient income or the lack of it. It is the condition when one has no financial means or access to resources to sustain a livelihood. Land and livestock are viewed as means of survival and form of insurance against misfortune among rural families. It helps caregivers to support children financially in schools.⁶⁹ Family members are expected to participate in tilling the land and looking after livestock. This includes children who attend school, which in one way or another interferes with their education. In essence most families use the labour of their children to fetch water, tend livestock or support small-scale farming.

⁶⁷ Staff writer <http://www.afrol.com/news> accessed 15 May 2007.

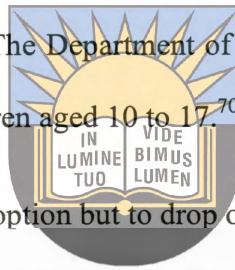
⁶⁸ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *op. cit.* pg 50.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Pension funds for elderly members have become major sources of income for the majority of poor rural families. Reliance in social grants means that money is not enough and priority is given to family basic needs.

2.8.3.3 Child headed families

South Africa has a population of 44.8 million people according to Census 2001; more than 41% of the population lives in rural areas. The Department of Social Development found that nearly 99 000 households are headed by children aged 10 to 17.⁷⁰



Most of these children are left with no option but to drop out of school either to take care of other young siblings or to earn a living for themselves and others.

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2.8.3.4 Hunger among school children

Not all children are lucky to have breakfast before going to school. Many children go without anything to eat the whole day long.⁷¹ Large numbers of children attending school come from homes that lack basic resources, including food. A survey conducted by the Department of Education found a high level of unemployed parents of school going children. Findings from the survey also supported the need for an inclusive school nutrition programme. Half of the surveyed parents in the Eastern Cape felt that their children in schools were not well-fed or healthy. The survey carried a testimony of one learner: "Once when my sister collapsed at school, the other children laughed at her and teased her"⁷² After such an experience a child would not be

⁷⁰ Department of Education, op. cit. pg 37.

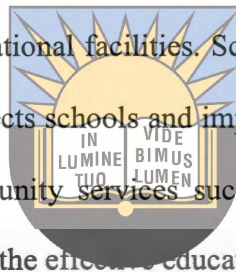
⁷¹ Note 10 above.

⁷² Department of Education, op. cit. pg 37.

psychologically stable to continue in such an environment of embarrassment, hence the best option is to drop out.

2.8.4 Poor community socio-economic conditions

The state of socio-economic condition in the community does influence activities that take place there. Hence lack of basic services in the community affects every aspect of community life: daily living, schools, clinics and recreational facilities. Schools are in no better shape. The lack of basic services in the community affects schools and impact on the access to schooling and the quality of education for all.⁷³ Community services such as; clinics; good roads; electricity; security and many other are crucial for the effective education for children.



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2.9 Conclusion

Unless the gap between children of the families of the white and privileged middle-class and children of the privileged and those living in rural areas is bridged, the latter will continue to be cheated out of the full enjoyment of educational opportunities presented to them. They will bring to their learning environment less motivation, poor background to give learning meaning and far less expectation of success than does the average urban school going pupil. The result is that rural school children learn far less as they go along their education, they are likely to drop out of school 'mentally' years before they drop out 'physically'.⁷⁴ The question keeps arising whether equality of opportunity can exist in schools that are segregated economically by race and social status.

⁷³ Note 10 above.

⁷⁴ Keach, E.V, Fulton R and Gardner W.E (1990) Education and Social Crisis: Perspectives o Teaching Disadvantaged Youth. John Wiley and Sons; New York: pg 135.

An extensive review of available literature in terms of policies, legislation, and research findings related to the children's right to education in South Africa has been discussed in this chapter. Locally, regionally and internationally binding instruments ensuring the right to education have also been discussed. This has assisted in understanding the right to education as a matter of concern globally. Chapter 3 looks at the methods and procedures which have been employed in conducting this study.



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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3 Introduction

In this chapter the research design and methodology employed throughout the process of research will be outlined. This will include the case study research design; qualitative method; the descriptive method of research, and particularly, the description of the research population, sampling procedure and size. Research instruments, data analysis, validity and reliability of the research outcome are discussed as well.



3.1 Research Methodology

3.1.1 Qualitative research methodology

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Qualitative research methodology is based on methodological traditions of enquiry that explores a social and human phenomenon.⁷⁵ Creswell further argues that qualitative research provides a rich source of information leading to theories, patterns and or policies that help to explain and inform the phenomenon under study. In this study, the research seeks to find the underlying factors causing children exclusion from education, despite the policies in place. The results will inform policies that seek to ensure the child's right to basic education. Another reason for selecting the qualitative method for this study is that the topic needed to be explored flexibly with the main aim of accessing specific information rather than a mere generalization of the findings.

In addition qualitative research methodology draws its principles from the interpretivist/phenomenologist and critical traditions. In these approaches, the researcher strives

⁷⁵ Creswell, J.W. 1998. Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks Sage: pg 2.

to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences. The aim is to understand the nature of that setting, what their lives are like, what is going on for them, what their meanings are, and what the world looks like in that particular setting. The goal of research is to describe and understand rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour.⁷⁶ The research seeks deep understanding of people's experiences and, in this regard, to understand from their vantage point what they take to be the causes or factors perpetuating rural children from education exclusion, despite all the policies of redress in place. The research looks specifically at three primary schools in Alice community and Fort Beaufort.



Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of social context for understanding the social world. It holds that the meaning of a social action, statement or situations depends, in an important way, on the context in which it appears. When a researcher removes an event, social action, answer to a question, or conversations from the social context in which it appears, or ignores the context, its social meaning and significance is distorted. Attention to social context is therefore of critical importance in qualitative research. Attention to social context means that a qualitative researcher notes what came before or what surrounds the focus of study. It also implies that the same events or behaviors can have different meanings in different cultures or historical eras.⁷⁷ This is the reason why the research in the preceding chapter gave an overview of Bantu education, because the researcher holds the view that people's past will always have an implication in shaping their present and future situation.

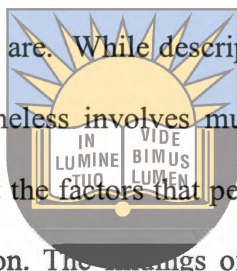
⁷⁶ Rembe S. Personal communication by way of class notes Department of Education (University of Fort Hare) 2007.

⁷⁷ Neuman L W, 1997, Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches; 3rd ed. Allyn and Bacon. Needham.

3.1.2 Descriptive Research

The researcher's intent in a descriptive study is to observe and describe some segment of social reality.⁷⁸ The main purpose of descriptive research is to examine the relationship among variables and to provide an accurate description of a phenomenon that is being researched.⁷⁹

A descriptive researcher believes that before solutions are sought, one needs to know what the existing facts and prevailing conditions are. While descriptive research is essentially concerned with conditions as they are, it nevertheless involves much more than mere fact gathering.⁸⁰ Hence the researcher sought to find out the factors that perpetuate rural children exclusion from full enjoyment of the right to education. The findings of this research assisted in developing possible solutions which are made in the form of recommendations.



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Lovell and Lawson⁸¹ define descriptive research as concerned with conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs and attitudes that are held, processes that are on-going, and trends that are developing. Descriptive research is also concerned with the investigation of possible cause-and effect relationships by observing an existing condition or state of affairs and searching back in time for plausible causal factors.

In this study the researcher adopts descriptive research design. Descriptive research could be an in-depth description of specific individuals, social event, group, company or any other social

⁷⁸ Babbie, E and Wagenaar, C T, 1992. Practice of Social Research: Guided Activities to Accompany The Practice of Social Research; 6th ed. Wadsworth Publishing Company: London.

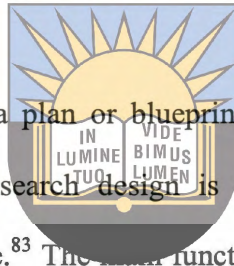
⁷⁹ Mouton, J and Marais H.C. 1990. Basic Concepts in the Methodology of the Social Sciences. Pretoria: Human Science Research Council Press: pg 43.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ K. Lovell and K. S. Lawton, 1970. Understanding educational research, London: University of London Press, p.31.

phenomenon. Because the research aims to dig deep into people's views on factors causing children exclusion from education in rural areas, focus was made on only three schools as case studies. The reason for focusing on a small area is to get a deeper view and understanding of people's experiences and views; explore the associated feelings and observe the non-verbal expressions.

3.2 Research Design



Mouton⁸² defines research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends conducting the research. In a qualitative context, research design is the entire process of research from conceptualizing to writing the narrative.⁸³ The main function of the research design is to enable the researchers to anticipate what appropriate research decisions should be made so as to maximize the validity and reliability of the eventual outcome.

There are two major aspects of research design, namely;⁸⁴ the researcher should specify as clearly as possible what the research envisages to find out; and the researcher must determine the best way to do it.

The researcher envisages finding out the factors that underlies the continual exclusion of rural children from enjoying the full right to education through an in-depth examination of three cases. The researcher therefore determines the case study research design as the best suited for this study.

⁸² Mouton, J. 1996. Understanding Social Research. Van Schaik Publishers; Pretoria: pg 55.

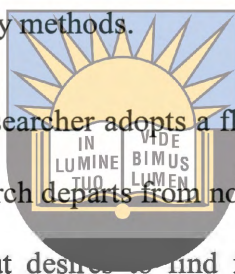
⁸³ Creswell, op. cit. pg 62.

⁸⁴ Babbie, E. 1995. The Practice of Social Research. Wadsworth Publishing Company: London.

Robson⁸⁵ makes a useful distinction between fixed and flexible design strategies. Fixed designs call for a tight pre-specification at the outset, and are commonly equated with a quantitative approach. The design employs experimental and non-experimental research methods.

Flexible designs evolve during data collection and are associated with a qualitative approach, although some quantitative data may be collected. The design employs, among other things, case study, ethnographic and grounded theory methods.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher adopts a flexible design approach because of the inductive nature of the study. The research departs from no fixed point of hypothesis, (though the researcher has stated a hypothesis) but desires to find from the research what could be the underlying factors perpetuating rural children's exclusion from education. A case study design is adopted for this research.



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3.2.1 Case Study Design

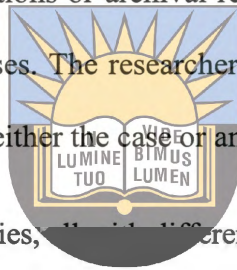
Case study is studying social elements through a comprehensive description and analysis of a single situation or case. Emphasis is placed on understanding the unit and the wholeness of a particular case.⁸⁶ In the desire to study a social group, community, system, organisation or a social event; it is convenient to pick one example or a small number of examples from the list to study them in detail within their own context, and make assessments and comparisons. These are called case studies.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Robson, C. 2002. Real World Research: A Research for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

⁸⁶ Rembe, op. cit. pg 47.

⁸⁷ Walliman, N. 2006. Social Research Methods. SAGE Publications Ltd: London: pg 86.

According to Creswell⁸⁸, a case study can be regarded as an in-depth analysis of a “bounded system” (bounded by time and/or place) or single or multiple cases, over a given period of time. The case being studied can refer to a process, activity, event, programme, individual or multiple individuals. The description of the cases takes place through a detailed, in-depth data collection method of involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context. These can include interviews, document analysis, observations or archival records. The product of this research is an in-depth description of a case or cases. The researcher situates the system or case within its large context, but the focus remains on either the case or an issue that is illustrated by the case.⁸⁹



Mark⁹⁰ refers to three types of case studies, all with different purposes:

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The first is the intrinsic case study which is solely focused on the aim of gaining a better understanding of the individual case. The purpose is not to understand a broad social issue, but merely to describe the case being studied.

The second is the instrumental case study which is used to elaborate on a theory or to gain a better understanding of a social issue. The case study merely serves the purpose of facilitating the researcher’s gaining of knowledge about the social issue.

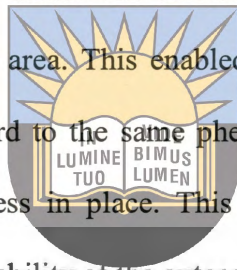
The last is the collective case study which furthers the understanding of the researcher about a social issue or population being studied. The interest in the individual case is secondary to the researcher’s interest in a group of cases. Cases are chosen so that comparison can be made between cases and concepts and so that theories can be extended or validated.

⁸⁸ Creswell, *op. cit.* pg 61.

⁸⁹ De Vos, A.S *et al.* 2002. Research at Grass Roots: For the social sciences and human service professions; 2nd ed. Van Schaik Publishers: Pretoria: pg 275.

⁹⁰ Mark, R. 1996. Research made simple: a handbook for social workers. London: Sage: pg 219.

This study adopted the collective case study approach, based on the primary desire of the researcher to further the understanding of the causes or factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from education. Because the researcher's interest in the individual case is a manifestation of his broader interest in the collective group, that is, all rural children, the study and its outcome will be limited to the cases. The researcher chose three schools: two from a rural area and one from a more urban area. This enabled comparison to be made among the experiences of these schools with regard to the same phenomenon of children exclusion from education despite the policies of redress in place. This is also to fulfil the methodological requirement and ensure validity and reliability of the outcome.



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The use of case studies has become extremely widespread in social research, particularly with small-scale research. When researchers opt for a case study approach, they buy into a set of related ideas and preferences which, when combined, give the approach a distinctive character. Many of the features associated with case study approach can be found elsewhere and are not necessarily unique to this strategy. However, when brought together they form a broad approach to social research, with underlying rationale for direction and planning of investigation that separates it from the rationale for survey research or the rationale for experimental research.⁹¹

Denscombe enumerated five features associated with case study approach as follows:

First, spotlight on one instance. The starting point, and arguably the defining characteristic, of the case study approach, is its focus on just one instance of subject that is to be investigated.

Occasionally, researchers use two instances for comparison but, in principle, the idea of a case

⁹¹ Denscombe, M. 2003. The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects; 2nd ed. Open University Press: Berkshire.

study is that a spotlight is focused on an individual case rather than a wide spectrum. The case study approach is quite the opposite of any mass study. The logic behind concentrating efforts on one case rather than many is that there may be insights to be gained from looking at the individual case that can have wider implications.

Secondly, in-depth study: What a case study can do that a survey normally cannot is to study things in detail. Here the researcher takes a strategic decision to devote all his or her efforts to research on just one case. Hence there is obviously far greater opportunity to delve into things in more detail and discover things that might not have become apparent through more superficial and distant research.



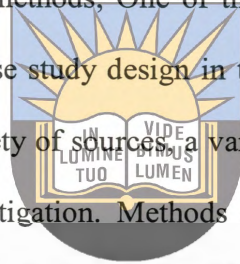
Thirdly, focus on relationships and processes. Relationships and processes within social settings tend to be interconnected and interdependent. In order to understand one thing it is necessary to understand many others and, crucially how the various parts are linked. Hence the researcher desires to dig deeper into all related factors that manifest themselves in the exclusion of rural children from enjoying the right to basic education fully. The case study approach works well here because it offers more chances than a survey approach of going into sufficient detail to unravel the complexities of a given situation. It helps discover how many parts affect one another. Case studies tend to be holistic rather than deal with isolated factors.

Fourthly, natural setting; the case that forms the basis of investigation is normally something that already exists. It is not a situation that is artificially generated specifically for the purpose of the research. The case is a naturally occurring phenomenon. It exists prior to the research project and, it is hoped, continues to exist once the research is finished.⁹² Hence the researcher, in his attempt to investigate factors perpetuating children exclusion from education, chose cases which

⁹² Ibid.

naturally existed before the research and which are going to continue after its completion. The researcher's units of investigation were similarly selected from groups that naturally existed prior to the research, so as to afford creating artificial groups which might compromise the reliability and validity of the research outcome. The units of investigation are described clearly later in this chapter.

Lastly, multiple sources and multiple methods; One of the strengths and the reasons why the researcher chose the utilization of a case study design in this research is because it allows and encourages the researcher to use a variety of sources, a variety of types of data and a variety of research methods as part of the investigation. Methods such as observation, interviews and document analysis can be utilised. These shall be dealt with in detail later in this chapter.



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The basic aim in this study is not to provide a mere generalization of the outcome but rather a holistic approach to the factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from accessing basic education. The researcher intends doing this through a detailed focus on three selected cases which are Alice Primary School, Davidson School and Fort Beaufort Primary School. Case study method as outlined above will afford the researcher a chance to utilise a number of methods in gathering these factors at the same time. Most importantly, these research methods give, the researcher the opportunity to observe some expressions and non-verbal information from both the participants and their surrounding environments. For example, if the researcher required information on the state of infrastructure of the school, he can have this from asking the respondents; he can also personally observe the physical state of infrastructure, by checking for himself if the school has water, electricity, class rooms, furniture, doors, fences and many other observable elements.

3.3 Research Population and Sampling Methods

3.3.1 Research Population

A research population refers to all those cases about whom the researcher wants to make a scientific conclusion, with respect to a certain attribute or social phenomenon. A research population is a term that sets boundaries on the study units and it refers to individuals who possess specific characteristics under study.⁹³ Specifically, the research population refers to:

All children attending basic education at Alice Davidson and Fort Beaufort Primary Schools; all other people as individuals and groups who are directly or indirectly involved in the provision of basic education to children. These include, *inter alia*, parents; learners; and teachers or educators including the principals.



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However, the researcher will most likely be unable to study the total population with respect to this attribute. The population may be too large, or simply unavailable for study. The researcher accordingly used a sample (a relatively small section) from within the population.⁹⁴ It is out of this wide population that the researcher will select the direct participants in the study to form the research sample, based on the sampling methodology outlined below.

3.3.2 Sampling

A sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons that together comprise the subject of the study. It can be viewed as a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which the research is located. The sample is studied in order to understand the population from

⁹³ Arkava, M.L and Lane, T. 1983. Beginning Social Work Research, Boston: Allyn & Bacon: pg 157.

⁹⁴ Behr, A.L 1983. Empirical Research Methods for the Human Science. Butterworth: Durban: pg 120.

which it is drawn. The interest in describing the sample is not primarily an end in itself, but rather a means to help the researcher explain some facet of the population. Alternatively, a sample is that which comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study.⁹⁵

The major reason for sampling is feasibility. A complete coverage of the total population is seldom possible, and all the members of a population of interest cannot possibly be reached. Even if it were theoretically possible to identify, contact and study the entire relevant population, time and cost considerations usually make it a prohibitive undertaking. The use of a small portion may make the results more accurate than would have been obtained if one had studied the entire population. This is because with a sample time, money and effort can be concentrated on producing a better quality research – better instruments, more in-depth information, and better interviews or observation.⁹⁶



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Most important is the sampling procedure and method one uses in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in-depth. Qualitative samples tend to be purposive, rather than random. This is because the initial definition of the population is more limited, and partly because social processes have logic and coherence that random sampling may reduce to incomprehensive sawdust. Also samples in qualitative studies are usually not wholly pre-specified, but can evolve once fieldwork begins.

⁹⁵ De Vos, A.S *et al. op. cit.* pg 334.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Initially choices of participants may lead to similar and different ones; observing one class of events invites comparison with another; and understanding one key relationship in setting reveals facets to be studied in others.⁹⁷ In qualitative sampling the researcher needs to set boundaries; that is, to define aspects of the cases that can be studied within the limits of time and the means, that connect directly to the research question or elements of what was being studied.⁹⁸

3.4 Types of Sampling



Since the research is a qualitative, descriptive research, using a case study design, is the most appropriate method of sampling. The primary aim of the research is not a mere generalization of findings, but access to the needed information. Non-probability sampling methods are based on non-random selection. Selection of participants relies on the judgment of the researcher or by accident and is not primarily aimed at making generalizations about the whole population.⁹⁹

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Different methods of sampling are considered below.

3.4.1 Accidental Sampling

Accidental sampling can also be called convenience or haphazard sampling. In this sampling procedure, any case that happens to cross the researcher's path and has anything to do with the phenomenon under study is included in the sample until the desired number is obtained. The so-called man in-the-street interviews that are often conducted by television teams are a good example of accidental sampling. The respondents are usually those who are nearest and most

⁹⁷ Matthew, B.M and Huberman, A.M, 1994. Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook; 2nd ed. SAGE Publications: London.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Walliman, op. cit. pg 50.

easily available. The researcher simply reaches out and takes the cases that are at hand, and continues the process until the sample reaches a designated size.¹⁰⁰

3.4.2 Quota Sampling

Quota sampling is an improvement over haphazard sampling. In quota sampling, the researcher first identifies categories of people in the population to be included in the sampling. Then he decides how many to include from each category.¹⁰¹ The main purpose in quota sampling is to draw a sample that is close to a replica of the population as possible and that represents the population as much.¹⁰² The sample size or quota to be taken from each category is usually selected in proportion to the category sizes, and sample elements are then collected at random by the researcher in the various categories until the desired quota is reached.¹⁰³ Though the researcher is going to mainly utilise the purposive sampling procedures, qualities of quota sampling are going to be used to ensure validity and reliability of the participants' selection and the outcome thereof.

The most important deficiency of this type of sample is that the selection of persons for inclusion in the sample rests totally with the researcher, and that subjectivity can consequentially play a significant role. It is also difficult to determine what percentage of each category should be represented in the sample when a defined population does not exist.¹⁰⁴ However given the

¹⁰⁰ De Vos, A.S *et al.* op. cit. pg 207.

¹⁰¹ Neuman L W, *op. cit.* pg 45.

¹⁰² Judd *et a*, 1991. Research methods in social relations. London: Holt, Rinehart & Winston: pg 135.

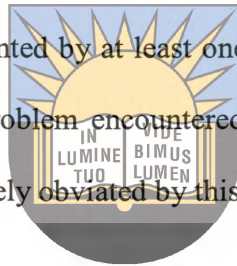
¹⁰³ De Vos, A.S *et al.* op. cit. pg 207.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

knowledge of the limitations inherent in this technique, the researcher is going to jointly use this with the purposive method. The researcher will try by all means possible to maintain objectivity.

3.4.3 Dimensional Sampling

Dimensional sampling is viewed by Bailey¹⁰⁵ as a multidimensional form of quota sampling. The idea is to specify all variables in the population that are of interest to the investigation, and then see to it that each dimension is represented by at least one case. The method entails that only a few cases are studied in depth. The problem encountered in many investigations, namely that certain variables may be left out, is largely obviated by this method.



3.4.4 Target Sampling

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This is mainly a strategy for obtaining systematic information when random sampling is impossible and when accidental sampling cannot be strictly implemented as a consequence of the hidden nature of the problem.¹⁰⁶

Waters and Biernacki¹⁰⁷ defines a target sample as “a purposeful, systematic method by which controlled lists of specified populations within geographical districts are developed and detailed plans are designed to recruit adequate numbers of cases within each of the targets”.

¹⁰⁵ Bailey, K.D. 1994. Methods of Social Research, 4th ed. New York: Free Press: pg 95.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Waters, J.K. and Biernacki, P. 1998. Targeted sampling: options for the study of hidden populations. Social Problems: pg 420.

3.4.5 Snowball Sampling

Snowball sampling (also called network, chain referral, or reputational sampling) is a method of identifying and sampling or selecting the cases in a network. It is based on an analogy to a snowball, which begins small but becomes larger as it is rolled on wet snow and picks up additional snow. Snowball sampling is a multistage technique. It begins with one or few people or cases and spreads out on the basis of links to the initial cases.¹⁰⁸

Snowball involves approaching a single case that is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated, in order to gain information on other similar persons. In turn, this person is requested to identify more people who could make the sample. The researcher proceeds in this way until he/she has identified sufficient number of cases to make up the sample.¹⁰⁹ As a result of the nature of the snowball sampling technique, each person in the sample is directly or indirectly tied to the original cases and several people may have named the same person.¹¹⁰ The snowball technique is excellent for those cases where the researcher is investigating a relatively unknown phenomenon.

3.4.6 Spatial Sample

This type of sample is used in cases of highly temporary populations, such as a sporting event or an accident scene. The researcher decides before hand, as far as possible, how this population will be approached in order to get more or less a more representative view from the respondents.

¹⁰⁸ Neuman. *op. cit.* pg 47.

¹⁰⁹ De Vos, A.S *et al.* *op. cit.* pg 208.

¹¹⁰ Neuman, *op. cit.* pg 47.

The researcher should permeate such a gathering thoroughly and utilise keen observation in addition to recording what respondents say.¹¹¹

3.4.7 Purposive Sampling

This type of sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. The judgment of the individual researcher is obviously too prominent a factor in this type of sample.¹¹²



The researcher in this case selects cases with a specific purpose in mind. Purposive sampling is best when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation. The purpose is less to generalize to a large population than to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.¹¹³

In this study, the researcher is driven by the desire to access the factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from the education system than the mere generalization of the outcome. The researcher's sample will consist of purposely selected respondents/subjects because of their characteristics. The researcher chose to employ a non-random selection approach because the goal is access to information, not just generalization¹¹⁴. The main concern is to gain deep understanding of the underlying factors that cause exclusion of rural children

¹¹¹ De Vos, A.S *et al*, op. cit. pg 208.

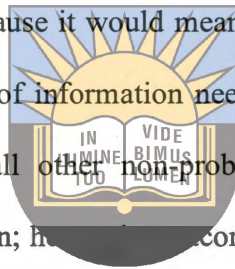
¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Note 102 above.

¹¹⁴ Steinberg (2004): The Social Work Student's Research Handbook. The Haworth Social Work Practice Press: New York : pg 111.

from education, despite all the policies of ensuring access to education that are in place. The research envisages understanding these factors in terms of the specific context of the purposively selected participants rather than attempting to generalize from the wide population.

Steinberg¹¹⁵ argues that purposive samples are drawn from an available population without stratifying first. This is another reason why the researcher chose to use purposive sampling over the closely related quota sampling because it would mean involving some subjects who did not necessarily matter in getting the kind of information needed, just for the sake of fulfilling the representation of each quota. Like all other non-probability sampling methods; purposive sampling does not permit generalization; hence the outcome of this research shall be interpreted in terms of the specific context under study.



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Purposive sampling was used for the selection of the case study of three primary schools. The researcher picked the most convenient two primary schools within his means of both proximity and financial implications. Hence the schools selected are Alice Primary School and Davidson School which provides basic education and are located in a rural area. Because the selected schools are located close to the researcher, this allowed the researcher easy access to the schools in terms of frequent visits. This entire process could be done at a very low and affordable financial cost, bearable to the researcher.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

3.5 Sample Size

Beginning field researchers should start with a relatively small group (30 or fewer) who interact with each other formally or informally on a regular basis.¹¹⁶ The researcher purposively selected a small sample size in order to focus more on that small group and dig deeper into the search of all necessary information.

The study sample was therefore composed of three (3) focus groups ranging from 5 to 7 members each. There were focus groups for:

- Teachers
- The size of the fourth focus group which was composed of learners from all classes at the schools falling within the level of basic education according to the definition given in the South African Schools Act, which is from grade R to grade 9. This was decided on the field by the researcher, as it depended upon other contextual factors, such as time available for the researcher and convenience for all the learners to be combined.
- Principals were interviewed on one-on-one basis.

Based on the predilection of the qualitative researcher and his ability to dig deeper into the study, the whole sample of the study did not exceed 30 from each school participating.

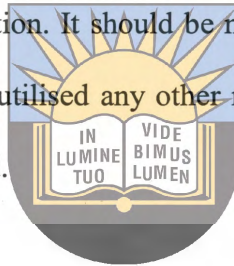
3.6 Data Collection Methods

Descriptive research, based on a case study design, usually takes place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, which are rich in context and involve multiple sources of information.

¹¹⁶ Neuman, *op. cit.* pg 47.

These can include interviews, documents, observations or archival records. As such, the researcher needs access to, and confidence of, the participants.¹¹⁷

The researcher in his case study largely utilised interviews, in the form of focus group interviews and one-on-one interviews. Observation and document analysis were also utilized. These three data collection techniques were the central means for accessing the factors that are causing the exclusion of rural children from education. It should be noted, that a qualitative researcher was not be rigid to the stated methods but utilised any other means necessary and applicable in the context and as events unfold in the field.



3.7 Interviews

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In-depth interviews with focus groups and individuals within the sample subjects were utilized.

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research.

Sewell in De Vos¹¹⁸ defines qualitative interviews as “attempts to understand the world from the participant’s point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples’ experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to the scientific explanations”.

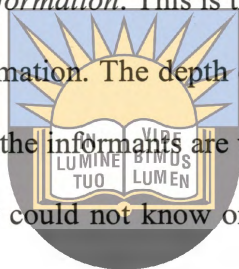
The use of interviews normally means that the researcher viewed this method as the best means of obtaining material which provides more of an in-depth insight into the topic, drawing from information provided by few informants. The research ought to be able to justify the decision to go for depth rather than breadth in material as being best suited to the specific needs of the study.¹¹⁹ The researcher in this study chose to pursue in-depth rather than breadth information,

¹¹⁷ De Vos, A.S *et al.* op. cit. pg 285.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Denscombe, op. cit. pg 52.

on factors underlying the perpetuation of the exclusion of rural children from education because of a wide range of reasons. These include; first, the researcher's desire to find information in its total contextual relevance, that is inclusive of the *emotions, experiences and feelings* that accompanies it; rather than access to mere straight forward, distant and inhuman factual factors. The second reason why the researcher chose to use interviews in this study is to pursue what Denscombe¹²⁰ refers to as *privileged information*. This is the value of contact with key players in the field who can give privileged information. The depth of information provided by interviews in this regard can produce best value if the informants are willing to and able to give information that others could not, or the researcher could not know or access without getting in touch with them.



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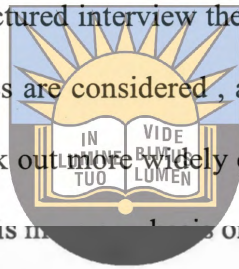
Field research uses unstructured, ~~nondirective~~, in-depth interviews, which differ from formal survey research in many ways. The field interviews involve asking questions, listening, expressing interest and recording what has been said. Interviews are a joint production of a researcher and a member. Members are active participants whose insight, feelings, and cooperation are essential parts of a discussion process that reveals subject meanings. The presence and involvement of the researcher, including how she or he listens, attends, encourages, interrupts, digresses, initiates topics, and terminates responses, is integral to the respondent's account.

There are mainly three types of interviews a researcher can choose to utilize. These are structured interviews; semi-structured interviews; and unstructured interviews.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

Structured interviews involve tight control over the format of the questions and answers. In essence, a structured interview is like a questionnaire which is administered face to face with a respondent. The researcher goes out with a predetermined question, to which the respondents are expected to answer.¹²¹

With semi-structured interviews the interview still has a clear list of standardized questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak out more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest.¹²²



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Unstructured interviews are in a flexible format, usually based on a question guide but where the format remains the choice of the interviewer, who can allow the interview to ramble in order to get insight as desired into the attitudes and feelings of the interviewee. No close-formatted questions are used.¹²³ Unstructured interviews go further in the extent to which emphasis is placed on the interviewee's thought. The researcher's role is to be as unobtrusive as possible, to just start the ball rolling by introducing a theme or topic and then letting the interviewee develop his or her ideas and pursue his or her trail of thought.¹²⁴

The researcher utilised unstructured interviews in conducting both focus groups and individual interviews, because the researcher is driven by the desire to explore deeply into what the

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

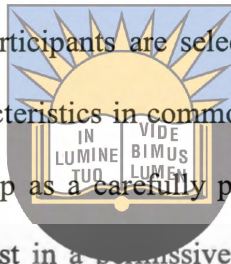
¹²³ Walliman, *op. cit.* pg 50.

¹²⁴ Denscombe, *op. cit.* pg 52.

respondents think or know are the factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from enjoying the right to education. This allowed the respondents space and choice to express themselves in the way they felt and desired.

3.7.1 Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews are meant to bring a better understanding of how people feel or think about any issue, product or service. Participants are selected to form a focus group from the sample because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group.¹²⁵ Krueger¹²⁶ defines focus group as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. Thus, interviews with focus groups are chosen to elicit information from all respondents in the investigation of their view on the factors causing the exclusion of rural children from schools.



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The following are among the reasons why the researcher chose to utilise in-depth interviews with focus groups.

Firstly, the researcher has control of the process to get exactly the information desired for the study; secondly, he is able to address complex issues under the investigation which respondents might understand differently; thirdly, he is able to clarify questions and responses to get exactly what the respondents meant; and lastly, the researcher is able to also make use of observable non-verbal cues during the discussions, which the research may choose to explore further with the respondents. This means the researcher gets a chance to observe a “person in situation”.

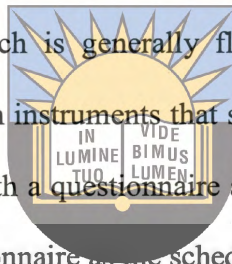
¹²⁵ De Vos, A.S *et al*, op. cit. pg 305.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

These interviews were conducted in a manner that accommodated all levels of literacy. In a qualitative study, the researcher will objectively adjust himself to fit well into any situation with the respondents in order to communicate with them in their most comfortable and natural environment. This will include the use of the language choice of the respondents.

3.7.2 Interview Guide

Data collection in a qualitative research is generally flexible in order to ensure access to information and it would be carried with instruments that seek qualitative (narrative) data.¹²⁷ In this case it is going to be carried out with a questionnaire as a guiding instrument. Labovitz and Hagedorn¹²⁸ refer to this guiding questionnaire as the schedule or interview guide. The interview guide is a set of items or questions (structured or unstructured) that are asked and filled by the interviewer in a face-to-face situation with the respondents. The respondents did not have to read or fill the questionnaire themselves but just respond to the questions verbally.



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A set of the questions in the form of an interview guide is attached as Appendix 1

3.8 Observation

This is a method of recording conditions, events and activities through observation rather than asking. Observation takes place as an activity, as opposed to a mere method.¹²⁹ Observation is a typical qualitative approach to data collection, which implies that data cannot really be reduced to figures. Therefore observation can be defined as a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community or situation. The real world of the

¹²⁷ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 120.

¹²⁸ Labovitz & Hagedorn (1981): *Introduction to Social Research* 3rd edition; Murray Printing Company, New York.

¹²⁹ Walliman, *op. cit.* pg. 50.

research participants can only be understood if the words and expressions they use in specific situations are revealed. The researcher desires to utilise as part of meaning from the respondents, words and their expressions. The researcher strongly believes that issues which are close to the people's hearts are always expressed with an accompanying expression of feeling which bear rich content and meaning, if explored. Issues of people's rights are such a sensitive issue which is always, when violated or presumably violated, is accompanied by feelings and emotions.



Peoples' conception of reality is not directly accessible to outsiders and, therefore, methods are required to unravel and capture these view points as accurately as possible.¹³⁰ Observation can also be used for recording the nature or condition of objects or events visually, for example, through photography, a film or sketching. This is sometimes referred to as *visual ethnography*. The visual may be a source of data for analysis, or can be used as a prompt for interviewee reactions.

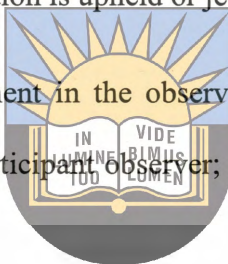
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As stated above, observation can be used for recording the nature or condition of objects or events. The researcher observes and records through any means applicable in the context the state of classrooms, furniture and sanitary facilities in the schools under study. This will be utilised in the analysis of data. Permission was sought to take visual images of any object or property of the school relevant to the study. Since permission was not granted due to reason undisclosed in the study, description of the observed state of infrastructure is objectively given by the researcher.

Observation is not only limited to visual senses. Any sense, such as smell, touch or hearing can be involved, and these need not be restricted to the range perceptible to the human senses. But

¹³⁰ De Vos, A.S *et al op. cit.* pg 279.

one can think of any instruments that have been developed in every discipline to extend the observational limits of human senses.¹³¹ Observation of objects can be a quick and efficient method of gaining preliminary knowledge or making a preliminary assessment of its state or condition. For example, a quick assessment of the school's infrastructural condition such as classrooms, furniture, toilets, electricity and water taps can be very useful in the analysis of the extent to which children's right to education is upheld or jeopardized.



There is a range of levels of involvement in the observed phenomena. Gold in Walliman¹³² classify them as: complete observer; participant observer; complete participant; and observer as participant.

Complete observer takes a detached stance by not getting involved in the events, and uses unobstructive observation techniques and remains invisible either in fact or in effect (that is by being ignored).

Participant-as-observer engages fully in the life and activities of the observed, who are aware of his/her observing role.

Complete participant takes a full part in the social but is not recognized as an observer by the observed. The complete participant is a covert observer.

Observer-as-participant is mainly an interviewer doing some degree of observation but very little or no participation at all. This is the form of observation the researcher adopted for the purpose

¹³¹ Walliman, *op. cit.* pg 50.

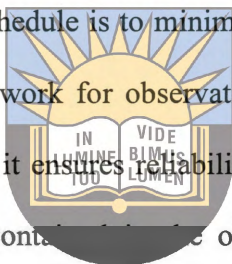
¹³² *Ibid.*

of this research, because of the limited time, and the nature of the research question which would limit the applicability of other participative observation techniques.

3.8.1 Observation Schedule

Observation schedule is an instrument used to generally guide the qualitative observer, though it does not limit the researcher to observe only the elements listed in the schedule.

The whole purpose of an observation schedule is to minimize possible elimination of important variables. Its aim is to provide a framework for observation in which all observers relatively come up with similar out comes, hence it ensures reliability and validity. Schedule operates as checklist.¹³³ Elements of observation contained in the observation schedule are attached as



Appendix 2.

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3.9 Document Analysis/ Secondary Data Analysis

Within the context of qualitative research, observation and interviewing are usually utilised to collect data. Another equally important method of data collection that is often neglected is the study of documents and secondary analysis. Some authors differentiate between document analysis and secondary analysis.

De Vos¹³⁴ refers to documents as those written mostly without a view of research. He gives examples of personal documents such as letters, diaries or autobiographies. Other non-personal documents such as minutes of meetings, agendas and internal official memos are written without a purpose of research. He also mentions a third category of documents that is aimed at the mass media, such as newspapers, magazines or newsletters, which are written primarily to publicizing

¹³³Denscombe, *op. cit.*, pg 50.

¹³⁴ De Vos, A.S *et al. op. cit.* pg 322.

information. He identifies secondary analysis as the empirical exercise on data already collected, and the researcher normally starts where the primary analysis of the data has been completed. These include journals, books, thesis and dissertations. However, for the purpose of this research, both sources shall be referred to as document analysis.

A bulk of the study and research started way before embarking on the field research and this is done in the form of document analysis. During the process of field research, the researcher seeks to top up the already found and still to be discovered data. Sources of document analysis data includes:¹³⁵ textbooks; articles in scientific journals; conference proceedings; theses and dissertations; company or institution reports, and newspaper; and the internet.



According to Goddard ¹³⁶ the first four on the list are the most reliable sources of scientific information, and are the most commonly referred to in scientific reporting. The researcher is going to utilise all sorts of documented information, in any form it appears, since its going to form the major source of data in this study.

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Reference to textbooks is usually the starting point of any scientific research in the social sciences. It is also the most reliable source of scientific information. However it should be noted that textbooks are not without their shortfalls; they usually contain out-of-date information, particularly in fast developing fields. This is because of the time consuming process of producing

¹³⁵ Goddard, W. and Melville, S, 2001. Research Methodology: An introduction; 2nd ed. Jutta and Co. Ltd: Lansdowne.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

a book; it takes at least a year or so from the first word to the time the finished product is ready for publication. Use of current editions of books helps to minimize this problem.¹³⁷

Articles in Scientific Journals are the bread-and-butter of scientific reporting. Thousands of journals exist, each publishing new work in a specific scientific field. Most journals are peer-reviewed. Journal articles reflect more recent work than text books.¹³⁸ The researcher used textbooks as the base for information while taking journal articles as top-up of new information.

Conference Proceeding are gatherings of researchers in a particular field where recent scientific results are presented as papers. These are also peer-reviewed. Theses and dissertations are finished products or write-up of masters and doctoral candidates. Theses and dissertations are usually stored in libraries of the institutions they were presented and are available on interlibrary loans. Others are also posted on the internet.



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Magazines and Newspapers, some magazines (such as the National Geographic) have strong track records of reliable reporting, while others are less reliable. Magazines and newspapers are rarely used in research except as stepping stones in tracking down more reliable information¹³⁹The Internet is a global network of computer networks which contains many millions of files of data (including books, articles, reports and results). The internet is an excellent source of tracking down information, but since one cannot always be sure of the correctness of the data on a site, it should not by itself be an accurate source of information.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

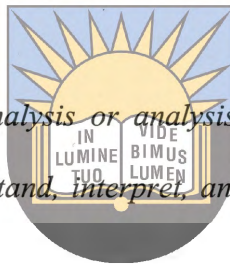
¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

Document analysis as outlined above, forms a large and considerable source of information in this study. During the literature review, it was realized that there was considerable work which has been done in this field of the right to basic education. However, there has been little attention paid to rural children. Available information will help to strengthen the investigation of the factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from education.

3.10 Data Analysis

Steinberg¹⁴⁰ states that “qualitative analysis or analysis of words is referred to as content analysis and its basic task is to understand, interpret, and represent the meaning of what has been said by the respondents”.



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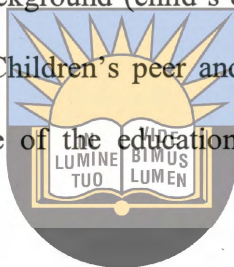
Qualitative research produces large amounts of data in a non-standard format. One way of interpreting this type of data is to become immersed in the data, looking at it many times and making an intuitive attempt to identify the categories and connections that insights simply come to the researcher almost as a matter of inspiration. This will involve a process Denscombe¹⁴¹ refers to as *coding and categorizing of data*. This process is quite distinct from putting a reference code on the various pieces of data so that parts can be identified and stored in an organized manner. Coding data, in this sense, involves breaking the data down into units for analysis and categorizing the units.

Data may take any form, interview notes, field notes, tapes, videos or any documentation. The first thing the researcher needs to do is decide on the units or categories that the data needs to be categorized into, and these may be identified as themes. This process is known as analytic

¹⁴⁰ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 120.

¹⁴¹ Denscombe, *op. cit.* pg 52.

coding.¹⁴² In this research, the researcher categorised the data according to themes derived from the main objectives already enumerated in the research objectives. These will include among others; the school environment (which will include; infrastructure; learning material; sanitation facilities; water sources; electricity; security at school; teacher-learner- relations; teacher-learner-ratio; and class sizes). Educational costs (which will include; school fees; uniforms; school meal; and transport cost. Children's home background (child's duties at home after or before school; family income; and family disputes). Children's peer and generational influences; community socio-economic situation; and the role of the education department and the government in supporting the schools.



These will form the main themes or categories of data analysis. However this should not be taken with any level of rigidity or dogmatic view; any other units or categories might arise during field work and will be included as well.

In undertaking the analysis process as suggested above, the researcher will utilise the model of qualitative data analysis suggested by Steinberg.¹⁴³ The model follows three steps. First, intra-transcript analysis; that is, trying to make meaning out of each script by referring to the verbatim notes taken during interview. Secondly, inter-transcript analysis; this is comparing and contrasting responses from respondents; and finally developing a meaningful story. This is the objective outcome the researcher drew out of the gathered data. This was arranged into the themes identified above.

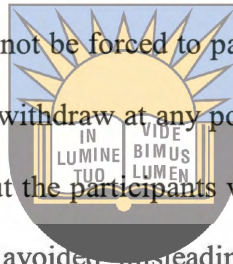
¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 120.

3.11 Research Ethics

The fact that in any human phenomenon under study human beings are the objects of study brings unique ethical problems to the fore.¹⁴⁴ Anyone involved in research needs to be aware of the general consensus about what is proper and improper in scientific research.¹⁴⁵

Based on this knowledge, the researcher took high cognizance of human rights. The researcher informed the participants that they will not be forced to participate; they do so only at their own personal will and still have the right to withdraw at any point if they feel so. The researcher will guide against making assumptions about the participants willingness but will work on the bases of a written consent. The researcher avoided misleading information that may derogate or jeopardize the integrity of the research and its findings. Confidentiality was maintained at its highest possible level between the researcher and the respondents, real names for respondents are not going to be used in the interviews. Respondents were well informed of the purposes of research and all other possibilities of research outcomes; such as publication at any public or private level. In this regard they would also receive feedback of the findings.



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3.12 Limitations

The researcher utilized in depth interviews as part of the research method. These are time consuming because one needs to spend considerable time with the respondent in order to get the in depth information. Respondents may give a rushed answer hence providing only surface information. However, the researcher tried by all means to make detailed interviews, while avoiding exhausting the respondents at the same time.

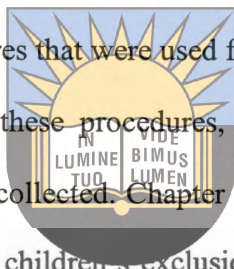
¹⁴⁴ De Vos A.S *et al*, *op. cit.* pg 62.

¹⁴⁵ Babbie, E. 2001. *The practice of social research*, 9th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth: pg 470.

The researcher would have wanted to carry out the research in more communities but this was limited due to financial constraints, limited time, and mobility of the researcher. For these reasons the researcher chose to make use of the most convenient and accessible schools.

3.13 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher described the qualitative research approach that was employed in the execution of the study. The procedures that were used for collecting and analysing data in the study were also discussed. Based on these procedures, the data that will be presented and discussed in the following chapter was collected. Chapter 4 presents what the study found to be the underlying factors perpetuating the children's exclusion from education, depriving them of their right to education in the new South Africa.



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CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4 Introduction

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected information and data. In Chapter Three, a full description was given of the research design and methodology employed in this study. Therefore this Chapter will present and discuss the results generated from the focus groups discussions and individual interviews with the study participants. The Chapter also provides a brief demographic profile of the research site and research participants. As outlined in the first Chapter, the researcher investigated the underlying reasons or factors causing children to be excluded from basic education.



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Seven focus groups of learners, one focus group of drop-outs, and three focus groups of teachers, one group from each participating school were interviewed. Individual interviews were conducted with principals. The purpose and procedure of the research was clearly written on the consent form which each participant had to sign before participating. The researcher also took time to explain and clarify the research purpose, procedure and status of participation. The signed consent forms are attached at the end of this research report as Appendix 3.

The data was collected in the form of field notes. In order to increase data capturing capacity, the researcher appointed two research assistants who mainly concentrated on recording the research discussions by taking field notes. Permission was verbally sought from all participants to take notes of the discussion, and participants were informed of who could get access to the information. The possibility of publication of the research findings was also explained to the participants.

Data was gathered by means of observation, document analysis and focus group interviews. Participants were drawn from a pool of learners and teachers from all the participating schools.

4.1 Research Site and Participants

A brief description of the site where the research interviews were conducted is provided. This is followed by a brief description of the participants who volunteered to participate in these focus group interviews.



4.1.1 Research Site

This study was conducted in Fort Beaufort, only on the specified schools listed in Chapter one (Davidson School, Zizipho Primary School, and Fort Hare) located in the semi-rural town of Alice, and Fort Beaufort Primary school located in Fort Beaufort town. Alice and Fort Beaufort are located within the Amathole District Municipality situated in the Nkonkobe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. The local municipality has an estimated population of 160 311¹⁴⁶. The majority of the population, approximately 61%, is village residents. There is a comparatively low level of education within the Nkonkobe Municipality, with 19% of the population having no formal education.¹⁴⁷ Fort Beaufort is a town 20 kilometers from Alice.

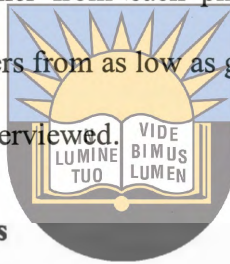
4.1.2 Participants Brief Profile

The research participants for the study were composed of educators (teachers) including school principals, learners in mainstream, and those in alternative streams of education.

¹⁴⁶ Mabusela, N ((2005). Learner's Perspectives on Gender based Violence in Semi-Rural Secondary Schools; A Thesis for Masters: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Unpublished paper: pg 39.

¹⁴⁷ Integrated Development Plan 2005. South African Population Statistics. Eastern Cape Province.

The learners who participated in the study were from Davidson School and Alice Primary School both located in the semi-rural town of Alice and Fort Beaufort Primary school located in Fort Beaufort town. Learners were chosen from all levels of learning, which are, foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase. A minimum of 10 and a maximum of 21 learners were taken per level of study. A minimum of 20 learners and a maximum of 41 learners were selected per school. At least one teacher from each phase was also selected to participate. Principals were also interviewed. Learners from as low as grade R to grade 10 participated in this study. A total of 91 participants were interviewed.



4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

Steinberg,¹⁴⁸ states that “qualitative analysis or analysis of words, is referred to as content analysis and its basic task is to understand, interpret, and represent the meaning of what has been said by the respondents”.

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Qualitative data presentation and analysis is usually reduced into themes or categories and is evaluated subjectively.¹⁴⁹ There are two primary sources for organizing qualitative data which are; the questions on the interview guide and or; the insights that emerge as you collect and analyze the data.¹⁵⁰

In this report, the enumerated objectives in Chapter one are going to form the themes of data presentation and analysis. The following factors perpetuating children exclusion from education

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Sumbulu, A (2005) Writing Your Research Project- Notes or SWK425/512. University of Fort Hare, Unpublished: pg 24.

¹⁵⁰ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 61.

are going to be discussed in addressing the main objective of the study, namely; social factors; economic factors; cultural and traditional cultures; physical impacts; and administrative factors.

These themes arose from the second option given by Steinberg.

Based on his first option of organizing data, the following themes which were derived from the researchers' interview guide were used:

First, learners' understanding of human rights. Secondly, the school environment which would include; teaching material available; teacher-learner ratio; class sizes; school infrastructure; and teacher motivation. Thirdly, children's home background, which includes family size; parents or guardian's occupation; family income sources; and other duties children are involved in after or before school. Fourthly, the children's home background influences and lastly the role of the Department of Education and the Government in supporting the schools.



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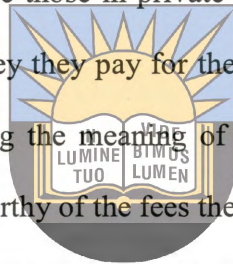
In the discussion of these themes, the researcher used verbatim quotations to represent the participants' perspectives on factors underlying children exclusion from education.

4.2.1 Learners' understanding of the concept of children's rights

The researcher first sought to investigate the understanding of the concept of children's rights from the learners. Learners in every focus group were asked to say in their own words what they understood by children's rights and if they could list any rights they have. The main aim was to establish if the learners knew their rights, with particular focus on their right to education, and what it meant to them.

The responses showed that learners had general knowledge of their rights and the right to education was also mentioned in most responses. However, the researcher observed a certain

trend in the understanding of human rights. He observed that knowledge of human rights was limited and the right to education did not even feature in the list enumerated by junior learners at lower levels, particularly at Alice Primary School. There was also a huge difference in the understanding the right to education between the children in a government school (Alice Primary) and those in a former private (Davidson) and a white school (Fort Beaufort). The researcher realized that this was because those in private and former white schools had a huge feeling of ownership based on the money they pay for the service they receive. For instance, at Davidson School, learners in explaining the meaning of their rights stated that it meant they should be accorded proper education worthy of the fees they pay. One respondent also stated that *“right to education means we should receive education properly and should be respected with regard to our views and demands”*. The issue of respect also came out at Fort Beaufort. The researcher also observed the presence of inferiority complex among learners in rural government schools.



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Learners offered the following definitions of what rights to education mean.

“You have a right to get education if you want to”.

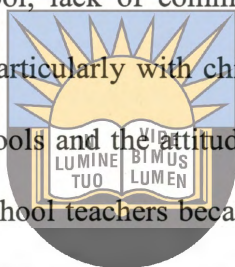
“To have good knowledge about everything and knowledge about life”.

“To learn new things, discover, get knowledge, to experience life in other environment and to be wise”.

4.2.2 Better education

The researcher also asked learners to give their view on where they think there is better education.

Equivocally learners both in rural and urban schools who were respondents said there was better education in schools located in towns than those in rural areas. Reasons such as lack of teaching aids and facilities for teachers were given. For example, a grade one respondent at Alice Primary School said of her cousin at an urban school *“they are taught with pictures and television in class and we don’t have even picture books”*. Other reasons given were long distance to school, poverty, and lack of transport to school, lack of commitment by teachers teaching in rural schools. The latter reason was raised particularly with children at Fort Beaufort. Learners said that some of them came from rural schools and the attitude of their teachers from rural schools was not the same like those of urban school teachers because here they were more serious with studies, a teacher does not leave school before time or stay away. However, learners also said it was not merely about the location of the school, whether in rural or urban areas that really determines the quality of education but rather it has much to do with the nature of the school. It was stated that there is better education in private schools whether it be in a rural or in an urban areas.



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The reasons enumerated by respondents concur with those highlighted by the Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Service (NCESS). The report argues that the priority of an education system should be to address those factors that prevent learners from accessing educational provision. The NCSNET and NCESS conceptualized these factors as *barriers to learning and development particularly in rural areas*.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Muthukrishna, N. 2002. International Journal of Special Education. 2002, Vol 17, No.1 University of Natal.

A study by Kimberley Porteus¹⁵² and others analysed factors underlying school non-attendance in three poor, marginalised communities in South Africa and the findings revealed that poverty is at the core of the challenges faced in rural areas. This concurs with what the respondents in this study also identified as one reason why they feel there is poor education among schools in rural areas.

The factors raised here amount to indirect discrimination, which is in contrast to the idea that education is recognized to be essential for all children. Article 28 of the Convention on the Right of the Child¹⁵³ stresses the right to education must be achieved “on the basis of equal opportunity”. This reflects the fact that vast numbers of children suffer discrimination in order to access to education (particularly children in rural areas, and mostly girls and disabled children).



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Some learners felt that most rural schools are not as strict on discipline as are their urban counterparts. They reported that there was a very relaxed and liberal environment (in terms of discipline) in rural government schools, which makes it difficult for better education to be provided. Respondents indicated that this manifests itself through the level of noise in most of these schools. Drug abuse and fighting among learners was also said to be high in rural schools.

¹⁵² Porteus K, *et al* 2000. *British Journal of Learning Support: 'Out of School' Children in South Africa: An Analysis of Causes in a Group of Marginalised, Urban 7- to 15-year-olds*. Accessed on <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com> 15 May 20.

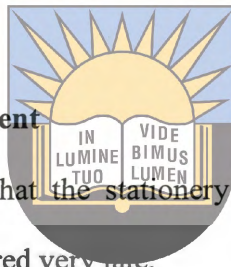
¹⁵³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Convention on the Rights of the Child Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25.

4.2.3 The school environment

Many learners in rural schools do not have access to educational resources in their homes and schools. The largest portion of provincial education budgets is spent on personnel costs, leaving little for infrastructure, school security, maintenance, stationery, equipment and textbooks. The views of both learners and educators were explored on this matter; therefore the discussion will incorporate both views.

4.2.4 Learning and teaching equipment

All the schools interviewed reported that the stationery and textbooks provided to them by government were inadequate and delivered very late.



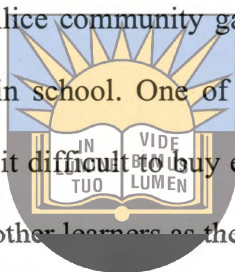
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In all the schools learners were technically supplied with stationery, pens, pencils and textbooks but it was not consistent as it depended on the government supplies. Hence learners received stationery only at the beginning of the term and when it was finished they had to buy for themselves. While in all the three schools parents were required to buy books, files and other requirements, the system used was differed in each school.

At Davidson (a fee paying school), parents pay a book fee whereby the school buys the stationery for the learners. This was the same with Fort Beaufort Primary School (a former white school). At Alice Primary learners were expected to buy stationery since it only depended on government delivery which is often inadequate and always late. Some parents manage to do so while others struggle. However, many classes in both Alice Primary and Davidson School indicated that there was shortage of textbooks per class. For example, the School Principals at the schools claimed that they sometimes receive fewer books than they ordered, for instance only 15 out of the 40 textbooks they ordered.

However the situation was not always the same at these two schools. At least at Davidson the school owned a photocopying machine where teachers could make copies to use in class and learners can also make copies at a cost of 20c per page. The situation was so bad at Alice Primary. In some subjects the school only had one or two textbooks for the whole class. The shortage was acute because they did not even own a photocopying machine.

Some of the dropouts interviewed in Alice community gave credence to the usual shortage of learner support materials experienced in school. One of the reasons which made them leave school was because their parents found it difficult to buy exercise books especially hard covers. They often had to share textbooks with other learners as the stationery and textbooks provided by the government were always insufficient.



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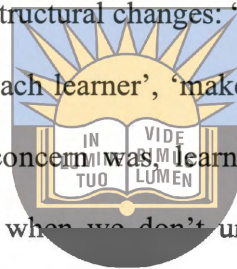
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All the three participating schools had no facilities to teach disabled or slow learners and its teachers were not specially trained to teach them either. Teachers reported being compelled by the government to use inclusive teaching, which encourages the teaching of all learners together despite their differences. However, the teachers had not received any form of basic training on handling and teaching disabled children.

The two schools located in Alice (Alice Primary and Davidson) indicated difficulties in teaching science subjects due to lack of learning and teaching facilities such as the science kits, not to mention science laboratories for experiments. As a result, they teach practical subjects theoretically. At times they go to other neighbouring schools to borrow science kits for experiments, which they do not always get. It was a different scenario at Fort Beaufort Primary. The school owns a science kit and practical equipment, though they need to be upgraded.

Just as the findings of the survey by the Nelson Mandela Foundation¹⁵⁴ revealed, this research also found out that learners have many ideas about how schools could be improved. At the heart of their vision for change is a school and classroom that respects them as human beings and recognises their right to learn.

In their responses to the survey question of how schools could be improved, many concentrated on the teaching methodology and infrastructural changes: “teachers should organise games”, ‘use charts’, ‘make sure to concentrate on each learner’, ‘make more time for us to implement what we learn like speak English’. More concern was learners equivocally voicing that teachers should ‘stop telling us we are stupid when we don’t understand’. These elements raised by learners are among the factors that hinder them from enjoying their right to education.



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As in many other similar researches, 70% of teachers in this study considered lack of teaching aids to be their biggest problem in discharging their educational task in rural schools. The lack of teaching aids is an issue that constantly surfaced in debates of the right to education.

4.2.5 Learner : teacher ratio

The researcher found out that none of the three participating schools, both government school and the former private and former white school had a learner teacher ratio which they were satisfied with. The researcher found that the trend has changed from the former status quo of former white schools having a low learner: teacher ratio as indicated in the literature discussed above. For instance, the South Africa-info reporter indicated that in government-funded public schools, the average learners: educator ratio in terms of the country's outcomes-based education

¹⁵⁴ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *op. cit.* pg 21.

system is 32.6 to one, while private schools generally have one teacher for every 17.5 scholars.¹⁵⁵ The findings of this study concur with the idea that government funded public schools have a high average learner: educator ratio though it does not concur with the figures. The researcher found out from Fort Beaufort Primary that the quest for better education among black citizens has seen former white schools being flooded by children from all over black surrounding communities which formerly could not send their children to such schools. As a result, the learner educator ratio has since sky rocketed. The challenge that these schools face to provide quality education at the same standard the school was before is lack of governmental support.



This study's findings on learner:educator ratio in primary schools with most of the previous research in the Eastern Cape, though they do not concur in terms of ratio figures. For instance, a research carried in 2005 by The University of Fort Hare Education Department¹⁵⁶ in the Eastern Cape indicates that the learner-educator ratio in the rural Eastern Cape Province is the highest in the country (at 43:1 in primary and 33:1 in secondary schools). Alice primary currently has an average learner: educator ratio of 57 learners per one teacher; with the biggest class of 60 learners. At Davidson school, the average ratio is 44:1, while at Fort Beaufort it is 45:1. These research findings agree hand in glove with the University of Fort Hare Education Department and the Nelson Mandela Foundation¹⁵⁷ 2004 research which concluded that the learner: educator ratio in the rural Eastern Cape Province is the highest in the country. This is a clear indication that in rural schools teachers are teaching larger classes than the norm in other parts of the

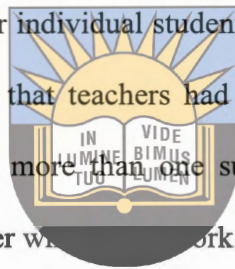
¹⁵⁵ SouthAfrica.info reporter. Updated November 2006.

¹⁵⁶ Rembe, *op. cit.* pg 21.

¹⁵⁷ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *op. cit.* pg 49.

country. The report emphasised that this has consequences for the quality of teaching and personal interaction between teachers and learners.¹⁵⁸ This also compromises the quality of education that rural children receive, and equally, their right to education.

It was only at Fort Beaufort Primary that teachers admitted having special time set aside on Fridays for individual assistance to learners. The other schools like Alice Primary teachers said even if they wanted to set aside time for individual students it would not work, because it is not possible with the numbers of students that teachers had to deal with. They added that some teachers teach large classes and teach more than one subject. One teacher at Fort Beaufort emphasized the difficult conditions under which she worked: *“I was working in England and I had 12 children in my class and had 2 assistant teachers. Then imagine having to work with 45 children”*.



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4.2.6 School infrastructure

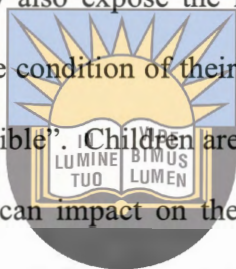
Improvement in the school infrastructure enhances access as well as quality of education. The government has put in place policies that ensure that schools are provided with the necessary infrastructure and other requirements. However, findings show that the problem of adequate infrastructure is affecting implementation of the right to basic education in poor communities.

4.2.6.1 Accessibility

All the participating schools are located at accessible locations, though Alice Primary is the only one with a dust driveway into the school, which from the researcher’s observation, may be difficult to walk through when it rains. There were also large pot holes which collect water during the rains and pose health hazard to young learners. Conditions like these seem to be

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

unnoticed yet they greatly compromise the children's right to education. It was also indicated by both learners and teachers that some children drop out of school due to sickness. Anyone can certainly suspect that poor health conditions at school could be one of the most closely contributing factors to ill health among children. There has already been a number of diarrhoea and cholera related illness reported among learners at Alice Primary and at Davidson School. Poor toilet conditions at Alice Primary also expose the learners to health hazards. When the researcher asked learners to describe the condition of their toilets they all frowned and said "we do not even want to get in there, it's terrible". Children are constitutionally protected from being exposed to risky environments which can impact on their well-being, education, physical or mental health. Therefore these conditions are in contravention of the South African constitutional protection of children. The other two schools are well paved and are close to the road.



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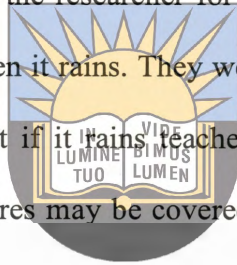
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4.2.6.2 Classrooms and other buildings

The only school where both learners and teachers proved satisfied with their classroom structures was at Fort Beaufort. However, the teachers and learners were highly unsatisfied with the dilapidated hostels at their schools and the lack of building maintenance. They contend that it should be the mandate of the government to ensure that proper infrastructure is available. Teachers at Fort Beaufort view this as great compromise of the children's right to access quality education.

Alice Primary school is said to have been built in 1906 and the same building are still being used today. The safety of the learners and teachers is threatened by such buildings on a daily basis. Some learners viewed the condition of the school buildings at both Alice and Davidson schools in Alice as a hindrance to the right to education.

Davidson School had the worst building structures, particularly their main block which was a house turned into a school building and the prefabricated blocks donated to the school by the University of Fort Hare long time ago, which also functions as classrooms. The structure of these blocks makes learning and teaching difficult because they are narrow and very deep to the extent that a child seated right at the back finds it difficult to hear and see the board properly. The principal at Davidson school also took the researcher for a campus tour and indicated that the pre-fab classrooms are inaccessible when it rains. They were car tyres put in a line between the staff room and the class doors, so that if it rains teachers will be able to get into the class. Sometimes when it rains heavily the tyres may be covered with water and teachers will not be able to get in.



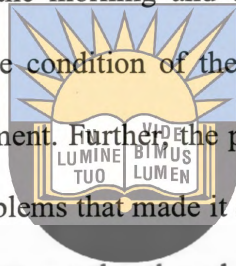
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The above circumstances under which children learn compromise the children's right to a safe environment because this is placing these children at a high risk of flooding. The buildings are very cold in winter thus exposing the learners to unbearable conditions for the whole day. These conditions place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development.

The first grade at Davidson school uses a very small round hut as a classroom. Its capacity may on the average be 9 people but it has 22 learners plus the teacher who also shares this small hut with her students. She occupies a small space just by the door where she will be literally buried under heaps and heaps of teaching material. There was a bucket of water just by the door outside where these children wash their hands every time they go to the toilet, since there is no running tap water close by. Also the school does not have toilets; it only has 2 bucket toilets; one for girls and one for boys. At break time learners queue to take turns to the toilet.

The infrastructure at Alice Primary Schools was more or less the same as that of Davidson with regard to the condition of school buildings and classrooms, water, toilets, library, science and playgrounds. The condition of classrooms, doors, windowpanes, roofs, desks and chairs and blackboards were considered to be in a very bad condition. However, although Alice was said to have water and electricity, learners reported that electricity was not working in most classrooms and that they really feel cold during the morning and during winter. Learners at Alice and Davidson complained about the terrible condition of the toilets, playgrounds and the lack of adequate stationery and sporting equipment. Further, the principal at Davidson also complained that the school was facing financial problems that made it difficult for it to buy sporting material and renovate the school. The main reason was that the school was paying salaries for most of its educators from the school's budget, with no help from the government.



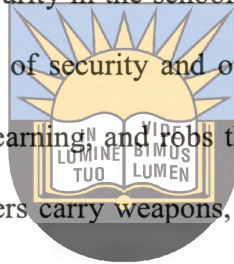
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4.2.7 Security

All three schools were fenced and only Alice primary did not employ a security personnel to guard over their school property. Learners at Alice Primary School indicated that they do not feel safe. Although the school is fenced, the gate is always wide open and anyone can come at anytime. One respondent said: *“someone can be raped, killed or anything can happen when we are outside the classrooms because the gate is always open”*. *“We always see people walking here and we are afraid”*. The researcher questioned the learners about the impact of lack of security at school. Learners indicated that if their parents heard that anything wrong had happened they would transfer their children from that school because they would not let their children stay in a dangerous environment.

The respondents from the other two schools felt differently about their security. At Davidson the Principal outlined that the school employed 3 watchmen who are present on the school yard 24

hours a day. The gate is always locked and every visitor who gets into the school yard has to register in the visitor's book, where he or she specifies the purpose of visit and is accompanied by the security guard to wherever he or she wants to go. There is no moment that a stranger on the school premises will ever be on their own. Learners at Fort Beaufort said they did not even think of their security because they knew in absolute terms that they are safe. In explaining what they thought was the importance of security in the school environment, learners stated that they should not be preoccupied with issues of security and other things when at school because it draws their concentration away from learning and robs them of the free learning environment. Learners also reported that other learners carry weapons, such as knives and screw drives with them to school.



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4.2.8 Bullying and teasing

A striking outcry among learners from all the three participating schools was with regard to bullying and teasing which is a major challenge towards a safe learning environment. There is a dearth of previous research and literature available on the impact of bullying; while there is hardly any comment on teasing. But the findings of this research revealed that these factors are actually some of the major causes of school drop out and exclusion.

Teasing is viewed by learners as “*verbal comments of mockery or looking down on someone, either by how they look or by their social status, their background and or how they perform in class*”. Teasing appeared to have more impact on girl learners compared to boys. It was reported to be one major cause of absenteeism and isolation among teased learners.

Some of the comments on teasing were:

“Another challenge we face at school which makes learning difficult is being teased by other learners and teachers as well, for instance if you are fat (as she stood up showing she was) other students always comment about your weight, until you also become convinced you can do nothing because you are fat” (a grade 5 female respondent) The researcher observed the accompanying emotional expression which emphasizes how disturbing this is on the learning environment.

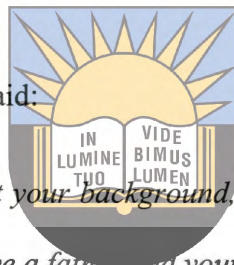
Another respondent on the same issue said:

“Some laugh at you commenting about your background, for example if you come from a poor family and they know that you don’t have a father and your mother works in houses cleaning and washing” (a grade 6 female respondent). This clearly shows how the social environment of the school contributes to the effective provision of quality education and respect to the right of every child as an equal.

“Some children end up not coming to school because they are always teased” (a grade 7 male respondent).

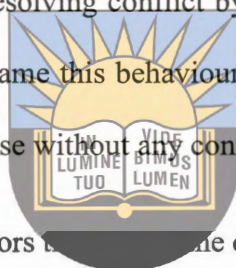
“The other problem we face at school is that foreign learners are at times segregated against because other learners always think if a foreign student comes here they are running away from their homes because they are poor”

It was also stated by learners that most of these rude comments are made by boys to girls, and if one retaliates they become provoked and may beat up the girls. These findings manifest the existence of gender based violence in the learning environment and its impact on the right to



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education, yet little is known about gender based violence in schools. According to Viano,¹⁵⁹ “Violence involves the use of physical force that is often driven by aggressive motivation”. The author further asserts that emotional and psychological aspects should be included. This is supported by the sociological theory¹⁶⁰ which asserts that violence is learned and manifests itself within a societal context. This theory assumes that children learn violent behaviour when they see their parents or significant others resolving conflict by means of violence. However, unlike this theory, the learners in this study blame this behaviour on a too relaxed school environment which allows children to do as they please without any consequences.



Learners also cited the following as factors that deprive the enjoyment of right to education.

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Noise is one factor that was raised from every focus group conducted in this study. Both learners and teachers identified noise as one major problem that face the education system. Different impact of noise was identified by learners and teachers. A striking discovery that this research made about noise and undisciplined learners is that other learners felt that they were so deprived of the enjoyment of their right to education because:

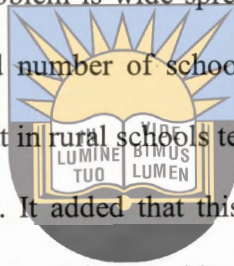
Teachers focus more on the noise and undisciplined learners than on those who are eager to learn. Also the noisy learners disturb them when they want to study. These were really identified as crucially factors that deprive learners of their enjoyment of the right to education.

One respondent in Alice Primary said “*I wish to transfer from here, because it is rough here and the students here have no respect*”.

¹⁵⁹ Viano, E. C. 1992. *Intimate Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

4.2.9 Teacher motivation

All the teachers interviewed in this study reported that they were not satisfied with their working conditions. The reasons given range from too big classes to deal with, a reason cited by a number of teachers. Large classes create a frustrating environment that hinders them from giving the best to each student. Equally, the teachers stated that having too many students in one class compromise quality education. This problem is wide spread in rural schools or schools located close to rural areas because of limited number of schools. Research by the Nelson Mandela Foundation concluded that it is clear that in rural schools teachers are teaching larger classes than the norm in other parts of the country. It added that this has consequences for the quality of teaching and personal interaction between teachers and learners.¹⁶¹



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The teachers also blamed the education department for incompetence, particularly by being inconvenienced with sudden calls for unplanned meetings, workshops and piles of backlog paper work that the department keeps sending to teachers to complete. Teachers reported that the Department of Education can call the school principal at 8 o'clock to tell him they are coming for curriculum training at 9 o'clock. This means teachers have to be called out of class which is a very bad and uncalled for practice. One teacher said: *"if you calculate the hours children lose due to these sudden and endless meetings you might be shocked to realize that probably they have lost a full month in a semester"*.

Principals also raised concerns over, the Education District Department requiring them at awkward times, while they are teaching, and this means learners lose out. One of the Principals

¹⁶¹ Nelson Mandela Foundation, op.cit. pg 49.

outlined that for every decision made within the Education Department, its final victim is the child in a school classroom without a teacher at a time when he or she is supposed to be taught.

Teachers from the participating former white school strongly felt the new education system in South Africa is not integrated. They were particularly concerned that white teachers are segregated against because one hardly finds a white teacher appointed by the Department in a predominantly black school. However, there are black teachers in predominantly (or formerly) white schools like Fort Beaufort.



The new curriculum was one other major concern of teachers which they viewed as compromising the quality of education for learners. Teachers felt that the curriculum keeps on changing and they teach without being trained to conduct the new curriculum. The education department sends trainers probably in the middle of the year to train them while they have been teaching all the time without training. The very people who are sent to train need the training first because they seem to be unaware of what they will be training.

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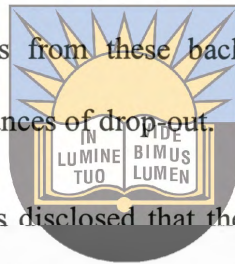
4.2.10 Summary on School Environment

Available literature and findings of the research indicate that there have been major gains since the advent of democracy. The gains identified include improved access, as reflected in enrolment figures, accelerated provisioning of school infrastructure, more equitable distribution of resources, improved learner-educator ratios, the introduction of school nutrition programmes and the establishment of democratic structures in the form of school Governing Bodies at the local school level. However, the inequalities that produce poverty take a dramatic spatial form. The right to education in rural areas in particular is jeopardised and lags behind the standard and

target required for the National Educational Development. This is despite the fact that the vast majority of school going children in South Africa live in rural areas.¹⁶²

4.3 Children's family Background

Among the major reasons cited for causing exclusion include children from families experiencing unemployment, chronic sickness, single parents, living with grandparents, and illiterate parents or guardian. Learners from these backgrounds are bound to suffer much education deprivation and have high chances of drop-out.



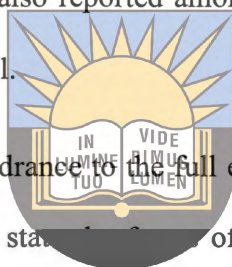
Learners in all the participating schools disclosed that there are learners from as young as the first grade affected and infected by HIV virus in their schools. Children who suffer from or whose parents suffer from HIV/AIDS are at high risk of education exclusion in the rural areas. Children are reported as leaving school early because their parents are ill or HIV infected.¹⁶³ As cited by the National Children Forum on HIV/AIDS this research found out that learners who are HIV positive are so much discriminated against at school, and even teased because of their status. This makes a number of them to either drop out of school or experience a drop in their health and school performance as they think a lot about their status.

Most learner respondents in this study identified uncaring parents as one major challenge to access to education. One learner said: *"having parents who do not care about your education really discourages, because they don't even care if your school fees is paid and even if they are receiving a child grant for you they don't pay your school fees. Instead they drink beer everyday"*.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS. Information Leaflets by AIDS Council.

Children involved in strenuous work after school and or before were said to be the most likely to drop out of school or not to come to school at all. In this study, learners admitted knowing other learners who were heading families. As a result they were hardly consistent in their school attendance or performance. Some were reported to be leaving school early in order to take piece jobs to earn a living for themselves and their siblings. Some were also said to be engaged in drug dealing. Elements of prostitution were also reported among girls as one reason leading to drop out and inconsistent attendance to school.



Abuse at home was also raised as a hindrance to the full enjoyment of the right to education by learners. When learners were asked to state the type of abuse they were referring to, sexual harassment and physical abuse, like beating and being over worked, were the prominent ones. This was mainly from learners not living with their biological parents. Concentration is rated very low for learners experiencing such traumatic abuses at home, because each moment they are worried of what will happen at home.¹⁶⁴

Parental illiteracy or ignorance was also highlighted as a barrier to education by learners. One respondent put it in the following words:

“Another challenge to education that we face is having parents who are old fashioned about school; this is making many children not to go to school, because their parents see no importance in going to school”.

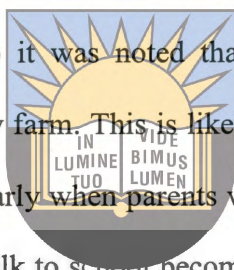
Favouritism by parents and teachers at school was another factor cited by learners. Some parents love one child more than others and that discourages the other children, because they do not feel worthy being members of the family. Also parallel to this was favouritism by educators. Learners

¹⁶⁴ www.childprotection.com 14 October 2007.

strongly complained that teachers show clearly that they like some learners more than others and that discourages the neglected ones. Some end up dropping out of school.

4.4 Factors causing exclusion or drop-out

In all the participating schools, drop-out or transfer of students was evident though the reasons and causes differ from school to school. At Alice Primary learner drop-out was estimated at an average of 10 learners per year. Also it was noted that a considerable number of learners dropping out are learners from a nearby farm. This is likely to be due to the use of child labour on the farm. Rembe¹⁶⁵ stated that similarly when parents were moved from one side of the farm to another, the distance they have to walk to school becomes prohibitive. This forces learners to drop out of school and work on the farms. Similarly, when parents are evicted sometimes children drop out of school because it might take long for them to find a place to settle.



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4.4.1 Slow learners and disabled learners

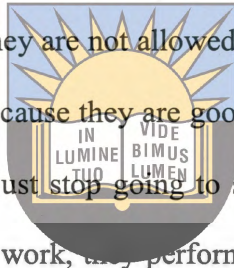
The failure of the education system to accommodate slow learners and disabled learners was cited in this study by respondents as one reason perpetuating children exclusion from education, particularly in the rural schools. Due to the high number of learner: educator ratio in rural schools, teachers cannot really focus on individual students, for instance a slow learning child. Therefore these learners keep trailing behind until they opt to drop out. Most of them stay in one class for years. In the end they feel out of place having to learn with their younger siblings who are invariably smarter than them. The other reason is that these schools do not have specially

¹⁶⁵ Rembe, *op. cit.* pg 77.

trained teachers to deal with slow or disabled learners. Besides, all the school did not have infrastructure appropriate or facilities for disabled learners.

4.4.2 School fees, uniform and stationery

The main cause of dropout in the rural schools was the issue of school fees, school uniforms and stationery. Although most schools claim that they did not send children home for fees or uniform, if a learner has not paid fees they are not allowed to play sport or to go for school trips. Some students enjoy going to school because they are good sport players so if they are deprived of what they like most at school they just stop going to school. When their fees get paid they realise they are so far behind in school work, they perform worse than they did before and they end up not coming to school at all.



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Equally, if fees are not paid a learner does not get new stationery. All these forms of deprivations compromise and discriminate against learners, mainly those coming from poor families. Rembe's¹⁶⁶ findings also support the above view "school learners from the rural schools complained bitterly that when they had not paid their fees the educators did not give them any stationery. By the time they had raised the money most of the stationery had been given out to the other learners or sold by educators as some of the drop outs alleged". It was only at Alice Primary where it was reported that learners still enjoy all their rights even when fees are not paid. Learners reported that debt collectors keep sending letters of warning to their parents. This threatens parents and they fear that one day they might be arrested, and then they withdraw their children from school till they can pay the fees. When asked about the issue of fees exemption and its implementation at their school, educators at Alice affirmed that they hear about that in the

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

media but they still do not know how it is supposed to work. All children are required to pay fees except for orphans whom they help apply for the African Scholarship which then pays their fees.

The schools also insist that all learners wear proper school uniform at all times. At Alice educators indicated that a learner can be allowed particularly in winter to wear any thing like a jersey if the family can not afford to buy the full uniforms. Also they have a community church helping learners who can not afford uniform by sewing uniforms for them. However despite this provision, learners indicated that some drop out because they do not have school uniform and they would not want to be wearing something different from everyone else.



4.4.3 Corporal Punishment

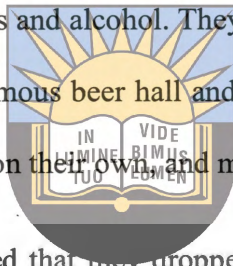
Corporal Punishment also contributed to some of the learners dropping out of rural schools. Learners reported receiving corporal punishment when they arrived late at school or in class. Some reported receiving corporal punishment on a daily basis, as they had to walk on foot for a long distance to school. They also received lashes if homework was incomplete. Learners claim that corporal punishment made them uncomfortable and they often lost their focus.

The researcher discovered that most teachers and even some learners believe corporal punishment should not be totally banned, rather it should be applied with control. As highlighted in some literature, corporal punishment is a major bone of contention amongst parents, teachers and learners. Although corporal punishment is against the law, and teachers claimed that they rarely resort to physical punishment, it was clear from the interviews and other sources that it still takes place, often with the tacit approval of parents. Many principals, parents and teachers see corporal punishment as a normal way to discipline children when all other methods fail.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

4.4.4 Peer and generational influence

Learners with friends who did not attend school also reported ending up not coming to school. One learner said “*some have wrong friends and they end up doing what they do, like drinking beer and smoking, at first they keep coming to school even if they are drunk then they finally stop*”. Educators at Alice Primary school also concurred with this problem of learners dropping out due to peer pressure, the use of drugs and alcohol. They also attributed this to the fact that the school is located right next to a very famous beer hall and a poor neighbourhood. Learners who come from very far stay in the location on their own, and most of them end up dropping out.



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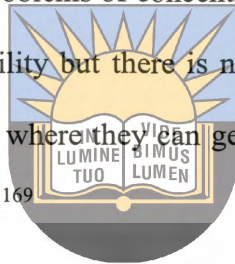
At Alice and Davidson learners reported that they dropped out in order to attend circumcision school because of the pressure they received from their peers who had undergone circumcision. Those who have not performed the rite are teased and called “*amakhwenkwe*” (uncircumcised boys). This forced them to be circumcised even without their parents’ knowledge or consent. When they returned from the circumcision school, they were no longer submissive to the school authority as they now called themselves ‘*amadoda*’ (men) and not boys. These findings are also in line with the findings of another research carried out by the University of Fort Hare Education Department in 2005¹⁶⁸. The research also found out that the parents of these learners lamented that they have lost control over their children and are at a loss of what to do.

4.4.5 Cultural and traditional beliefs

Some of the out of school learners interviewed in this research at Mzamo’hle Disabled Community School said they dropped out of school because they mysteriously fell ill during school hours but as soon as school was out they were well again. They suspected that they had

¹⁶⁸ Rembe, *op. cit.* pg 98.

been bewitched. One learner in this group dropped out because she was mentally disturbed. She was teased and told by the teachers that she is a failure, therefore used to beat up other learners. There are no facilities to accommodate learners like these in the mainstream education system, though it is said to be implementing inclusive education. In another similar research, the parents of learners like these did not lay blame on the teachers for their children's poor performance. They admitted that their children had problems of concentration and writing. It appears that they may have some kind of learning disability but there is no one to diagnose them properly and there are no special schools in the area where they can get help. In addition the educators have not been trained to handle such learners.¹⁶⁹



4.4.6 Community influences

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A few of the learners were taken out of school by their caregivers because the caregivers are too poor to afford payment of cattle herders' wages. The children became herders of their parents' livestock. One respondent (educator) at Alice Primary school reported that one parent took her child from school so that the child could help her sell 'ubutywala' (traditional beer) in order to make ends meet.

Some of the drop outs see no value of education since they rub shoulders with many matriculants and graduates who are roaming in the streets looking for employment.

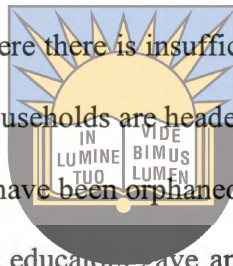
The violation of the children's right to education in rural areas in South Africa is integrally linked to the provision of inadequate employment, infrastructure, nutrition and health, lack of social amenities and basic needs for the rural poor and vulnerable groups. These are conditions that need to be addressed if the right to education is to be enjoyed. It should be noted and

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

acknowledged that these conditions are intimately linked to South Africa's past and unequal power relations between urban and rural areas, and between racial group.¹⁷⁰

4.4.7 Educators' view on drop out and exclusion

Ten participating educators in this research were asked why learners drop out of school and a number of them cited the home environment as the main reason. A number of learners who dropped out come from poor homes where there is insufficient food. Some of these learners also lack proper supervision because their households are headed either by elderly grandparents, or by illiterate caregivers or by children who have been orphaned and find it difficult to cope with their own and the new circumstances. Some educators gave an example of a 10 year old child who stays with a 70 year old grand mother, lacks parental care and starts assuming parental responsibilities. This was cited as one of the major challenges facing children from rural areas.



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Large households with no corresponding income were also cited as a big challenge for rural families which greatly compromised children's access to education. Children coming from large and poor families were said to be among those with the most drop outs or children who do not attend school at all. Parents in these families were preoccupied with making ends meet in order to put food on the table rather than education for their children.

Drug abuse was also cited by both educators and learners as another reason why learners drop out of school. The main drug that is abused by rural learners is dagga, which is said to be readily available in the rural areas. Other factors cited by educators and learners are teenage pregnancy and distance from school. One of the Principals clearly stated that:

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

“the issue of transport excludes children from education, even though the government never talks about it, focusing only on fees. Actually a lot of families can afford to pay fees but they fail to pay transport costs for their children, since it is needed on daily basis. Learners always arrive at school tired, and in some cases hungry, as they have to leave their homes very early and have no time to eat”.

Tired and hungry learners find it difficult to concentrate. Some of the educators said that some learners drop out of school either because they are ill or because they have to nurse someone that is sick at home. Some of these learners were ill because they were HIV positive or had to look after caregivers that were suffering from HIV/AIDS.



Some educators felt that lack of professional counselling services in the school environment, particularly in primary and secondary schools goes unnoticed but is a major cause of children's exclusion and drop out. The challenges that learners face in schools could be readily solved if counselling services were available.

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4.4.8 Teenage Pregnancy

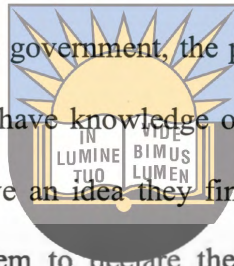
In all the three schools the issue of teenage pregnancy was raised by both learners and educators as a factor robbing a lot of learners from education. A lot is done by educators through lessons learners receive in Life Orientation Skills classes but there have largely fallen on deaf ears. Some schools even invite nurses from the clinics to address learners on the use of contraceptives and the dangers of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) when they engage in unprotected sex.

It is most likely that the breakdown of family life is among the factors contributing to this increase. Too many learners come from single-parent households headed mostly by women who invariably have a variety of boyfriends. It also appears that learners are exposed to sex in magazines and television programmes including cartoons as well as advertisements. Some

educators and learners put the blame squarely on the child grant. They believe that learners deliberately fall pregnant in order to access child grant, which they use to buy food and contribute to the upkeep of their families.

4.5 The role of the Government/ Department of education in the view of the research participants

Despite the fee exception policy by the government, the people on the ground, including some educators, learners and parents do not have knowledge of how one gets to be exempted from paying school fees. For those who have an idea they find it difficult and embarrassing to go through the process which require them to declare their poverty. This in itself is a huge compromise of human dignity and integrity which is right protected in the South African Bill of Rights. Section 10 provides: “Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”.



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Learners indicated that there should be a way in which the government should directly help learners who cannot pay their school fees, particularly those who find themselves attending a school categorised in higher quintile where more money is paid for fees. The researcher asked about their knowledge on the existence of the government policy on fees exemption, but just like the educators at Alice, learners proved they had no idea about such a provision. One learner at Alice primary said:

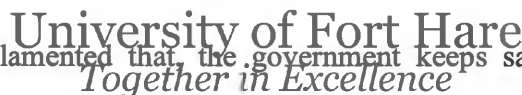
“For example some of us would like to go and learn at Fort Beaufort Primary but we just can’t think about it because, my parents are already struggle paying my fees here, which is only R80 per year, what about the huge money paid at Fort Beaufort”?

The fee schedule for the three schools is provided in the table below.

Table1: Fees structure for the three participating schools:

Name of the school	Fess per year
Alice Primary School	R80/year
Davidson School	R 340/ month
Fort Beaufort Primary School	
Grade R to 3	R280/ month
Grade 4 to 6	R320/ month
Grade 7 to 10	R 395/ month

Source: Data collected from the three schools



The principal at Davidson lamented that the government keeps saying that we have equal education and equal access to education, while some children are handicapped by the government system from accessing education.

“What I mean is if the government categories a school located in a rural place like this to be a quintile 5 school; definitely we will have to charge high school fees because we don’t get much money from the government. As a result we employ and pay a number of our staff from the school budget, which comes from the school fees from learners. Definitely in the process we eliminate a number of learners who would have wanted to come here, but are unable to do so due to the fees we have to charge”.

She also added that “so many people simply think we enjoy increasing fees to exclude the poor from our school, but we have no choice, for example right now we are busy building toilets for the school and all the costs are paid by the school, no help is forth-coming from the government”.

Learners in this study also strongly felt that there was better education in towns than in rural schools. They assigned the problem to the government's failure to provide needed education facilities in rural schools. Below are some of the learners' views on the government:

"You can get better education in urban schools more than in rural schools; but in most cases it is because they don't have enough material. If the government provides all the facilities which are needed for education programmes in rural areas, this may change the students' attitude".

...



"Because of the lack of government facilities in government public schools in rural areas, it limits learners in getting better education".

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...

"The other issue is that government promised about free education but its not there".

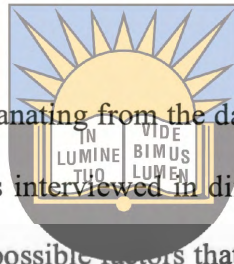
...

"In schools sometimes the lack of school equipments hinder some students which makes some of them not to continue with their studies, for example textbooks, stationery, equipments for sports".

Educators in this research were mainly concerned with the continual changes in the education curriculum. They said it affects their education delivery in so many ways, which includes lack of textbooks. Every time the curriculum changes most of the textbooks, even those probably bought last year, become useless new ones have to be bought. However, getting the government to buy books for the school will take ages. If a school orders books at the beginning the year, it will probably get them way into the year which creates a bottle neck in the teaching system.

It was also stated that, whenever the curriculum changes, educators do not receive training in time. Although they are trained later into the year, they are expected to have been teaching under a system they do not know. Educators complained that even the type of training they receive is seemingly a smoke screen to show that teachers have been trained. The trainers themselves need to be trained.

4.6 Summary



This Chapter presented the findings emanating from the data gathered from the participants. The data was collected from 91 participants interviewed in different focus groups during which the respondents articulated their views on possible factors that hinder the full enjoyment of the right to education. The data was analysed according to the framework proposed by Steinberg¹⁷¹ as outlined at the beginning of this chapter. From the process of data analysis, the following themes were identified:

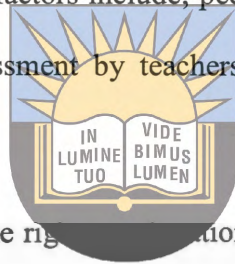
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Learners' understanding of the human rights, focused significantly on the school environment, in terms of: teaching material available; teacher-learner ratio; class sizes; school infrastructure; and teacher motivation. Children's home background, which include; family size; parents or guardian's occupation; family income sources; and other duties children are involved in after or before school. Other the themes identified included, children's peer and generational influences; or the role of the department of Education and the Government in supporting the schools.

¹⁷¹ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 120.

Though not presented under these categories, the study findings indicated that the factors perpetuating exclusion can be identified under the following categories: social, economic, cultural and traditional cultures; physical impacts and administrative factors.

The findings also indicated that there is more to accessing education than the mere provision for it in departmental policies and in the Constitution. Respondents came up factors that rarely feature in the literature surveyed these factors include; peer teasing; being discriminated against by fellow learners and teachers; harassment by teachers (in form of comments with sexual connotations) and noise.



Participants see the challenge facing the right to education to be multifaceted, though they feel strongly that it is within the power and ability of the South African government to remedy the situation, lacks the political will to do so. Some of the striking factors that were raised as challenges facing children living in rural areas include: poor homes; large households with no corresponding income; insufficient food; lack of proper supervision (both at home and school); elderly grandparents; child abuse; illiterate caregivers; drug abuse; lack of professional counselling services; teenage pregnancy; and long distance from schools.

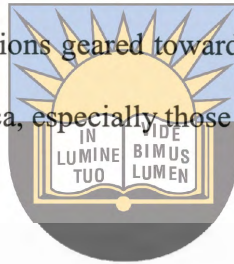
In summary the findings of this research suggest that effective and equal provision of education in South Africa can only be effective when the factors that present barriers to the right to education have been attended. At the centre is the load of poverty and income differentiation which continues to perpetuate the division of the apartheid era in schools. Based on these findings the researcher came up with a number of conclusions and recommendations outlined in the closing chapter of the study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5 Introduction

The concluding chapter gives a brief summary of each chapter and a brief outline of the main findings. Conclusions are also drawn on the findings of the study on the factors perpetuating the exclusion of children from education despite the policies in place to ensure access to education.

The chapter also contains recommendations geared towards an effective and equitable access to education among learners in South Africa, especially those from rural schools.



5.1 Chapter Summaries

5.1.1 Chapter One

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This chapter introduces the reader to the study in general. The chapter points out the problem statement of which the research seeks to explore. The reader is provided with the overview of the challenges facing the provision of education as a right, particularly among children living in the South African rural communities. The research explored the factors perpetuating children's exclusion from education despite the policies and laws in place to redress the past inequalities; within the Fort Beaufort Education District. The case study focused on Alice Primary and Davidson School in Alice and Fort Beaufort Primary School in Fort Beaufort.

This chapter also outlined the research objectives, which the research sought to address, namely, the factors underlying children exclusion from education.

This was done by examining:

First, how teachers teach in rural schools as compared to urban schools. This included the school environment, teaching material available, teacher-learner ratio, class sizes, school infrastructure and teacher motivation.

Secondly, children's home background, which included family size, parents or guardian's occupation, family income levels and sources and other duties children are involved in after or before school.



Thirdly, the children's peer and generational influences.

Fourthly, the community's socio-economic situation, including the main economic and social activities that the community is involved in or value highly.

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Lastly, the role of the Department of Education and the Government in supporting the schools.

5.1.2 Chapter Two

This chapter focused on the literature review which entailed looking at what has been done in the field of study. The researcher generally attempted to expose what underlies the rural children's exclusion from basic education. First, the researcher outlined working definitions of the major concepts used in the study. The background of the right to education was provided by indicating all the legal and binding instruments in which the right is asserted. The researcher also reviewed related and competing ideas and theories on the right to basic education. Children's right to education in South Africa was also evaluated.

5.1.3 Chapter Three

Chapter three outlined the research design and methodology utilised throughout the process of research. Elements covered include the case study research design, qualitative method; the descriptive method of research, in particular, description of the research population, sampling procedure and size. Research instruments, data analysis procedure and the elements of validity and reliability of the research outcome were also outlined.

The researcher employed a qualitative descriptive research method in this study, due to the nature of the phenomenon under study which requires a more open and flexible approach as suggested by Creswell.¹⁷² The researcher's desire to conduct an in-depth inquiry into exploring factors perpetuating children exclusion from education necessitated the use of a case study design.

Focus group interviews were used in this research as a method for data collection, as this was deemed to be the most suitable method for the study. Participants were selected from the three participating schools. The data was analysed following the qualitative data analysis method suggested by Steinberg.¹⁷³ The data was presented in identified themes and categories as outlined by Sumbulu.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Creswell, *op. cit.* pg 15.

¹⁷³ Steinberg, *op. cit.* .

¹⁷⁴ Sumbulu, A (2005) Writing Your Research Project- Notes or SWK425/512. University of Fort Hare, Unpublished: pg 23.

Reports of bullying and sexual harassment were widely reported by girl learners, and this indicated the existence of gender based violence in the school environments.

Family problems were top of the factors identified that perpetuated children's exclusion from education. Elements such as low family income, unemployment, family abuse (both on children and between parents) was reported as having the same impact on the education of children, parental and sibling illiteracy. Family duties carried by children after or before school were reported to permanently exclude some children from school. These include duties such as nursing siblings, nursing a sick parent or care giver.



The Government and the Department of Education were blamed for failure to make education accessible, particularly to rural schools.

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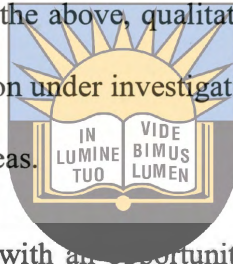
5.2 Research Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached following an extensive and deep investigation into the possible factors perpetuating children's exclusion from education, with specific focus on those in rural schools. The research sought to ascertain the accessibility of the right to education among the children living in the rural South Africa though a case study specified schools in Alice and Fort Beaufort.

The researcher found that there are a number of factors surrounding the exclusion of children from education as presented in the previous chapter. However, these factors have not received due attention although they greatly compromise the children's right to education.

5.2.1 Conclusions in respect to research methodology

The researcher established that the qualitative, descriptive and contextual approach was appropriate for this study. The study was descriptive in nature hence the choice of a qualitative approach. As indicated in chapter one although research has been done in this area, a gap still exist between the reasons perpetuating children's exclusion and the policies in place for redressing past inequalities. In view of the above, qualitative approach was most suitable to get first hand information of the phenomenon under investigation, namely, factors perpetuating child exclusion from education in the rural areas.



The approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to explore the perspectives of both learners and educators concerning factors hindering effective enjoyment of the right to education. Babbie¹⁷⁵ recommended that the method is best when the researcher intend to explore a phenomenon deeply.

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The method of data collection, which was in this study focus group interviews, worked very well in that it necessitated generation of diverse data from the participants. Using research assistants for recording the interview conversations helped greatly in capturing all the important comments by participants and helped reduce the potential of missing specific comments in the responses of the participants.

The researcher found out that utilizing a structured framework for data analysis as suggested by Steinberg,¹⁷⁶ facilitated the research process as it provided clear direction and for the construction of analysis themes. Verification of data gathered was facilitated by using Guba's

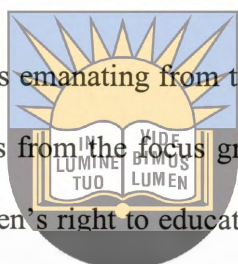
¹⁷⁵ Babbie, *op. cit.* pg 46.

¹⁷⁶ Steinberg, *op. cit.* pg 120.

model of trustworthiness.¹⁷⁷ This model which encourages a qualitative researcher to maintain a high level of trustworthiness in presenting the findings in order to maintain high validity and reliability of the research outcomes proved useful and informative to the researcher.

5.2.2 Conclusions in respect of findings of the study

In chapter four of this study the findings emanating from the study were discussed. This chapter discussed the summary and conclusions from the focus group interviews. The researcher noted that there is great compromise of children's right to education, beyond the mere provision of the legal basis, policy structures and strategies of providing the right in question. Therefore, for a right to be enjoyed it needs all the relevant elements of.



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Based on the participants' view on the factors affecting rural children from effective access to education, the researcher came to the conclusion that the intended beneficiaries of any advocated right should be given a chance to contribute to its implementation; irrespective of how young they may be or how insignificant their contribution may be. The research also noted that there is still a lot that needs to be done in improving the school environments in the rural areas, up to a level conducive to provision of proper quality education.

The very policies meant to protect learners in education environments, such as the total ban of corporal punishment has resulted in a great deterioration of order and discipline in schools. For instance, now teachers have no control of misbehaviors such as bullying and other forms of violent activities practiced by learners at school. As a result, they do not even attempt to reported

¹⁷⁷ Mabusela, N (2005). Learner's Perspectives on Gender based Violence in Semi-Rural Secondary Schools; A Thesis for Masters: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Unpublished paper: pg 38.

cases of bullying, because they feel their hands are tied. However, the failure of educational authorities to address such behaviours timeously or at all, has allowed such abusive behaviours to flourish within school settings.

Mabusela¹⁷⁸ suggests that it is important therefore that strategies to address violent behaviours in schools acknowledge the role that can be played by learners. The latter can take responsibility for knowing how, when and to whom to report incidents of abuse and encourage constructive and collaborative relationships. She further suggests that the same should apply to teachers. In this regard, teacher training should include strategies of coping and handling such behaviours in schools in the proper manner.



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This study concluded that generally the South African government is failing to protect the right to primary education for children living in rural areas by either not ensuring their access to better schools or maintaining the adequacy of learning conditions at these schools. This violates the South African Schools Act¹⁷⁹, the National Education Policy Act¹⁸⁰, and its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Receiving an education is compulsory for all children up to grade nine or age fifteen, depending on whichever comes first.

The historical, social and economic conditions in South African rural areas, inherited from years of an undemocratic minority government, mean that most rural schools both public schools and private ones face difficulties in providing quality education. These schools are also among the poorest in financial resources, physical structure and delivery of quality education. Rural

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Note 4 above.

¹⁸⁰ South African National Education Policy Act 1996: No 27 of 1996.

children attend schools without electricity, drinking water, sanitation, suitable buildings or adequate learning materials.

While the present government has made efforts to redress these conditions, including promulgating legislation recognizing education as a right and introducing policies aimed at addressing the needs of the poorest schools in South Africa, a great deal remains to be done. Not least, this requires the full implementation of national policies at provincial government level and within districts. Without adequately addressing these conditions, rural schools which provide an education for rural children will remain impoverished and limit children's educational opportunities.



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5.2.3 Summary of the conclusions *Together in Excellence*

There are a lot of challenges which have been identified that deny learners from poor communities access to basic education.

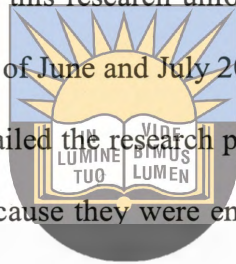
There is inadequate infrastructure and learner support materials; learners drop out of school because of poverty which leads to lack of uniforms, textbooks and fees. Also some parents are not able to provide food for their children to enable them to attend school. Learners also drop out because of corporal punishment, teenage pregnancy, child labour, and cultural practices. Learners drop out because they have disabilities and they are not accommodated in schools. Those infected with HIV and AIDS and those taking care of infected relatives also drop out.

5.3 Limitations encountered

The researcher encountered the following challenges:

The researcher has had no previous research experience and this posed a challenge as it was a relatively new territory.

The planned time for data collection in this research unfortunately coincided with the national teachers' strike that rocked the nation in of June and July 2007. Therefore, data collection had to be postponed by a month. This also derailed the research progress and limited the availability of teachers for the research afterwards; because they were engaged, trying to make up for the lost time during the strike.



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The above strike also resulted in cancellation of a number of interview appointments with principals as they were frequently called to meetings after meetings in the District Education Offices in an attempt to end the strike.

The research focus group interviews with both learners and educators were done during school hours and the interviews had to be kept within the limits of time. This might have limited the access to deeper information that would needed further probing.

5.4 Recommendations

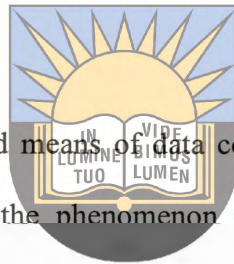
The following recommendations are proposed based on perspectives of the participants and after consideration of the broader findings of the research. A more comprehensive implementation of strategies and policies for the provision of the right to education is needed as a matter of urgency, particularly with reference to the provision of education in rural communities. In the light of the foregoing, the following recommendations are suggested.

5.4.1 Recommendations regarding research

It is recommended that future research on this issue needs to be broadened to include a wider number of respondents.

Qualitative research was best suited for this kind of research and its use is recommended in any future study. The methodology adopted in this study may pave the way for exploring the same study on a large scale.

Involvement of other more complicated means of data collection might also be necessary for future research in this area, because the phenomenon under study involves wider societal interest. These might include the utilization of community gatherings as opportunities for collecting data.



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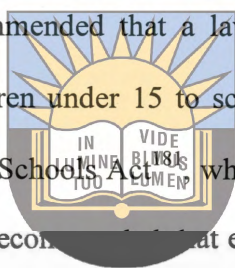
5.4.2 Recommendations with regard of main findings of the study

The researcher recommends that democratic principles need to be extended to every citizen, including school pupils irrespective of the age or level of education. In this regard, it is recommended that schools create participatory forums for learners to voice their concerns and issues affecting their access to education.

Educators suggested that the problem of learners dropping out could be addressed by motivating learners. Issuing awards and certificates for academic, sport and cultural achievement and for good behaviour could significantly motivate learners. The certificates for good behaviour could boost the self esteem of those learners who struggle with their school work as well as sport and cultural activities but are well behaved.

It was also suggested that the social problems identified in this study could be addressed through regular counselling by social workers, health workers, pastors as well as career guidance personnel. In addition meetings involving all community members should be organised to find solutions to schools' problems. It is recommended that the government employs social practitioners to work in school environments.

Educators in this study strongly recommended that a law with a prison sentence be passed compelling caregivers to send all children under 15 to school. This suggestion resonates well with the provision of the South African Schools Act¹⁸¹ which requires parents and caregivers to ensure total attendance. Therefore it is recommended that existing policies and legislation aimed at effective provision of the right to education be implemented and monitored to ensure complete access to equitable quality education.



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Workshops involving all stakeholders could also be held to inculcate a culture of self-sufficiency and ensure that everyone does their part to see to it that learners access and stay in school. Parents and teachers could also work more closely to stamp out bunking. In addition, employment creation was strongly suggested to be a positive way for providing the means for parents and caregivers to help children's access to education.

A total ban of dilapidated school infrastructure being used should be adopted, as it greatly compromises the children's right to safety and good environment for development.

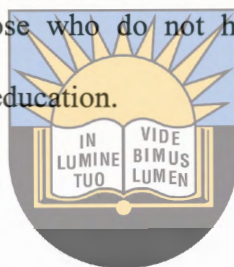
In view of conditions observed on the participating schools in this study, the researcher saw that the conditions are a great violation of the children's constitutional right to be protected against

¹⁸¹ Note 4 above.

maltreatment, neglect or degradation. Exposing children under such poor and dangerous infrastructural is a sign of neglect, maltreatment and degradation of children.

Furthermore, children are exposed to dangers such as sexual assault and road accidents when walking to and from school. This can result in non-attendance or irregular attendance. This report argues that the state's provision of transportation, particularly for those pupils who have to walk long distances to schools or those who do not have the financial means to pay for transportation, is essential for access to education.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

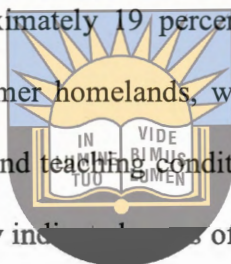


Before 1994, education in South Africa was structured along racial lines. It was offered according to the roles that people were supposed to play in society. In line with its policies of discrimination, the apartheid state enacted the Bantu Education Act in 1953 which ensured that the majority of African children received education that relegated them to unskilled manual labour and low status jobs. On the other hand, education provided to white children prepared them for an almost complete monopoly of dominant positions in society (Lemmer, 1991). The characteristics of apartheid education system included gross inequality in the financing of education, differentiated curricula, standards and quality of education and restricted access of black people to higher education. With the establishment of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994, redressing apartheid education became one of its priorities and the right to basic education became entrenched in the Constitution.

The findings of this study, however, has identified that not much has completely changed among the children living in poor communities of South Africa. Inequalities which existed among

different racial groups during apartheid still manifest themselves along the lines of social status in the new democratic era of South Africa.

The social and economic legacy of the apartheid era continues to affect the rights of those living in rural areas in South Africa, including the rights of children to education. A national Department of Education report published in 2000 - *Education for All: The South African Assessment Report* - found that approximately 19 percent of children in rural areas, which include commercial farm areas and former homelands, were not in school, as opposed to 11 percent in urban areas.¹⁸² The physical and teaching conditions at most rural schools are among the poorest in South Africa.¹⁸³ The study indicates that many children and educators experiencing difficulties in accessing and providing quality education and conducting educational activities.



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Although the Provincial Departments of Education does intervene on behalf of teachers, learners and parents, these interventions are neither rapid, effective nor offer long-term resolutions to access. The difficulties in physically accessing schools keep children and teachers out of school.

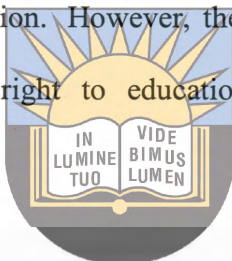
South Africa is a party to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which guarantee the right to primary education - a component of basic education. With the passing of the Schools Act and the 1996 National Education Policy Act, the government has committed itself to making basic education accessible

¹⁸² Department of Education, *Education for All – the South African Assessment Report*, 2000 [online], http://education.pwv.gov.za/policies&20and%20Reports/2000_Reports/2000_Reports_Index.htm. (Retrieved July 11, 2003).

¹⁸³ Adele Gordon, "Providing Quality Education in Schools on Commercial Farms," paper presented at a conference on farm schools convened by the minister of education, May 13, 2000.

to all school-age children. The effective implementation of these government policies at schools in rural areas is crucial in the provision of the right in question.

The hardships children in the rural community face are enormous. Their parents' precarious tenure on the land, poverty, and poorly resourced police services that are unable to deliver prompt assistance to children, all affect the enjoyment of children's right to education as enshrined in the South African constitution. However, there are steps that can and should be taken by the state to guarantee the right to education of children in such unbearable conditions.¹⁸⁴



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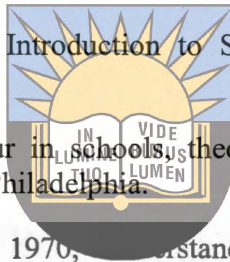
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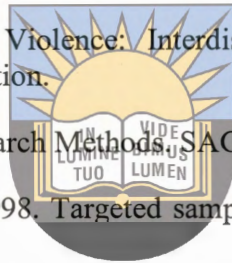
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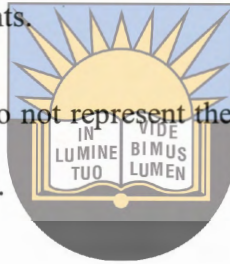


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3.12 Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Central to the interviews is building of rapport. The researcher shall ensure a good rapport is established before venturing into the interviews, to ensure the feeling of safety and free participation spirit among participant. Here the researcher shall tap up his social work skill of rapport establishing and trust building. This will include forging a friendly environment and speaking same language as the respondents.

It should be noted that these questions do not represent the exactly words they shall be asked in but they carry the idea of the content sort.



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INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS

General questions

Whether children understand the notion of rights and democracy

1. Do we have rights?
2. What are children rights?
3. What rights do we have as children?
4. Why do we go to school?
5. Where do you think there is better education?
6. What problems do you face at school ?
7. and at home?

School environment

1. Are there things that you think you don't have here at you school? And what are they
2. In what way do you think if those things would help you in you studies, if they were there?
3. Does you school have adequate facilities for learning- if not which ones are not adequate?
4. What would you like to have more

- Classrooms
- Furniture
- Books and other learning aids
- Toilets
- Water
- Electricity



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5. How is your school security?
6. Are your teachers able to teach well?
7. Are your teachers able to help you with your individual problems?
8. Are there times when some students feel they can't continue with school? If yes what cause it and what do you do then?
9. Do you pay school fees and how much?
10. Do you buy your own books, do u have them?
11. Do you have uniform- how many pairs?
12. Is your home far from the school?
13. How do you come to school?
14. How do your teachers deal with discipline and punishment?

15. Are they student who bully others and what does the school do about it?
16. Do you learn about HIV/AIDS at school?
17. How does the school deal with sick children? Is there a clinic nearby?

Home background

1. What motivates you to continue going to school?
2. How would you describe you home? And you family
 - How big is your family?
 - Who is working at home?
 - Where do you get money at home?
 - What other means does your family get money apart from those who work?
 - Do you do any work at home? What do you do before or after school?
 - Does this work affect you schooling? And how?
 - How would you describe you day?
 - Who helps you with your home work at home
 - If you do not do home work is there anyone who asks you at home? If No why do you think they don't ask?
 - Who would want to help you with your home work at home? Do they? If not why do you think they don't?



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Peer and generational influences

1. Where your friends are and what do they do?
2. Do you have friends, or other children of you age whom you know who don't go to school?

3. What makes them not to go to school?
4. What most of the children in your community do?
5. Is there anyone at home who does not go to school? And why

Community socio-economic conditions

1. how is your community
2. What is it that very important in your community?
3. What is mostly done in your community?



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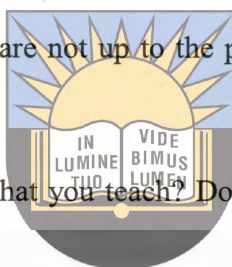
Government role

1. what do you think the government should do for your school
2. how will that improve your education

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

School environment

1. How would you describe your working conditions in comparison to those in urban schools?
2. Do you have all that which you would wish to have for effective teaching? Teaching material
3. What are things that you think are not up to the proper education standard here at your schools?
4. How big is your average class that you teach? Do you think it's the same as teachers in urban school teach?
5. Do you manage to have time for individual student?
6. How would you describe the educational performance for this school?
7. Is it satisfactory? If not what do you think is affecting it?



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Learners' background

1. How would you generally describe the background of children at this school?
2. Would you say their background has anything/ impact on their performance at school?
3. Do you think children come to school well fed?
4. Are they well clothed?
5. Is the issue of uniforms emphasised here?
6. What is done with children who do not afford uniforms?
7. Do you think it affects a child's performance at school if he or she does not have a uniform will all others have?

8. How does the issue of school fees affect children here?
9. Do you think their parents know about the fees exception provision?
10. Do some students drop out of school here and what are the major reasons for dropping out?
11. Do you think there is something in the communities affecting children's education? What could it be/
12. Do you think some students have responsibilities or conditions at home which might be affecting their education?



The role of the Government **University of Fort Hare**
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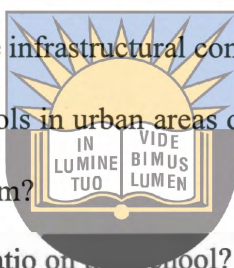
1. Do you think the government has done enough to ensure equal education for children in rural areas in comparison with those in urban areas?
2. What do think the government should do to ensure the right to education for children in rural areas?

What do you think are some of the factors still perpetuating rural children exclusion from education, despite all the policies the government has put in place since 1994?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PRINCIPALS

School environment

1. How would you describe the condition of your school?
2. Are there things you wish could be there to better the learning conditions for children here?
3. How would you describe the infrastructural condition of your school?
4. In comparison to other schools in urban areas do you think your school being located in a rural area is equal to them?
5. How is the learner teacher ratio on your school?
6. How would you describe the security at this school?



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Children's backgrounds

1. How would you describe the general background of children here from your observations?
2. What are the major problems you observe which affect children's education?
3. Do you think children come to school well fed? Or well clothed?
4. Do learners pay school fees here? How much?
5. Do you have any children here under fees exception?
6. How is the issue of school uniform here?
7. Do you have any cases of children dropping out of school? How is the rate of drop out?
8. What are the major causes of drop out?

9. Do some students go back home before dismissal time and what are the main excuses they bring for going home early?
10. Family – do you think most children here has family support for their education?

Community socio-economic conditions

1. Do you think there is something in the communities where children coming from which are affecting their enjoyment of their right to education?



Government role

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1. Do you think the government has done enough to provide equal education for children in rural areas and those in urban schools?
2. What do think the government should do to ensure access to proper education for children in rural areas?

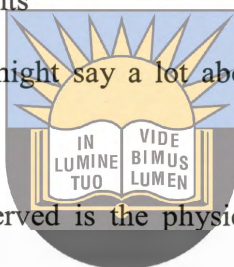
What do you think are some of the factors still perpetuating rural children exclusion from education, despite all the policies the government has put in place since 1994?

Appendix 2: Observation Schedule

In data collection through interview the research is going to be utilizing all his senses in picking up all other unspoken information.

This will include observing:

- Feelings expressed by respondents
- Other non-verbal cues which might say a lot about the genuineness of the facts and concerns



Also of importance that shall be observed is the physical condition of the schools this will include:

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- School environment
- Infrastructural conditions
- Classrooms
- Toilets
- Water
- Electricity
- Security conditions- is the school fenced or does it have a gate

Other elements that shall arise in the field will also be noted and recorded in the outcomes.

Subject Information Sheet

Researcher's identification

Nyika Machenjedge
Student # 200327909

Research Assistants

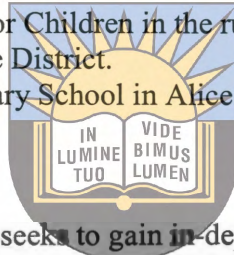
Zihle Somahela (B.Ed 1st year)
Zanele Zinto (B.Ed 1st year)

Faculty

Faculty of Law
(UNESCO 'Oliver Tambo' Chair for Human Right)

Research Topic

An appraisal of the right to education for Children in the rural post apartheid, South Africa: A case study of three schools in Amathole District.
(Alice Primary School, Davidson Primary School in Alice and Fort Beaufort Primary School, in Fort Beaufort)



Brief description of the study

The research is a descriptive study that seeks to gain in-depth information on factors perpetuating the exclusion of rural children from education despite all the policies of redress in place. The study shall be done through case study and data will be gathered using in depth interviews with individuals and focus groups. These interviews shall be conducted in the respondent's choice of language.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the underlying factors hindering the full enjoyment of the right to education for children in rural schools; despite the policies of redress in place since 1994.

Any financial or other benefits to participants

Participation in this research shall be on volunteer basis. There shall be no financial or any material rewards that shall accrue to participants for partaking in this study. However all efforts shall be acknowledged in this study.

Assurance of all ethical research principles

Ethical consideration shall take preference in this study, principles as outlined in the research proposal shall be up held to the utmost level possible; including the principle of confidentiality, with regard to identification for participants. This can only be done at the approval of the respondents themselves.

Contact persons for more information on this study

The researcher

Nyika Machenjedge
Cell: 084 642 0124

Supervisor

Professor N.S Rembe Tel: 040 602 2544/ 2220

Co-supervisor

Dr. S. Rembe: srembe@ufh.ac.za

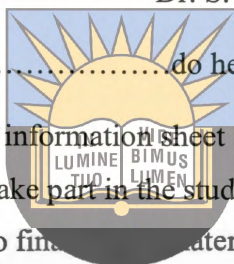
CONSENT FORM

Research Topic: An appraisal of the right to education for Children in the rural post apartheid, South Africa: A case study of three schools in Amathole District. (Alice Primary School, Davidson Primary School in Alice and Fort Beaufort Primary School, in Fort Beaufort)

Researcher's Name: Nyika Machenjedge

Supervisor (s)
Professor N.S Rembe

Co-supervisor
Dr. S. Rembe



I or (we).....do hereby confirm that:

1. I or we have read the participant information sheet and fully understand the nature and purpose of the study. I agree to take part in the study.
2. I understand that there will be no financial material benefits to be gained from taking part in this study.
3. I understand that while information from this research may be published, I will not be identified, unless I consent to true identification; besides that my option will remain confidential.
4. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study anytime.
5. I understand that notes shall be taken from my responses and will also make part of the research report.

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Signature:

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Date: