AN INVESTIGATION OF ISSUES ADVERSELY AFFECTING

BLACK EDUCATION, WITH SPECIAL RELATION TO POVERTY,

VANDALISM AND SCHOOL FEE PAYMENTS.

A STUDY OF SOME EASTERN CAPE PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

BY

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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED WITH LOVE TO MY HUSBAND FOR ALL THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGENT THAT HE HAS GIVEN ME THROUGHOUT MY STUDIES. HE HAS SUPPORTED ME IN VARIOUS WAYS; BY THE TIME I LOSE HOPE HE NEVER DID INSTEAD HE GAVE ME STRENGTH. FOR THAT, I THANK YOU; I AM SO GRAETFUL TO HAVE YOU IN MY LIFE.

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SUMMARY

The focus of this research was to establish how black primary school principals in some Port Elizabeth schools manage the problems of poverty, vandalism and non-payment of school fees.

The aim of this research was to improve these burning issues at my own school, but also to assist other schools which are encountering similar problems with regard to these three issues.

Qualitative research methods were used. Data was collected by studying relevant literature and conducting semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Composite case studies of the schools were compiled. Content analysis was used to analyse the data and recommendations for improvement were made.

The results of the research indicate that since 1994, when democracy and equal human rights were declared, primary schools have actually been experiencing escalating problems in terms of

poverty, vandalism and school fee payment. As the school system is closely intertwined with the socio-economic and political dimensions of society, these challenges can only be effectively addressed if all stakeholders in education collectively take up ownership of these problems and commit themselves to finding unique and effective solutions in the Port Elizabeth urban and rural areas.

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

South African society is an extremely diverse society. The majorities of learners attending state schools suffers hardships and are raised in families with little or no income, except state grants. Hence poverty is rife. This socio-economic position impacts negatively on the education of learners. Coupled to poverty, the incidence of vandalism aggravates the already mediocre circumstances under which learning takes place.

As a person who has been a teacher for 13 years, I have experienced the ramifications of vandalism on the morale of educators and learners alike. Thus, when searching for a suitable topic to undertake research for my master's studies, I decided to focus on these aspects of education. Thus the purpose of this research is twofold, namely to acquire valuable insights into these aspects, but also to be able to render a contribution to the communities in which I do research, after having completed my studies.

1.2   HOW DID I BECOME INTERESTED IN THE TOPIC?

I started to teach at Vukanibantu Primary School (Motherwell, Port Elizabeth) from January 1994. From the onset it was an aesthetically beautiful school, although the school building was not yet completed and the school furniture still had to be delivered by the Department of Education. For the first three years, the school was running very smoothly. For example, the parents paid the school fees and most of the parents attended parents meetings. They were displaying very much interest in the school   and they were very much supportive of just everything that was taking place.

Many changes became noticeable after 1994. A   drastic change in parent's attitude took place; they started failing to pay school fees; vandalism of the school building especially the administration block started to take place;

stealing of copper taps and wires, school furniture, doors and window panes became rife. The learners also developed an attitude of absenteeism, some would have excuses of not having taxi-fare to come to school, others claimed that their school clothes were dirty and their parents did not have money to buy soap. All these challenges had a detrimental influence on the school, as it could not function properly anymore. Even though this was reported to the Department of Education, and they promised to repair the damage, nothing materialized. So we had no alternative but to use the little we had from school fees (because there were few who were paying) to restore basic necessities in order to operate a bit more functionally. Up till today many repairs have not been done yet.

The things mentioned above sparked the idea to find out what really happened at other schools in similar circumstances. I was in the fortunate position of teaching in the Distance Education Unit of University of Port Elizabeth's Faculty of Education and therefore had access to research reports written by teachers who were in the process of upgrading their studies. By means of these reports, I could establish that the problems I came across at my school, also occurred at other schools.

After having presented an exposition of my exposure to the topic   I have chosen for this study, I proceeded to develop the research statement for the study.

1.3   THE PROBLEM STATEMENT OF THE STUDY

The main problem has been formulated as follows:
To what can the adverse effects in black education in Eastern Cape primary schools be ascribed?

For the purpose of identifying clusters of sub-problems, the researcher has decided to focus on poverty, vandalism and the payment of school fees.

Cluster Sub-problem One:

What are the factors impacting on poverty in urban and rural areas? What can be learnt about dealing with difficult challenges, by studying various schools?

Cluster Sub-problem Two:
What is the nature of vandalism experienced in urban and rural schools? To what reasons can it be ascribed? What do various communities do to address the problem of vandalism?

Cluster Sub-problem Three:
What are the factors impacting on the payment of school fees in urban and rural areas? What knowledge can be acquired to improve the payment of school fees? Can something be learnt from various SGB's to address the issue of school fees?

1.4   OBJECTIVES TO THE STUDY

First and foremost I would like to mention that when I started my research, my initial focus was to study these burning issues at the school I was teaching at. In 2002, I was employed at Vukanibantu Primary School in Motherwell. In 2003 I was appointed at Sivuyiseni Intermediate School at Kwa-Magxaki. I subsequently adjusted my objectives to include my new school as well. In addition, it also made more sense to include Lower Mgwalana Primary School, a rural school I had been teaching at previously, so as to investigate the research question in urban and rural schools.

Contrary to much social science research that can be labelled as "arm chair", I want to combine the traditional requirements with field experience and go about in a scientifically valid way. This will require that I answer the following questions. Even though they are formulated as questions, they also form the objectives I want to attain in my study.

- What emerges if I undertake a case study of the three schools where I have been employed?

- What emerges in connection with the three issues I am focusing on; that is: poverty, vandalism and non-payment of school fees, when I undertake a literature study?
- What emerges if I undertake semi-structured interviews with a selection of teachers and principals, as well as participative observation when facing similar circumstances in these three schools?
- What emerges if I compare the literature study, the case studies, the interviews and the participative observation results?
- If I employ the scientifically appropriate procedure to the analysis of the data, what recommendations can I make to improve challenges faced by teachers in these three areas of concern?

1. 5 DERMARCATION OF RESEARCH AREA

My research geographically focuses on three primary schools (in urban and rural areas in the Eastern Cape), which face problems with regard to poverty, vandalism and non-payment of school fees.

1. 6 ETHICAL ISSUES

When we started this study, I was still operating under the auspices of the then University of Port Elizabeth's procedure, which did not require all the formal ethical clearances on studies of a Human Science, as has been subsequently introduced for new students at NMMU, since November 2005.

As this research contains empirical research which is sensitive in nature, I took the necessary precautions to set the minds of the respondents at rest as well as informing them that their identities would not be made known when I document and analyse the data beyond the examination phase of the study. Before conducting an interview, I first made an appointment with my interviewees. I tried to be as open, honest and transparent as I could to them before starting to interview them. I also told them exactly why I wanted to interview them.

After having briefed them on the three issues that are my major challenges, I asked them how they perceive these issues in their schools. I told them how sensitive these issues are in nature and that it is not easy for someone to express his or her opinion about it publicly; firstly, because one can be misunderstood, and secondly, a researcher probing these issues can be perceived as a troublemaker. I furthermore assured them that they have the right to anonymity and confidentiality. I also informed them that the data provided would be documented without disclosing their real identities, when disseminated in the public domain.

Beforehand I told them that they might refuse to answer a question if it is too sensitive to them. I assured them that I have planned my interview questions carefully and tried to eliminate questions, which could make respondents uncomfortable or sensitive.

1. 7   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

From the beginning it was clear that qualitative research was appropriate to collect data from the two schools I am/ was attached to. As I planned an in depth overview of these schools, I was also clear that I needed to specifically make use of the case study approach.

In Chapter Two I plan to undertake a literature study, where I shall mainly make use of the descriptive or narrative method, the comparative method, and my own reflection.   The focus here will mainly be to compose an exposition of what has been already been documented by other researchers.

 In Chapter Three I shall present case studies on the three schools included in this research. In order to compile these case studies, I shall also make use of semi-structured interviews and participative observation.

The purpose of Chapter Four will be to analyse the data of the previous chapters at a primary level, by means of mainly the analytic method. Beyond

this method, triangulation will be used to validate the research in a scientifically valid way.

In Chapter Five mainly the reflective method will be used to deduce the findings of the study, as well as make recommendations for the possible improvement of the factors investigated.

Finer detail on the various methods used, will be provided in the various chapters.

1. 8 DIFFICULTIES AND LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

As far as literature study is concerned, it was difficult to find South African sources, in the form of books or journal articles, which addressed issues I established in my case studies. The reason for this is that the data which emerged from my case studies emerged after 1994 and not much has been published. I consulted the Nexus data base and it became clear that not much has really been done that could be of value for insights into my study. However, researches at masters' level were done in related fields. Examples are MA theses in Sociology by Manyeli, T F (2003) and Ntonga, S N (2003) on income generating projects that could contribute to poverty alleviation in Port Elizabeth and the Mnquma municipality district respectively. It is interesting to mention that searches on vandalism led to the field of architecture, namely to studies abroad on how to design schools that are not so vulnerable against various forms of vandalism (See Cohen, 1999, Designing against Vandalism)

As research in schools in South Africa is a fairly new phenomenon, especially in 'black' schools, I had to develop a trust relationship with school principals and teachers so that all data collected would be treated as confidential and no respondent's name would be used. Also, the purpose of this study was to bring about improvement and not to victimize or ostracize any person in any way.

1.9 LAYOUT OF STUDY ACCORDING TO CHAPTER 2,3,4 & 5.

In chapter one, I will be dealing with orientation of my study, as explained in this chapter.

In chapter two, a literature study on poverty, vandalism and school fees will be undertaken.

My chapter three will deal with the qualitative research methodologies as well as the presentation of case studies of the THREE schools, that is: Vukanibantu Primary School, Sivuyiseni Intermediate School and Lower Mgwalana Primary school

In chapter four, I will analyse the data, firstly as a simplistic content analysis, and secondly as a triangulated content analysis.

Lastly, in chapter 5, shall offer recommendations to improve the three aspects, namely poverty, vandalism and non-payment of school fees, which are researched in this study.

1.10 DEFINING OF TERMINOLOGY

Unclear concepts may lead to misunderstanding by the reader, assessor or other researchers consulting this study. For me as the researcher it can lead to obscurity of thinking and not precisely identifying what I mean by means of the terminology I use. Therefore, it is very important for me to clarify certain key concepts featuring in this research.

    a. Educator: A professionally trained person who teaches learners at a formal school.
    b. Learner: a person who is learning at a formal school.
    c. Parent: the biological mother, legal guardian and /or father who live as a natural family with their or her or his children.
    d. Stakeholder: a key member of an organization e.g. a school.

e. Education: the process of developing or empowering people's minds and abilities so that they acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to become successful citizens and members of society.

f. Law: a rule or set of rules that everyone must obey by teachers and parents e.g. South African School Act.

g. SGB: steering members of an organization, in this case, a school's governing body (Representatives are parent, teacher and learner components).

h. Vandalism: destroy or damage public or private properties, like schools and damage to a fellow learner's school books or other properties.

i. Poverty: being poor, like not having money, food, clothes, accommodation, opportunities, recreation, etc.?

j. School: a place where learners are taught and educated by professionally trained teachers. The age group for this study is 5 – 18.

1.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have provided an orientation as to the background, nature, demarcation, research methodology and design of the research for this study. In the next chapter a literature study of specific issues pertaining to this study will be undertaken. The purpose of this will be to compile data on what other researchers have established about the aspects I plan to research by means of qualitative methodologies at selected primary schools.

CHAPTER 2: A LITERATURE STUDY OF POVERTY, VANDALISM AND SCHOOL FEES IN THE FORMAL SCHOOL CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The three aspects chosen for investigation in this study need to be reviewed by means of a study of relevant sources, in order to construct a theoretical background against which the empirical part of the research can be compared. Furthermore the additional purpose is to investigate to what extent clarity or cues can be found that can be elucidating to the extreme challenges South African schools are faced with.

In Chapter four I shall analyse the findings of my empirical research on these issues and then compare my analysis with the literature study in order to establish to what extent there is a correlation between questionnaire and interview responses, used to construct the three case studies in my empirical research, and documentation found in literature.

2.2 POVERTY

The aspect of poverty will be elucidated by means a description of its nature and origin, as well an overview of some key societal factors.

2.2.1 THE NATURE OF POVERTY

According to Christie (1998: 74), poverty can be defined as the lack of the necessary for material well being, especially food but also housing or other land assets. They also claim that poverty is a multidimensional social phenomenon; as a result its definitions and its causes vary according to gender, age, culture and other social and economic contexts. For an example, in both rural and urban areas, men associate poverty with a lack of material assets whereas for women poverty is defined as food insecurity.

According to Cohen (1992: 47), poverty is the condition of having insufficient resources or income. In its most extreme form, poverty is a lack of basic human needs, such as enough nutritious food, clothing, housing, clean water and health services. Extreme poverty can cause terrible suffering and death, and even modest levels of poverty can prevent people from realizing many of their desires.

According to Marshall (1988:28), poverty is both an absolute and a relative term. In an absolute sense, it means a lack of resources for specific needs. In a relative sense, it refers to the extent of these resources in comparison to what other individuals in society have.

The authors cited above, capture the essence of poverty in general. As the purpose of the study is rather to merely theoretically scaffold poverty in this chapter, I do not wish to embroider beyond this brief exposition.

2.2.2   REASONS FOR POVERTY

When studying literature, it becomes evident that there are no simple, clear-cut reasons to explain poverty. Some authors believe that poverty results from a lack of adequate resources at a global level – resources such as land, food and building material – that are necessary for the well being or survival of the world's people (Christie, 1998:78). Others see poverty as an effect of the uneven distribution of resources around the world on an international or even regional scale (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991:189).

Poverty has many causes; some are very much basic and others much more complex and interrelated to other factors. Some primary factors that lead to poverty include overpopulation, unequal distribution of resources in the world economy, inability to meet high standards of living and cost of living, inadequate education and employment opportunities, environmental degradation, certain economic and demographic trends and welfare incentives (Thomas, 2002:47).

2.2.3 OVERPOPULATION

Overpopulation can be described as the situation of having large numbers of people with too few resources and too little space to accommodate these people. It can be the result of high population density or from low amounts of resources or from both. Excessively high population density puts stress on available resources. Only a certain number of people can be supported on a given area and that number depends on how much food or resources are available. High birth rates contribute to overpopulation in many developing countries. Children are often viewed as assets to many poor, especially rural families because they provide labour, usually for farming (Thomas, 2002: 59).

2.2.4 GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

Many experts agree that the legacy of colonialism accounts for much of the unequal distribution of resources in the world economy. In many developing countries, the problems of poverty are massive and pervasive (Rosenthal & Rosnow 1991:243). They also lack raw material and the knowledge and skills gained through formal education and training. They also often lack the infrastructure provided by, for example, transportation systems and power generation facilities. Because these things are necessary for the development of industry, developing countries generally must rely on trade with developed countries for manufactured goods, but they cannot afford much.

2.2.5 HIGH STANDARDS OF LIVING AND COSTS OF LIVING

Because people in developed nations may have more wealth and resources than those in developing countries, their standard of living is also generally higher. Wealth and poverty is perceived differently in developed and developing countries. For example, people in the United States may expect to make an average of about $30,000 each year. They also probably expect to rent an apartment or own a house with electricity and running water, to be able to afford to eat and dress well, and to receive quality health care.

In contrast, people in developing countries may consider themselves to be doing well if they have productive gardens, some livestock, and a house of thatch or mud-brick. In rural areas, people may be accustomed to not having plumbing, electricity, or formal health care. By the standards of developed countries, such living conditions are considered hallmarks of poverty.

Developed countries also tend to have a high cost of living. Even the most basic lifestyle in those countries, with few or no luxuries, can be relatively expensive while other developed countries cannot obtain adequate food, clothing and shelter without ample amounts of money. In some areas, even people with jobs that pay the legal minimum wage may not be able to cover their basic expenses. People who cannot find or maintain well-paying jobs often have no spare income for discretionary or emergency expenses, and many rely on government welfare payments to survive (Thomas, 2002:64).

2.2.6 INADEQUATE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Illiteracy and lack of education are common in poor countries. Governments of developing countries often cannot afford to provide for good public schools, especially in rural areas. Poor people also often forego schooling in order to concentrate on minimal living. In addition, developing countries tend to have few employment opportunities, especially for women. As a result, people may see little reason to attend school.

Even in developed countries, unemployment rates may be high. When people do not have work, they do not make any money, thus, high unemployment leads to high levels of poverty (Thomas, 2002:66). Due to a high rate of unemployment in South African, most families cannot afford to buy nutritional food. As a result of this, people are very much prone to various diseases, like scurvy, beriberi, kwashiorkor and many others.

2.2.7 ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Environmental degradation is the deterioration of the natural environment, including bodies of water, soil and forests, and is an important cause of poverty. Environmental problems have led to shortages of food, clean water, materials for shelter and other essential resources (Kallaway, 2002:28). As forests, land, air and water are degrading, people who live directly off these natural resources suffer most.

Global environmental degradation may result from a variety of factors, including overpopulation and the resulting overuse of land and other resources. Intensive farming, for instance, depletes soil fertility, thus decreasing crop. Environmental degradation also results from pollution. Polluting industries include mining, power generation, and chemical production. Other major causes of pollution include automobiles and agricultural fertilizers (Thomas, 2002: 68).

2.2.8 ECONOMIC AND DEMOGGRAPHIC TRENDS

Poverty in many developed countries can also be linked to economic trends. For example, in the 1950's and 1960's, most people in the United States experienced strong income growth. The average family income almost doubled during this period. However, since the early 1970's typical income, adjusted for inflation, has not grown much, while the cost of living has increased. In particular, many young and less educated people have suffered from this economic shift, as they cannot find jobs that pay enough to support themselves.

Because of similar reasons, the youth in South Africa has relocated to bigger cities like, Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, seeking for jobs. In these cities there are big industries and factories and it is easy for them to get jobs instead of staying at home after they had passed grade 12 (Mqoto, 2004:138).

Changes in labour markets in developed countries have also contributed to increased poverty levels. For instance, the number of relatively high paying manufacturing jobs has declined, while the demand for workers in service and technology related industries have increased. In the past, people have learned the skills required for manual jobs such as those in manufacturing, or through easily accessible school vocational programmes. Nowadays these jobs are replaced by service and technology related jobs that usually require skills taught at college level. Therefore, people who cannot afford a college education find it difficult to obtain well paying work.

In South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape Province, the government has open many colleges and technical colleges, where youth and adults are trained for various skills, depending on one's capabilities. They are skills that are in demand in the workplace, such Information Technology, computer skills and technical subjects.

2.2.9   INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WELFARE DEPENDENCY

There are different beliefs about individual responsibility and poverty. Some believe that poverty is a symptom of societal structure and that people will always be poor. These people believe that poverty is beyond the control of those who are experiencing it. Others are of the opinion that the poor intentionally behave in ways that cause or perpetuate their poverty. For example, if people voluntarily choose to use drugs and this leads them to poverty, it can be argued that they are to blame for their situation. However, such an argument cannot completely explain cases in which poverty leads to drug dependence (Thomas, 2002:73).

2.2.10 THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY

Poverty has wide ranging and often devastating effects. Many of its effects such as poor nutrition and physical health problems result directly from having too little income or too few resources. As a result poor nutrition and health problems as well as infant mortality rates among the poor are high, and life

expectancies are lower than the average. Other effects of poverty may include infectious diseases, mental illness and drug dependence. Some other effects of poverty are not easily understood. For example, studies link poverty to crime, but by no means has this meant that all poor people are criminals. In many cases, the primary effects of poverty lead to other problems, like extended hunger, lack of employment and depression, which may sometimes contribute to criminal behaviour. Many a time when children do not get something to eat at home, especially in the case boys, they develop certain attitudes whereby the boy thinks he has to look for himself or after himself for something to eat. As a result he develops stealing skills and steals something from nearest shop to eat (Chambers, 1988:113).

2.2.11 MALNUTRITION AND STARVATION

Malnutrition is one of the most common effects of poverty. In developing countries, the poorest people cannot obtain adequate calories to develop or maintain their appropriate body weight. Poor children often suffer most, commonly from a deficiency known as protein-energy malnutrition.(Marshall, 1988:42) In these cases, children lack protein in their diets, especially from an insufficient amount mother's milk. Protein-energy malnutrition leads to a variety of problems, including gastro-intestinal disorders, poor mental development and high rates of infection. Prolonged malnutrition can lead to starvation and almost always results in death.

In addition to caloric malnutrition, most poor children and adults suffer from severe vitamin and mineral deficiencies. These deficiencies can lead to mental disorders, damage to vital organs, and failure of the senses, such as poor vision, problems in conceiving or delivering babies and gastro-intestinal distress (Chambers, 1988:133 & 136).

2.2.12 INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND EXPOSURE TO THE ELEMENTS

In addition to the effects of malnutrition, the poor experience high rates of infectious disease. Inadequate shelter or housing creates conditions that

promote disease. Without decent protection, many of the poor are exposed to severe and dangerous weather conditions, as well as to bacteria and viruses carried by other people and animals. If people are exposed, they become more vulnerable to fluctuations in temperature that lower their resistance to disease (Tulasiewicz & Strowbridge 1994:119). They also are more likely to become infected with disease carried by insects or rodents. For instance, mosquitoes carry malaria, a debilitating disease that is common in the tropics. In temperate climates, including in the major cities of developed countries, homelessness is a growing problem.

Many of the homeless poor are harmed by or die of exposure to extreme winter colds. In South Africa, there are large numbers of street children. Often they seek out parks, pipes and areas near to shops to sleep. These neglected children who "care" for themselves, are usually dirty and unkempt their physical appearance. As they have either run away from home because of appalling or abusive conditions, or landed on the street because they have become orphans, they do not attend school, even though they of school going age.

In Port Elizabeth, welfare organizations and various NGOs have shelters where such children are fed, given a place to sleep and they are provided with basic clothing. Another benefit as that these organizations try to unite them with families and get them back into the schooling system.

Inadequate sanitation and unhygienic practices among the poor also lead to illness. Inadequate sanitation almost always accompanies inadequate shelter (Tulasiewicz & Strowbridge, 1994:123). Because the poor in developing nations commonly have no running water or sewerage facilities, human excrement and garbage accumulate, quickly becoming a breeding ground for disease. In South Africa, in most black and coloured rural schools, huge damage is caused to school premises, due to school vandalism. This often leads to the closing down of such schools because there is no running water and no sewerage facilities, as some has been smashed down and some has been stolen.

The poor are also often uneducated about the spread of diseases, for example, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). As a result of that STD rates are very high among the poor. In particular, the incidence of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) among the poor is high. People claim that the condoms, which are provided free by the government, are very hard, rough and painful to use for their delicate parts. Some claim that these government condoms are like wearing tight gumboots on your feet, meaning that they are not comfortable at all. Simply because most adults are not working, buying more sophisticated condoms is very expensive for them.

2.2.13 MENTAL ILLNESS AND DRUG DEPENDENCE

In most developed countries, rates of mental illness are higher among the poor. The most common disorders associated with poverty are depression and anxiety disorders. Without meaningful, well-paying work and the resources and social affirmation that come with it, many poor people develop low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness (Kallaway, 1984:162). People who are stressed by the uncertainty of where they will get their next meal or spend the night, often develop high anxiety. Because the poor experience high rates of severe mental illness, they also have high rates of suicide.

In South Africa, there is lot of child sexual abuse, especially in the informal settlement areas where most poor families live. Many cases are reported to the police. In most cases, the police find that their family members abuse these children. As a result of excessive poverty, adults engage in bad actions like abusing their children, according to a local psychologist. He is also of the opinion that   these adults have developed low self-esteem due to excessive poverty, and therefore resort to such deeds (The Herald, 28 March 2006).

Some poor people attempt to relieve feelings of anxiety and depression associated with poverty through the use of mind-altering drugs (Charles, 1995:84). A common drug among the poor is alcohol, which is legal and affordable. Many of those who drink develop alcoholism, and become physically and emotionally dependent on drinking. Other users often become

addicted to more dangerous and often illegal drugs such as heroin and cocaine. In South Africa, and especially in the Eastern Cape, poor people make use of dagga, glue and mentholated spirits as means of relieving their stress and anxiety, as they cannot afford drugs like heroin and cocaine.

Mental illness and drug dependence demonstrate the difficulties of distinguishing between poverty's cause and effects. Mentally ill and drug dependent people tend to have problems with keeping steady jobs and maintaining relationships, which cause them to fall back into poverty repeatedly (Charles, C.m, 1995:86). They may also have difficulty in uplifting themselves out of poverty. At the same time, in some cases poverty itself appears to promote mental illness and drug dependence. This tends to be an effect on both parents and children, especially when children grew up to such a situation. Such children have no one to look up at for improving their lifestyle. No one is there to encourage them, even if they try to break the habit. As a result they tend to fall into to the same trap, due to lack of positive and effective guidance.

2.2.14 CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Some experts believe that poverty leads people to commit acts of violence and crime. Anger, desperation and the need of money for food, shelter and other necessities may all contribute to criminal behaviour among the poor (Sanders, 1981:143). Other experts caution that the link of cause and effect between poverty and crime is unclear. In some cases, poverty undoubtedly motivates people to commit crimes, although it may not be the only factor involved. Other problems associated with poverty are often linked to crime. For example, to obtain money, some poor commit the crime of selling illegal drugs; others may steal to obtain the money to buy drugs on which they are dependent.

Most girls, due to poverty and lots of suffering at home, tend to sell their bodies for prostitution to adults, so as to be able to buy food for their families and buy clothes for themselves. At times schoolgirls look up to these drug

lords as their heroes. As a result they leave school and follow them so as to get their monies. Drug lords in the Port Elizabeth black and coloured areas are notorious for exchanging exchange money and expensive gifts for sexual favours.

2.2.15 LONG-TERM EFECTS

People who grew up in poverty may experience lifelong problems because of it. They are at a disadvantaged in many areas of life because they have limited income and resources. Studies have shown that people who grew up in poor households experience more difficulties throughout their lives than those raised in households that are above the poverty level (Lewis, 1992:64). Overall, they do not do well at school, have more difficulties in marriages, and more frequently become single parents.

 In addition, poverty tends to perpetuate itself. In many cases, those who had poor parents or are poor themselves, earn lower than average incomes. They may also have learned a mindset that keeps them from getting out of poverty (Jones & Weale, 1998:143)

2.2.16 SUMMATIVE REFLECTIONS ON POVERTY

Poverty has an impact on key areas of young people's lives, including physical health education and future prospects, experience of crime, family relationships and social lives. Many different definitions of poverty are in use at present, and it is clear that the term itself is contested (Behr & Macmillan, 1971: 25 & Pampallis, J, 1998: 78). However, whilst most early definitions of poverty as not having enough food to stay alive, more recent conceptualisation have focused more on the effects of poverty on people's lifestyles and degrees of inclusion or exclusion from society.

According to Pampallis (1998: 85) poverty is all about denied expectation of health, shelter, a social life and a sense of self-esteem, which the rest of people not trapped in poverty, take for granted. Poverty increases the risk that

a young person will experience accidents, respiratory illness and mental health problems; it also increases the likelihood of a poor diet and a higher than average use of legal and illegal drugs (Christie, 1991:128).

2.3   VANDALISM

This aspect will be put into a descriptive perspective by means of establishing its nature as well as briefly presenting an overview of various types of vandalism and its possible causes.

2.3.1   THE NATURE OF VANDALISM

According to Gay & Airasian (1992:253) vandalism is of increasing interest to modern society. He also claims that even at present no generally accepted and comprehensive definition of the term has yet emerged. Cohen (1999:39) states that vandalism might sound like an arcane, theoretical exercise with no reference to a real world in which 'everyone knows' that vandalism is clearly recognize as a problem, threat or menace. According to Sanders (1981:138) vandalism can be described as the purposeful damaging, violation, defacement, or destruction of public or private property by persons who are not the direct owners of the property. Stahl (2000: 15) defines vandalism as the wilful or malicious destruction, injury, disfigurement or defacement of any public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or persons having custody or control.

 Most of the time people are engaged in vandalism due to anger. For example, school children throw stone at school windows because there is a disagreement between them and their teachers. At times teachers chase them away from school or disallowed them to write final examination because their parents have not paid school fees. However, at times other children play freely and willingly without any hassle from anyone or adult, but they end up destroying buildings without realizing that they are committing an act of vandalism. In my experience as a teacher over many years, I have observed this personally.

Finn & Frone (2003:46), Theron (1991:48) and Bloemhof (1990:3) have found that boys, aged between 14 and 16, are primarily responsible for school vandalism. Sanders (1981:139) do not agree with this. According to him, girls are involved in vandalism just as often as boys. He also ascribes the reason for pointing to boys as the offenders to the view that boys show more aggressive behaviours than girls. As a result their vandalism is more readily noticed and reported compared to that of the girls. Although Sanders (1981:139) admits that most vandals are youths, he also warns that it must not be generally assumed that all youths are guilty of vandalism. According to him, only a small percentage of the youth can be considered vandals.

2.3.2   TYPES OF VANDALISM

Stanley Cohen, Professor of Sociology, has distinguish six different types of vandalism namely, acquisitive, tactical, vindictive, play, ideology and malicious vandalism (1999: 13 – 58). As I regard these types as vital for the purpose of my study, I present a detailed exposition of all six types.

2.3.2.1   ACQUISITIVE VANDALISM

In this type of vandalism, the damage is done in order to acquire money or property. This includes stripping lead, copper or brass from the buildings to sell to junk dealers. In the Port Elizabeth black areas, people steal these items from our schools and sell them so as to buy food or to replace the damaged ones in their homes.

2.3.2.2 TACTICAL VANDALISM

Tactical vandalism is used to advance some end other than acquisition of money or property, for example, breaking a window in order to be arrested and get bed and food for the night in prison. In South African law, prisoners are more privileged; they claim that they get all meals and not just meals but a balanced diet at the right time. On top of this they get proper care and good

education that they never got while they were outside. This results in people continuing to do wrong things, as long there is   better care and provision in our prisons than in law abiding, free society.

2.3.2.3 PLAY VANDALISM

In this type of vandalism, the destruction is done as part of a game. The participants may even think that damaging the property might be a minor offence or be surprised that their behaviour is disapproved of.

2.3.2.4 IDEOLOGICAL VANDALISM

This type of vandalism is intended to further an explicit ideological cause or to deliver a message, for example dissatisfaction. Another example is the burning of school buildings by learners due to the dissatisfaction of the curriculum offered to them. A further example is the breaking of school windows by learners because they have been chased away from school by the teachers due to the non payment of the school fees.

2.3.2.5 MALICIOUS VANDALISM

This type of vandalism is the way of expressing anger or aggression. It clearly reveals viciousness and senselessness and as a result, society finds it so difficult to understand such an action, for example, slashing the tyres of all the cars in a car park or hiding teachers' textbooks, canes and dusters.

2.3.2.6 VINDICTIVE VANDALISM

In this type of vandalism participants destroy school property as a form of revenge to settle a grudge to whoever ill-treated them. This sort of vandalism appears to help participants to be emotionally satisfied. They use vandalism as an outlet. At one stage a certain class destroyed the teacher's teaching aids that he was using to explain his lesson to them. They did not hide those

pieces; they threw them next to his door in the classroom, as they felt the teacher had punished them unnecessarily.

2.3.3   CAUSES OF VANDALISM

According to Cummins (2003:5) and Black (2002:18), as well as McCart (1999: 25), the reasons for school vandalism are complex and varied. Adolescence is characterized by the love of adventure, a search for excitement, and the need to discover new things and one's own identity. Vandalism is consequently not always committed with the exclusive purpose of causing damage, but rather for excitement and pleasure, as well as a search for identity and acceptance.

Ward (1976: 32) believes that the cause of vandalism cannot be generalized, as it depends on the understanding of the context in which they occur. The following causes are among the more general patterns, which emerge:

- At times the property is destroyed simply because the participants perceive the building as public property, not owned by anyone. They destroy it due to its anonymous nature. I believe that our schools are being vandalized because teachers, learners and community members do not own the school, since they do not treat school as their valuable property or asset whereby they will know that they have to be proud of it and as a result they will take care of it.

- Some schools are incomplete or badly kept. As a result, participants perceive such schools as fair places to play and they destroy the building without knowing that they are vandalizing it. Therefore, incomplete and untidy buildings offer very attractive targets as an important factor in play vandalism. As long as our schools are neglected and not being taken care of or maintained, they will continue to target them for all sorts of vandalisms.

- According to Ward (1976: 47), areas of vandalism can be distinguished by their social characteristics, like little identification among parents, teachers and pupils with the school, a record of bad reputation, dissatisfaction with the administration, failure to repair broken equipment and overcrowdedness. There is also a general atmosphere of insecurity and dissatisfaction. Most of our schools today do not have a look of a respectable place where one acquires good and important things like knowledge. They are very much dirty and untidy. They are not conducive at all to proper learning, as they have broken windows, doors and chairs, and even the grounds are too dangerous for children to play, as there is lot of broken glass.

Ward (1976:42) also believes that vandalism is almost always a group rather an individual offence. The most important two patterns that exist are those of age: that is, a peak in late adolescence as well as the play vandalism type at a much earlier age between 10 and 12 years. Within this range some types like 10 year olds have been identified as smashing windows and toilet bowls as part of a game. In South Africa, big boys and girls due to anger do the smashing of windows and toilets bowls and that is not related to any age. Even adults do that.

2.3.4   EFFECTS OF VANDALISM IN SCHOOLS

School vandalism has negative economic, psychological, and educational implications for education. According to Stout (2002:2) acts of vandalism place a heavy burden on education departments and school budgets. He also claims that vandalism can cause teaching and learning to collapse, as school programmes must often be interrupted in order to repair vandalized structures. According to the former Minister of Education (Asmal, 1993), crimes such as vandalism cause a feeling of powerlessness, uncertainty and fear among educators and learners, and this necessarily leads to the destruction of "the basis of a learning community".

Whatever the causes of vandalism, the effects are apparent.

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- Due to school vandalism, education of learners is affected. For example, stealing of copper wires (sewerages & taps) results in learners having to go home at an earlier time than the normal time because there is no water for them at school. They cannot drink water or use toilets. During cold days, learners feel uncomfortable as there are neither windows nor doors in the classrooms and that results in an environment that is not conducive to proper and effective learning.
- The effects of much vandalism may be damage, which is indistinguishable from ordinary wear or tear, or accidental damage.
- Another problem is that any record of vandalism will tend to refer only to the cost of repair or of material. The figures do not necessarily reflect the true cost of vandalism. There is a problem of definition and recording as well as difficulties in costing any type of criminal activity (Mqoto, 2004: 41).

2.3.5   SUMMATIVE REFLECTIONS ON POVERTY

School vandalism is not only a school problem but also a community problem. Factors that are often beyond the control of the school, such as poverty, unemployment, inability or unwillingness of government to clamp down on vandals and availability of drugs, are considered as the most important causes of vandalism.

The co-operation of education leaders, government, legislators and community leaders is essential in order to combat learner vandalism and to create a safe environment that promotes effective teaching and learning. The socio-economic and social upliftment of the community is also essential. Educators must play a leading role in combating learner vandalism, because they not only have access to learners during their important formative years, but also often the only conservative factor in the lives of the youth who grow up in homes, neighbourhoods in which crime reigns supreme.

2.4   SCHOOL FEES

In this section the history, nature and purpose of school fees, the extra-
ordinary problems that are experienced in poor schools, as well as the
legalities in terms of school fee payment and the enforcement thereof, will be
presented.

2.4.1   THE NATURE AND HISTORY OF SCHOOL FEES

In the past, the payment of school fees by parents has never been as big an
issue as it is today. Even though there were no school buildings, churches
were used as schools. As a result of that, most churches played a fairly
important role in South African education by means of funding the schools
(Van Schalkwyk, 1995: 96).

At mission stations education was provided for the indigenous population by
missionaries from various Christian denominations. (Kallaway, 2002: 87) This
indicates the important role missionaries were to play in African education for
centuries to follow. The good point was that the missionaries were
commissioned to set up the link between education and the economy for
South Africa. The bad point, however, was that the education provided by
missionaries for black people was to promote certain values such as
punctuality, a sense of duty, persistence and reliability but not skills which
were needed in industrial society. This type of education was structured such
that it promoted racism and inhibited black urbanization. Christie (1991: 63).
According to Christie (1991: 80), the role played by the church in South
African educational history is not an easy one to judge. It is so complicated
and often contradictory. As a result, there are different views about the
church's involvement, but the important point now is that they played an
important role in terms of funding children's education.

After 1839, when the first Superintendent-General of Education for the Cape
Colony was appointed, the responsibility of the missionaries was theoretically
transferred from the churches to the state (Kallaway, 1991: 73). Even though

the responsibility had been transferred to the state, the missionaries remained primarily responsible for African education, up until 1953 when the Bantu Education Act came into place, thus ending the long era of missionary responsibility for African education. During the time of missionaries there was never any learner being chased away from school by school principals or teachers due to non-payment of school fees. The missionaries took full responsibility for funding the black learner's education.

According to Van Schalkwyk (1995: 156), Bantu Education became the responsibility of the Department of Native Affairs in terms of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. Bantu Education was viewed as a part of a plan of social development and as an essential to the success of the policy of apartheid (Dekker, 1995: 152). According to Kallaway (1991:85), when the Native Affair department took over the administration of grants for African education in 1955, it insisted that all classes should register irrespective of whether they were subsidized or not. I interpret this as meaning that all learners were allowed to register at schools, whether their parents had money to pay school fees or not. However, it is important to mention that school funding was allocated according to how the population group was viewed at the time (Dekker, 1995: 154), namely white learners got most subsidy as the system favoured white learners at the expense of other groups, that is, Indians, Coloureds, and Africans.

According to Van Schalkwyk (1995:158) primary compulsory education had been introduced in the pre-democratic era but it was only fully implemented in white education. Behr (1988: 104) claimed that compulsory education for Africans existed in a handful of schools only. For an example, by 1985 some of 390 African schools had introduced compulsory attendance from grade 1 to grade 6, involving 182 000 pupils. According to Behr (1988: 105), a shortage of resources such as finances, teachers and facilities linked with a large population of school going age were major constraints, preventing the introduction of compulsory education. According to this author, compulsory education cannot be legally enforced if educational opportunities are lacking,

making its introduction meaningless. As a researcher who has worked under such conditions, I full heartedly agree with Behr.

According to Christie (1991:92), in 1976 a new theme emerged in church education, namely the opening of the white private church schools to black students. These schools were often small and expensive and were usually attended by children of the white elite. These open schools were nothing else but private schools, which means black learners admitted in those schools, also had to pay school fees.

According to Christie *(ibid.)* this was done so as to limit the entry of black learners, as the majority could not afford such monies. Furthermore the new open schools were previously white private church schools situated in white group areas, and the white learners attending had never been affected by school fees. This can mainly be ascribed to the fact that the church and wealthy donors subsidized school fees of children whose parents belonged to the denomination of the church, e.g. Catholic or Anglican.

The right to free education has been one of the rights that have been introduced by the South African government. However, to enshrine such a right in a constitution and to make it work in practice remains a formidable challenge, as is evident of our schooling system since 1994 up to the present.

Christie (1991: 166) illustrates this by referring to 1981 when the government introduced a scheme of free and compulsory education along with the age law in about 201 schools in 38 townships, mainly in the then Transvaal. The system only catered for Sub A students in 1981, but 45 000 learners were affected. Learners in Sub A were given free books and stationary at the cost of R4 per child without considering how much books cost at the time. As a result parents had to pay school fees because the support from the government was not enough.

 Christie also claims that compulsory education does not mean that the state has to provide education for all learners, as parents who can afford to send

their children to school should do so. These parents must sign an undertaking to keep their children in these schools for a set period of time. To Christie the scheme of free and compulsory education is just another way to force learners to attend school without making it free and without changing the content of the schooling that students have been protesting against.

2.4.2 PARENT'S LIABILITIES IN TERMS OF SCHOOL FEES.

In 1996, parliament passed the South African Schools Act (SASA: 1996). Two years later, the Department of Education promulgated accompanying subordinating legislation, namely Norms and Standards for Public Schools Financing. These two sources of law constitute the central components of the regulatory scheme for public school financing. Section 39 of SASA states the following:

- Subject to this Act, school fees may be determined and charged at a public school only if the resolution to do so has been adopted by a majority of parents attending the meeting.
- A resolution contemplated in subsection (1) must provide for the amount of fees to be charged; and equitable criteria and procedures for the total, partial or conditional exemption of parents who are unable to pay school fees.
- The governing body must implement a resolution adopted at the meeting contemplated in subsection (1)
- The Minister must, after consultation with the Council of Education Ministers and the Minister of Finance, make regulations regarding the equitable criteria and procedures referred to in subsection (2) (b).

2.4.3 SCHOOL FEES AND GOVERNING BODIES

According to SASA, Section 39 (1) the legislation authorizes schools to charge school fees when the majority of parents attending the school budget meeting adopt a resolution to do so. In addition these parents are given discretion over how much to charge under section 39 (2). Parent bodies are

authorized to determine both the amount of fees to be charged and specific criteria to exempt those parents who are unable to pay fees.

Parents control the spending of resources via local school governing bodies (SGBs), which are charged with administering and allocating school fees. Section 16 of SASA codifies the governing powers of this autonomous administrative body, which is staffed by teachers, parents, community members and learners. Under SASA, SGBs are in charge of administering and controlling the use of fees for operation purpose. Section 21 of SASA permits school governing bodies to apply to be allocated additional functions, including the direct purchase of books, materials equipment and the payment of services to the school. In contrast, non Section 21 schools must purchase equipment through the provincial education department.

 It is important to note that school fees are not collected for the benefit of the public, nor are they administered as part of any collective fund among several school. Rather, the law directs that fees be used only for the benefit of the specific schools collecting such as fees. In particular, s 37 (2) of SASA requires that subject to sub-section (3), all money received by a public school, including school fees and voluntary contributions, must be paid into the official school fund.

Within the province of the individual school, the legislation does not really restrict the SGB in using school fees. Schools can use both fees and privately collected contributions for many purposes. An amendment to SASA specifically permits SGBs to use fee funds to hire additional teaching personnel. Those SGB-funded educator posts are controlled by the SGB. Teachers in these posts report directly to the school governing body, and not to a government entity.

2.4.4   FEE EXEMPTIONS

In an effort to ameliorate the discriminatory impact of fees, legislation and regulations provide exemption for poor learners. Section 39 (1) (b) of SASA

requires that parent bodies determine equitable criteria and the procedures for determining total, partial or conditional exemptions for parents who are unable to pay fees. For partial exemptions, if the combined annual gross income of the parents is less than ten times the annual fees per learner, the parent qualifies for partial exemption. Partial exemptions are granted at the discretion of the governing body. However, if parental incomes are more than 30 times the fee, parents cannot qualify for exemption. The regulations also provide for conditional exemptions, under which families can plead special circumstances relating either to a parent's ability to pay fees or her ability to collect information about income.

Under section 4 of the exemption of parents from the payment of school fees regulations, parents wishing to qualify for an exemption must apply in writing, or in person if desired. According to section 4 when submitting an application, parents must provide evidence of income, assets and liabilities, and other information requested by the school governing bodies. Schools must notify parents of the availability of exemption and parents are entitled to assistance in filling out exemption requests. Governing bodies must render a decision within 14 days of the request, and if the governing body denies request for exemption, parents have the right to appeal.

SASA expressly prohibits SGB's from excluding learners who cannot pay fees. Section 5 (3) states that no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parents is unable to pay or has not paid the school fees determined by the governing body under section 39. However, parents can be sued for failure to pay fees. (Section 40)

2.4.5 ILLEGAL MEANS USED BY THE SCHOOL TO ENFORCE PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES

Legislation states that a learner may not be excluded or discriminated against in any way if a parent or guardian refuses to or cannot afford to pay school fees. Thus a school cannot:

- Refuse a learner to write exams.

- Withhold a report card or exam results when school fees are not paid.
- Hold a learner accountable for school fees that are not paid.
- Use a learner as a "tool" to get the money from the parent.
- Bar a child from learners if the school fees are not paid.
- Shout at learners who have not paid the school fees instead of dealing with parents about that.
- Withhold neither textbooks nor any stationary from learners who have not paid school fees chase learners away from school to go home to ask money for school at any time during school hours putting children's life at risk.
- Punish those who have not paid the school fees.
- Admit the first comers without the payment of school fees.

2.4.6   THE LEGAL MEANS TO FORCE PARENTS TO PAY SCHOOL FEES

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, states clearly the legal steps that should be followed by the schools so as to get the school fees from the parents. The schools also receive the circulars from the various districts on how to handle parents who do not pay school fees. As much that teachers are parents, they understand fully that as a parent, at times one fails to pay school fees due to insufficient money. It becomes worse to those parents who are totally unemployed.

The SASA states that, a learner may not be refused admission to public schools on the ground of inability to pay school fees. It also states that the parents are liable to pay school fees unless they have been exempted (Section 39, 40 and 41). It also states that the School Governing Body (SGB) is the one that decides about exemption and parents have the right to appeal if they cannot afford to pay school fees.

There are legal processes that are also stipulated in the SASA for the enforcement of school fees. They do not have bearing on the child but on the parent or the guardian of the child. The school has to appoint debt collectors

and hand over the full details of the parents who fail to pay school fees to the attorneys for collection and that is only done by the SGB.

2.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW AND SOME STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION

In formal education there are many interest groups or parties, which co-operate with schools. The educators, parents and learners should co-operate as stakeholders. Such co-operation demands that the interests of all the stakeholders involved be juridically reconciled. Juridical reconciliation of interests occurs, amongst other things through the stipulation of the policy, procedural arrangements, organizational arrangements and measures of control.

The South African Educational policy stipulates the above-mentioned stakeholders with a vested interest in education are part of the education system and should co-operate as partners. Therefore, co- operation within these stakeholders should enjoy a high priority. The parent, educator and the learner, each has a particular legal status that gives rise to specific relationships. Sometimes the right of a person imposes a particular duty on another. For an example, the educator's right to act as a manager, places a responsibility on learners to accept duties given to them.

Various legal relationships exist within the context of education system such as the legal relationship between an educator and department of education concerned. A parent also has a legal relationship with the education authority when he or she serves on a school governing body, and that also implies a legal relationship with educators (Badenhorst, 1993, 56).

2.5.1 WHY KNOWLEDGE OR UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION LAW IS IMPERATIVE FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION.

The important stakeholders in education, namely educators, learners and parents, need to have enough knowledge of education law so to be able to

avoid becoming involved in disputes of contravention of rights. Therefore, the knowledge of education law will help the stakeholders to be able to achieve the following outcomes:

2.5.2   UNDERSTANDING PROCESS AND PRINCIPLES

If an educator becomes involved in court cases based on education issues or around school, s/he should understand how the processes work. Also, one should know what legal consideration would be taken in the process to reach a decision on the matter, for example, if a learner is injured in the school grounds.

2.5.3   CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Having sound knowledge of education laws empowers an educator to be able to make valid and legal decisions. The educators and SGBs are compelled by the law to make legal decisions so as to create a safe environment. Legally correct decisions automatically contribute to safety in more than just the legal sense. A safety - conscious environment contributes towards the physical safety and the psychological security of members of the school community concerned

2.5.4   UNDERSTANDING LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

A person who is an expert in a certain field is expected to be well informed of the legal provisions and the principles that regulate and govern his/her activities in such a field. Such a person cannot advance ignorance of the relevant legal principles as an excuse for what has happened. Therefore, it is expected of an educator to stay abreast of the legal principles governing the field of education.

2.5.5   DETERMINING THE LEGALITY OF DECISIONS

Educators are often uncertain about the basic legal concepts that apply to education issues. As a result of that, they find themselves in situations whereby are uncertain about the legality of the decisions that they have to make. Having sound knowledge of education law, will help educators to know when they can safely make a decision on their own or when they need to call in legal experts for advice.

2.5.6 LOOKING AFTER ONE'S INTERESTS

An educator who knows his/her rights and duties will be better able to look after his/her own interests compared to an educator who does not. Such an educator will be able to carry out his/her duties as well as to ensure that other educators fulfil their duties towards him/her. If one carries out one's duties, such an educator is also able to ensure that the interests of other stakeholders are properly looked after. For example, if an educator knows what his duties of care entails, such an educator will be able to protect the interests of learners as well as that of parents for whom he/she is responsible for.

2.5.7 ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND A DECISION – MAKING FRAMEWORK

An educator should know what legal consideration should be taken into account when a decision is made. Such an educator will be able to make a better decision compared to an educator who does not know anything about legal considerations. Legal consideration equips an educator to be able to determine what decisions are permissible and what are not. Legal considerations also create a framework outside of which educators may not venture (Beckman, 1995: 94).

2.5.8 LAWS BY WHICH PARENTS MUST ABIDE (WHERE A PARENT SERVES AS SGB MEMBERS, I.E. A PARENT COMPONENT)

The democratic transformation of schooling has envisaged a key role for parents. The role of parents has been formalized via the introduction of School Governing Bodies (SGB). Historically, Parents in the South Africa have been involved in school affairs to a significant extent. Their impact, particularly in white middle-class schools, remains significant and is still visible in the physical resources and academic output of these schools. One of the main reasons for the state to involve parents is to equalize the state affairs. According to Mashishi (1994: 219), the involvement of parents has advantages, particularly in campaign-specific ventures, for an example, against drug taking.

The South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996, Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is the juridical culmination of a long process of establishing democratic practice in schools. Pampallis (1998:65) states that as statutory bodies, the governing bodies of schools ensure the participation of parents, educators, other staff members, the principal, learners and co-opted members in the governance of public schools in South Africa (SASA, section 23(1) and (2). According to this Act, the governance of every public school is vested in its governing body (section 16(1) and the principal of the school has formal legal authority in terms of the management of the school (section 16(3). This Act can be interpreted as a mandate for increasing the accountability of schools and governing bodies.

This implies that both the governing bodies and the principal are legally required to perform certain functions for which they are accountable (Beckman 1995: 45). According to the South African Schools Act, governing bodies are to take on the role of determining school curriculum on condition that it meets the requirements of South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). School governing bodies (SGBs) were constituted as major vehicles for the democratic transformation of schools. Parents constitutionally comprise the majority of SGB members. SGB's are not involved in the day-to-day running of schools but they have a key role to playing policy making for the schools.

2.5.9 FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB) (according to section 20 of the South African Schools Act).

Bodies appointed at schools and in other educational institutions are expected to perform certain functions defined in laws and regulations, such as:

a. In terms of Section 20 of South African Schools Act (1996(c)) the governing body has to set the mission statement of a particular school. Religious and moral undertones are normally inherent to the mission statement of schools.

b. According to the South African Schools Act, the SGB is expected to draw up a code of conduct and dealing with cases of misconduct of learners who are referred to them.

c. 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.

d. Adopt a constitution.

e. Administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school.

f. Determine times of the school day consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school.

g. Support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

h. Encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff members at the school to render voluntary services to the school.

i. Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Educators Employment Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 138 of 1994) and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995).

j. Recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non educator staff at the school, subject to the Public service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), and   the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995).

k. To determine the extramural curriculum of the school and the choice of subject options in terms of provincial curriculum policy.

l. To purchase textbooks, educational materials or equipments for the school.

m. Shall be the mouthpiece of the parents for the pupils, parents and teachers of the school and shall make decisions on the school's mission, goals and objectives.

2.5.10 WHAT HAPPENS IF PARENTS ARE NOT AWARE OF THE EDUCATIONAL LAWS/ACTS

If parents are not aware of their rights, they will be reluctant to criticize the school for fear that their children may be victimized by the teachers. The long period of isolating of the parents from the school activities has resulted in parents having a negative attitude towards school education.

Most parents view the school negatively as they have the perception that schools are usually helpful in attending to their problems. For an example, when parents fail to pay school fees, teachers are impatient to listen to them and they also say negative things to them. As a result, such parents surely will view the school with mixed feelings and they will not be keen to be involved in school activities.

Some poor parents are not keen to be involved in school activities because they are afraid that this would place an extra financial burden on them.

If parents are unaware of educational laws, they will be unable to influence decisions due to their lack of knowledge of their rights.

2.5.11 WHAT HAPPENS IF PARENTS ARE AWARE OR IGNORE THESE LAWS?

Some parents become increasingly aware of their powers, as a result some schools are being put under increasing pressure by parental demands, and some parents are now become aware that there are different subjects that are offered at different classes (i.e. Majoring subjects). Such a knowledge help parents to be aware as to why there should be certain number of learners for a particular educator. (i.e. Teacher – Pupil ratio that should be considered by the school).They also become aware of what to look at when choosing schools for their children, not just choose for futile reasons rather than sound educational reasons. For example, most parents placed more emphasis on their child's happiness than sound educational reasons. Therefore, parents should look at the breadth of curriculum and at the quality of teaching and learning opportunities.

Parents are now aware that they are fully participants at school, which also includes decision-making process and its implementation in school. They are also aware that they have equal strengths and equal expertise in schools; they have to contribute and receive services on an equal footing and finally share responsibility and accountability (Mashishi, 1994:22).

2.5.12   WHAT CAN BE DONE BY WHOM SO AS TO HELP PARENTS TO ACQUIRE THIS KNOWLEDGE?

The South African education system was characterized by complex bureaucratic structures where the decisions were taken at the highest level and little room was left for a few parents at the lowest level (Jones & Weale, 1998: 27). This tended to include parents from taking an active part in the education of their children.

Christie (1998, 33) believes that parents are hesitant about getting involved in school activities because of the long isolation of the school from the community it is serving. According to the South African School Act, the school governing body is expected to draw up a code of conduct and deal with cases

of misconduct of learners who are referred to them. However, most members of the governing bodies lack experience of such matters, while some members are illiterate or semiliterate, thus compounding the problem. The training of these bodies, which should be provided by the provincial departments of education, often does not take place due to a lack of funds.

Parents in general have a limited amount of knowledge about the National Curriculum and its associated assessment procedure. As a result the media has actively misinformed parents. They read the papers and they think it is all up and running. Therefore, the principals should do their best to inform parents about the National Curriculum, by using methods such as sending home newsletters and leaflets, holding meetings and displaying National Curriculum materials on classroom walls. As a result of that the reform act has extended the duties and responsibilities for ensuring that the National Curriculum is followed in each school.

If parents are to play the role of a stakeholder to its fullest extent, they need enough and appropriate knowledge about education law.

2.5.13 EDUCATOR'S RIGHTS, POWERS AND DUTIES

According to the Education Labour Relation Act 146 of 1993, an employee is defined in Section 1 as any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons at any school, technical college or teacher's training college or assists in rendering professional services or educational auxiliary services provided by or in a Department of Education. According to Section 5 of the new approach in the South African Law, employees have fundamental rights such as to:

- Establish or to join an employee organization or to refrain from or joining any employee organization.

- Negotiate collectively with the employer on the matter that arises out of the normal working relationship.

- Have access to dispute settlement procedures with regard to disputes of right as well as disputes of interest.

- Be protected against unfair labour practices.

- Privacy, Human Dignity and Freedom of expression.

Society is becoming increasingly aware of the teacher's distinct educational responsibility towards society in providing correct and effective educational training. South African educators have the responsibility towards their learners to educate them in accordance with a culture of fundamental rights i.e. freedom of expression. On the other hand, the educator is under obligation to protect the learner the learner against possible adverse effects of pornography (Christie, P, 1991:67).

According to Oosthuizen (1995:45) there is a worldwide insistence that education should be effective and be characterized by skilled and well-trained educational staff that is capable of importing knowledge to a pupil so as to equip him for a technologically specialized and competitive labour market. As a result of that, teachers have the sole responsibility to produce literate and numerate individuals with a variety of skills in order to compete in an increasingly sophisticated technological society. Teachers are also expected to be guardians of the social, moral and political standards of the community.

An educator has a legal right obligation to protect pupils against dangers, to which pupils maybe exposed, arise in a multitude of forms in and around a school or during school activities and the legal implications arising from them differ from case to case (Oosthuizen, 1995:48).

2.5.14   WHAT CAN BE DONE TO CREATE A SOUND RELATIONSHHIP AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS IN RESPECT TO EDUCATION LAW?

All the stakeholders in the schools and their communities must work towards rectifying the problem that inhibits parents from becoming actively involved in school activities. Improved

communication will ensure that the parents will know why and how they can be involved towards the improvement of their children's education and participate in everything that is being done at schools. Schools must initiate the process for the parents to be involved. Every school should identify their needs and then provide the opportunities and the structures for the parents to be positively involved.

According to Lewis (1999:48), knowledge and competencies of the parents are the utmost importance to enable them to be effectively involved. The parents can be involved at different levels depending on their skills and knowledge.

Parents should take ownership of the school and help to resolve school problems. A sound relationship between teachers and parents is much needed in South African Schools, and that will need a change of attitude from parents as well as teachers to achieve such a relationship. If sound relationships can be achieved, it will be to the benefit of children and as such to the benefit of the country (Behr, L, 1988:34).

2.6   CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has undertaken a literature study of the three aspects demarcated for the purpose of this study, namely poverty, vandalism and the payment of school fees. While much of the literature available does not cover the South African situation, it has been used to construct a theoretical framework of key focus areas within the three aspects of the research.

The researcher has endeavoured to limit the chapter to a mere exposition in a descriptive style and has steered away from any judgments or recommendations at this stage, as it would go beyond the purpose of this chapter.

The relationship between the three stakeholders in education, namely the educator, the parent and the learner, has been included, as it is necessary to understand the legal framework within a democracy as well as the new South African Constitution. Furthermore it indicates what the roles of parents are who serve on SGBs, as well as the rights and responsibilities of all parents and guardians with school going children. Finally, it also serves the purpose to illustrate that the learner is the one who should be equally protected and enhanced by both educators and parents/ guardians, as they need nurturing from both.

In the next chapter an exposition of the research methodology used for the case studies of the three schools, as well as the actual case studies that were constructed from the data, which emerged, will be presented.

CHAPTER THREE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: CASE STUDIES (INCORPORATING OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS)

3.4   INTRODUCTION

Qualitative research was deemed to be the most suitable category of research methodology for this component of the study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:57) qualitative research is based on naturalistic, phenomenological philosophy that views reality as multi layered interactive, and shared social experience. The researcher agrees with this explanation and has therefore decided to use three methods of research, (in this order) namely case studies, semi-structured interviews with principals, teachers and parents, (the latter from the SGB component) and participative observation**.**

The researcher will endeavour to collect and present the detail, divorced from information gathered from the literature study presented in Chapter Two. The reason for this is that unclouded or unbiased data need to be presented in descriptive, case study format. In Chapter Four the exposition presented in this chapter, will be compared with what surfaced in Chapter two, where a literature study was done. It needs to be mentioned, however, that sources acquired through newspaper cuttings, do not strictly fall into the literature study demarcation. It so happened that while I was busy with the compilation of the case studies, the very aspects I was doing research on, was prominently covered by local and national newspapers. In one instance, (The Herald, 11 October, 2006), it so happened that my school became one of the schools that confronted the Department of Education about the problem of vandalism, the school has suffered extensive damage to the windows, ceilings and the school has no running water as a result no toilet is working. Sam Snayer, the Port Elizabeth district manager, had given the mandate to the school to release learners at 11am every day until the toilets are repaired. As the principal was in a show down with Sam Snayer, the school condition forces him to take drastic decision.

In the next section of this chapter an explanation of the research methodology used for the qualitative approach will be presented. I shall first explain the significance of using the case study approach in research and why I regard it as most useful for the purpose of the focus of my study.

3.5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section a brief overview and substantiation of the research methodology used for the experimental part of this research, which has not been covered elsewhere, will be presented**.**

3.5.1 USING CASE STUDY AS A METHOD.

According to Wilson and Thompson (1979: 31) a case study has certain basic generic qualities such as, they are holistic, they try to capture as many variables as possible and often include descriptions of history and context. They usually present the views of different groups of actors. In the case of my study, these actors are the principals, the teachers, the SGB parents and the learners.

Furthermore in this study a case study has been used because it relies on many of the same techniques as a history, but it adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian's repertoire: direct observation and systematic interviewing. My direct observation can more precisely be termed *participant observation*, as I was the researcher but also closely involved with the three schools, either as a past or present teacher.

Even though case study and histories can overlap, the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, artefacts, interviews and observations – beyond what might be available in the conventional historical study. This exposition of Merriam (1998:5) is a precise reflection of what takes place in my study. This author (1998:7) defines a case study as an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a programme, an event, a person, a process, an institution or a social group. Thus, this

motivation for selecting the case study approach coincides with that of Gay & Airasian (1992: 35) when he states that case study knowledge is more concrete, more contextual, more developed by reader interpretation and based more on reference populations determined by the reader.

Case study also involves investigation, which makes detailed examination of a single subject or group or phenomenon. It requires the collection of very extensive data in order to produce an indepth understanding of the entity (Yin, 1993:262). For the purposes of this study, a case study has been used in three primary schools in the Eastern Cape, two from the urban area and one from the rural area. All three schools are encountering similar challenges such as poverty, vandalism and nonpayment of fees even though they are in different areas. This study sample allows me to determine if the challenges experienced in the urban schools are indeed common to those in the rural areas, as well as what could be the reasons to that and what could be done by whom to bring solutions to that.

Case study as a research method can be closer refined to specific kinds of case studies (Yin, 1993:264). In this study my type of research can be more closely described as a *participant, observational case study*. A group of individuals who interact over a period of time is usually the focus of the study. As indicated in Chapter One, I cannot divorce myself from the schools in my case studies, as I have been teaching at two of the schools and am still teaching at the third school I have included as a case study.

3.5.2   PARTICIPATION OBSERVATION AS METHOD

Participation approach was used as means of collecting data for the purposes of this study. This strategy presented a first hand account of the situation under investigation (Gay & Airasin, 1992:234) and was combined with interviews, which has enabled me to provide a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon investigated. According to Ronsnow, (1966:24), participation observation, which resembles investigation journalism in some respects is a

group from within by watching and recording how people behave and what they talk about.

Participant observation describes how people behave by watching and recording what they do and say (according to Ralph & Rosenthal, 1976:76). When using participation method, the researcher is looking for material that is sufficiently rich in content to reveal consisted themes. The researcher may use a tape recorder, written notes or makes fields notes largely from memory. The researcher may use specific questions so that the observation is not random but theoretically selective. As the name applies, the participant observer interjects himself or herself into an actual situation into an effort to draw out and document people's reaction (Ralph & Rosenthal, 1996: 179).

3.5.3   SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEW AS METHOD

An interview can generally be described as a purposive interaction between two or more persons, one trying to obtain information from the other. Interviews permit researchers to obtain information that cannot be obtained from observation, such as events or a participant's emotions. According to Gay (1987: 203) a researcher is contented that when an interview is well conducted, it can produce in depth data, which is not possible with a questionnaire.

A semistructured interview has been used in this study. It has the advantage of being reasonably objective while still permitting a more thorough understanding of the respondent's opinions. A semistructured interview, allows an interviewee to be more relaxed compared to a formal interview. (Cachalia, 1994:79) It also provides a desirable combination of objectivity and depth and often permits gathering valuable data that could not be successfully obtained by any other approach. According to Borg and Gall (1989:412), the semi-structured interview also provides a desirable combination of objectivity and depth and often permits gathering valuable data that could not be successfully obtained by any other approach.

In this study I have made use of this method at Sivuyiseni, as I was not there during its establishment and I did not know of the events that took place in the past. As a result I have interviewed teachers who were there during its establishment, as well as at the Lower Mgwalana Primary School where I interviewed the school principal. Fortunately for me I was at the Vukanibantu Primary School since it was established as a new school.

I constructed an interview schedule with my opening remarks that I will use to different school respondents so as to ensure that I will get reasonable comparable data from al of them.

3.6   A CASE STUDY OF VUKANIBANTU PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH REGARD TO POVERTY, VANDALISM AND SCHOOL FEES.

This institution is situated in Motherwell North of Port Elizabeth city. This school was built in 1993 by SBT constructors and was established in 1994. The school had 21 teaches with one principal and 2 heads of departments (H.O.D.). Due to high number of learners then, the school was granted 4 additional teaching posts by the department of education in 1995. There has never been nonteaching staff, namely clerk, the caretaker nor night watchman employed by the government. The school started from grade 1and went up to grade 7 with an enrolment of 1 200 learners. In 1996 the school introduced about 100 pre-school learners without Governments' permission. The school had the record of such learners separately. Presently, the school is in the process of registering the classes officially. In 1994 it also incorporated about 160 grade 8 learners from Ncedo High School, as Ncedo High School had insufficient classes to accommodate those learners. This was done with mutual understanding of both school staffs as well as the authority from the Department of Education.

3.6.1   THE REASON FOR SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT

The school was established because of the need in the community. Before, nearest school to the community was 3km away. In that distance, a distance of about 900m is an open field, which is still very dangerous to the very high rate of crime and rape. For those reasons, the community decided to write a letter to the department of education in Bhisho to ask for the building of the school in their community, so as to save their children as there were already reported rapes of the children in that open field. The first principal of the school was Mr. Welile Matana and he is still the principal.

The school has 24 classrooms. It has 13 classrooms set aside for the senior primary and 11 classrooms set aside for junior primary phase.

3.6.2   THE HARDSHIPS OF THE SCHOOL

In 1994 the school was still under construction till the end of April. Three schools namely Vukanibantu Primary, Ncedo High and Elufefeni Primary utilized the school. For the first five weeks the school was not functioning under normal circumstances, in that the first two weeks were utilized for the principal's orientation, the third week was the orientation of the principal with his new staff and the other two weeks were for the learner's registration. On the sixth week Elufefeni Primary left the building for its own building, and the other two schools had to share one building.

The platoon system was introduced, with Vukanibantu starting at 7h30 am till 12h00pm and the Ncedo starting at 12h15pm till 17h30pm. There was lot of unbearable noise caused by the machines as the junior primary section was still under construction. There was no furniture, educators had to use loan chairs from neighbourhood and learners had to use bricks or paint tins to sit on. From time to time the workers of SBT contractors went on strike, which affected the learning as 100 grade 1 learners were fused in one classroom. As well as other grades 2,3,4,5 and 6 were sharing the classrooms, and the classrooms were so overcrowded.

3.6.3 THE SCHOOL'S HIGHLIGHTS

Vukanibantu had to share school building with Ncedo High School. Vukanibantu educators had to teach grade 8 learners in order that Ncedo could accommodate some grade 12 learners who could not attend finishing school that was accommodated in the building in Korsten. The school donated some clothes to a grade 8 learner whose home was gutted. The school excelled in athletics, music, and rugby, winning couple of trophies that are now used to decorate the principal's office. The school was officially opened in 1996 by the EDO of the department of education, Mr. Viwe Miza.

3.6.4 THE SCHOOL'S SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT/COMMUNITY CHARACTER.

The socio economic of the school is not the sound one. About 40% of Vukanibantu parents do not work. Even those parents who are working do not have secured jobs and their salaries are between R700 – R1 500 per month. In 1994 the school fees were R10 00 per annum. The school fees were raised with the time, as it is now R60.00 per annum. The school does not have a recreational hall. When the school is having a concert as a means of raising funds, it uses the netball quad which is about 20m by 20m, and that depends on weather conditions. The whole community around is poor. The crime is rife. It is not uncommon to find in a family that there is no body that is working. Learners often come to school on empty stomachs and without full uniform. The types of fundraising effort range from empty bottle collection to Miss Vukanibantu. The amounts raised per show vary from R189 to R400 per show. The parents flatly denied the raffle collection.

Since 1994, the learner ratio dropped from 1: 60 down to 1: 30. Amongst the reasons for that gradual drop is the unemployment that results to parents leaving the area to a low cost houses area. This has resulted to the school to 7 post level 1 educators to be in excess.

3.6.5 POVERTY

Vukanibantu Primary School is situated in a new developing area called Swartkops Valley, the beautiful area in Motherwell. Swartkops Valley has big beautiful subsidy houses. Most families who stay in these houses are municipality workers. Most of the residents are illiterate, who are originally from rural areas. They came in Port Elizabeth seeking for work and they end up P.E. permanent citizens. Most mothers in the area are housewives and some are working as domestic workers and some are casual workers.

After some time some workers lost their jobs due to various reasons, such as illnesses and restructuring in their companies. And that resulted to be difficult for them to pay for their subsidy houses; even before they lost their jobs it was not an easy thing to do. Even though the learners come from these big beautiful houses, their appearance is not the good one. Most are very much untidy and dirty. Some come at school with no proper school uniforms and parents claimed that most money of the fathers is used to pay for these beautiful houses. As a result they struggle to buy food for the whole month not to mention to buy a chair to sit on, as most mothers do not have a salary. And that gives a clear explanation as to why it is difficult for the parents to pay school fees.

3.6.6 VANDALISM

The school has been a victim of vandalism ever since education was declared free after 1994. At the back of the school about 150m fence has been stolen and now there is an open field. The school has no alarm system. There is no block that has burglar proofing in full to secure it against vandalism. The main target of the thieves is the administration block whereupon they would get in through a broken window in one of the toilets, going to a ceiling through a trap door and getting access to any room in the administration block by breaking the ceiling. The same applies even in the classrooms.

The school is in the process of putting up burglar guards to all the blocks. This will be done in phases depending on the funds. The school has never raised

more than R24 000 per annum on the school fees and more than R3000 per annum on the fund raising efforts.

3.5 THE HISTORY OF SIVUYISENI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL WITH REGARD TO POVERTY, VANDALISM AND SCHOOL FEES.

This is situated in a suburb called KwaMagxaki. This suburb was built in 1984, specifically for the policemen and their families. Simply because they were harassed by the community members in the early 80's, during the time of struggle. Sivuyiseni is the second primary school which was built in the area, as the first one which was built with pre-fabs was very much overcrowded by learners. Parents were afraid to send their children to other areas in the location as the people by then were killing the policemen and their children. The school was built in 1987. It is a double storeyed building with 28 classrooms and toilets for boys and girls attached in each block and in the admission block.

Teachers and learners of Sivuyiseni were taken from the other primary school as it was flooded with learners. Teachers were divided into half so as to establish the second primary school. They started the school in1988 with 28 teachers, two Heads of Department and a principal, by the name of Mr. Phantsi who was also selected from amongst the other teachers. The enrolment was 1 400 starting from grade 1 to grade 7. The school started to function in January 1988. It is said that in 1989, there was a teacher who was also a staff member; from his workbook the other teachers discovered the proposed design of an emblem and a suggested motto for the school, which says RISE and SHINE. As a school, they decided to adopt the suggestion as proposed by the deceased teacher.

3.4.1 THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE SCHOOL

In the first four years of the school establishment, the principal has never had a problem of maintaining the school, as the parents were willing to pay the school fees. The school fees then were R20.00 in the first two years and rose to R30.00 for the third and fourth year.

The deterioration in the payment of school fees was noticed after the government declared that the schooling would be free and compulsory. The parents started to be reluctant to pay the school fees complaining to the teachers why they are being asked to pay the school fees while the government has announced that the school is free. Even today the school is suffering to maintain school due to the nonpayment of school fees. As I have mentioned that the school has an alarm system, which also needs to be paid each month as well as the phone bill.

Some months the school does not afford to pay bills due to insufficient funds. At times the principal asks the donation from the teachers so as to pay those bills; at times the principal pays the school bills out of his pocket. After 1994 the school could not even afford to hire a gardener to clean the schoolyard, as the school does not have a caretaker who is officially employed by the government.

When vandalism started to take place after 1994, the perpetrators damaged the toilets by stealing the copper pipes leaving the toilets leaking. As a result of that the toilets are in an unhealthy condition. Even if the health inspectors can visit the school and see the condition of those toilets I am sure, they will not hesitate to close such a school as it is not conducive to proper teaching and learning. I am trying to illustrate how the school is suffering due to vandalism, poverty and nonpayment of school fees. If there is money at school, I believe at school all problems should have been sorted, but most unfortunately the school has no alternative, but to suffer. In that the department knows these things and the department does not do any thing on that. In short, the socioeconomic status of the school is very low.

3.4.2 THE HIGHLIGHTS OF SIVUYISENI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

The school has been prominent in the community ever since it has started as a primary school, academically as well as outside the classroom. By outside the classroom I mean in the sport field, on various sporting codes, for an example, netball, soccer, rugby, and athletics as well as in music competition. In music competition the school has won so many trophies, which are now

used to decorate the principal's office. Each year learners are trained by library teachers to write their poems and to practice reading and they compete with other primary schools. They always win.

Some of the soccer boys from Sivuyiseni have played for Eastern Cape Primary school association. They have been to other provinces to play soccer for the Eastern Cape Primary Schools. When there is a tournament in the Kwa-Magxaki and Zwide area, Sivuyiseni soccer boys always come home with trophies and shields. At Sivuyiseni there are eight learners and three teachers who were once in New York for debates with the different schools there, debating on different cultures. Those eight learners developed a relationship with learners in New York; as a result they are now pen pals. Most learners at Sivuyiseni are very good in expressing themselves in their second language (English) as if they learn in those western areas. Sivuyiseni is a very good primary school at Kwa- Magxaki area. There are so many good things that are taking place, such as cultural dance, gumboots dance and drama. These learners can design anything using beads, because they have good art and culture teachers. Each year they make a cultural day where they display their work and sell some to the parents.

3.4.3   POVERTY

The area in which Sivuyiseni Primary School is situated is a well-respected suburb, and is called KwaMagxaki. It has beautiful subsidy houses. Most parents who are staying in these houses are government workers and business people. It is a well developed area with 4 schools, 2 high schools, 2 primary schools and 2 educare centres, 2 sport fields, a chemist, a garage, a library with a community hall in a building, a clinic and many doctors surgeries as well as a new shopping centre in the surroundings with all popular banks not just auto- tellers but banks with the Post office in the centre.

Most unfortunately for the school in that, it does not serves fully its community ,because most learners are not from KwaMagxaki but in various informal settlements around KwaMagxaki, such as Joe Slovo, Soweto- on- Sea, Veeplaas, Zinyoka and KwaDwesi extension. Those learners come to school

with various problems, others come to school with empty stomachs, no school uniform and others with serious problems of abuse in various ways and some are orphans due to various diseases. Due to the above reasons, the school struggles to get school fees from their parents as most parents claim that they are not working, some depend on casual jobs and most on grants from the government for their children, that is the amount of R190,00 per month per child under the age of 14 years.

Most children come to school every day even if they are not feeling well because of the feeding scheme they get at school. In summer they get bread and milk and in winter bread and soup. Government is doing a big favour for children on that. Even though at times they do not feel full up at least there is something that they get for the day. Some learners claim that they become worried when it is Friday as there is no school the next day and they are not sure they will get bread. Others take some more bread for their siblings at home. At one stage a boy claimed that his grandmother loves the school bread and he would be glad if he could get more for her.

Every Thursday there is a little group of mothers who come to school in the afternoon and bring cooked soup and bread for the specific learners selected by the teachers in their classrooms. Those learners selected by the teachers are in real need compared to the rest of learners that eat the feeding scheme. These parents are retired nurses from KwaMagxaki community. They volunteered themselves because they saw a need. At times these parents make some donation by buying some school uniform or shoes for the needy learners. Even though there are these plans to help these needy learners, it is not enough. Some learners still coming to school very ill, and because of that there is always a sick child in the sick room.

3.4.4 VANDALISM

As I have mentioned the KwaMagxaki suburb has been initially and specifically developed for the policemen and their families. In that area before 1994, vandalism was never a problem. Today, vandalism in this area is often experienced. The school is vandalized even though there is an alarm system

which has been installed. The perpetrators are so cunning that they are able to bypass such an alarm. They get into the administration block through the roof, by removing the roof tiles. These perpetrators destroy everything that is in front of their eyes, is as if they are angry for something. They even destroy teacher's and learner's books. The taps leak and toilets do not work properly as the thieves have stolen pipes and taps made of copper. Teachers are unable to lock up their classrooms as the door locks have been stolen too, leaving the classrooms open. The perpetrators also use these classrooms as their sleeping place at night. They leave their blankets up in those broken ceilings.

Today, teacher's classrooms are like barren fields, they do not look like a learning environment as classrooms supposed to be. They are so blank, no teaching aids hanged against the walls. If posters were left after school, the next morning it was gone or was damaged and one could see that this was done on purpose. This, as well as many other types of destructive activity, discouraged various teachers in various ways.

The teachers claimed that the vandalism that is taking place in their school is so discouraged and is becoming more discouraging when they report these incidents to policemen and the Department of Education and they do not get any satisfying response from both parties. They sometimes call the community members to report these incidents most unfortunately they get the same response. The school at times uses the school fees money to repair these damages but within no time the same repairs are damaged again. At times teachers use their own monies to repair the window panes or to buy their door locks as the school does not always have money to make such repairs.

3.4.5   SCHOOL FEES

In the first two years of the school establishment, the school fee was R20, 00 per annum. It has never been such a problem then for parents to pay the school fees except for a few individuals, off which at the end of the year they pay those balances before they receive an end of year progress report. In

those years the school was running very smoothly as parents were so responsible and supporting towards everything that was taking place at school. Two years later the school fees was raised by the school governing body to R30 00 per annum. Even in those years the payment of school fees was not a problem. The problem of the nonpayment of school fees started to be noticed by teachers after 1994, and it is still a problem even today.

As the school grows it has accommodated learners from other areas surrounding the KwaMagxaki area, which is unfortunately, coming from disadvantage areas. The areas such as Soweto- on- Sea, Kwanoxolo, Veeplaas, Joe Slovo and KwaDwesi extension. The learners from those areas and their parents do not manage to pay school fees due to high rates of poverty and unemployment. According to schoolteachers, the announcement of free education and the children's rights, emphasis on free and compulsory, has contributed to the non-payment of school fees in their schools. After this announcement, the teachers claim that it has become difficult for most parents to pay school fees. As a result of that, hardly a quarter of learners pay school fees freely. By freely, I mean without being threatened to do so. The teachers claimed that they are making every effort to threaten parents, so as to force them to pay school fees. But, few that feel threatened and they pay, most parents continue to promise but they never fulfil their promises.

 Due to nonpayment of school fees, the school is unable to buy stationery for the office as well as textbooks (teacher's guide) needed by teachers so as to keep abreast of the curriculum, which is continuously changing. Some parents are unable to pay school fees not because they do not want to, earnestly. They do not have money because they are not working. Even then, it does not mean they do not search for work but they do not get it.

3.5   A CASE STUDY OF LOWER MGWALANA PRIMARY SCHOOL (A SCHOOL IN A RURAL AREA)

The school is situated at Peddie in the former Ciskei. The school was built in 1988 by the department of education after a long cry from the parents. The school had 6 educators, one Head of Department and one school Principal.

The department did not build any toilets and as a result the parents built them on their own using mud, i.e. pit –hole toilets. There has never been non-teaching staff. The school starts from grade 1 to grade 7 with an enrolment of 350 learners.

3.5.1 THE HARDSHIPS OF THE SCHOOL

For the first two years, the school struggled to function effectively and properly as the principal had no transport and neither did the teachers. For the principal to get the stationery from the department of education, he had to use public transport, which is very much difficult to get in a village, no telephone at school as well no money from the school. The teachers were struggling with learners, as most of them were not used to going to school. Most of them were unable to write, read or hold a pen even though they were in higher grades. There were no progress reports available. Learners were just telling the teachers that they were supposed to be in a certain grade. As a result during the year the teachers were busy assessing the learners so as to place each learner in a correct grade.

As I have mentioned above, toilets had been made up of mud by the parents, during hard rainy days and strong windy days, they fell down and during hot days a bad smell comes from those toilets, making it very difficult to breathe. As the school has no gates, during the day, the cows from the surrounding are moving up and down the school and between the classrooms. The school does not even have taps or tanks to keep rain water. The teachers have to carry water along when they come to school or they have to ask for water in the nearby houses.

During break time some learners go home to have their lunch. As a result they have a tendency to come back very late. Others stay behind and eat after two if at all. There is also a shortage of school furniture because the classrooms are so overcrowded, as there is only one unit for each grade. The number of classrooms is so limited. The school does not have electricity as a result during the strong hard rains it becomes very dark and cold in the classrooms as some doors in other classes have been stolen.

3.5.2   THE SCHOOL'S HIGHLIGHTS

The school has good, qualified and dedicated teachers. Most teachers are from other towns; four teachers are from Port Elizabeth, two from King William's town and the two from the village. Teachers are putting more effort into those older learners who are struggling in writing even to write their own names. Some learners have improved a lot. Teachers are also doing their utmost best trying to develop learners in totality, by introducing other sporting codes like basketball and mini cricket to the foundation phase compared to other schools in other villages where learners are only taught how to sing, play netball and soccer.

3.5.3   THE SCHOOL'S SOCIO ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The socio economic conditions of the school's environment are not good at all. Most parents who are left at home with children are grandparents. The grandparents depend on the government pension fund for their living. The biological parents have left the village to search for employment in big towns such as Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. Some parents do come back after 3 years, others having money, but most with nothing claiming that they have struggling to get a job for all those years. Others never come back; they do not make any means to find out about the condition of their parents and the school progress of their children.

Due to such reasons the school is suffering in return, in that the grandparents do not afford to pay school fees and other necessary things needed at school. This also discourages the teachers to be creative in terms of fund raising efforts, as the parents do not have money. Most learners are not paying the school fees and the parents do come to school and explain the reason for not paying. Some learners do not even have a school uniform, and others come to school with bare foot and with empty stomachs. As a result they do not have enough attention span, cannot think and always feel sleepy.

3.5.4 VANDALISM

The school started to be a victim of vandalism after three years it has been built. At first it was regarded as an honour and privilege to the community members to have a school in their village. As a result, the parents contributed some money to make a feast at school so as to open the school officially. It was been noticed that the tables and chairs were disappearing and this was done very much professionally, by professional thieves. In that, the perpetrators were taking out the whole lock out of the door very much cautiously when opening it. The community members were stealing this furniture to beautify their houses.

It has been found that there are big boys in the village who are so troublesome and they are suspected that they are the one who are stealing from the school. The community members are afraid of these boys as the result during the day their houses are always closed. Most windows are broken, the reason being that children also use the school as the playground after school, so most of the time the children break these windows by the time they cease to play purposefully. Strange thing with this vandalism, the classroom with schoolbooks has never been touched. They do not see books as valuable assets that one can steal and acquire knowledge from it.

3.5.5 POVERTY

The great majority of adults in this community are very poor, illiterate, and unable to read a road sign let alone a newspaper. Their children, though they now have a much better chance of attending school than in the past, usually do not complete more than two or three years. The parents have a hope that their children will somehow be able to climb out of poverty in future.

As I have said most parents who are in the village are grandparents. They are totally depended on a subsidy from the government. Some parents are able to make gardens so as to provide for their families. The village has no access to clean water and sanitation. The people get water from the river to wash their clothes and to irrigate their gardens. Most parents who do not have water tanks use the same water from river for drinking and for cooking. In the same

river, people take their animals, like cows and horses to drink water. In most families, there is a lack of privacy in that families share two or one rooms as most of their houses have fallen down because most houses are made out of mud.

The village has no clinic; as a result there is a mobile clinic that comes to the village once in two weeks time on Wednesdays. Malnutrition and under nutrition are widespread in the village. The grandparents cannot afford to buy nutritional food for their grandchildren. They only afford to buy starch food only.

3.5.6   SCHOOL FEES

The payment of school fees in the rural areas has been a problem ever since the schools were introduced in those villages and it is still a problem even if it can be a R10 per year. As a result of that it has never crossed teachers' mind to raise the school fees to R50 for an example, as it is difficult for parents to pay only R20 in the past. Most of learners have been at school more than four years without paying even a cent for school fees. Teachers claim that they have decided to visit such families and they found that the families are really suffering, in that there is no one working in the family. The family depends on the grants that the grandparents are receiving from the government.

These families are unable to buy enough food for their big families not to mention to buy school uniform. The teachers find out from the grandparents that their parents have left them with children; they do not even make any effort to contact them. Some parents are not working at all; no one knows how they survive.

Teachers claimed that they have made every effort trying to raise funds for school by organizing concerts or selling sweets and stationary, but of making money they lose what they had, in that learners take sweets and pencils or books on credit and they do not pay but return making lots of promises and excuses. At times the teachers claim that they call parents for a meeting so as to beg them to pay school fees and explain to them why is it necessary for them to pay school so as to improve their children's education. The parents do

promise to pay as they hear how serious the teachers are with their schoolwork and about the interests they have in their children. Some parents do come and pay as promised and others do not and explain why they are unable to do as they have promised.

According to teachers, they have used every means and efforts they have to raise money, but they have been unsuccessful, in that they never meet their goals. In all those failing efforts, teachers do not blame parents because they could clearly see that parents do not have money. Most parents in the rural areas depend on pension and on their gardens to feed their families. Because of that, teachers buy textbooks for themselves and some teachers donate some other things that they need for the school, like sport kit and balls for the soccer, rugby and netball so as to improve their schools.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The main thrust of this chapter was to provide an exposition of the research methodology that would be used to conduct the qualitative part of the research, as well as presenting the composite case studies that were composed, after having collected the necessary data by means of the methods indicated.

In the next chapter, I shall analyse the literature study and case studies, as well as newspaper cuttings, in order to analyse what emerges in terms of the overall purpose of this study. The analytical method will be used to detect points of agreement found in the data from the various chapters (triangulation), as well as determining whether other phenomena emerge, which appear unique to the data collected by the case study approach.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

After having undertaken a literature study in Chapter Two and compiled case studies of selected schools in Chapter Three, the data collected will be analysed in this chapter. The main aim of this study is to discover how schools experiencing similar socio-economic factors, are addressing the aspects which have been demarcated for the purpose of this study.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish what emerges if the data that have been presented in a descriptive format, is analyzed. The researcher will endeavour to categorize the data under common themes, so as to structure this phase of the research. Once this stage of the research has been completed, suggestions and recommendations can be made on how the three aspects researched in this study, can possibly be improved.

4.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

It is a research technique that comprises the objective and systematic description of the manifest content of communication (Bliken, 1992:73). Most content analysis in education is aimed at answering questions directly related to the material analysed. It can also be viewed as a valuable tool for obtaining certain types of information useful for identifying or solving educational problems.

Raw material for the research worker, using the content analysis technique, may be any form of usually written material (Yin, 1993:56). like the library sources I consulted and the other forms of printed communication like pictures, magazines and political speeches. I have also made use of articles that I have referred to from newspapers and a speech from the former Minister of Education, Mr. Bhengu.

In the next section a general content analysis of the three schools at which I did research, will be undertaken.

4.3 CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE THREE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

4.3.1 THE ASPECT OF POVERTY

When I compare the two schools that are in the rural areas in terms of poverty, which is Sivuyiseni and Vukanibantu, both schools are built in beautiful suburbs - Vukanibantu iS situated in a respected area of Motherwell in NU5, called Swartkops Valley. Sivuyiseni is also situated in a beautiful area with big and wonderful houses, called Kwa-Magxaki. Both these schools are surrounded by subsidised houses and parents who stay in these houses are mainly government employees.

However, most learners who attend these schools are not from the community surrounding the school. The community send their own children to better schools, the so called "white Schools", where there are many facilities such as computer and science laboratories as well as various sporting fields within the school. These schools get learners from informal settlements where most of them stay with unemployed parents. So some they come to school with empty stomachs. Some come at school everyday simply because they expect to get bread and soup from the feeding scheme from the government. Some learners come to school with the aim of looking for something that they can steal after school. Most of the learners who attend these are really suffering. Some do not even have proper school uniforms, even though teachers do welcome those without uniforms to attend school.

Compared to these two schools, the rural school experiences extreme poverty, as most learners are always tired, dirty and seem unprepared to come to school because of the situation at home. Most learners have no one to take care of them; they look after themselves. No one encourages them to go to school. Parents there perceive school as the nagging place that always asks for money whilst they do not have the money and they do not see the importance of schooling. To them schooling is a waste of time as children are expected to work in the garden, so as to have food at night. During the hot

days some learners faint, due to hunger and some are looking very ill. In most schools in the rural areas there is no feeding scheme.

In all three of these schools, poverty has an adverse effect on education in that children might be at school but they do not have energy or strength to learn because they are very much hungry. Some learners continue to have headaches almost every day because of hunger and at times they do not even hear their teachers but the class will catch them falling down due to hunger.

4.3.2 VANDALISM

In both schools that are in the urban area vandalism has been noticed. At Sivuyiseni Primary, which was established in 1988, vandalism was noticed particularly after 1994. At Vukanibantu, vandalism was first noticed two years after the school had been established. At the rural school vandalism was also noticed after two years of its establishment. The damage that happened in these three schools was almost the same, except that there were no taps and toilets in the rural school, which meant no copper pipes, were been stolen as was the case with the two schools in the urban areas. Teaching aids and posters used by the teachers in urban schools were destroyed, whilst in the rural areas the classroom with schoolbooks was not touched at all.

In all these three schools, these kinds of vandalism have a negative impact on children's education. The stealing of school furniture and doors, damaging of school books and copper wires in the urban schools, and breaking of windows affect the proper functioning of the schools. During cold, rainy and windy days, teachers and learners are suffering, as most classrooms have no windows and doors. The vandalism of our schools has negative impact to the proper teaching and learning situation. As a result, I do not think the Department of Education is expecting better results under such circumstances. Schools have to knock off earlier than normal closing times because they do not have water and the toilets are not functioning at all. The schools are also suffering financially, and it takes time for the schools to repair damages as most

parents fail to pay school fees. So the schools have to make fundraising efforts so as to obtain money.

Time and again we read in the media, see on television and hear on the radio about schools that are being vandalized, especially in the black urban areas, as these school principals continue to report these incidences.

4.3.3 NON-PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES

In all these three schools the school principals are struggling to get school fees from the parents. As a result of the non-payment of school fees, the schools do not function effectively. The teachers make every effort to fundraise so as to buy what the schools need. It is most unfortunate that parents mostly fail to support the school in these efforts. Some parents do pay the school fees but the schools find out that mostly the same parents who had paid the previous year are the same ones who pay in the current year. Some do really try to pay up to half of the amount of the money asked by the school, as they are fully dependent on the pension they receive from the government. Some parents do not pay at all. Teachers have found out that some do not pay simply because they do not want to pay. In other cases there are serious problems, in that none in the in the family earns an income and most of the time their children come to school with empty stomachs.

The high rate of unemployment in South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape Province, has contributed to a high rate of poverty, and because most parents are out of a job, they do not have money and it is more difficult to put food on the table and becomes more difficult worse to pay school fees. At times there are parents' meetings during which the school begs the parents to pay the school fees; the school principal explains to them why is it important that the school fees have to be paid by the parents, and the reason is nothing else but for the benefit of our children's education for the preparation of their brighter future. After the meetings, parents continue to promise, others do fulfil their promises, and others fail to keep their promises.

Due to non-payment of school fees, the school is unable to repair broken windows, buy new textbooks as required by the new curriculum, unable to

partake in most sporting or cultural codes (requiring payment of national and regional affiliation fees before learners are allowed to take part in sport competitions, or buying copyright material for music and choir competitions) as the school does not manage to buy the necessary things. At times the school can not afford to hire a bus to take the school choir to the hall for a music competition. When it comes to Natural Science experiments, the school also suffers because there is no equipment to do so, and the school can not afford to buy such things as there is no money. As a result of all of the above, schools can simply not afford to develop the child in totality.

4.4   TRIANGULATION

According to Cohen (1999:43) and Merriam (1998:33) triangulation can be defined as the use of three or more methods of data collection in the study. It is a procedure that refers to the strategy of using several different kinds of data collection instruments such as interview, observation and content analysis, to explore a single problem or issue (Borg & Gall, 1989), It can be achieved by collecting essentially the same data from different samples, at different times and in different places. In this study I have done case studies at three different schools and conducted semi-structured interviews at these three different schools at different times, focusing on the same issues. Participant observation was also one of the methods used in this study. In this sense, triangulation is simply a form of replication that contributes greatly to our confidence in our research findings, regardless of whether qualitative or quantitative methodology has been employed. The use of a variety of methods for data collection contributes significantly towards validity and reliability of the research findings. Therefore, the use of triangulation helps to demonstrate validity and open up new perspectives about the topic under investigation (Borg and Gall, 1989).

For the purpose of this study, triangulation involved at least four kinds of methods to acquire data. The methods of collecting information included semi-structured interviews, participant observation, the case studies and a literature study.

4.4.1 POVERTY

Poverty, according to my literature review in Chapter Two, is defined by Cohen(1999:132) in its most extreme form as the lack of basic human needs, such as enough nutritious food, clothing, housing, clean water and human services. According to my literature review there are many reasons that contribute to poverty and some are basic like inadequate education and employment. Due to lack of education and illiteracy, people do not have work; do not make any money and the high unemployment rate leads to a high level of poverty (Beckmann, 1995:79).

Poverty has also been identified as the most serious problem in our black schools in rural and in urban areas. As a result of poverty, some learners struggle to reach their maximum potential (Prinsloo, et. al: 1998:135). They are always ill because at home parents cannot afford to buy nutritional food; as a result they are more prone to various diseases. Some learners are continuously absent from school, as they do not have money to come to school, and others claim that they could not come as their school uniform is dirty, there is no money at home to buy soap and moreover he or she can not come to school because he or she does not have school shoes or any other type of shoes. Some learners claim that they feel very much embarrassed to come to school with dirty uniforms or looking clumsy. Poverty destroys their self-esteem as some learners laugh at them. Some learners come to school with empty stomachs, meaning that they will not be effective at school at all due to hunger.

In Chapter Three of my study, when I conducted interviews with different teachers at different urban schools and at the rural school, they also confirmed this. The schoolteachers claimed that it is a very painful challenge to them in that they are directly involved with these cases. They do not read about these cases in papers or listen to the news on television; they are faced with them from Monday to Friday and at times on Saturdays. The teachers also claimed that these learners come to school looking very much tired and when you asked them what is wrong with them, they will tell the teacher that they do not feel well and they have not eaten the previous night or in the

morning before they came to school. The very same child is not neatly dressed, no proper school uniform and looks very much dirty.

The teachers claim that these children are so withdrawn because of their situation at homes. And that affects their confidence in the classroom because they are aware of their situation. At Sivuyiseni Primary School, there are parents staying near the school, who happen to recognize the poverty at the school. As a result they have volunteered to provide the needy learners with bread and soup every Thursday. (Chapter Three of my study). The teachers also claimed that, when there are fundraising efforts that take place at school, these learners always do not contribute as a result and the teachers have accepted such cases. Teachers have discovered that in their families no one is working or in some families they depend on the pension received by the grandparents.

From a newspaper point of view around the issue of poverty (chapter 3) the department of education has been aware of the poverty that takes place in our black schools. From a newspaper article (The Herald, October 19, 2006); poverty has driven school children to suicide. In the same article, the psychologist who assesses pupils, said poverty and hardship were at the core of the suicides. As a result of that, the department is responding very positively in that it is doing its utmost to counteract this problem. The department of education has introduced a feeding scheme to most black primary schools to counteract this. At first, there was bread and peanut butter or bread and powdered milk. After some time the menu was changed to fortified biscuits and powder and milk.

 In 2005, learners were given bread and soup. Towards the end of October 2006, the government changed the menu to a full meal, consisting of soup, vegetables and samp or styfpap. The government has also employed parents on a full time basis to prepare this food for the learners. At times schools encounter difficulties with the feeding scheme. Such problems include that the bread is not well baked, or it does not arrive for a week, but then the department continues to try and solve these problems.

All these three sources provide agreement that poverty really is one of the challenges faced by the teachers in school. Poverty is not just a problem that ends at the learner's home; instead it is a recurring thing that accompanies the learner on the school premises. As a result it affects the school with regards to the poor performance of those learners, as well as the entire bodies that have interest in and respect for children and their education.

4.4.2 VANDALISM

In Chapter Two of my study, vandalism is defined by Stahl (2000:1), as wilful destruction of any public property without the consent of the owner. And according to the Oxford Dictionary, vandalism is defined as destruction or damage of public properties, like schools. Cohen (1999:128) claimed that, schools are vandalized due to various reasons and with different motives behind Ward (1973:46). Some people vandalized schools so as to sell whatever they stole to buy food, and to meet their needs which are also destructive for their lives, for example, buying alcohol. Black (2002: 134) believes that vandalism is not always committed with the exclusive purpose of causing damage, but rather for excitement and pleasure, as well as a search for identity and acceptance (Chapter Two). Some people vandalized schools due to anger; learners have been chased away from school during examination time for non-payment of school fees. As a result of anger towards whoever decided to chase them away, vandalism of school is used as an outlet. Some vandalized schools without understanding what they are doing is an act of vandalism, for example bored kids doing such an act as means of entertaining themselves (Chapter Two).

It is said that vandalism of schools has a negative effect, not only to learner, but also to all stakeholders in education. For example, it discourages both teachers and learners in that those perpetrators at times destroy both teachers and learner's work. Vandalism causes a feeling of powerlessness, uncertainty and fear among learners and educators (Asmal, 1993: Chapter Two).

The school principals whom I have interviewed claimed that, as a result of vandalism which continually takes place in their schools, schools are now like barren fields. They are not conducive to effective learning at all. Most classrooms have damaged ceilings; one can even see the light entering the classroom on top through the ceiling. Most classrooms have no doors and no window panes. On windy days dust gets inside the classrooms. And during rainy days rain enters through windows, doors and through the roof. Most primary schools in black areas have no running water because toilets are not working since toilet bowls have been smashed and water pipes and taps have been stolen. Yet such buildings would be called institutions for quality education, and the department of education is expecting normal tuition and better results at the end of the year (See Chapter Three). The teachers at school have found out that some classroom are used as sleeping places at night by perpetrators because they hide their blankets in the ceilings of the classrooms. These perpetrators can come and go into school as much as they want because there are no doors to lock up the classrooms (Chapter Three). The school principals also claimed that even though there are alarm systems at some schools, schools continued to be vandalized.

The school principals believed that the high rate of unemployment and poverty in South Africa are the main causes of vandalism and they also feel that is very much unfair, especially to the children. It is like killing the children directly because the children's future depends on the education they get from school. They also feel vandalism of schools cannot be used as a stage or platform to justify such conduct, for example claiming they did it because of poverty. They also believe that, those companies who buy those stolen school materials (like scrap metal dealers) from perpetrators have lost respect for the school.

From time to time, people read articles about school vandalism in newspapers and see vandalized schools in the media. It is said, most primary schools in Motherwell have no water at school as vandals steal pipes (The Herald, 13 February 2003).It is also said in this article, eight schools from Motherwell have engaged in protest, caring placards saying: " Don't buy stolen property", " Stop vandalizing schools " and " Enough is enough". They were protesting

against the companies, which were recognized as companies, which buy stolen scrap iron. This means that teachers are really tired of this vandalism in their schools. Teachers were complaining to these dealers, claiming that they buy the stolen pipes, which encourages thieving and vandalism of schools (The Herald, 13 February 2003). At this stage the schoolteachers felt that it was enough that had been reporting these incidents to the department of education and at the police station but never received satisfying responses from these parties. That is why they decided to engage themselves to such an action so that their cry could be heard by the world, as it is now appeared in the newspaper.

There is another newspaper article (The Herald, 20 May, 2004) with headlines: "PLEA TO SCHOOL VANDALS". In this article, Premier Makhenkesi Stofile pleaded to the vandals in the Eastern Cape Province to stop vandalizing and stealing from schools. This means the government is also affected by this continuous vandalism of schools just like teachers. The difference to them is that the government has its own way of responding to the problem. Even though there are such actions, which say loud and clear that people are affected by this vandalism in various ways, even today schools are being vandalised, as most learners from primary schools in Port Elizabeth are going home at an earlier time because of vandalism. These schools have been granted permission to do so by the Government of Education, after they have seen the condition of such schools. The cisterns in the schools have been stolen, leaving the schools without running water (The Herald, Wednesday, October 11, 2006).

This vandalism, affects the proper functioning of the school, as the learners go home earlier, meaning that they are losing out some important learning areas. It is said time wasted will never return and that means, vandalism steals important things from children's futures. It might not be seen by other people or by our children today, but they will in the long run as it will delay or destroy their future plans.

All these three sources provide agreement on this theme. It therefore validates the point that schools are the victims of vandalism and something

should be done by all stakeholders of education to protect our schools that reside in our communities. This cruel act should be dealt with in a very sensitive manner, considering every possibility that could be a reason for such an act. Possible reasons could be frustration, anger or poor understanding of an act, the child might be playing an innocent play (See Chapter Two).

4.4.3   SCHOOL FEES

According to Della Thompson (1998, 74), a school fee is a regular payment to a school, meaning the money that should be paid by each and every learner at school. From my literature review (Chapter Two, the payment of school fees was never been a problem in the past.   As a result most churches played an important role in funding the black learners (Van Schalkwyk, 1995, 65). According to Christie (1991:92) the introduction of open schools, which are today known as private schools, was one way of introducing payment of school fees by black learners (Chapter Two).

These private schools were too expensive for most black parents to afford. The only option was rather to leave school (as black schools did not really equip you well) and to work for small salaries, meaning that they were working as cheap labourers (Christie, P: 1991:108). They did not earn enough money to further their education but only to earn money to buy food.   Payment of school fees became a hindering effect for most black learners to acquire quality education. Christie also claimed that the scheme of free and compulsory education, which has been introduced by government in the last decade or so, is just another way to force learners to attend school without making it free and without changing the content of schooling that students have been protesting against (Chapter Two).

It is an ideal of the government to make education available to everyone at state expense, but at the moment that is not possible (Cachalia, 1994: 97) Due to widespread poverty and the high rate of unemployment in Eastern Cape Province, a province that is largely rural, most parents fail to pay the school fee that is required at schools. There are also differences in income among those parents who are fortunately working. As a result those who are

better off financially send their children to more privileged schools and pay school fees there. So this results in less privileged schools not getting the financial support from those who may live near the school but who do not enrol their children at these schools.

From the school principal's point of view, nonpayment of school fees in their schools has been more noticeable as a problem after 1994, especially after the announcement of free education by the government (Chapter Three). The school principals also claim that they have made every effort to beg and to force parents to pay school fees. At times they chase learners away whose parents have not paid or do not give them textbooks. By doing so, they are forcing parents to pay school fees and that did not work. At times they call parent meeting and explain to parents the need for them to pay, so as to buy school stationary, as the government does not provide school stationary to school as promised. The school also needs the money to buy new textbooks and learning materials so as to conform to the new NCS curriculum, which is mostly learner orientated.

The school principals also claim that the schools need more money to repair damages caused by vandalism. Due to vandalism toilets at most black primary schools are not working, doors have been stolen in the classrooms, ceilings are damaged and there are no window panes. The environment at schools is dirty (Chapter Three); there are lots of obnoxious odours from rubbish around school and toilets. As a result of this it becomes so unhygienic and unpleasant to work under such conditions. The principals also felt that the situation has become easier for learners to contract diseases as the air around is so contaminated. One of the school principals claimed that even the health inspectors could close such schools if they can see such unhygienic environments, as it is so harmful to learner's lives.

Even in spite of such a self-explanatory situation, some parents fail to pay school fees and others are not prepared to do so, even though they have money, but due to ignorance they do not pay. The school principals claimed that the schools have no money and it so discouraging to work to such conditions. At times there is no money to pay telephone bills resulting in the

disconnection for some time. The school principals have found that parents who pay school fees are the same who have paid the previous year (Chapter Three), and the nonpayment of school fees is really a serious challenge to their schools.

From the newspaper articles, the papers confirm exactly what school principals at schools say. According to The Herald, 11 March 2004, an article with headlines reads as follows:" Pupils at P.E. school being detained as parents fail to pay school fees". It is also said in this article that" more than 100 pupils at this school were allegedly detained for five hours on Tuesday and on Monday due to non payment of school fees. One of the irate staff members said the pupils were detained in the hall on Tuesday from 9am until 2pm. The staff said these learners were not even allowed to take a lunch break or to go to the toilets".

 The staff member also said non-paying pupils were previously suspended by the school and left to loiter nearby, but it appeared that the latest strategy was aimed at saving the image of the school by keeping them indoors instead. To me, this confirms exactly those illegal strategies or efforts which were not specified by those school principals that I have interviewed. And this also confirms the ignorance that the school principals have about the law because what they have done they know exactly that is against the law and it is a very abusive act as well as unacceptable, not to anyone's child whom you claim you love and respect.

From the Sunday Times, September 3, 2006, there is an article, which says: "High Fees a key reason for older pupils to leave school early". In this article research was undertaken by the University of Cape Town Development Policy Research Unit. It has found a significant drop in school attendance by 16 to 18 year olds. This unit also found that in 1995, 986 00 teenagers did not attend an educational institution, including 353 000 who said they stayed home because they could not afford fees. To me this high rate of drop out of learners from school is also the result of poverty that is also taking place in the homes of these learners as well as the high rate of unemployment. Due to the high rate of unemployment, parents are unable to buy food and pay school

fees. The learners between the age of 16 and 18 are very much aware of the situation at home. They now feel very much embarrassed by their appearance as their parents at times cannot even afford to buy school uniforms and they are even too hungry to go to school. This means, there are many things that affect the child, resulting in the decision not to go to school anymore because of their home situation.

The research by the University of Cape Town, which analysed education service provision between 1995 and 2003, found that fees remained a barrier to education, even though some seven million pupils paid less than R100 a year for schooling. This confirms exactly what has been said by one of the primary school principals in The Weekend Post, Saturday 2, 2006. He claimed that in his school the school fee was R50 a family and the enrolment in his school has 420 families, but there were only 20 to 25 % of families who paid school fees. That means no matter how little the school can ask for a school fee in our black school areas, parents cannot afford to pay because of high rate of unemployment.

The speaker from one of the Teachers' Union said the unions do not condone any action taken by school principals against learners that could result in the learners being turned away because he or she has not paid school fees or does not have a uniform (Sunday times,3 September, 2006). The speaker also said that the union would not defend such actions by teachers or principals because it is against the law. The spokesperson of the union agreed that the non- payment of school fees made it difficult for schools to make ends meet with the meagre contributions made by a few dedicated parents, even though the union could not allow any institution to exclude learners on that basis (The Herald, 28 0ctober 2005).

The newspaper articles, interviews conducted with school principals and information obtained from literature review, all provide a strong degree of agreement that the nonpayment of school fees is one of the biggest challenges to black primary schools. Many strategies, legal and illegal, have been used by school principals to force parents to pay school and many fund raising efforts have been done to supplement the school fees, even though

payment of school fees is still a serious challenge in our black primary schools.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher undertook an analysis of the data collected for researching the three aspects demarcated for the purpose of this study. Firstly a general, overall content analysis was undertaken. Then, in second more sophisticated analysis, a form of triangulation was used. The purpose of the second analysis was to establish to what extent the data collected from published, formal, scientific sources correlates with the data collected from popular printed data, like newspaper clippings, as well as the case studies compiled through the methods of interviews and participative observation.

From the analysis of the data in this chapter, it becomes evident that poverty, vandalism and non-payment of school fees are not just restricted to the standard, "usual" challenges/problems found by researchers, but that specific, additional challenges/problems were found by means of the various methods I used for the collection as well as the analysis of the data.

The next chapter will focus on the last phase of the research, namely presenting findings and making recommendations for improvement regarding poverty, vandalism and the payment of school fees.

CHAPTER 5:   REFLECTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this study I have endeavoured to establish what gives rise to challenges that adversely affect education at black primary schools specifically in the Port Elizabeth area. My literature study on the three aspects selected for the purpose of this study, namely poverty, vandalism and the payment of school fees, provided information about these issues in the educational context outside South Africa. My qualitative research at the three schools included for the purpose of this study, indicated that we are grappling with similar problems, but there are many unique challenges, typical of an infant democracy, stemming from a past where people were grouped according to racial groups and schools were built in neighbourhoods with the idea that the immediate communities would be served.

Furthermore, the majority of the population belongs to the "black" grouping, which entered the new democracy with a legacy of poverty and being under-resourced in terms of educational provision. While the new government had the vision to empower its citizens through education to improve their socio-economic position, the reality of what transpires in the majority of our schools points in quite the opposite direction. Poverty is still rife, vandalism has dramatically increased and parents' inability or non willingness to pay school fees contribute towards the breakdown of formal black education as an effective means to raise the youth.

5.2 SUMMATIVE REFLECTION

In this I thesis focused on some key issues school principals and their staff are battling with and what they are doing in terms of trying to tackle the problems of poverty, vandalism and the non-payment of school fees.

Due to poverty, people have lost the meaning and value of education. People have lost interest in education and no longer perceive school as the most important place in a society as it had been previously.

In the past black churches in South Africa were used as schools during the week as is still prevalent today with Seventh Day Adventist churches. In those days vandalized churches were unheard of and everything was going very well. Today people increasingly vandalize schools. As a result, most schools in black areas have no doors; no windows, no ceilings and the toilets are not functioning properly.

In The E P Herald, Thursday, October 19, 2006, an article   was headlined: Poverty driving school children in rural Transkei to suicide. It was also stated that since 2001, about six pupils from upper Corhana Senior Secondary School and at least three of the 18 pupils who died in Ngubenzulu High School in Libode, committed suicide. The school principal said poverty was the main reason behind the alarming trend.

A schoolgirl, who poisoned herself in March 2006, left a note saying she was neglected by her mother who had left for Johannesburg and she lived with an unemployed grandmother (The Herald, Thursday, October 19, 2006), indicating that there was no money to buy food, pay school fees or to buy a school uniform.

Some learners go to school during the day so as to look what they can come and steal at night, as most of our black schools have no caretaker or night watchman. As a teacher, I have ample experience of this. The sad reality of this is that the school is not seen as a respected institution that empowers you with knowledge, skills and attitudes for adult life one day but a place that has the potential to be targeted for theft of items that can immediately be exchanged for cash now.

 Due to poverty in their own homes, some learners live with their grandparents, who themselves are dependent on old-age pensions. Their biological parents only pay initial school fees at the beginning of the year, so as to ensure the issue of school books. Subsequently no fees are forthcoming.

Any other necessities, like uniforms needed for school, are difficult to get and that makes them feel very much embarrassed at school (The Herald, Thursday, October 19, 2006).

Vandalism of school buildings in black areas in South Africa has increased and become more noticeable *after* the 1994 elections. It affects academic performance in all grades and consequently grade 12 results continue to be very poor. During vandalism a range of items fall target, like teachers' textbooks, teaching materials, learners' work as well apparatus used in science like test tubes and chemicals. Due to damage caused by vandalism and which cannot be repaired because of lack of money, learners have to go home earlier than normal closing time because there is no running water at school and toilets are non functional. According to The Herald, October 11, 2006, hundreds of pupils were sent home after toilets were destroyed in the latest spree. Learners from a certain school told The Herald people they had been sent home at 9am on the 10th of October 2006. They also claimed that the school principal was fed up with the ongoing vandalism, meaning that learners lost out on education in some vital learning areas.

A Motherwell primary school in Port Elizabeth was without water for three months after the municipality cut suppliers to avoid huge leaks, following the theft of pipes and toilets from the toilets. Another primary school in Motherwell was vandalized on numerous occasions and as a result, the school was been forced to hire three chemical toilets for its 617 pupils (The Herald, February 13, 2003).

If one analyses what is being stolen in our schools, one will come to the conclusion that these are "VITAL ITEMS FOR SURVIVAL", for example window-panes, taps and wires, which are made of copper. These items that are stolen from schools are either vital to make their own living conditions more bearable or are being sold to various types of dealers to acquire money for buying food.

Against the background of the above references to recent relevant problems captured in the local media and my view on that in relation to my research, the

issue of school fee payment and free education can be reflected upon. Parents do not seem to understand the real interpretation of what free education, which is one of the children's rights in South Africa, really means. Free education, as enshrined in the Constitution as "every child shall have the right to education", leads to all kinds of problems in practice. Parents take this right at literal face value and as a result they do not see why the school is asking them to pay school fees in addition.

Due to the nonpayment of school fees, schools are failing to function effectively, *inter alia* in their ability to able to buy the necessary textbooks and additional source material required for the new curriculum, or even just repair broken windows, ceilings and doors, as well as damaged toilets.

The participation and support of relevant stakeholders in education depend on the sound understanding of educational legislation on these issues in question as well as on the amount of state money available to fund all other vital societal needs like housing, roads, health, water and safety and security (Hofmeyer & Buckland, 1992: 328). Furthermore, support by political structures in our local communities is very important for the practical implementation of educational legislation. Political leaders in our communities should assist teachers by educating community members about educational laws as the community members have confidence and belief in them, from the mere fact that they voted for them.

It can be expected that vandalism of schools, poverty in schools and non-payment of school fees will remain problematic until the South African government succeeds in getting entrepreneurships off the ground that raise independent income from various sources, like tourists. Also the government should strive to equip unemployed people with skills and qualities that are in need in the workplace, so that people will be able to get jobs or those who are already employed, will be more productive and be able to retain their jobs and be beneficial to the market.

Due to non-payment of school fees, the schools are failing to function effectively. The new RNS curriculum compels a school to have its own

photocopier machine and this machine has to be serviced continuously after some time. Additional expenses include the purchasing of photocopier paper and ink cartridges. Also, new teacher and learner guides for each learning area have to be bought.

A researcher at the University of Cape Town, who analysed education service provision between 1995 and 2003, found that fees remained a barrier to education, even though some 7 million pupils paid less than R100 a year for schooling. The researcher also referred to the 2004 Education Service Delivery Indicator Report   which stated that a lack of financial resources underlies non-attendance of school. He is of the opinion that this cannot be tolerated and needs to be addressed urgently, because it results in the transmission of poverty from generation to generation (Sunday Times, September 3, 2006).

A primary school in Port Elizabeth has been without electricity for 19 months, as a result of vandalism. The school principal claimed that the school has to go to the neighbouring schools if they want to photocopy and the school photocopier machine and computer are at a teacher's house. The school principal also claimed that for the school fee, the school is only asking a R50 a family per year and the percentage of parents who pay is 20 to 25 %. As a result of that the school has no money to do necessary repairs (Weekend – Post, Saturday, September 2, 2006).

In this summative reflection I have tried to focus on recent attempts by teachers and reporters to bring the state that black education is in, to the attention of the wide variety of educational stakeholders who read public media. I have specifically singled out coverage of poverty, vandalism and school fee payments.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section I shall deal with recommendations on ways to possibly bring about improvement with regard to these three focus areas.

POVERTY

▪ As the root of the problem has been established as a loss of the meaning and value of education, campaigns should be run by the Department of Education through the media and churches, to drive the message home to people that we can not hope to become a winning nation according to the requirements of the 21st century, if we fail to realise the value of formal education. The SABC should run "Soapies" on TV so as to cover this and bring the serious message across in an entertaining way, as people like to imitate what they view daily.

▪ Government, politicians and the private sector, should co-operate to supply in and "buy into" the physical and health needs of people, so that the breakdown in the faith of the value of schools can be restored. Anti-poverty programmes , well-developed and success proven elsewhere in the world, needs to be run in such a way that success can be bred locally, e.g. European Union, Dan Aid, Swedish Development Aid, Fin Aid and US Aid. In other words, I am suggesting that it needs to be established how programmes should be adapted to achieve lasting success in South Africa.

5.3.2 VANDALISM

Gay and Airasian (1992:19) and Cohen (1992:153) suggested the following advices to minimize vandalism in our school's surroundings:

▪ Protective measures need to be installed in schools by the local authorities.

▪ Anti-vandal alarm systems like ADT should be installed in vandalprone areas.

▪ Private security personnel should be employed for periodic visits to premises with a history of vandalism.

▪ Installation of perimeter lighting, area lighting and flood lighting to the exterior of the premises should be installed so as to provide sufficient brightness.

- Resident caretakers should be employed in schools in areas of high incidence of vandalism.
- Use of school premises by approved organizations as deterrent during non-school hours should be encouraged.

I think, if schools can make use of the above suggestions which are so reasonable, surely vandalism will be minimized in our school. And this will only be successful if the stakeholders work together.

5.3.1 SCHOOL FEES

- It has long been debated whether schools who suffer hardships should be totally exempted from paying school fees or not. Before this study was completed, the Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, introduced the new list of schools which will offer free schooling from 2007. Many of these schools are situated in the Eastern Cape.

- As budgets to run schools are not nearly as simple as exonerating schools from school fee payment, learners should be educated in life skills that can enhance their education, yet cut on the costs of schooling. Such an example would be to learn to be neat and not litter. This would save costs. Another example is to learn to contribute in the cleaning and maintenance of school premises and not to perceive this as a separate, mediocre task. Leading countries like Denmark and Japan have established cultures in terms of this.

- Teachers and parents can be assisted and trained by professional fund-raisers (from e.g. NGOs) in the techniques of fundraising.

- Parents who can pay need to be brought to the realisation by the school principal, that financially contributing to schools should be a moral, serious priority, as the State cannot simply provide totally free education to a nation where the majority is suffering basic living needs. This is not the task of the teachers, but can effectively be run in the media by the Department of

Education, like the AIDS campaigns. This theme can also be worked into local TV and radio "soapies".

▪ Workshops for school principals, teachers and parents are required so as to make them aware of the constitutional rights of the learners as well as to equip school principals with the skills for dealing with non-payment of school fees. For example, the way teachers and parents treat children is as if they do not understand that children have rights and these rights have to be respected. There are teachers who still swear at the learners and use switches to punish them. There are also parents who do not care about the well-being of a child at all. These parents do not care whether the child does go to school or not. Some school principals do not want to accept that it is illegal to chase a child away from school if he or she did not pay the school fees. Therefore, the department of education should train some facilitators so as to visit schools and conduct some workshops concerning that.

▪ Parents have to be aware of the importance of paying the school fees, as well the problem of the learners that come to school with empty stomachs. The school should invite all the stakeholders to school so as to explain to them the situation of the school, which is, how the school suffers because of the non-payment of school fees and poverty. The principal and SGB should discuss the budget of the school with all other stakeholders, so that they may know exactly why the school is asking for school fees from the parents. Most school fails to do this and this is why most parents are reluctant to pay school fees. At times, parents think the school principals are abusing their monies, as it is in many other schools.

▪ The principals should try by all means to show or explain to parents that schools cannot function effectively without money, especially in order to meet the requirements of the new NRCS curriculum.

▪ The school principals should try to help parents to develop a sense of ownership of the school, so that their attitudes will improve towards paying school fees and protecting the school against vandalism, as well as developing a heart to give, especially those who manage financially, so as to

help those learners who come to school with empty stomachs. By doing so, I believe the education of their children will be realized and appreciated.

Some black parents, who are financially comfortable, send their children to the so called "White Schools" in the ex – department, outside the black areas where there are more than enough facilities such as libraries, computer laboratories and science laboratories. At such schools, black parents know exactly that a large amount of money is payable towards school fees every month and they are fully aware that if one fails to pay, legal steps will be taken against them. In black schools, some parents simply do not want to pay school fees even though they have money, and they get away with it.

What normally happens at black schools is that school principals, call parent meetings to address the non-payment of school fees. Usually the targeted parents do not come to the meeting and the meeting becomes ineffective. Each time a new meeting is called and it fails because those were present and have paid the school fees already do not see any reason to come again. And those who did come heard from those who were present and they do not come either.

I believe our school principals should call only those who owe fees. They should see the principal individually. By so doing one avoids any negative influence from each other as well as to get the real reason as to why one fails to pay school fees without embarrassing anyone. I truly believe this will definitely work as it does in the so called "White Schools". No one wants to be known by the crowd (in a meeting situation) that he or she can not afford fees. By being called individually, one feels being treated with love, respect and dignity, which is very much important for humankind.

5.3.4 STAKEHOLDERS

▪ The establishment of the school–community partnership is recommended so as to make it possible to deal with these three issues, namely the nonpayment of school fees, poverty and vandalism of schools. According to the South African School Act of 1996, there should be a

committee, comprising e.g. three teachers, a school principal, eight parents and two learners, trying to identify each and every challenge with relation to these issues as early as possible. The idea is to then make plans to rather act pro-actively than re-actively.

- Improvement of the relationship amongst some stakeholders in education will be to the advantage of the healthy and proper functioning of the school. A possible example is that the school could organize fund raising efforts in the form of fellowship by inviting parents at night for TEA and BISCUITS, which can be sold at the occasion. Parents should be encouraged to bring other family members. They can then have the opportunity to meet their children's class teachers. By so doing, I believe that the relationship amongst them can be improved. The main idea is to combine fundraising and acquaintance and to try to remove tension between teachers and parents.

- Training and workshops should be held to empower all stakeholders in education regarding educational laws. Therefore, a well-planned programme is required for such training and workshops. Effective teamwork effort is required to pursue that. SGB members attended training in 2001, which was organized by the Department of Education. At those training sessions, there were pamphlets that were handed out. In those pamphlets there were guidelines that were stipulating the duties and roles of SGB members. Even though everything that was written there was very good and meaningful, I never saw any good and special thing done by those SGB members. So in effect, they did not really succeed in practically applying what they learned.

I think it was too much for our parents to read, as some of our parents are not good readers and some are illiterate. Another problem was that there was no follow up from the government side. I believe for every thing that one is trying to establish, there should be a follow up so as to evaluate whether one has accomplished his or her goals. In essence the concept was good but it did not materialize because of the above reasons.

- Teachers and school principals can play an important role in fostering awareness of educational laws amongst stakeholders in education. This can

be done by holding an awareness day, whereby they invite the stakeholders for a well organized programme which is not long, but which focuses on educational laws. They should try their best to explain how important it is for a stakeholder to be aware of these laws, so as to avoid unnecessary conflict and   promote a healthy working relationship.

- Parents should gain more clarity on the different roles the SGB's should perform for the effective governance of the school, and for them to be well organized. Most SGB members are really not sure of their duties, especially in our black school areas. School principals are still continuing to do things as they wish, even though there are SGBs. So for example, school principals are still having the upper hand in terms of school money, even although this is not supposed to be like that. The danger to that is, some principals are sometimes found guilty of using the school's money for themselves personally. Therefore, training of SGB members has to be reconsidered. Its recognition and support by other education stakeholders should be encouraged, so as to make them effective in practice.

- Community members should be made aware of the importance of a school and should be educated to understand that it is a place of value that should be cherished and protected, as learners are educated there on how to be able to sustain and develop present and future communities and society in general.

- I am of the opinion that generally speaking, school principals and teachers try their utmost to convince the community members how important the school is, and that they should take good care of the school. At times when vandalism takes place at a school, the principal calls community members to see the damage, but this does not make any difference as the school continues to be vandalized, even though at the meeting they had promised to look after the school. Teachers will only hear rumours that people who had vandalized the school are known by the parents and are not staying far from the school, but they would never reveal their names as they are afraid of them.

▪ I am of the opinion that the officials from the department of education have been drawn into the struggle that teachers and principals have, due to the intense media coverage in recent weeks in Port Elizabeth. They now have to come down from their offices to the sites of the schools and assist the school principals to reach the people's hearts about the importance of schools. A possible way forward could be holding "Awareness Days", to which all stake holders around the school should be invited. A well planned and interactive programme, in collaboration with high level dignitaries in local and regional education, can be prepared for the day.

5.4   CONCLUSION

Most schools in the black areas are faced with serious challenges such as non-payment of school fees, poverty and vandalism. The participation and support of some stakeholders in education depend on the sound knowledge and understanding of educational laws in trying to bring about solutions on the issues in question (Pampallis, J, 1998: 234). Furthermore, support by political structures in our local communities is very important for the practical implementation of the educational laws as our community members serve on them.

Parents are part of any solution; but at the same time they can be part of the problem. Parents tend to abdicate their responsibility to teachers (Christie, 1998: 184). It should be clear to parents that they have an important role in the schooling of their children. Parents' input, ideas and perspectives are paramount to the development of the school.

Parents, teachers and communities must share the same important goals - to harness learners to become successful in school and life generally. They must work together to ensure that all learners have opportunities to become productive and law abiding citizens by taking good care of their school buildings and every public building that serves the society in their surroundings.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW SHEET

The following questions are the questions that I have asked to the three different school principals. I have used the same questions with all of them so as to maintain consistency in the research.

Before I asked questions to my respondents, I reminded them that all their answers would be held in strict confidence, especially in terms of sensitivity as well as that their identity would be anonymous, and would not be used when the research is published in journals. If someone was reluctant, I explained the procedure that I would use to assure confidentiality.

<u>Questions</u>

1.   What is the name of your school?

2.   What is the enrolment number of your school?

3.   How much does a learner pay for a school fees?

4.   Who decides on the amount that should be paid by parents for   school fees?

5.   How many of your parents your school manage to pay school fees?

6.   Explain the welfare of learners who are attending your school.

7.   How do you deal with the learners who seem to not to be taken care of at home?

8.   Is there a feeding scheme in your school?

9.   Who qualifies to get assistance froma feeding scheme in your school?

10. Do you encounter the problem of vandalism in your school?

11. If yes, how do you respond as a school to such problems?

12. What do you think could be the cause of vandalism in your school?

13. Tell me, what do you think could be the solution to these problems?