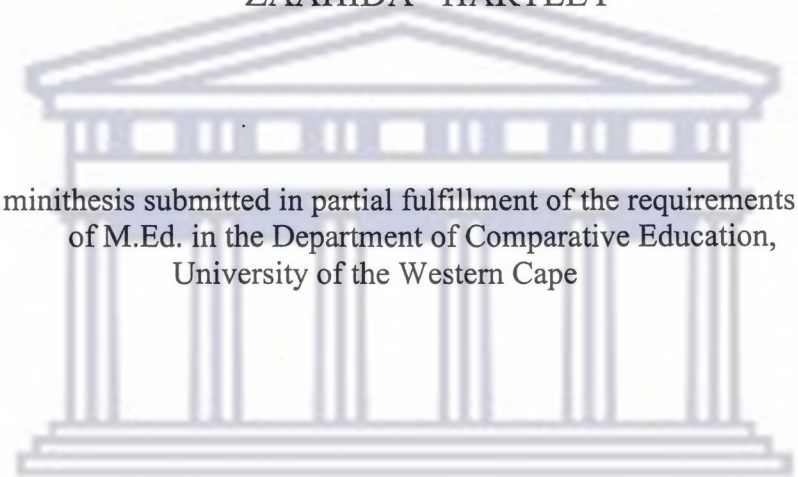
AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT 'PARTICIPATION' IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION POLICY TEXTS FROM 1980-1996

ZAAHIDA HARTLEY



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SUPERVISOR: Prof. Glenda Kruss

KEY WORDS

Community participation

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ABSTRACT

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HARTLEY, Z

M.Ed. minithesis, Department of Comparative Education, University of the Western Cape.

This minithesis traces the concept 'participation' in South African education policy texts from 1980-1996. Bowe, Ball and Gold's (1992) conceptualisation of the policy process guides the analysis in terms of the context of influence, the context of text production and the context of practice. In exploring the context of influence, the analysis focuses on the political, economic, social and ideological forces which have influenced the concept 'participation' in education policy texts in South Africa in three distinct periods, 1980-1990, 1990-1994 and 1994-1996.

In exploring the context of text production, the way in which the concept 'participation' is framed in the education policy texts which emerged in South Africa in each of the three distinct periods is analysed. It becomes apparent at this level of analysis that the concept 'participation' has a variety of meanings to the different policy actors due to their different ideologies and political histories. These range from the notion "community participation", "parental participation" and "parental community participation".

In terms of the context of practice, analysis is confined to the 1980-1990 period. Since People's Education was symbolic policy, the way in which it was implemented outside and in opposition to the apartheid state, is discussed.

In conclusion, the way in which 'participation' is framed in education policy texts post 1994 in South Africa represents a convergence of ideological positions. The education policies reflect both social democratic principles and the legacy of the reforming apartheid ideology.

DECLARATION

I declare that An analysis of the concept 'participation' in South African education policy texts from 1980-1996 is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

ZAAHIDA HARTLEY FEBRUARY 2002

SIGNED:.....

DATE :.....

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of this study

The demand for democratic participation in the educational arena in South Africa is not new. In fact it has a long history starting with the flight of the first slaves in the 17th century from their colonial masters to the intense and bitter student protests in the late 20th century (Sayed, 1997). Throughout this period the array of oppression and inequalities experienced by the dominated groups in South Africa were verbalised through public vehicles of literacy. Among these, schools with churches, religious organisations and the media, were the most prominent. Each of these gained prominence and legitimacy in giving 'voice' to the concerns of the oppressed population. In giving justification to these 'voices', specific sets of arguments were developed and strengthened in the late 20th century.

These arguments and concepts tried to express how the educational arrangements that were yearned for and which were essentially democratic, could be understood and conceived as realisable objectives. The concepts themselves related to the manner in which public institutions such as schools were held in relation to the 'people'. As a critique of the lacunae of governance mechanisms on the part of white minority regimes in South Africa (whose world-view did not provide for such a conceptual understanding) the oppressed population set it as a duty to remedy this shortcoming by being comprehensive in establishing what the norm should be. An absence of democracy in everyday life hence emphasised the need to reinforce such democracy. The absence of systems in which people were able to participate meaningfully in the education of their own children made it imperative to ensure that such conditions would never arise again if the oppressed population ever held the power to prevent it from recurring.

All the concepts which were perceived as a norm within the realm of traditional policy, particularly education policy, were turned upside down and challenged with alternatives. The most significant difference was that the new arguments that were

eventually consolidated as the most correct position and eventually formalised into principled concepts, emanated not from the traditional textbooks on policy but from real life experiences which oppressed people could relate to. This gave the concepts legitimacy and a trademark of progressive intentions. At each juncture in the history of the struggle for freedom, these concepts became more incisive, building on the historical legacy but also expanding as a result of new lessons from experience.

Central to the education struggles throughout the history of South Africa has been the demand that decision-making in school structures should include all sectors of civil society. This was an elaboration of the notion of joint participation where all stakeholders made a contribution or advanced concerns which were not merely limited to participation. It incorporated notions of co-operative governance by which each participant or constituent stakeholder participated to advance the cause of 'the people'. This demand was concretely manifested by forces operating outside state power and embodied in the policies of the People's Education Declaration in the 1980s and later in the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI, 1992). Consistent with the notion that the legitimacy of the state was framed through its relationship with the people and the way the people were incorporated into stakeholder institutions in which the principles of co-operative governance would be implemented, the forces outside of the state attempted to construct the initiatives of the state as 'illegitimate'. Drawing on classical radical literature, this notion of constructing a functioning order outside of the prevailing state powers was referred to as 'dual power', and many activists firmly believed dual power undermined the reforms that the state intended to introduce. The state responded to these demands through education policies such as the De Lange Investigation (1981), the White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa (1983) and the Education Renewal Strategy (1992). The history of the period until 1994 constructs the contestation in education policy discourse as those between 'the people' and the apartheid state.

Participation at institutional level in the education policies emanating from the forces operating outside of state power is broadly referred to as "community participation" (Sisulu, 1986; Sithole, 1994; NEPI Framework Report, 1992). Within the De Lange Investigation (1981), the state's response to the Investigation in the form of the White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa (1983) and the

Educational Renewal Strategy (1992), participation at institutional level is confined to 'parental communities', 'individuals', 'parents', 'teachers' and 'organisations in society' (Van Zyl, 1991).

The political and symbolic defeat of the apartheid system which manifested through the emergence of popular representation and the election of an ANC majority government in 1994, heralds a new phase in our understanding of education policy and its immediate and medium term trajectory. It is significant because the plurality of differences which formerly united groups and constituents against a common foe, was able to obtain a voice that gave expression to the nuances and programmatic differences which the need for unity masked. But the problems and conditions which required a response differed prior to 1994 from what began to emerge thereafter. The imperatives of 'governing' a country also seemed to have impelled a realistic approach by those in government about historically evolved policies, particularly within the education arena. Often the progressive agents in government still claim allegiance to historically evolved and constructed policies, but invoke the complexity of the period and the urgency of the response required as a crucial factor limiting their manoeuver with respect to education policies.

What notions of participation are advocated in the education policies that were produced since the abolition of apartheid? What are the shifts, shifting influences, continuities and discontinuities that gave rise to the form of participation in the education policy documents since 1994? As I did not have answers to these two questions, I decided to undertake a systematic probe into the education policies with regard to the concept 'participation'.

1.2 Focus of the minithesis

The research for the minithesis is located within the field of policy analysis. Within this field the research will be particularly focused on the reading and interpretation of the notions of 'participation'. In this regard the forms and implications of the education policies which emerged from the 1980s through to 1996 will be explored.

The education policy which emerged in 1996 was the South African Schools Act (1996).

Research and analysis is however not restricted to the education policy texts, but will also extend to influences or pressures which were related to the formulation of the education policy texts. Simplified, the approach is guided by the assertion that:

> ...an analysis involves more than a narrow concern simply with a policy document or text. We need to understand both the background and context of policies, including the historical antecedents and relations with other texts, the short and longer-term impacts of policies in practice (Bowe, Ball with Gold, 1992:44).

In order to identify and analyse the shifts and shifting influences with regard to the notions of 'participation' in education, the research takes the form of a tracer study. The adoption of this approach has been influenced by Ball's (1992) conceptual distinction of the policy process into three contexts which are referred to as the context of influence, the context of text production and the context of practice. To understand the context of influence, I look at the way in which the social, political, economic and ideological forces in South Africa have influenced the emergence and development of the education policies relating to participation. To illuminate the context of education policy text production, I look at the notions of 'participation' advocated in the key texts. In this regard, I am guided by the assertion that:

> ...policies are seen as representations which are encoded in complex ways (via struggles, compromises, authoritative public interpretations and re-interpretations) and decoded in complex ways (via actors' interpretations and meanings in relation to their history, experiences, skills, resources and contexts) (Ball, 1993:11).

Within the context of practice or implementation, I ascribe to the assertion that:

> Practitioners do not confront policy texts as naïve readers, they come with histories, with experience, with values and purposes of their own, they have vested interests in the meaning of policy...policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts (Bowe et al, 1992:17).

The context of practice is only dealt with in the period 1980-1990 as the focus is on the production of the education policy text with regard to 'participation' and not on the process of its implementation.

1.3 Research questions

Using Ball's conceptual framework of policy analysis and noting that policy actors represent various political ideologies and constituencies with different expectations and demands, I have researched the following questions:

- How is the concept 'participation' in school governance understood within the People's Education Declaration and the policies of the state in the form of the De Lange Investigation (1981) and the state's response to the Investigation in the form of the White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa (1983)?
- What notions of 'participation' are promoted in the policies of what Badat (1997) refers to as the Mass Democratic Movement and the policies of the state in the form of the Education Renewal Strategy (1992)?
- What notions of 'participation' are promoted as a result of the negotiated settlement in South Africa and the first democratic elections in 1994?
- To what extent does the key policy text, SASA (1996) embody the values and visions of each of the antecedent education policy texts?

In formulating the research questions, I was aware that different forces in different policy contexts impacted upon the demand for certain groups to participate in education. It is therefore an objective of the minithesis to probe the nature of the forces which influenced the education policy of participation and the way in which these forces have moulded the key policy text, SASA (1996).

1.4 The structure of the minithesis

The minithesis is divided into six chapters. Each chapter is briefly summarised below.

1.4.1 Chapter 2

I develop an understanding of the way in which different forms of participation (especially parental and community participation) in school governance are understood within the conceptual literature as well as within the different schools of thought. Various theories of 'community' are discussed. The chapter closes with a review of the literature on the different theories of policy and the policy process and explains the reasons for adopting Ball's (1992) approach for this analysis.

1.4.2 Chapter 3

Using Ball's (1992) conceptualisation of policy-making and the policy process, I trace the articulation of the concept 'participation' in the period 1980-1990. Within the context of influence, the social, political, economic and ideological conditions prevailing from the 1970s through to the 1980s are analysed in relation to the concept 'participation' in education. Education policy texts of the state as well as forces operating outside of state power are reviewed. The texts produced by the two major policy actors are analysed in the context of text production to illuminate the manner in which the ideologies of the policy actors are articulated. Finally, the context of practice reveals the way in which these articulations allowed for various interpretations of the concept 'participation' and highlights some of the difficulties which hampered participation.

1.4.3 Chapter 4

This chapter provides an analysis of the processes and policies which emerged in the period 1990-1994 with regard to the notion 'participation' in education. Thus, this

chapter focuses on the social, political, economic and ideological forces which impacted on the way in which the notion 'participation' was framed in the education policy texts. A shift in the discourses of the National Party and the forces operating outside of state power is identified. The chapter closes with the reasons each of the two policy actors had for decentralising the education system and how the two policy actors concept of 'community' and 'parental' participation differed as well as their reasons for the usage of these terms in their policy options.

1.4.4 Chapter 5

This chapter focuses on the period 1994 to 1996. I examine the context of influence and the context of education policy text production. With regard to the context of policy influence, I analyse the forces which influenced the form and content of the notion 'participation' in education. In terms of the context of education policy text production, I analyse the education policy texts which were produced between 1994 and 1996. These texts are analysed in order to trace the shifts, shifting influences and compromises which occurred with regard to the notions of 'participation' in education as it emerged and was finally articulated in the SASA (1996).

1.4.5 Chapter 6

I conclude the minithesis by summarising the shifts, shifting influences and compromises of South African education policy texts from 1980-1996 with regard to the notion 'participation'. The implications of the shifts and shifting influences as it emerged in SASA are reflected upon.

CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The concepts of "community participation", "parental participation" and "partnership" in school governance are always used in a positive manner. These concepts convey sentiments of moral responsibility and the commitment to building anew. Williams (1987:5) notes that the concepts 'community' and 'parental' are particularly favoured when used with the concept 'participation'. He thus notes that, "...unlike all other terms of social organisation...it seems never to be used unfavourably". Community and parental participation are then always used in a constructive way, but in order for community and parental participation in school governance to be effective, it must be supported and sustained when implemented. It becomes almost inconceivable that any individual or organisation within civil society can be opposed to it. Vincent (1996) similarly argues that the concepts of 'community' and 'parental', when used with auxiliary terms like 'participation', 'partnership' and 'empowerment' often imply equality, consensus, harmony and collective actions or endeavours. Edelman (1964) refers to these terms as 'condensation symbols' which means that the usage of these terms extract specific emotions which are always favourable. However, the exact meanings of these condensation symbols are never clearly defined. Thus over a period of time, the words gain assumed meanings which are seldom scrutinised or criticised.

Education policy documents of the National Party from the early 1980s to the 1990s in the form of the De Lange Report (1981) to the Education Renewal Strategy (1992) recognised the legitimate participants in education, especially in schools, as parents and teachers. Education policy documents of forces operating outside of state power in the form of the People's Education Declaration (1985) and the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI, 1992) recognised the need for parents, teachers, students and workers to be the participants in education. A variety of notions with regard to participation emerged in education policy documents post 1994.

The aim of this minithesis is to understand what the meanings of participation in school governance were in South Africa from 1980 to 1996, to examine the context

within which these notions emerged and to develop a framework for defining and analysing the education policy documents in which these notions are expanded.

As a starting point, I will review the literature on notions of participation, focusing specifically on 'community' and 'parental' participation in school governance. The way in which the concepts 'community' participation and 'parental' participation are used within the social democratic approach and the neo-liberal approach are examined. This is followed by a literature review on the concept 'community' in order to establish the way in which the notion 'community' is understood by various community theorists so as to develop a set of definitions of 'community'. The chapter ends with a discussion on policy and the way in which policy is defined. This is done to develop a framework for analysing education policy documents which emerged in South Africa from 1980-1996.

2.2 The emergence of the concepts 'community' and 'parental' participation in South Africa

The idea of 'community' and 'parental' participation in education re-emerged in South Africa and was given greater and more incisive elaboration by oppressed communities as their opposition to apartheid intensified. These oppositional struggles occurred particularly in the arena of education and the school was the site of these engagements. From 1980-1990 there was increasing emphasis on the need for parents and communities to participate in school governance, because it was believed that schooling under apartheid was ideologically discredited and was in the process of disintegration. It was further believed that apartheid education could only be removed and education given social relevance and purpose under the guidance of parents and communities in which the schools were located.

Participation in school governance occurs on various levels. In particular, this minithesis focuses on "community participation" and "parental participation" and the way in which each of these concepts are contested in education policy-making. Academic literature has ascribed a variety of different meanings to each of the terms "community participation" and "parental participation". Two main schools of thought

are relevant in this regard, namely the social democratic approach and the neo-liberal approach. The dissent in academic literature on the exact meaning attributable to these two concepts is further compounded by the fact that the concept 'community' participation is often used interchangeably with 'parental' participation. This alternation is inappropriate in view of the fact that there is a distinction between 'community' and 'parental' participation especially as it emerged in South Africa during the 1980-1990 period through forces operating outside of the apartheid state.

The purpose of this chapter then, is to define 'parental' participation and 'community' participation in a manner that is appropriate within the unique South African realm. Examining the meanings ascribed to these concepts by the social democratic and neo-liberal schools of thought will do this. This will establish an appropriate framework within which to examine education policy documents from 1980 to 1996 in order to understand the shifts, continuities and/or discontinuities in the political and social exigency and the manner in which shifts, continuities and/or discontinuities with regard to 'community' and 'parental' participation are reflected in education policy documents.

2.2.1 Conceptualising 'parents'

The literature on parental participation in school governance presupposes a definition of a parent (Goldring, 1997; Croft and Beresford, 1992; Schaeffer, 1992 and Sayed, 1997). The colloquial understanding of a parent, especially in terms of education, is one who has borne offspring as well as one who may not have physically borne offspring, but is legally responsible for the child/ren's education. The BBC English Dictionary (1992) defines 'parental' as "something that relates to parents in general or that relates to one or both of the parents of a particular child". My understanding of "parental participation" is the participation of a person/s who have borne offspring or is the legal guardian/s of children of school going age and therefore have the right to participate in some of the processes in the education of her/his child/ren. In school governance terms, the parent/s or guardian/s can participate in the governance of the school where her/his child/ren are learners.

The social democratic approach and the neo-liberal approach conceptualises "parental participation" differently.

2.2.2 Theorising "parental participation" within the social democratic approach

The social democratic approach gained currency in Britain after the Second World War. Within this approach, parents are citizens first and foremost. Implicit in the notion of citizenship is the notion of 'belonging'. In order to belong or have the status of citizenship conferred, one must be either born in a country to be a citizen of that country, or have chosen to become a citizen of that country through legal means. The status of citizenship carries with it formal rights and obligations which are derived from a sense of 'belonging' or by being 'included' (Dudley et al, 1999). The rights of a citizen include the right to participate in certain institutions, the most important being the right to participate in the electoral process.

This process of participation is further extended within a social democracy for citizens to be actively involved in institutions such as schools, churches and other institutions within civil society. This right to participate in institutions is to provide citizens with a sense of 'ownership' over institutions from which they were previously excluded or which they (citizens) perceived as alienating (Dale, 1989).

According to Dudley et al (1999) this sense of inclusion and belonging is not unproblematic. What needs to be asked is whether and to what extent certain citizens are excluded. Newton (1976) argues that within institutions and even state structures, some individuals or groups will have their voices heard while certain voices will be excluded. He comments that:

> ...some interests are difficult to aggregate while others are represented by organisations which, because of the social and economic position of their membership, have a weaker set of political weapons than opposing groups – consumers as against producers, tenants as against landlords, pedestrians as against motorist (Newton 1976:227)

It would be appropriate in a social democratic society based on a capitalist mode of production, to give a stronger and more overt priority to the role of teachers and education officials compared to parents or (in some instances), less empowered parents.

Lukes (1974) argues that within a social democracy certain issues may be excluded by decision-makers in a way that it may not provoke dissent from other less powerful citizens, or (in the case of education) the parents. He argues that through a process of maneouver the decision-makers may raise issues, but it will be done at a time that is in the interest of the decision-makers. Thus, powerful individuals or groups of decision-makers can exclude certain citizens or groups of citizens through a process of maneouver whenever it suits them. This cannot be said to be true in every situation, but it is a mechanism that can be applied especially when groups or individuals feel less powerful or when powerful groups fear that their position may be compromised or challenged.

Vincent (1996) argues that even when citizen participation is encouraged, the process is never straight-forward in that attempts to increase participation may prove to be illusory and participating limitations are designed in most cases so as to legitimise the actions of the organisation or institution. Thus "parental participation" may in theory mean that all parents who have children at a specific school have the right to participate in the management and functioning of the school. In practice, not all parents have the time, commitment or feel empowered enough to do so. Thus within the social democratic approach to school reform, a few individual parents who were previously excluded may be brought into the decision-making process, but more structures must be set up to include those who are excluded.

Newton (1976) in his study on voluntary groups in Birmingham shows that groups with the least radical aims, that is, groups who do not challenge the status quo of an organisation, were more encouraged to participate in institutions within civil society. He also notes that class, race and gender may be important factors in determining the willingness or ability of people to participate. Vincent (1996) asserts that although research in this area is sketchy, there is evidence to indicate that white middle class parents are more likely to participate in school structures and thus agrees with Croft

and Beresford (1992:33) that "typically participating schemes have mirrored rather than challenged broader oppression and discrimination". Thus, within the social democratic approach, there is acknowledgment that the gap between the rhetoric and reality need to be filled so as to make the role of parents as full citizens a reality in school governance. To achieve this, it is argued, fundamental changes need to be brought about and attitudes in the existing structures within civil society will have to be challenged.

2.2.3 Theorising "parental participation" within the neo-liberal approach

The neo-liberal approach gained currency in Britain in the 1970s. This approach differs from social democratic principles in many ways. To understand their differences, one needs to look at the way in which parents are perceived within this approach. The New Right conceptualises the citizen in terms of consumerism, which means the concept of citizenship is:

> ...essentially directed to promoting the individual persona and private autonomy of the individual, rather than citizenship in the sense of the relationship between the individual and the state or community (Oliver, 1991:160).

An awareness of and interaction between individuals are lacking and the possibility of parents interacting collectively to influence state institutions is diminished. One of the reasons for this is that parents are regarded as consumers who are free to exercise their power through their individual choice of a school. By the same token, individual parents are also entitled to withdraw their support from such school if they are not satisfied with the product (the school). The need for parents to act collectively in the interest of all children at a specific school is also diminished, as individual parents are concerned with the education of their own children first and foremost.

Hirshmann (1970) notes that parents within the market model are offered an 'exit' as opposed to a 'voice' which means that the opportunity to stay and work collectively so that the product (the school) can be improved is diminished. Kallaway (1997) notes that within this approach, the market becomes key as opposed to the social or

collective need. The market model of education assumes that because parents have a choice to exit, there will be consensus between the clients (parents) and the suppliers (educators) because the suppliers will always act in the interest of the clients.

Within the social democratic model of education, schools are seen as public institutions and are accountable to the stakeholders which include parents, teachers, learners, citizens and the state. Within the neo-liberal approach to education, schools are mainly accountable to the parents as the consumers or clients of education. Schools are compelled to respond to the 'wishes' of their customers through the operation of market forces. In its purest form, this model will work best in private schools where the service is supplied at full cost to those who can pay for it. However, the market model can also work in schools that are state subsidised but where parents can afford to pay additional costs.

Fiddler et al (1997) comment that for schools to be able to compete on the open market for clients, a number of conditions must be met. Firstly, a varied number of such schools must exist with the capacity to meet the requirements of the customers on a competitive basis. Secondly, there must be a demand for the service, which means that there has to be parents who can afford the service. Thirdly, an information system, which would adequately inform parents about the nature and quality of the service, must be in operation.

It is assumed within the market model that because parents pay for the service, the service is of a better quality than the normal public schools that are in most instances almost totally state funded. Goldring (1997) conducted research in schools in the United States and Israel to establish whether there is an increase in parental participation in schools of choice as opposed to ordinary schools which accommodate children from the geographical area in which they live. She refers to these schools as zone schools or state-funded schools. One of the reasons for the research was that proponents of schools of choice argue that parental choice will result in greater parental participation (Bryck and Driscoll, 1988). The study found that schools of choice attracted parents who were of a higher social class compared to zone schools, but similar patterns and degrees of parental participation occurred in the schools of choice as in zone schools. However, there was the perception amongst parents in the

schools of choice that they were more part of the decision-making processes than parents in zone schools. The parents in zone schools reported that zone schools offered them opportunities to be full partners in the management and functioning of the schools.

Critics of schools of choice argue that the parents in schools of choice do not have more opportunities than the parents in zone schools, but because they pay for the service in the schools of choice, they are under the impression that they have more opportunities or that they are in partnership with the educators of the school. This Goldring (1997) says is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because parents have invested capital which is associated with making a choice, they will therefore view the schools favourably even if there are no visible reasons for the choice to lead to satisfaction.

Within the social democratic approach, parents are citizens and have the right to participate in institutions such as schools. Parents are regarded as individual consumers of education within the neo-liberal approach and will act in the interest of their own children first and foremost. The concept of 'community' has a variety of meanings within the social democratic and neo-liberal approaches. The next section is a review of the international literature on the concept 'community'.

2.3 The international literature on 'community'

The international literature shows that the concept 'community' is often defined and understood in many different ways and each generates different meanings and interpretations of the concept. It is also evident from the literature that 'community' is never used in an isolated manner. It tends to generate auxiliary concepts, which extend the manner in which the concept is used. Concepts such as 'participation', 'involvement' and 'associations' are examples of the auxiliary concepts, which are generated through the application of the concept 'community'.

Community was conceptualised as a collectivity of social relationships in the work of Tonnies (1897), an imminent German social scientist and a contemporary of Max Weber. Tonnies developed a sharp distinction between Gemeinschaft (community)

and Gesellschaft (society). Gemeinschaft was seen as good because it was based on intimate social relationships. Common bonds existed because of friendship, neighbourliness or blood relations. Relationships were based on natural will, which meant that it existed because of the choices and decisions of individuals for it to exist. Given the definition of parents (as noted elsewhere in this chapter) and their participation in school governance, would a group of parents be classified as an example of Gemeinschaft? Tonnies (1897) referred specifically to a group of people sharing a geographical space and common bonds, like their offspring attending local schools. In this case parents and other members of the community would have a shared interest in the education of all the learners in the local area. This notion of community and parental participation could possibly apply to local areas where social, racial and class differences are negligible.

Gemeinschaft, according to Tonnies (1897), would be similar to the way in which parents as citizens are defined within the social democratic approach in that parents who have children at schools as well as non-parents who are citizens, have the right to participate in the activities of schools.

Gesellschaft (society) in contrast, was based on rational will. People associated with each other because there was something to be gained from it. In Gesellschaft, everyone was by her/himself and there existed a condition of tension against all others (Tonnies, 1897). The neo-liberal conceptualisation of parents is similar to Tonnies' (1897) concept of Gesellschaft in that parents act as individuals and in the interest of their own children first and foremost.

Tonnies identified Gemeinschaft with the European, pre-industrial rural village and assumed that Gemeinschaft consisted of relationships in which each person worked for the good of the whole. The most obvious criticism against this argument is that people sharing common territory and bonds do not necessarily live in harmony and the possibility of competitiveness existed and will continue to exist within rural villages as much as it does in capitalist societies. Also, Gemeinschaft need not only refer to rural people. Within an urban city, people can live in harmony, share common bonds and work for the benefit of all. Furthermore, Tonnies argued that the Gemeinschaft would diminish with the development of technologies, and thus give

rise to the Gesellschaft, which in a sense implies that technology is solely responsible for the isolation and competitiveness of humankind.

Tonnies' work was influential and had a strong hold on sociologists' writing in the early and mid-twentieth century, whose work largely concentrated on the loss of community (Vincent, 1996). Louis Wirth (1964) for example, argued in a similar vein as Tonnies in that he asserted that there would be a greater loss of primary relationships within urban settings due to the demands of city life. Herbert Gans (1977) however questioned this assertion and argued that the majority of residents in cities are relatively stable and permanent and that social networks exist among these residents which are based on shared ethnicity and social class. Gans' (1977) view of community has gained currency especially from the mid-twentieth century onwards.

A contemporary 'community' theorist, Hillery (1971) found ninety-four sociological definitions of the term 'community'. The majority of the definitions agreed that community should include social interaction, area and common bonds. Thus, based on Hillery's investigation, the overwhelming majority of 'community' theorists would define community as a group of people interacting and sharing geographical territory and common bonds. In earlier works, Hillery (1968) argues that in order to differentiate a community from the broader society and even the nation, it would be preferable to limit a community to a size. This would be consistent with the limitation placed on the parent community at a specific school. This limitation would make it easier for inhabitants and parents to have a diffused familiarity with the every day activities of the geographical area in which people live or in the case of parents, the area in which the school is situated. If parameters could be placed on the geographical area, global, national and metropolitan areas could be excluded from the definition of 'community' in the same way as a single household or an apartment block.

Thus, in order to extend and also limit the definition of 'community', certain basic functions need to be performed by the inhabitants who share a common geographical area. A 'community', unlike collectives like a school or an apartment block, is a social system in itself, a microcosm of society in which basic functions are performed like the provision of mutual support, the application of social controls and the participation of the inhabitants in events within a defined geographical area. This

definition of 'community' by sociologists, which Hillery (1971) studied, is probably the most common understanding of the term.

Hillery (1971) expands on the above definition by distinguishing between formal organisations and a community. Schools, factories, churches, political movements and professional organisations are examples of formal organisations. These organisations are characterised by their goals. For example, a factory usually consists of workers and management with each constituent having clearly defined roles. In a factory, workers are there primarily to earn a living, while management ensures that the organisation makes a profit. Likewise, in a school, parents are interested in the progress of their children and may develop an interest in the education of all learners. Thus, parents have a limited role in education. Furthermore, formal organisations have clear boundaries, in that a school or factory can only accommodate a certain number of students or workers occupying specific grades in the case of students and tasks in the case of workers. In a community however, goals and relations are more diffuse and encompass a larger aspect of the inhabitants' lives. A community, like the formal organisation, must be limited in size. Formal organisations are limited by their goals while a community is limited by geographical space.

Another community theorist, MacIver, (1950) distinguishes between a community and an association. His concept of 'associations' is similar to Hillery's 'formal organisations'. What distinguishes an association from a community is that an association exists because of the particular interests around which it is organised, for example the Parent, Teacher, Student Associations (PTSAs). Within a PTSA, each constituency will have a clearly defined role and purpose. A community on the other hand does not originally exist around a particular interest. One could ask why particular communities exist in the locality in which they do. Associations may also become temporary communities, for example, when the learners leave the school and new parents are elected to the PTSA. Another example of a temporary community in South Africa would be the Dutch community. When the Dutch arrived at the Cape in the seventeenth century they were organised around a particular interest, purpose, goal and mission and thus formed an association. At the same time, they were compelled to share a common territory or geographical area and created their own communities, in that they performed basic functions, like participating in mutual

religious events, and protecting themselves as a group from the perceived threats posed by the indigenous people. They were thus forced to live together as a temporary community and perform common rituals and functions whilst isolated from their original base for a period of time.

There are also borderline communities, for example prisons, in which the inhabitants are territorially based and share social living and interaction. MacIver (1950) defines a community as a group of people who share a geographical area and sentiments. For MacIver (1950), the basis of a community is that it facilitates the possibility of living one's life completely within it, whereas one cannot live one's life entirely within an association or within a formal organisation. Community sentiment, which implies an awareness of sharing a common way of life, can however also be found within an organisation or an association. Thus, from MacIver's (1950) definition of community, it is unclear what the parameters of a community are and how it differs from an association or even a temporary or a borderline community.

The community theorists discussed here would all agree that territory is a common element for community. By the same token, a school is also a common element for community. Parental participation is only possible because schools exist. However, community ties and a sense of belonging do not necessarily presuppose living together. What comes to mind is the 'academic community' whose interests and work may be similar, but members of this group are not restricted to a territory. One can however refer to the academic community of a specific university, town, city, country or the world.

The non-territorial approach has gained recognition as a result of modern advances in technology, especially communications. With the reduction in or absence of territory, clear boundaries, however defined, would be one of the major properties that differentiate it from other social groupings.

Anderson (1983) in defining a 'nation', uses the term 'nation' and 'community' interchangeably. He argues that communities, like nations, are imagined in that no matter how small a nation or community is, all the inhabitants will never meet or know each other, yet in the minds of each of the inhabitants lives the image of a

community. His concept of 'nation' and 'community' refer to physical space and one detects that there exists in his concept of nation and community, a need for people to belong. He argues that regardless of the inequality and exploitation that exists within a nation or community, there is a "deep horizontal fraternity that makes it possible...for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as to be willing to die for such limited imaginings" (Anderson, 1983:7).

A range of competing notions of 'community' is evident from the literature review. These competing definitions on community allow me to identify notions of 'community' which are dominant and those which are marginalised when analysing education policy texts.

2.4 Concluding the debate on 'parental' and 'community' participation

I have examined the way in which the notions of 'parent' and "parental participation" are understood within the social democratic approach and the neo-liberal approach. Within the social democratic approach, the notion of parents as citizens is emphasised whilst parents are seen as individual consumers within the neo-liberal approach.

A review on the literature of community reveals that the majority of international theorists reviewed agree that geographical space is an important requirement for a group of people to be defined as a community. The concept 'community' in the South African education context will be reviewed in the next chapter. However, the most common use of the concept 'community' in South Africa pre 1994 broadly referred to a group of people sharing a common territory and similar race, class and social positions. Parents would be a subset of the community, but in school governance terms, their children may attend a school outside of the geographical area in which they live. Thus the parent community may refer to those parents whose children attend a particular school, irrespective of whether the school is located inside or outside the geographical space in which the parents reside.

2.5 Conceptualising 'policy'

Cunningham (1963) states that policy is a bit like an elephant in that both are easily recognisable when seen, but when asked to describe or define either, it would be very difficult. Realising that describing or defining policy is a difficult task, I will review the literature to discover how various writers define policy. From the literature review, I hope to develop a definition of policy which will allow me to analyse education policies on participation in South Africa.

Ball (1994) argues that in order to examine policy, one must be able to conceptually define it because very often the term policy is used to describe very different things. One's interpretation and understanding of policy will determine how it is researched and how the findings are interpreted. Within the literature on policy, two broad strands of thought can be discerned. These two schools of thought are referred to as the functionalist, traditionalist or rationalist approach on the one hand and the political, deconstructionist or critical analyst approach on the other. For the purpose of this minithesis, I shall refer to it as the functionalist and critical schools of thought.

2.5.1 The functionalist approach for analysing policy

According to Taylor et al (1997), the functionalist paradigm of society is that members of society are bound together because of a shared or common value system. These values which members share will lead to order and stability in society. In terms of education, the functionalist sees the education system as a vehicle to maintain order in society. Thus the role of education within the functionalist paradigm is to reproduce society again and again from one generation to another in more or less the same fashion. Taylor et al (1997) assert that the ideas of functionalism are a reflection of a positivistic approach to knowledge, which in a nutshell means that a policy problem can be solved scientifically. Badat (1992), a South African writer on policy, claims that the education policies developed by the National Party (NP) from 1990–1992 were based on the functionalist approach to policy. Badat further argues that these policies were presented as the result of a scientific investigation, which were conducted by neutral experts. What 'neutral experts' mean is that the researchers used

a scientific approach to policy analysis and that they were unbiased. This point will be picked up later when education policies are analysed.

Another South African policy writer, De Clerq (1997:127) notes that within the functionalist paradigm, an education policy exists "to restore the cohesiveness, order and functionality of society". Thus, policies within the functionalist paradigm exist because a problem has occurred and as a result a policy has to be produced to resolve the problem. This notion of policy is reflected in the work of other writers on policy who identify with the functionalist school of thought. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) for instance, define policy as 'decisions of government'. Another functionalist, Harman (1984) defines policy as:

> The implicit and explicit specification of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognised problem or matter of concern, and directed towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired set of goals. Policy also can be thought of as a position or stance developed in response to a problem or issue of conflict, and directed towards a particular objective (Harman, 1984:13).

The definitions of policy offered by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) and Harman (1984) do not reflect the politics involved in the recognition of an educational problem. Their definitions give the impression that there is general agreement about the problem and that a policy can then be generated in order to rectify the problem. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) place the state at the centre and thus downplay the role played by social, economic, ideological and political forces in shaping the policy.

Some South African writers on policy share this view. Robert Schire (1978:176) a South African academic reflecting on the policy-making process during the National Party rule, describes policy as "nothing more than a large number of ad hoc decisions and actions taken and implemented on an informal basis".

Within this approach to policy, there exists two major groups or forces in the policy-making process. These two groups consist of individuals and groups on the one hand and the policy-makers on the other. The former group would want to influence the latter so as to ensure that policy decisions are made in their interest. The latter group,

the policy-makers, are those individuals who occupy formal roles within the polity and who, because of their positions within the legislature, are entitled to make decisions binding upon society. Within this approach, policy is formulated at the top by policy-makers, and then filtered down by a chain of implementers.

A major critique of this approach to describing policy is that it does not question the roles and ideological positions of the policy-makers. Neither does it show how the policy-makers came to be in their positions or whose interests they serve. Furthermore, it does not explain how the individuals and groups are constituted, neither does it state why and in which way they do in fact influence the decisions of the policy-makers. In a nutshell, the approach to describing and defining policy within the functionalist approach does not take the complexities of the total system as represented by the political, ideological, economic and social system into account (Ball, 1990). Also, the history and the context within which the policy emerged are not catered for within this approach.

Ball (1990:15) asserts that an approach to describing policy in which the state takes centre stage, "cannot tell us where educational change comes from, that is, how the notion of what is appropriate, rather than possible, is established".

2.5.2 The critical approach for analysing policy

Policy is defined very differently within the critical approach. Ball who refers to himself as a critical deconstructionist, argues that the task of the political analyst is to take things apart in order to understand the social, political and economic context and consequences of the policy. His approach to policy and policy analysis is 'pragmatic and eclectic'. Thus, his approach to analysing education policies takes the form of deconstructing it so as to understand where it comes from, what the values are that underpin the policy, whose voices were not heard and why and also how relevant the policy would be in practice. How then does Ball (whose work has been influential and provides useful conceptual tools) define policy?

Ball (1992) defines policy as product (the text), a process and a discourse. As a product, the authors of policy can never control the way in which the text is interpreted and a variety of understandings will exist which may affect the way the policy is implemented. The variety of meanings may constrain implementers but it can also generate new and creative meanings and interpretations. Taylor et al (1997:15) take this further and assert that to view policy as a formal document is to overlook the "nuances and subtleties of the context which gave the text meaning and significance". The text must therefore be viewed as a product of a variety of compromises which were fought over at all levels. Thus policy as text is dynamic and interactive and not merely a set of 'ad hoc' decisions or instructions. The text has a history, which needs to be analysed so as to understand the reasons for the policy choices. Ball argues that the process through which the text is arrived at must reflect 'the messy realities' and the 'evolving chaos' and it should reveal how the policy 'foregrounds and backgrounds' certain values and whose interest the allocated values represent.

2.6 Adopting an appropriate approach to describe policy

The functionalist approach to describing policy is not considered for a variety of reasons. Firstly, within this approach the state or its functionaries take centre stage in developing or formulating policy. The education policies which emerged in the period 1980-1990 in South Africa were not all initiated by the state but emerged as a result of the authoritarian role of the apartheid regime. Secondly, the definition of policies within this approach does not explicitly refer to how policies are produced and the processes involved. The messy realities and the complexities of the process are not reflected upon. This approach is therefore problematic as one would not be able to establish the value-laden nature of policies (Taylor et al, 1997) or what Ball refers to as the micro-politics of policy. By focusing my analysis not only on the produced texts, but also on the processes involved, I show how the education policy allocates, foregrounds and backgrounds certain values and whose interests the allocated values seem to represent.

Within the functionalist approach to policy analysis, there thus exists an assumption that the policy process is straightforward and uncontested. The history of the text as well as the ideological positions of the major role players, which Ball (1990) refers to as the power sources, need to be analysed so as to understand whose values were allocated in the text. Since policies are never new, but draw from existing ones, I need to understand the discontinuities, omissions and compromises underlying the policies as well as those policies without pedigree and shots in the dark. The tensions and ambiguities which emerged or are absent in the different policy texts are also invaluable (Ball, 1993).

Ball and Taylor guide me in that policy involves the production of a text, the text itself and the ongoing modifications to the text as well as the processes from the time the policy appears on the agenda through to practice. In this regard Taylor et al (1997) assert that policy is not just a text, but involves processes before it appears on the agenda through to the articulation of the texts and these processes will continue even after the text has been produced. These processes involve contestation right from the beginning and these are played out to see whose values are validated and which groups will benefit as a result of the policy. Thus the 'messy realities' (Ball, 1990:9) and 'evolving chaos' (Brieschke, 1989:305) must be acknowledged in the policy process. Ball refers to this process as cyclic.

With this definition of policy, I am able to analyse the socio-economic and political context in which the texts emerged, the texts itself and how the texts are to be implemented. This will be done with specific reference to the notions of 'participation' in education.

Ball's (1992) theoretical approach for analysing policy and patterns identifies three primary policy contexts. Each context consists of a variety of fields and actions. The production of policies is seen as cyclical and consists of three interrelated contexts. These contexts are: the context of influence, the context of text production and the context of practice.

2.6.1 The context of influence

It is within the context of influence that public policy is initiated and policy discourses are constructed. Interested parties struggle to influence the definition and social purpose of education and what it means to be educated (Bowe et al, 1992). In this context different pressure groups as well as policy actors try to develop concepts and discourses that are to permeate the policy process and the subsequent text(s). Thus it is within the context of influence that key policy concepts are established. Bowe et al (1992) argue that the context of influence has a symbiotic and uneasy relationship with the next level, the context of text production.

2.6.2 The context of text production

It is here that specific policy texts are articulated. Usually or very often they are articulated in the same or similar language used by those at whom the text is aimed. In the case of People's Education (a symbolic text), the policy or choices were articulated for a specific group of people, whereas the South African Schools Act, (a legislative text) was for all South Africans. However it should be noted that policy is not completed at the legislative moment, but evolves in and through the texts that represent it (Bowe et al 1992). This context can be the messiest of the three contexts in that all parties involved would like to see their meaning and their positions reflected in the ultimate text. Both Ball (1994) and Taylor et al (1997) argue that the text should be read and understood with and against other texts and sources and in relation to the time and the particular site of its production.

2.6.3 The context of practice

It is at this level that an understanding develops of how groups negotiate the texts and discourses, how they understand it and the meanings they promote therein. Those who must implement the policy will interpret it in a variety of ways. There will be a variety of meanings and understandings of the text as there are a variety of conceptions and interpretations of the world. Those who must implement the policy confront the text from the basis of their own experiences, their history of struggle and their ideological positions. Thus, for any text, a plurality of readings and readers exist.

The plurality of readings and meanings is not really harmful, as new ideas can be developed and tested.

Ball sees policy as having 'effects' rather than 'outcomes'. Because the policy process is complex and messy, it is very often difficult to predict what the effects of policy will be or to know what the effects are and what they mean in practice. Also, very often, policy as texts has material or other constraints which manifest in the arena of practice.

2.6.4 The framework for policy analysis

In concluding the discussion on the definition of policy and the policy process, I will use the notion of policy as a text, a discourse and a process. I will use the notion of policy texts to refer to the education policy documents which were produced from 1980 to 1996. The concept of discourse will be used to explain human agency in the textual construction of policy texts. The process of policy will be used to understand how participation in school governance was understood in the policies of the period 1980-1996 and whether there have been shifts, continuities or discontinuities in the policy documents that emerged. Using this conceptual framework for policy analysis and understanding participation, the research was guided by the following questions:

1. How is the concept of 'participation' in school governance understood within the discourse of People's Education and the policy of the state that emerged in the form of the De Lange Report? What was the context of influence in the 1970s and the 1980s that laid the conditions for the policy debate around participation in school governance? What was the context of text production within the People's Education Movement and the De Lange Commission? What was the context of practice around People's Education and the state?

2. What notions of 'participation' are promoted in the policy texts of 1990-1994? The key policy texts are the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) and

the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS). What characterised the context of influence and the context of text production for these texts?

3. What notions of 'participation' are embodied within the South African Schools Act (SASA)? Are these notions of 'participation' similar to the notions enshrined in the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI or are they similar to those enshrined in the De Lange Report and the Education Renewal Strategy? How do they represent continuities and shifts from earlier education policy texts?

CHAPTER 3: THE CONCEPT 'PARTICIPATION' IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION POLICY TEXTS FROM 1980 TO 1990

3.1 Framing the analysis

The previous chapter motivated for the use of Ball's conceptual approach to analysing the policy processes which emerged in South Africa during 1980–1996. The focus here will be specifically on the concept and discourse of 'participation' in education as it emerged within the De Lange Report and the competing education policies of the People's Education Declaration.

In terms of Ball's approach to policy analysis, emphasis is placed on the role of the policy actors and the interest groups during the evolution of policy. Because the policy actors represent different constituencies and there exist competing ideologies between and within these constituencies, the policy process is "inherently messy, ambiguous, unpredictable and conflict-provoking" (Henry, 1993:102). The process of policy becomes a political platform through which a competing language unfolds to give the policy meaning and legitimacy. In this regard, Codd (1988:235) argues that "fundamentally, policy is about the exercise of political power and the language that is used to legitimate that process".

This analysis will emphasise the language used by the policy actors in the two competing political camps as well as within each camp. It will also be mindful of Taylor et al's (1997) rule on policy analysis which states that in order to analyse policy effectively, the policy analyst must be aware of the contrasts between reform and change. Neither are neutral terms and have a variety of meanings. Henry (1993:104) asserts that because reform and change have a variety of meanings, analysis of policy is a "value laden activity which explicitly or implicitly makes judgements as to whether and in which way policy helps to make things better". It is within this framework that Troyna (1994) lays emphasis on the need for critical approaches to policy analysis that does not only analyse what is going on and why, but also attempts to do something about it. Taylor (1997) drawing from Troyna,

asserts that the policy analyst must not only be concerned with the question of how progressive change might occur, but should also have the desire to illuminate alternative policy options which reflect this change. The task of the policy analyst then is to "examine the moral order of reform to existing patterns of social inequality, bringing to bear those concepts and interpretative devices which offer the best possibilities of insight and understanding" (Ball, 1994:2).

Ball's (1992) conceptual distinction of the process of policy will guide analysis to trace the articulation of 'participation' in school governance from the context of influence, to the context of text production and later to the context in which the text is implemented/practiced.

People's Education, however, was a symbolic policy that arose in opposition to state policy. It was therefore not possible for it to be implemented at school level in an extensive way. However, the way in which the policies of People's Education was (or was intended to be) practiced, will be briefly reflected upon at the end of this chapter.

3.2 The context of influence

Within the context of influence the social, economic, political and ideological conditions prevalent in South Africa are reviewed. In keeping with Ball's (1994) understanding of the process of policy analysis, the socio-economic and political factors need to be understood in order to make an informed assessment of the process of policy formulation. Badat (1992:21) agrees with this approach in that he argues that the process of policy should be situated within the "broader framework of national transformation". This is so, because "social factors set the agenda for policy-making" (Unterhalter, 1991:217). Alexander (1991), a South African educationist, argues that the crisis in education since 1976 cannot be traced or understood in isolation from the socio-economic and political developments in the rest of Southern Africa.

The history of and resistance to Bantu Education and the Bantu Education Act of 1953 of the NP is well documented (Alexander, 1991; Hyslop, 1988; Kallaway, 1984 et al). The conditions that were prevalent in South Africa will be briefly sketched as the socio-political and economic conditions that gave rise to the articulation of communities and parents forming the basis of participation in school governance. The notion of 'community' participation found expression in the People's Education Declaration from 1985 onwards, but this demand was not new and the period prior to 1985 needs closer examination.

3.2.1 The political, economic, social and ideological conditions in South Africa in the 1970s

In the 1970s, Bantu Education relied on two factors. Firstly, the state needed to control blacks through an education system that was authoritarian and repressive. This was in line with its apartheid ideology which was designed to preserve the power, privileges and interests of white people. Secondly, the state tried to reform the education system of blacks. This, Alexander (1991) argues was because foreign capital was withdrawing from South Africa due to the state not modernising apartheid fast enough as dictated by foreign capital. The latter feared a political revolution that would topple the capitalist system and thus freeze their investments.

Both the repressive and reformist policies of the NP were designed to maintain the apartheid social order (Unterhalter, 1991). The reformist strategies of the state also took the form of expanding education for blacks. Unterhalter's (1991) statistical analysis of black education and state spending reveals the following. During the period 1953-1960, there was a negligible increase in state spending on black education, despite the expansion in black enrollment. In fact, per capita expenditure decreased from 1953-1960. Subsequently, there was a marginal increase in state per capita expenditure in black education while the per capita expenditure increased markedly for the other race groups through to the 1970s.

From 1970 to 1980 there was, however, a drastic increase in state expenditure on black education and a less dramatic increase in the expenditure on education for the

other race groups. The increase in state expenditure must not only be viewed in terms of the drastic increase in student enrollment from the 1970s onwards, because the period 1953-1960 also showed an increase in black enrollment, but not in state expenditure. Unterhalter (1991) argues that during the period 1953-1960 the state had no intention to reform apartheid. A high dropout rate and minimal schooling for black children were desirable, therefore very low economic and political priorities were given to black education during this period. The increase in spending on black education must be viewed within the reformist policies of the NP during the 1970s and 1980s in general.

Unterhalter (1991) argues that from the 1970s onwards the state tried to modernise apartheid. The modernisation of apartheid took many forms, but analysis will concentrate on the effects it had on education. On the one hand, spending on black schooling increased, but this expansion took place mainly in Bantustan areas. Hyslop (1988) argues that this resulted in black workers who lived in cities, having to send their children to attend schools in Bantustan areas as the education facilities were seen to be better. For example, the teacher-learner ratios were lower in schools in Bantustans than in black urban areas. Later, these young adults would be excluded from the urban labour market because they did not possess the necessary documentation to work in non-Bantustan areas. This was due to the laws on which apartheid was based as legislated under the Population Registration Act of 1950 and the Group Areas Act of 1950. In this way the state was seen to be reformist by providing better education facilities to blacks in the Bantustans. Through its repressive laws, on the other hand, it became very difficult (if not impossible) for young people from the Bantustans entering the labour market, to enter the cities. In this way, the state protected white unskilled and semi-skilled workers from competition in the non-Bantustan areas.

Furthermore, the reformist strategies of the state included an increase in the education facilities even for blacks in non-Bantustan areas in the 1970s. Conversely, the repressive strategy was the insistence that Afrikaans be used as a medium of instruction especially in those subjects which students were required to pass in order to gain entry into university or other tertiary institutions (Hyslop, 1988). The state's insistence on Afrikaans as a medium of instruction effectively made it difficult for

black students to obtain entrance to tertiary institutions. The majority of black students and teachers did not know the language well and this made schooling more difficult. Also, Afrikaans was seen by the oppressed as "the language of the oppressor" and therefore elicited resistance from the oppressed to its use (Bickford-Smith et al, 1995: 146).

In addition to the above factors, there was a drastic increase in unemployment especially among black and coloured workers during the early 1970s. Alexander (1991) argues that the high unemployment rate amongst black workers was partly due to foreign capital fearing an overthrow of the apartheid regime and therefore withdrawing from South Africa. The state's labour policies that disfavoured black workers also added to the high rate of unemployment amongst black and coloured workers.

A combination of these and other factors led to the student uprising in 1976 (Alexander, 1991; Hyslop, 1988; Kallaway, 1984 et al). The unequal and inadequate education facilities affected students directly. A factor which indirectly affected black students was the diminishing employment opportunities due to the state's repressive strategies mentioned above. Simultaneously, the victories of FRELIMO in Mozambique and Angola in 1975 inspired many students to challenge the South African regime. These victories on the borders of South Africa led to an increase in political awareness of black students and workers (Bickford-Smith et al, 1995).

3.2.2 The state's response

The state responded to the 1976 student uprising by expanding education opportunities for black students. Oertel (1981) stated that immediately after the 1976 uprising, the following expansion took place in Soweto:

> Buildings were repaired, classrooms upgraded, additional classrooms built at existing schools, and thirteen new schools will have been built by the end of 1978. There has also been an effort to upgrade teachers' qualifications...(Oertel, 1981).

The expansion of education must be seen within the reformist-repressive context of the National Party. In fact, whilst expansion took place in education, the status quo (the social fabric of society) remained intact. Motala et al (1999) argued that the expansion was not linked to an increase in quality. Quantitative expansion was thus delinked from qualitative expansion. Evidence of this was the presence of the repressive state machinery (in the form of the South African Defence Force) which remained in the black townships. Also, the uncompromising position of the state was reflected in a statement from the Deputy Minister of Bantu Education in his address to parliament in 1976, where he reasoned:

> Why should blacks be allowed in schools if they do not want to be taught in the language chosen by the Government? (The Sowetan, as in Ndlovu, 1998)

3.2.3 The political, economic, social and ideological conditions in the 1980s

Despite the expansion of education facilities in the aftermath of 1976, student unrest continued. Of particular importance were the student boycotts at the end of 1980, which took place mostly in coloured schools in the Western Cape (Davies, 1984:356). The 1980 student boycott affected as many as 60 000 coloured youth demanding a non-racial education system and free and compulsory education for all South Africans. The state feared that the boycott of 1980 would give rise to a new generation of radical coloured youth who would form an alliance with the already politicised black youth (Davies, 1984). What is noteworthy is that during the 1980 school boycotts, the students situated their protests within a broader political context. An example of this was that black and coloured students supported various campaigns that were waged by workers, such as the 'red meat boycott' and the 'Free Mandela Campaign'.

It was a combination of factors such as the continued student boycotts, the withdrawal of foreign capital and increasing international sanctions, as well as the demand by capital for a more skilled labour force, that the current education system was unable to provide, which moved the state to seek alternatives.

The early 1980s witnessed a slump in the economy as a result of the astronomical debt that the NP had incurred in its desire to reform apartheid. An example of this reform was the formation of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983 in which Indians and coloureds were allowed to vote in separate houses of parliament. The white house of parliament had more power than the other two houses and could stop the Indian and coloured houses from passing laws. At the time the gold price dropped, inflation increased and the NP was faced with an increase in foreign disinvestment and a widening of international sanctions. The national problems facing the NP were the continued student boycotts in the early 1980s and the re-emergence of organisations which opposed the state.

Of particular importance were the United Democratic Front (UDF) which was formed in 1983 and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which was formed in 1985. Initially, the UDF was formed as a response to the NP's Tricameral Parliament, while COSATU was formed to provide a political platform for workers, particularly black and coloured workers. Both these organisations were political in orientation and ultimately fought for the dismantling of apartheid as well as capitalism. The speeches of the leadership within these organisations stressed that freedom and democracy could not co-exist within a capitalist society. Thus, both the UDF and COSATU not only fought against apartheid, but also had a socialist agenda which was aimed at bringing about the demise of capitalism. These trends will be discussed in more detail when examining the context of text production, but first the way in which the state responded to these challenges need closer examination.

3.2.4 The state's response

In the 1980s, the state desperately needed to reform the education system so as to prevent the continued politicisation of black and coloured students. The state also needed to allay the fears of foreign investors who were continuing to withdraw from South Africa due to the political unrest. The state initially attempted to resolve the education crisis by deploying its repressive apparatus, but a more reformist strategy slowly emerged which Davies, Chisholm and Buckland (1984) argue was mainly prompted by the needs of capital. Major corporations in South Africa such as the

Chamber of Mines, the Association of Chambers of Commerce and the Federated Chamber of Industries urged the state to change the apartheid system.

Davies (1984) argues that the reform initiative urged by capital was motivated by the fact that students were not only opposing apartheid education but were also linking their struggle against capitalism. Capital thus insisted that certain reforms be introduced. Examples of the reforms were, the lifting of the 'colour bar' which prevented blacks from occupying certain positions in the work place and also an improvement in the living conditions of blacks. These changes would, as it was perceived by big corporations, "stimulate the economy and produce an enlarged urban middle class which would be supportive of the free enterprise system" (Davies, 1984:345).

Thus, during the early 1980s, the state was urged to reform its education policies to support the creation of this middle class black elite who would have a stake in the economy and so be depoliticised. Davies (1984) refers to this process of reform as the 'embourgeoisement' of urban blacks in particular, while subjecting rural blacks to increasing control.

This process of 'embourgeoisement' of the 1980s was the reverse of the reform which took place in the 1970s where the state expanded education facilities in Bantustan areas. Davies (1984) argues that the expansion of education opportunities for blacks in the urban areas in the 1980s would only benefit the minority of blacks who were given permanent status in white urban areas. This would result in a future black middle class who would be granted access to open schools and universities. The role of capital in the 'embourgeoisement' of blacks is well documented (Kallaway, 1984; Molobi, 1986; Davies, 1984 et al). As noted by Davies (1984), the state was unsuccessful in its attempts to create a stable black middle class as student unrest and economic boycotts continued.

It was a combination of these social forces which set the scene for the state to initiate new education policies (Badat, 1992). In June 1980 the state commissioned an independent, but state funded body, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to review the education system in South Africa. This investigation became known as

the De Lange Investigation, named after the person who chaired it (Van Zyl, 1991). The key text (the De Lange Report), with regard to the notion 'participation' which it enshrines, is analysed in Section 3.

Thus far the political,economic, social and ideological conditions which prevailed in South Africa during the 1970s and 1980s have been analysed. This was not done in great detail, but only to provide a description of the context of influence of the conditions that gave rise to policy texts that enshrined notions of 'community' and 'parental' participation in school governance. The next section describes the way in which the forces operating outside of state power responded to the state's reformist/repressive strategy.

3.2.5 The response of forces operating outside of state power

In 1985 the Soweto Civic Organisation, which was concerned with local issues relating to people who shared common interests and geographic space, like increases in rent or busfare, called a meeting to discuss the crisis in education. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the educational issues in the light of the approaching year-end examinations and the unpreparedness of students as a result of the school boycotts of 1985. Of particular importance here was that a civic organisation (as a community organisation) was taking up education issues. This meeting was banned by the state.

In October 1985, the Soweto Civic Organisation called a second meeting. It was at this meeting that the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee (SPCC) emerged. It would be interesting to know whether the SPCC as it emerged in 1985 consisted only of parents of students who were currently at school in Soweto. This cannot be discerned from the primary sources, but from the speeches and interviews of key role-players of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC), it is evident that an understanding existed that parents, workers, students and organisations opposing apartheid were all legitimate stakeholders in education (Sisulu, Molobi, Rensburg et al 1986). Rensburg (1986:45), for example, referred to the composition of the NECC

as consisting of "representatives from organisations specifically engaged in the education struggle".

The first task of the SPCC was to call a meeting with the state's regional Department of Education and Training (DET). The immediate demands of the SPCC were: the postponement of the end of year examination, the removal of the South African Defence Force (SADF) from the township and the schools in particular and the unbannning of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). DET officials argued that it was not within their jurisdiction to accede to the demands of the SPCC as it was the national government which had declared the state of emergency as well as the banning of political organisations.

Examinations were then scheduled to proceed on the prescribed date. On the first day of the examinations, the school principals called a meeting amongst themselves and took a decision not to administer the examinations. The DET then called an urgent meeting with the SPCC. It is interesting to note that the Minister who represented the security forces and the SADF, was present at this meeting. The Minister of Education emphasised that national demands could not be resolved at a regional level.

At this point the SPCC realised that they needed a national mandate from 'the people' in order to resolve the crisis at a national level. The concept of 'the people' in this context, referred to all those who were organised in political and community structures that opposed the apartheid state. Thus the education crisis as it emerged in Soweto, became a national issue and the SPCC broadened its base to include student organisations as well as organisations representing the 'community'. The community was broadly defined as organisations which opposed the apartheid state, like women, workers and teacher organisations.

The SPCC also held a meeting with the ANC (as a political organisation) but as they were banned in South Africa, the meeting was held outside of the country. The ANC urged students to return to school and to abandon the slogan 'Liberation first, Education later'.

The first National Consultative Conference was held in late December 1985 where the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was established. At this conference, the concept 'People's Education' emerged. It was also at this conference (as well as the subsequent one which was held in March 1986) that the notion of "community participation" in education emerged and was emphasised. At both conferences workers, students, residents, teachers, women as well as church and community organisations were represented. Many other concepts and ideas emerged from the Consultative Conferences, but the idea of unity between parents, students and the community as participants in education is the focus of analysis in the context of text production.

3.3 The context of text production

This section examines the manner in which policy texts centred on notions of 'community' and 'parental' participation developed, and how these concepts of participation evolved and were articulated in and through the texts. Ball contends that this is the messiest of the three contexts because the parties concerned with the policy texts compete to have their meaning and ideological positions reflected in the ultimate texts.

According to Ball, policy texts are usually articulated in the same language used by those for whom the policies are produced. The policy actors who represent the policy do not confine policy texts to formal legal documents only, but incorporate commentaries, speeches and interviews. Policy actors during interviews, press statements and speeches, can utter these policies. With People's Education being symbolic policy, the sources are critical. It was through the speeches, interviews and publications of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) that the education policy and the notions of 'community' and 'parental' participation in school governance which it enshrined, emerged. In order to analyse these, it is important to describe the way in which the concept 'community' was conceptualised.

3.3.1 Conceptualising 'community' in South Africa

In much of the South African literature (particularly the intellectual
of the 1980s) the concept 'community' was frequently used, but ne
defined (Sisulu, 1986; Sithole, 1994; Unterhalter, 1991 et al).
'community' was thus often assumed. In order to understand the concept and its multiple meanings, one has to understand the context in which it was used as well as the auxiliary concepts that accompanied its application. A review of the literature on People's Education, which emerged from mid 1985 onward in South Africa, depicts the intervention of communities to establish the claim that they (as well as parents) ought to form the basis of participation in school governance (Sisulu, 1986; Sithole, 1994; Rensburg, 1986).

From the position papers and resolutions taken at the national conferences on People's Education, the concept 'the community' is used interchangeably with concepts such as 'the nation' and 'the people'. Levin (1991), a South African academic reflecting on the discourse of People's Education, argued that it was not necessary to construct an all-embracing concept of 'community'. For Levin (1991) what needs to be asked is who constitutes 'the community' or 'the people' or 'the nation'. In answering this question, Levin (1991) sees the 'community' as a subset of 'the people' or 'the nation'. Following this logic, 'parents' would then be a subset or constituent part of the 'community'. The 'community' and 'parents' would be constituted in the same way as 'the people', but 'parents' would be a smaller social grouping with more specific education demands.

In South Africa, because of the historical patterning of residential areas under apartheid, it was possible for the majority of the oppressed and disenfranchised population to share a common history of racial and class oppression. While it was possible to view geographical residential spaces as being segmented partially along class lines, these spaces nonetheless remained highly racialised. This fused a multiple coalition of the oppressed against the apartheid regime. Consequently, it was inevitable that a group of people sharing a common history of class oppression also shared a common geographical space. This group could therefore be defined as

a community. Thus, a community consisted of a wide range of groupings, such as parents, non-parents, students, workers and so on.

Parents are assumed to be a subgroup of the community, who in turn, is a sub-group of the nation. Members of a nation are potential members of a particular community within that nation. Non-members of that nation would therefore not qualify for membership of the communities constituting that nation. Defining that nation therefore becomes the first crucial step in ultimately determining who qualifies for membership of the communities constituting that nation. In 1910, General Smuts, the leader of the ruling party in South Africa commented as follows on the nature of the South African nation:

> We are going to create a nation, which will be of composite character, including Dutch, English, Germans and Jews and whatever nationality seeks refuge in this land – all can combine (Hancock, K as in Mashamba, 1990:10).

The concept 'the nation' was thus legislatively underwritten to refer exclusively to those who were classified as white in South Africa. It was this understanding of the nation which was incorporated in all of the National Party policies throughout its history.

Within the spectrum of the oppressed sector of South African society, a radically different understanding was attributed to the concept 'the nation'. The literature of the African National Congress (ANC) which emerged in 1912 shows that 'the nation' and 'the people' were used interchangeably and referred to all South Africans, black and white (Levin, 1991; Mashamba, 1990; Kallaway, 1984). This notion was embodied in the Freedom Charter of 1955.

In the 1960s, the substance of thought changed within the ANC literature. 'The people' no longer referred to all South Africans, but to those who were oppressed under apartheid and to whites who identified with the struggle against apartheid. Within the Pan African and Black Consciousness traditions which emerged in the 1960s as a breakaway from the ANC, 'the nation' and 'the people' referred to all those who identified with being African and thus excluded those who owed allegiance to any other country outside of Africa. These traditions gave emphasis to

an anti-colonial and anti-imperialist identity and attempted to construct an identity of Africanism.

Despite the political differences between these two traditions, the notion of 'the people' and 'the nation' (of which the community is a subset) unites a wide range of social, political and economic categories that appeal to the population. The population is organised in a range of ways to substantiate these categories. Theoretically then, in terms of the literature of the major political organisations opposing apartheid in South Africa, what 'the people' and 'the nation' share are their antagonism towards apartheid, their desire for democracy and freedom and their allegiance to Africa.

Having analysed the concept 'community' and its usage by the NP and the forces operating outside the apartheid state, the next section looks at the way in which the concepts 'community' and 'participation' were expressed in education policy texts from 1980-1990.

3.3.2 The education texts of the state

The De Lange Investigation was the state's response to the crisis in education in the 1980s. The focus here is the recommendations of the De Lange Investigation and the White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa (1983) which was the state's response to the De Lange Report.

The De Lange Investigation was state funded and neutral 'experts' employed by the state were commissioned to investigate the education crisis. The De Lange Report aimed to provide feedback to the state on how education could be reformed to resolve the crisis which confronted it. Nasson (1982) argues that the purpose of the De Lange Investigation was to construct a:

> ...modernising idiom of educational practice within a reformed framework of equality and opportunity... one which would be as free as possible from the stigma of discriminatory apartheid schooling (Nasson, 1982:149).

In the process of formulating new policies, the De Lange Investigation did not consult any progressive educators, academics, trade unionists, community groups, student representatives or parents. Thus it "fell far short of a decently representative educational consensus" (Nasson, 1982:150).

The management of the school is dealt with in Chapter Four of the Report. In this chapter, three management levels are outlined (central, regional and local). The third level (the local level) deals with schools specifically. Within this level, it is recommended that:

> The greatest possible degree of autonomy should be given to the institution that is 'closest' to both parents and teachers - 'the school' (as variously defined), and that parents and teachers should have a major share in decision making at this level. Proposals are therefore made to extend the functions and authority, both of the 'school governing body' and of the principal and staff, particularly with regard to the curriculum of the school and other related matters, such as appointments (Human Sciences Research Council, 1981:201).

The recommendation proposed that parents and teachers, as significant actors in education, should participate in some of the management activities of the school through the school governing body. The De Lange Report was the first education policy proposal linked to the NP in which "parental participation" and the formation of "school governing bodies" were introduced.

The De Lange Investigation also recommended that the principal and staff are to make extended decisions, for instance, with regard to the appointment of teachers and the curriculum. It is not clear whether parents were to be part of this process as it does not specify the role of parents in this regard.

Whereas the social democratic approach views the parent as a citizen who relates to the community with a view to inclusivity and collective action for the benefit of society as a whole, the De Lange Investigation conceptualises 'parents' as those individuals who have children at a school and as such are entitled to participate in the education processes of that school.

With regard to the function of the school governing body, which is outlined in Chapter Seven, it is proposed that the teachers and principal "should encourage parents to regard themselves as partners in the task of education". The recommendation does not stipulate the level or type of partnership between parents and teachers.

In terms of the state's reformist-repressive strategy, it can be argued that the De Lange Report is reformist in that it made provision for parental participation in education through school governing bodies. The state's response to the Report is arguably less reformist in that it accepted parental participation but not through school governing bodies, but through the school management committees which were in operation at the time of the Report.

With regard to the management structure proposed in the White Paper (1983), the following decisions were made: "The Government accepts the desirability of parent representative bodies at local level, either for each school or for groups of neigbouring schools" (White Paper, 1983:18). No mention is made of school governing bodies as recommended by the De Lange Report, but reference is made to 'local education management bodies', which were to be dealt with by the various departments of education. The White Paper further states:

> The government is not in favour of ordinary local authorities taking charge of education (White Paper, 1983: 18).

The De Lange Report in its attempt to construct a "modernising idiom for educational practice..." Nasson (1982) introduced the notions of "parental participation" and "school governing bodies'. However, the state in its response to the Investigation, in the White Paper (1983), was not ready for the participation of parents as partners in education and thus made limited concessions for parents to participate in an advisory capacity on management bodies.

The crisis in education continued and the key education policy texts of the People's Education Declaration enshrined not a narrow notion of "parental participation", but

a social democratic notion of "community participation". The next section thus examines the notions 'participation' in the education policy texts of the NECC.

3.3.3 The education texts of the NECC

Given the context in which the discourse of People's Education emerged, no detailed, substantive blueprint on People's Education was produced. In this regard Rensburg, the national secretary of the NECC, stated that:

> People's Education is a process and not directed towards the production of a text, but the process must be seen as creating the conditions for establishing democratic structures in schools which would lay the foundations of a democratic and free South Africa (Rensburg, 1986:9).

From the above statement, it is clear that the policy of People's Education was not embodied in a concrete policy text as the De Lange Investigation and the White Paper (1983) was. It was envisioned that the process would lay the foundation for the policies which would emerge in the event of South Africa becoming a free and democratic country. By "democratic structures" Rensburg was referring to the demands made by students in 1976, 1980 and in 1985 to have representative student organisations (SRCs) as well as the demand by parents to be part of the management of the school in the form of Parent, Teacher, Student Associations (PTSAs).

There are also a number of other reasons why the NECC did not formulate 'concrete' policies' or produced a central document which outlined how education was to be restructured and transformed in post apartheid South Africa. Firstly, because of state repression, in the form of bannings and detentions, the key NECC officials were constantly under threat. In fact, at one point, the entire NECC executive was in detention. Secondly, since its formation in 1986 and up until 1989, the NECC was involved in resisting the state and concentrated on immediate demands that would prevent further student boycotts. These immediate demands included the release of students from detention and the unbanning of political and student organisations, especially COSAS. Lastly (and most importantly), by 1986 the prospect of a negotiated settlement in South Africa seemed distant.

Due to the fact that People's Education was seen as a movement and a process, combined with the factors outlined above, the NECC was unable to formulate precise policies for education. Instead it attempted to lay the foundations for policies which would emerge in post apartheid South Africa. Nevertheless, there are key texts in the form of speeches and declarations of the NECC with regard to "community participation", which are enshrined in the discourse of People's Education and which need closer examination.

Analysis of these texts makes it clear that People's Education was not only a response to the crisis in education. It linked the political struggle for liberation, in which 'the people' referred to all South Africans, to the crisis in education. In order to link the education struggle to the broader political struggle, the NECC worked closely with major political organisations, especially COSATU and the UDF. This was reflected in the statement by the national co-ordinator of the NECC, Molobi. He pointed out that "prominent figures within the UDF and COSATU are to be found in the structures of the NECC" (Molobi, 1986:19). Both COSATU and the UDF were political in orientation and fought not only for the dismantling of apartheid but also against capitalism. For the most part, both these organisations (especially COSATU) had leanings towards socialism. An illustration of this was an excerpt from a statement by Erwin, the national co-ordinator of COSATU:

> Education is, therefore at the heart of ideological control...virtually the full weight of the present education formal and informal maintains the domination of capitalist domination. Central to that ideology is its denial of the validity of collective action...(Erwin, 1987:15).

From the above statement, it is evident that apartheid and capitalism were linked to the oppression of 'the people' and that an education system in a post-apartheid South Africa would lay emphasis on 'collective action'. Collective action, from the national conferences could be translated to mean "community participation". Levin (1991) argued that it was assumed that 'community' was a subset of 'the people' or 'the nation' who were opposed to apartheid.

Another key NECC figure, Khanyile, emphasised the need for 'communities' to take charge and run their own schools and for the state to continue to fund and provide

the necessary infrastructure. The concept 'community' as used by Khanyile is in line with the social democratic approach, in that it emphasised collective action and supported the idea of people sharing a geographical space as being the legitimate participants in education. Given the fact that apartheid education was still in existence, it was recognised that full participation would only be possible in a society where there was full political and economic equality. He thus stated:

> Firstly, we believe that it is the basic right of every community to run its own schools. To decide who teaches where, who goes to which school and what should be taught. Secondly, DET has shown that in the last ten years that it is incapable of running the schools. In most parts of the country, there has been no normal schooling since 1984. We firmly believe that the communities and their organisations are far more capable of running their schools (Khanyile, 1986).

From these statements by the major role-players, it was clearly promoted that communities should participate in education, specifically in school governance. Initially, 'community' referred only to those who were the recipients of Bantu Education (as noted from Khanyile's reference to the DET). However, there was evidence that the substance of thought changed as noted in Sisulu's (1986) keynote address at the NECC conference in 1986:

> When planning our future, we need to ask ourselves how do we broaden this national unity? In assessing different strategies, we need to ask ourselves whether they will reach out to communities not yet touched by our organisations...We also need to examine ways of making inroads into the white community. To break the stronghold that apartheid education has on the minds of white children. We must show their parents that apartheid education provides no future for their children or any of South Africa's children (Sisulu, 1986: 115).

From the above, it is clear that it was proposed that communities (however differentiated along class, gender, religion, race or any other lines) as well as parents (who are a subset of the community) must participate in education. The inclusiveness of this notion of 'community' was in line with the ANC tradition which understood the concept 'community' to be a subset of 'the people'. Whatever the differences between and within communities were, what they shared was their antagonism towards apartheid and their desire for freedom and democracy for all South Africans. This notion of 'community' is in line with social democratic principles in that

'communities' consist of citizens who may or may not be parents, and citizens have the right to participate in institutions such as the school so that a sense of 'ownership' over the institution is gained.

The inclusiveness of the notion 'community' is also in line with the ideas of popular international educationists such as Paulo Freire (1972) and Amilcar Cabral (1970). Mkatshwa (1986) used the ideas espoused by Freire and Cabral in his speech at the Second Consultative Conference of the NECC to illustrate the non-neutrality of education and the need for communities to participate. This also reflected a socialist tendency within the People's Education discourse:

> ...there is no neutral education. Education is either for domestication or for freedom. Although it is customarily conceived as a conditioning process, education can equally be an instrument of deconditioning... (Freire as quoted in Mkatshwa, 1986:9).

He further quotes Cabral (1970) to illustrate the importance of participation, not only in education, but in all spheres of life:

> ...the growing participation of the people in taking charge of their own lives, their own literacy, the creation of schools and health services, the formation of cadres, who come from the midst of the peasants and workers and many other developments, which impel people to set forth upon the road of cultural progress (Cabral, 1970 as quoted in Mkatshwa, 1986:10).

As stated previously, the NECC aligned itself with major political organisations that opposed the apartheid state and capitalism and espoused a socialist ideology which would be implemented in a post apartheid era. The insistence upon community participation in education was part of this ideology. From the resolutions of the First Consultative Conference, it was explicitly claimed that People's Education will be education that:

> ...eliminates capitalism norms of competition, individualism and stunted intellectual development and one that encourages collective input and active participation by all, as well as stimulating critical thinking and output (Resolution 2 on People's Education, no. 2)

From the above statement, 'collective input' implied community participation as opposed to 'individualism' which is in line with a neo-liberal understanding of participation.

With regard to participation in school governance, the specific resolutions emanating from the First Conference were the following:

- To implement democratically elected SRCs in all schools and tertiary institutions.
- To forge links between student, worker and community organisations and to co-ordinate action in these different areas (Resolutions 2 and 3, 1985).
-

The 'policy' texts that emanated from the major role players on People's Education, held that in a future democratic South Africa, the major role-players in school governance would be teachers, students and parents. Thus the demand for PTSAs and community participation in these structures. Although the concept of 'community' was never explicitly defined, all the texts of the NECC strongly emphasised participation by communities. As noted previously, this notion was in line with the Pan African tradition as well as the ANC tradition where 'community' is understood to be inclusive of all those who are opposed to apartheid and desire freedom and democracy for all South Africans. In school governance terms, the concept 'community' referred to people (parents, non-parents, students, workers, etc.) who lived in the same geographic area as the school and are therefore entitled to participate in the educational processes of that school. Due to the historical patterning of residential areas under apartheid, the majority of the oppressed and disenfranchised population shared common geographical spaces even though they were partially segmented along class lines. This patterning supported the social democratic view of "community participation" in that a "sense of belonging" as well as "mutual support" for common problems were largely already in place.

The aim of Peoples' Education was to involve these communities in the education processes of their schools and to forge links within these communities which would result in co-ordinated activities which would take the anti-apartheid and anti-capitalist struggle forward at various levels (i.e. in the educational arena, civic

groupings and worker organisations) simultaneously. The quality of education would also promote social democracy as opposed to the interests of the apartheid regime and capitalism.

In the next section the context of practice will be briefly examined, bearing in mind that neither People's Education nor the De Lange Report gave rise to substantial legislated policy. They are however, significant by way of influencing later policy debates and practices in schools. The effects of these policies in practice are explored with regard to participation in education.

3.4 The context of practice

In white schools, which were administered by the House of Assembly, parents were represented on bodies such as the Provincial Education Department. In the early 1980s schools under this department (parents, for example) could determine the amount of school fees (which was compulsory), admission policies, the selection of staff and the purchasing of resources. The manner in which parents actually participated is not very clear, but what is noteworthy, is that parents had a considerable say in the management of the school.

In schools administered by the House of Representatives and the House of Delegates (Coloured and Indian schools respectively) parents were elected to serve on committees which had very little say in educational matters and whose functions were of an advisory nature, such as determining school uniforms, the collection of voluntary school funds and fund raising activities. In some schools PTSAs did exist, but they were not recognised by the government.

In schools for black children, administered by the Department of Education and Training provision was made for school management committees which comprised of elected parents and the principal. Since the formation of People's Education in 1985, these management committees were discredited and became non-functional in most schools.

All education departments made provision for some form of individual and community participation through school councils and management committees. This was the case in principle, but in reality very few individuals and community members who were non-parents participated on these structures. If they had attempted to do so, communities in which the schools were situated would not have accepted them. This was especially true in schools administered by the DET and DEC as the communities discredited the structures on which they served. This was because the individuals and community members were accountable to the bureaucratic authorities and not to the political groups which were operating at local level. Some of these structures were women's groups and civic organisations (NEPI, Governance and Administration, 1993). Because management committees were discredited, education policies were formulated and implemented by bureaucrats within the education system and mass organisations or the public had no access to the processes.

In terms of the policies espoused by the major role-players in the People's Education Movement, it is very difficult to discern exactly how communities were to participate in school governance. It seems as if an understanding existed that democratic structures would be set up in schools and that these structures would exist alongside the DET structures as outlined by Khanyile (1986). These democratic structures would lay the foundation for a future education system when the 'People Shall Govern' or when the ANC gained power. The structures would consist of parents, teachers and students (PTSAs). Parents who were serving on the DET management boards would be encouraged to join the democratic structures and thus abandon the 'puppet' structures set up by the various education departments. This was one of the resolutions adopted at the 1986 National Consultative Conference where it was proposed that the statutory parent committees (which the White Paper, 1983 and the De Lange Report referred to), be replaced with democratic PTSAs. The idea was that the PTSA would shift the balance of educational power away from the state imposed structures to that of democratic structures representative of 'the people' (Kulati, 1993)

Upon subsequent development of the notion 'PTSA' by NECC aligned organisations, it was proposed that the PTSAs (while based in schools), should report

on their progress to the broader community and also take community concerns to the schools. The claim was that the organisational structures present in the community had a right to be represented on the PTSA. The PTSA would not only consist of the three constituencies, parents, students and teachers, but would also have representatives from the community. It was proposed that the parent component not necessarily be limited to parents of learners enrolled at a particular school, but that it could include guardians of learners or other members of the community who had a vested interest in education and in the welfare of a particular school. Such a person/s would form part of the parent component of the PTSA. These persons would either be elected by the community or seconded by community organisations such as the civic body of that area. Principals could decide to be part of the PTSA. The teachers of the school would elect the teacher component, students would either be elected directly by the students or could be elected by the SRC. Finally, each sector would have equal representation (EPU, 1994).

Herbert Vilakazi (1991) stated that the way in which People's Education manifested itself in the school could be compared to a large private enterprise in which the PTSA and the community were seen as the major shareholders of the school. From the position papers and resolutions of both conferences, an understanding existed that the purpose of the formation and functioning of PTSAs would be to further the educational aims of schools within the community so inculcating a democratic approach to decision-making and problem solving. Furthermore, they would do fund raising and monitor the usage of school funds (Sithole, 1994).

Many problems were experienced in those schools that managed to establish PTSAs with community representation. One of the problems experienced was that PTSA structures operated without the official recognition of the different education departments, which made it difficult for them to function effectively. The teaching staff felt threatened, not only by the existence of the PTSA, but by the response of the state. This made it difficult to instill trust between the teaching personnel and the members of the PTSA. There were few guidelines and very often the constituencies within the PTSA lacked clarity about their rights and powers as well as the role of each component. PTSAs also operated without funding, which made it difficult to provide skills and capacity building training. Very often, especially in rural areas,

there were no local structures that could co-ordinate the work of t
NECC could not provide the necessary structures or skills traini
members of its executive were either in detention or on the run fr
forces.

Despite the challenges faced by PTSAs, their existence provided important signposts in the interpretation of events. They were accepted by communities, unlike school committees which were not. They represented different interest groups and afforded people the opportunity to work together in ways that they never did before. Furthermore, it was claimed that they empowered people to take control and assisted in building democracy. This view is reflected in Sithole's statement on PTSAs:

> They are important grassroots formations that give concrete expression to popular participation in the formulation and implementation of education policies and ensures the institutionalisation of participatory democracy (Sithole, 1994: 36).

3.5 The emergence of various notions of 'participation' in education policy

I have attempted in this chapter to outline the context of influence in which the crisis in education arose, the reformist-repressive strategy of the state, and the context in which the NECC emerged. The forms of participation which emerged in the education policy texts of the period were: "parental participation" on "school governing bodies" in the De Lange Report (1981), "parent representatives" on local school management committees in the White Paper (1983) and "community participation" in the NECC. I have described the way in which these texts were implemented in partial ways to change the nature of participation in the structure of schools.

The concept "community participation" in South African education policy documents found expression in the early 1980s when the country was in political and economic turmoil. Although the term was never conceptually neatly defined, the implication was one of "inclusivity" and "a sense of belonging" which assumed 'participation' to mean collective action for the benefit of all irrespective of the fact

that such participation or inclusivity was not entirely unproblematic or devoid of an element of manipulation.

Although the notions 'parental' and 'community' participation were used interchangeably by the oppressed, there was a common understanding of these terms amongst these social democratic groupings. Because the country's system of education had far-reaching effects, the entire community (which included all those individuals – parents, non-parents, students and workers who lived in the same geographic area of a particular school) had a vested interest and therefore had the right to participate in the education processes of that school.

The NP government did not entertain the notion of democratically elected SRCs and the notion "community participation". The reforms made in terms of school governance essentially ignored the ideals and aspirations which gave birth to this notion and allowed only for "parental participation". Whilst a 'parent' (in school governance terms) was deemed a "person/s who have borne offspring or is the legal guardian/s of children of school going age…", the discrepancy between the social democratic view of "parental participation" and that of the apartheid government, lay in each one's basic view of the individual as a citizen.

In the next chapter, education policies which emerged during the 1990-1994 period will be analysed so as to understand what notions of 'participation' were espoused by the NEPI and ERS, and how these notions of 'participation' were shaped by the policy contestation of the earlier period.

CHAPTER 4: EDUCATION POLICIES IN THE ERA OF NEGOTIATIONS (1990-1994)

4.1 Conceptual framework

The previous chapter outlined the context in which the education policies of the state, in the form of the De Lange Investigation, the White Paper (1983) and the competing policies of the NECC, emerged. This chapter examines the context in which the policies of the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI), which was a project commissioned by the NECC, and the education policy of the National Party, the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS), emerged in the period 1990-1996.

Guided by Ball's conceptual framework for policy analysis the processes which influenced the production of the NEPI and the ERS will be examined. The chapter begins with an overview of the context of influence which gave rise to the production of the two key policy texts. The ideological frameworks of the two policy actors, namely the NP and what Badat (1992) calls the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), will be considered. By 1990, the MDM consisted of the NECC and the ANC alliance. The ideological framework of the policy actors needs to be considered because given their different historical backgrounds, different value systems and principles and different constituencies which they represent, their notions of 'participation' differed.

Using the concept of the context of text production, the values enshrined with regard to 'participation' in the ERS and the NEPI will be examined. The last section examines the competing notions of 'participation' in the education policy texts of the two competing policy actors. When both the ERS and the NEPI were released in 1992 and 1993 respectively, the NP was still legally in power. Ball (1992) argues that policies are textual interventions, but carry with them material constraints. These constraints would only be realised within the context of practice. As policy players are never neutral, but come with their historical experiences, values and ideologies so do those who implement policy. Thus the policy as text will be "interpreted

differently as the histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests which make up any arena differ" (Ball, 1992:22).

4.2 The context of influence

The social, economic and political conditions that emerged in 1990 set the agenda for the initiation of the policy processes that produced the ERS (1992) and the NEPI (1993). By the late 1980s, it became clear that the NP government could not endure the international pressure to reform apartheid. The international pressure took the form of economic, recreational and diplomatic sanctions. Regionally, the South African Defence Force (SADF) defeat in Angola in 1988 and SWAPO's victory in Namibia in 1989 weakened the NP's hard-line position. Nationally, the country was rapidly reaching a point of ungovernability as a result of the continued student boycotts and economic demands as well as boycotts waged by the UDF and COSATU. Chisholm (1992) argues that it was the result of the international, regional and national forces which made the NP government move from a position of repression to a position of negotiation. Badat (1992) similarly argues that as a result of the pressures outlined above, the NP realised that the crisis in South Africa could not be contained through baton charging and detentions. This gave rise to the State President, F. W. De Klerk's landmark speech in February 1990 announcing change.

The announcement by the State President shifted the political context from a politics of repression and resistance to a politics of reform and transformation. The immediate result of the State President's speech was the unbanning of political organisations, like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress (PAC), the release of political prisoners and the repeal of the five pillars on which apartheid was based. The five pillars were the Group Areas Act (1950), the Population Registration Act (1950), the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953), the Prohibition of the Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Bantu Education Act (1953). Most of the laws were no longer in existence by 1990, but the State President's speech of 1990 rendered all five laws obsolete (Christie, 1994).

The MDM used their rights of freedom of expression and freedom of association to mobilise the historically oppressed and marginalised groups for the establishment of a Transitional Executive Authority and the first non-racial and democratic elections. Christie notes that:

> ...moves towards a negotiated settlement through structures such as the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and subsequent multiparty talks promised a new constitution with equal rights for all and an interim government of national unity (Christie, 1994:45).

Although the CODESA negotiations were slow and often unpredictable, there was hope at the end of the political tunnel. The MDM and the NP were (among other things) to negotiate the manner in which the continued crisis in education would be resolved. The process of negotiation was not going smoothly due to the different constituencies which the major policy actors represented and their divergent ideological frameworks. The next section briefly sketches the ideology of the two major policy actors and how it impacted on the process of education policy formulation.

Ball (1992) asserts that policy actors engage in a process of bargaining and negotiations with the intention to frame the meaning of the policy. The different systems of values and principles which emerge are a result of the divergent points of view and historical experiences of the policy actors. It is against this background that Ball (1992) sees policy as a result of competing and contesting values. Prunty (1985:136) notes that policy is "the authoritative allocation of values". By knowing what the values of the policy actors are, we will know whose values have been legitimised in the ultimate policy text. In terms of this study, the ultimate text is the South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996).

4.2.1 The ideological framework of the MDM

The ANC, representing the majority of the oppressed citizens in South Africa, has an ideology traceable to the Freedom Charter (1956). Enshrined in the Freedom Charter are popular democratic principles and values such as non-racism, democracy,

equality and redress. These values are consistent with the popular democratic ideology, social democracy and socialism (Kallaway, 1988). It was consistent with this ideology that popular slogans such as "Education for Liberation" and "People's Education for People's Power" emerged. However, a shift in discourse is discernible in that the notion of 'the people' and 'the nation' of the 1980s are replaced in the 1990s with that of 'the masses'. In the literature of the period, the shift was never conceptually reflected upon. Thus it can be taken that 'the people', 'the nation' and 'the masses' can be used interchangeably. However, for this period, the notion of 'the masses' will be used in line with the prevailing discourse.

The notion of 'the masses' articulated a shared language of radical tranformation. Within the People's Education discourse, the common or shared language was around the democratic participation of all in education. The demand for democratic participation in education was manifested in their notion of "community participation" within the MDM. This notion of participation is in line with the ideals of popular international educationists like Paulo Freire (1972) and Amilcar Cabral (1970) who espoused socialism.

De Klerk's speech of 1990 ushered in a new political era. However, the NP was still legally in power and the reality of the discourse used by the MDM had to be negotiated with the NP. In this new political context, neither the NECC nor the other components of the MDM had any experience of policy formulation and implementation having operated in opposition and "at a distance" from state power (Wolpe, 1991:4). Thus, policy activities within the MDM took the form of meetings and the production of policy documents from the ANC and its alliance partner, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Policy research initiatives were launched by both the ANC and COSATU. In March 1992, the National Education Conference (NEC) brought together a range of anti-apartheid organisations to develop strategies for addressing the crisis in education (Christie, 1994). The launch of the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI, 1992) which was sponsored by the NECC, was to explore a range of education policy options "within the broad principles of the democratic movement in order to inform the NECC and allied groupings in negotiations over a future education system" (Christie, 1994).

4.2.2 The ideological framework of the NP

The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed another shift in the politics of the NP. This shift can be defined as a mixture of apartheid and neo-liberalism. The latter can be traced to Britain (Thatcherism) and the USA (Reaganism). The neo-liberal ideology or what is often referred to as the New Right was a reaction to earlier social democratic trends of the post-Second World War era in the advanced capitalist economies (Kallaway, 1989). The New Right policies (in a nutshell) advocate a free market enterprise, privatisation of public assets, cuts in public expenditure, maintaining the rights and privileges of individuals and minority groups, minimal state intervention in the economy and civil society and an attack on trade unions (organised labour). The NP embraced these ideals in the 1990s in an effort to further their political aim.

The shifts, shifting influences, compromises and tensions in NP education policy documents with regard to participation started taking shape in the midst of the early 1980 school boycotts in the form of the De Lange Investigation. The De Lange Investigation regarded parents who have children at a specific school together with the teachers at that school, to be the major decision-makers. In a nutshell, the De Lange Investigation emphasised 'parental participation'.

In 1990, the Minister of National Education, Gene Louw, announced the processes towards developing an Education Renewal Strategy (ERS, 1990) and this ushered in a new concept with regard to participation. This will be dealt with later in the chapter. The ERS was intended as a response to the continued crisis in education during the late 1980s and the new political setting which was inaugurated in February 1990. In 1991, the NP government published its draft Education Renewal Strategy (ERS1), the ERS Discussion Document and a Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa (CMSA).

Significantly, in 1991 and 1992, the NP government passed the Model B and C regulations. The Model System which applied to schools under the Department of Education laid down the conditions under which parents in white schools could vote

in order to desegregate (Christie, 1994). Thus, in practice, the Model System enshrined "parental participation" but it applied only to white schools.

The participation of white parents in the Model System is in line with neo-liberal notions of parents as consumers of education in that it offers parents choice whilst maintaining the rights and privileges of minority groups. A shift in education policy is detected. The De Lange Report (1981) and the White Paper (1983) proposed that parents and teachers would be partners in making certain decisions of the school. The Model System gave parents the right to choose whether the school at which their children are learners should remain segregated along racial lines or not. Discussions of the context of text production will make the neo-liberal tendencies which started emerging in NP education policy with regard to participation in school governance, apparent. The final version of the Education Renewal strategy (ERS2) was released in early 1993. The purpose of this document was to spell out the government's vision for the reformed education system in South Africa.

The NP faced dilemmas in terms of its shift in education policies. Whereas the MDM represented 'the masses' and was given an informal mandate by the masses to restructure and transform all structures in society which perpetuated inequalities and racism to democratic structures which would benefit the society as a whole, the dilemma facing the NP as Christie points out, was:

> The huge task of maintaining support within the white electorate whose privileged position it has placed at risk and at the same time gaining support among blacks who were about to be enfranchised (Christie, 1994:45).

The NP was thus seen by its stalwart supporters of apartheid to have compromised the position of the white population and to be encouraging blacks to join the NP. In contrast, the dilemma which faced the ANC was that of striking a balance between the aspirations of 'the masses' and submitting to negotiation through bargaining and consensus.

The dilemmas and tensions which faced both the ANC and the NP had to be reconciled through the terrain of negotiations. Both sides realised that the current education crisis needed a new vision. Thus both the ANC and the NP researched,

formulated and presented proposals on their envisaged education system for a democratic South Africa, which reflect these dilemmas and tensions.

4.3 Context of text production

Within the context of text production, the way in which the texts were arrived at, who were involved in the production of NEPI and the ERS, the way in which the notion of participation in school governance was framed in both the NEPI and the ERS and why it was framed differently, is outlined.

4.3.1 The production of the NEPI policy proposals

"The NEPI reports were produced outside the state in civil society, by more than 300 volunteers, consisting of political leaders, academics and practitioners" (Chetty, et al 1993:50). These volunteers worked in research groups to generate policy options to be tabled for discussion (NEPI, 1992). The NEPI process was essentially an inquiry into feasible policy options for the new system of education in South Africa. The result of the NEPI process was twelve reports, each covering a major education sector. A thirteenth document, called the "Framework Report", provided a conceptual analysis of the NEPI process.

The way in which the policy-making process unfolded within the NEPI is well documented (NEPI, The Framework Report, 1993). The principle of democracy as one of the five principles which guided the NEPI project, is examined more closely. Badat (1992) notes that the policy-making process can either be democratic or technicist. Since democracy was one of the principles which guided the NEPI process, it can be assumed that the policy-making process, with regard to school governance and administration, was democratic. The NEPI had to take into consideration the views of trade unions, teachers, students and community organisations. The wide consultation that occurred within the NEPI process influenced its policy options with regard to 'participation' in school governance.

Badat (1992) views the democratic policy-making process as circular. Thus the values enshrined in the People's Education Declaration with regard to school governance would be a starting point, which is the agenda setting phase. A variety of policy options are then formulated with regard to the democratic governance of schools. The second phase would be to examine the present system of school administration in South Africa. Research may be carried out so as to establish the education policies with regard to school governance in countries which experienced similar problems to South Africa. A range of policy options would be examined and its implications for implementation would be analysed. At this stage, forums could be established to discuss the variety of policy options. This is the policy formulation stage. After the range of policy options have been discussed by the various forums within the NEPI, the representatives of the different forums would formally meet and put forward their policy options. This may be a lengthy procedure since representatives may have to go back to their forums to discuss the other options. The best policy would then be selected democratically. This is the policy adoption phase. The policy would then be implemented. Since the NP was the official ruling party at the time, the policies adopted by the NEPI could not be implemented, but the way in which implementation and evaluation takes place must be outlined in the policy text. The evaluation of the policy could lead to the first phase and the process is repeated.

In 1990, as the political context changed from a politics of resistance and opposition, to a politics of transformation, the NECC sponsored the NEPI to formulate concrete policy options for transformation. The NECC conceptualised transformation as a non-neutral activity and thus the policy-making process was a political process. Henry (1993:104) argues that policy-making for reform and change is a "value laden activity which explicitly or implicitly makes judgement as to whether and in what way policy helps to make things better". Thus the NEPI process was not only concerned with putting forward policy options for a new South Africa, but also assessing the policy-making process of the NP and providing a critique of the recommendations of the ERS. The NEPI process thus, unlike the ERS process which was dominated by "experts in the field of education", included political activists, office bearers of mass organisations, progressive academics and researchers.

The NEPI proposed a four-tier education system which comprised central, regional, local and institutional levels. Within this system of decentralisation, a strong central state is envisaged which would co-ordinate, regulate, and intervene in all aspects of the system so as to ensure standardisation and the equitable allocation of education resources. The decentralisation of power to the regional and local levels ensured active and direct involvement of parents and other stakeholders in a collective process of accountability or in cooperating to improve the quality of education at the local level.

4.3.2 The NEPI conceptualisation of 'parents' and 'community'

One of the key principles which emerged at the National Education Conference (March 1992) with regard to community and parental participation was:

> Education and training policy and practice shall be governed by the principle of democracy, ensuring the active participation of various interests groups, in particular, teachers, parents, workers and students.
>
> Education shall be based on the principles of cooperation, critical thinking and civic responsibility, and shall equip individuals for participation in all aspects of society.

The NEPI (1992, Governance and Administration) acknowledged that the documentation which emerged from the MDM on school governance did not spell out how communities, workers and parents were to democratically participate in school governance. In terms of democracy, the democratic movement stressed that democracy meant much more than voting once every four years. Instead, 'the people' should be able to participate on a daily basis in decision-making processes in all aspects of their lives. This notion of democracy was in tandem with the social democratic notion of democracy. The concept 'community' as participating in education should be viewed in the context within which it emerged, which is one of struggle against illegitimate state structures. The social democratic notion of 'community' in the NEPI texts is inclusive of parents, students, teachers, workers and non-parents. Parents, students and workers, however fractured along gender and class lines, are citizens first and foremost and as such are afforded the right to

participate in civil society so that a sense of ownership over institutions within civil society is derived. Thus the duty of a democratic state would be to create the spaces so as to ensure that citizens are fairly treated and that all citizens have an equal say in public institutions such as schools. Participation should not be limited to the recipients of education, but to the nation as a whole. Thus the text claims "education shall equip individuals for participation in all aspects of society".

In terms of parental and community participation within the NEPI policy options, two perspectives were proposed; the system perspective and the school governance perspective. Both perspectives made provision for parents, workers, students and communities to participate at the various levels of the system. The ratio of representation was not specified. The NEPI specified the different possible forms of participation in school governance.

4.3.3 The production of the ERS policy proposals

Badat (1992) argues that the education policy-making process of the NP in the form of the De Lange Investigation and the ERS were marked by technicism. In formulating policy options for a new education dispensation, the ERS comprised of senior specialists in education who were to work under the direction of a Committee of Heads of the different Education Departments. Badat (1992) further argues that neither the De Lange Investigation nor the ERS had taken the democratisation of the education policy-making process very far in that the capitalist social order was the point of departure in both texts. Badat (1992:24) thus notes that:

> ...the values and ideology that informed the De Lange Commission and the ERS are not necessarily shared by the mass of South Africans. The principles and values enshrined in both De Lange and the ERS are based on the assumed needs of the masses or disenfranchised in South Africa.

Nasson (1990:52) refers to the De Lange Investigation as "state intervention on behalf of capital". The purpose of the ERS was to outline the NP's position on education in a future South Africa. When looking at the actual texts, the neo-liberal

tendency with regard to the free market enterprise and the rights of individuals will be clearer.

4.3.4 The ERS policy recommendations

The policy recommendations of the NP in the form of the ERS were concluded in November 1992. The policy recommendations of the ERS with regard to the management and administration of school governance will be analysed, specifically the way in which parental, student and community participation in school governance is framed. The key texts to be analysed are the ERS Discussion Document (1991) and the ERS (1992). Ball (1992) argues that policy is not completed at the legislative moment, but evolves in and through the texts which they represent, thus the ERS Discussion Document represents a key step in the formulation of the ERS.

4.3.5 The structure of the education system as proposed by the ERS

Despite the different historical backgrounds, constituencies and the ideological frameworks of the two major roleplayers, the NP and the MDM, there was a common proposal in the NEPI and ERS that there should be a single Ministry of Education. The ERS Discussion Document (1991) motivates this:

> The present education model enjoys little support among the majority of South Africans who find it's racial base, as expressed in separate education departments for the various population groups unacceptable (ERS Discussion Document (1991:15).

This constituted a significant break from the past and a development from the recommendations of the De Lange Report. The creation of a single education department was proposed by the De Lange Investigation, but was rejected by the NP in the White Paper of 1983. The ERS (1992) states:

> An education system with central education authority and regional education authorities that have their own power and decision-making autonomy is

> envisaged. This will promote national unity while allowing for particular needs in respect of religion, language and culture. Such a system must naturally fit in a new constitutional dispensation (ERS, 1992:ix).

The ERS thus proposed three tiers of governance, that is central, regional and institutional (school level). The responsibilities of central authority is to formulate "policy on norms and standards in various crucial matters in education" (ERS Discussion Document, 1991:22). The central authority would have fairly limited powers whereas the real power would be at the regional level which would politically be accountable for the provision of education within the parameters set by the central authority. The ERS thus recommended that "regional education authorities have their own power, and decision-making autonomy is envisaged" (ERS, 1992:ix).

On the third level, the institutional level, the ERS recommended that there should be different categories of public schools which would be equally funded. It also recommended that management councils be established at all schools so as "to devolve as many decision-making and executive functions as possible to such councils" (ERS, 1992:80).

In terms of the ERS's three tiers of governance a notion of decentralisation is inferred in that the authority rests in the centre and some of the power is delegated to the region, which in turn delegates some power to the institution. In this regard Lauglo (1990 and 1995) distinguishes between three kinds of decentralisation which are deconcentration, delegation and devolution.

Deconcentration transfers authority from the centre to the different regions and thus strengthens the regional and local staff of the civil service (Lauglo, 1990). Lauglo contends that deconcentration is the weakest form of decentralisation in that the central authority maintains effective control of the whole system, despite the fact that management responsibilities are shifted to lower levels. Delegation means that authority at the centre is delegated to the lower levels, but that this power and authority could be withdrawn at any time because of the unavailability of binding legislation. Devolution is defined as "the transfer of authority by law from the state to some regional or local (or private) authority which is not directly accountable to

the center" (Lauglo, 1990:30). In terms of all the methods in which power can be transferred from the centre, devolution:

> ...is the most far reaching form of decentralization in that the transfer of authority over financial, administrative, or pedagogical matters is permanent and cannot be revoked at the whim of central officials (Bray, 1996:10).

The ERS recommendation of "An education system with a central authority and regional education authorities that have their own power and decision-making autonomy" (ERS, 1992:ix) is consistent with Lauglo's (1990) definition of devolution. In terms of the three tier system of education, the centre would devolve irrevocable power to the regions (when the ERS was published, the delineation of regions was still to be negotiated). It could be argued that by 1992 when the ERS was released, the NP had realised that in case of democratic elections taking place in South Africa, they would not constitute a majority. Thus, the devolution of power from the centre to the region was a means of protecting the interests of the white minority at the institutional level. This point will become clearer when the different school 'Models' are discussed.

The ERS further noted that regional departments could devolve power to the institutions provided that the "principle of maximum functionally justifiable devolution of decision-making power to the community or individual institution is upheld throughout" (ERS, 1992:24). Since devolution means that the centre cannot revoke the power of the regions, it also means that the regions, through devolving power to the institutions, cannot revoke this power.

While the language usage of the ERS (which is rather difficult to understand) had a democratic sound to it, in essence it tried to individualise schools, which is in line with the neo-liberal approach. The usage of the terms 'community', 'institution' and 'parent community' meant that the community (meaning the community of parents who have children at the school) or the school (the educators) could decide how it would be managed. 'Community' in this context refers to the geographic location in which the school is situated. Due to the geographical patterning of schools during the apartheid era, it was very likely that schools which were situated in rich middle class

white areas would be safeguarded. The notion of "parent community" is thus consistent with the neo-liberal ideology of the NP. The system which established the Tricameral Parliament and created the 'own affairs' and 'general affairs' equally contributed to the NP's commitment to devolve power to the institution.

4.3.6 The "Models" initiative

In 1990 the Minister of Education, Piet Clase (under the Department of Education and Culture) announced a number of new governance models for the schools under its control (white schools). These models, known as the Clase Models, emerged before the ERS was finalised. The ERS Discussion Document (1991) accepted these models and motivated its importance:

> ...these are models with different management options as far as community responsibilities are concerned, thereby bringing the provision of education closer to its users (ERS Discussion Document, 1991:75).

In terms of the Clase Models, white schools were given four options. The first option was to retain the status quo, or for parents, (by a majority vote) to choose one of three options. The 'Model A' option meant that the school could be converted into a private school which required that the school building be purchased from the government. Thereafter it would be subsidised by the government as a private school. This option is in line with the neo-liberal ideology of privatising public assets.

The 'Model B' was a second option which allowed schools to remain state-funded with the management council of the school determining its admission. This option further created conditions which favoured white privilege, as it was unlikely that conservative white parents would 'allow' the admission of learners of colour.

The third option was the 'Model C' option. Within this system the school could remain state-aided, but such aid would only cover the cost of teachers' salaries and the minimum of education resources. The maintenance of buildings and other service costs such as the telephone, electricity and rates would have to be covered by the

management councils. The 'Model C' option meant that parents would incur extra costs and since white school enrollments were declining, more teachers would face retrenchment. To maintain the favourable teacher-student ratios that existed in white schools, parents would have to open the formerly white schools to students of all race groups whose parents could afford the school fees. What this would mean in practice is that these schools would no longer be racially exclusive, but would exclude learners on the basis of class in that they could "exclude from the best education facilities in the country the children of rural, poor and working class parents" (NEPI, 1992 Governance and Administration: 23).

The institutional autonomy proposed in the 'Models' option reflects the NPs commitment to devolution. In terms of devolution, the NP envisaged greater powers at the institutional level of governance. This is in line with its need to protect minority rights and interests, which is in line with its neo-liberal ideology. Granting governance structures the right to raise their own funds reflects a commitment to the market. In terms of this ideology, education is conceptualised as a commodity which has to be produced by schools, then marketed and sold (through user fees) to the consumers (parents).

This was a uniquely South African version of neo-liberalism in that given the past, the market would reproduce racial inequalities in a new form. It is assumed within the market model that because parents paid for the service, the service would be of a better quality. This could possibly be true in the South African situation in that the best-resourced schools in the country were situated in white middle class areas where parents could afford the additional costs. Finally, Morgan argues that:

> The opportunity given to parents to vote that 'their' schools secede from the control of the education authority does not appear to give them extra choice, it does introduce into the system a school managed in a distinctive form, but it is intended that the nature of the school shall remain the same (Morgan, 1997:148).

In the South African scenario, this meant that schools in white middle class areas (though they included black students) would retain the dominant ideology. Equally, schools in black working class areas would remain under-resourced because the

parents in the geographical area in which the school was situated could not compete if schools were to rely on parents and the community for funding through user fees and fund-raising activities. Thus the institutional autonomy proposed in the 'Models' option, essentially reflected the NP's commitment to protecting minority rights and interests.

4.3.7 The ERS conceptualisation of 'parents' and 'community'

Chapter Three outlined the way in which white parents legally participated in school structures. Through their participation they gained experience in the legal aspects of school management. The ERS Discussion Document (1991) made provision for programmes to be set up so those parents could be educated on their role within governance. It recommended that:

> ...education authorities should embark on programmes through which parent communities are educated as to the role and responsibilities of management councils at schools (ERS Discussion Document, 1991:77)

The ERS does not define parents, but what can be deduced from both the ERS Discussion Document (1991) and the ERS (1992), is the understanding that the parents are the legal guardians or the bearers of offspring. These parents as individuals could participate at the school which their children attend. Within this definition, parents who do not have children at school are excluded from participation in school governance.

Expanding the market model of education, parents as individuals are regarded as consumers of education because they pay for the service. They are allowed to shop around and choose the 'best' school for their children. Furthermore, in line with the market model, students are referred to as 'clients' (ERS, 1992:83).

Neither the ERS Discussion Document (1991) nor the ERS (1992) conceptually defined 'community'. From the texts however, it is clear that 'community' strictly referred to a group of people who have children at a specific school, thus the notion

"parent community". The way in which non-parents or parents who not at school could participate on school governance was never def Discussion Document (1992:25) recommended:

> ...the sharing of responsibilities regarding education be authorities at various levels and different stakeholders, parent communities and the organised teaching staff (ERS Discussion Document, 1991:25).

The term 'parent' is coupled firmly with 'community' limiting the notion to those with a direct stake in the school. Who the 'different stakeholders' were and how they were to participate or 'share responsibilities' was not defined in either document.

The ERS Discussion Document (1991:77) recommended that learners could be represented on the management councils in secondary schools where 'communities' found this necessary. The final ERS (1992) did not make any provision for learner representation on management councils. Thus the neo-liberal agenda of the ERS could be discerned on closer analysis despite its usage of 'inclusive' terms. In this regard, Morgan notes that:

> Parental choice is not within the framework of democracy unless – the day when every local school is so well resourced and well-regarded that parents will have no reason to choose other than to send their children to the local school, valued at the heart of the community (Morgan, 1997:148).

4.4 Contesting notions of 'participation'

De Clercq (1997) argues that the ERS could be classified as substantive policy in that it spelt out exactly what the NP's intentions for the education system was. The NEPI policy options in contrast, were visionary and symbolic in that they had "to confront the inherited apartheid legacy of exclusion and discrimination as well as answer the socio-political demands of the oppressed majority" (De Clercq, 1997:144).

The ERS policy recommendations with regard to school governance were based on the Clase Model System on the principle that it recommended that the state should not be solely responsible for the provision of education. Thus, the text argued for

"...the sharing of responsibilities for the provision of education between the state and interested sectors, such as the parent community" (ERS, 1992:17). While parents as individual consumers were entrenched in the ERS, it could be argued that it also entrenched the privileges of white parents. This was so given the legacy of and favourable economic opportunities afforded to whites in general which allowed white parents to be in a more favourable position financially to afford the extra costs of school fees. The NEPI (1992, Governance and Administration) claimed that in practice the Clase Model System provided parents more say in the affairs of the school, whilst compelling them to pay for education services which automatically excluded the participation of the majority of historically disadvantaged parents. Thus, the neo-liberal approach would ensure that "the major forms of inequality in South Africa would be perpetuated within a framework of choice and democracy" (NEPI, 1992:24).

I have tried in this chapter to illustrate that due to the different ideologies of the two major political actors, their policy options on community and parental participation were adopted for different reasons. The NEPI policy options were derived from its social democratic principles and its historical relationship with grassroots organisations, such as civic, teacher and worker organisations. The view of parents participating in structures as citizens with rights and obligations, is central to the NEPI. This was demonstrated in the NEPI proposing the four-tier system of governance (central, regional, local and institutional) with power devolved from the centre to the regions and local level and the institutional level having less power.

In contrast, the NP government recommended a three-tier system of governance (central, regional and institutional) with power devolved from the centre. This power was irrevocable and the institutional level would have great power. Parents would have more say at the institutional level in line with the neo-liberal notion of democracy in which parents were seen as individual consumers of education.

The NEPI proposed power to the institution and combined the notion of 'parent community' to infer a collective group of people inclusive of all citizens. Pre-1994 two competing ideologies and education policy visions, which embodied diametrically opposing interests, emerged. The question that needs to be answered in

the next chapter is which of these ideologies prevailed and which became silenced or marginalised in the SASA (1996)?

CHAPTER 5: PARTICIPATION IN THE POST 1994 CONTEXT

5.1 Conceptual framework

This chapter will continue to be guided by Ball's model of policy generation and policy analysis to understand the evolution of the SASA policy text as a 'cycle' of policy formulation, which is broken up into conceptual 'moments' or contexts (Ball, 1992). Of specific relevance will be the context of influence and the context of text production.

Ball (1993) argues that each context involves struggle, compromise and ad hocery and that the policy texts are rarely the work of a single author or a single process. The context of influence and the context of text production will be analysed to understand the struggles, compromises, processes and ad hocery which shaped the notions of 'participation' in the education policies which emerged in South Africa after 1994.

Key questions are raised: What notions of participation are embodied within the key text, the South African Schools Act (SASA)? Are these notions of participation similar to the notions enshrined in the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI or are they similar to those enshrined in the De Lange Report and the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS)? In order to answer these questions, analysis will focus on the context in which SASA (1996) emerged and the context of text production.

5.2 The context of influence

The Government of National Unity (GNU) which came into being as a result of the April 1994 elections, created a new political landscape which impacted on education transformation in general and policy formation in particular. The ANC and its alliance partners, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and COSATU, in alliance with the NP and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), led the GNU. By gaining

the majority vote in the 1994 elections, the ANC alliance assumed the majority position (but not sole power) of responsibility and power within the structures of the GNU. The GNU did not make provision for the formal statutory participation of progressive mass based organisations, like the organised teachers' unions, (SADTU), the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). The ANC with its alliance partners represented in the policy process a collective vision of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM). The latter was composed of sectors like parents, workers, students and NGOs.

In its representation of these sectors (and given the history of the ANC) it was to be guided by the principles and values enshrined in the Freedom Charter. The values and principles that are enshrined in the People's Education Declaration as well as the NEPI, are traceable to the Freedom Charter. However, Kallaway, Kruss and Chisholm (1997) argue that two ideological positions converge in the policies of the GNU. On the one hand the policies reflect the commitment of the ANC and the MDM to the principles of social democracy, which emphasise equity, redress and the rights of citizens to participate in institutions in civil society so that a sense of 'ownership' is provided to all the citizens. On the other hand the policies also reflect the legacy of the reforming apartheid state in which individualism and the 'free market' is highlighted together with global economic pressures, influenced by institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Badat (1995) notes that within the new political context, the ANC alliance was forced to abandon some of its ideals and principles as enshrined in the Freedom Charter and the Declaration of People's Education in favour of what was "desirable and possible in the process of educational change" (Badat (1995:142). Badat (1995) argues that:

> ...negotiations were less about the transfer of power but more about a negotiated political settlement underwritten by a series of agreements, pacts and accords covering a variety of social spheres (Badat, 1995:141).

Chisholm (1997) argues that the policies of the GNU placed it on par with the policies of developed and developing countries in which education systems were being structured along neo-liberal market-oriented strategies. In these policies

education is no longer viewed as a 'common good' but as a factor essential for economic growth.

Thus the context in which socialist ideas emerged in the ANC and later in the MDM was very different to the post 1994 political context. Firstly, the GNU had to accommodate the neo-liberal tendencies within it (represented by the NP, within the ANC itself and later the IFP). Secondly, the collapse of the Soviet Union had raised doubts about the success of socialism. The abandonment of socialism by the frontline states raised the question as to whether socialism was a viable alternative for South Africa and the form it would take if it were successfully achieved. Some South African academics and activists allege that the ANC was always vague in its anti-capitalist stance and it, in fact, never claimed to want to embrace socialism or overthrow capitalism.

The ANC pre-1994 had never spelt out the way in which it would carry out the redistribution of socio-economic resources once it gained power. Thus, the ANC as a majority partner in the GNU, was willing to accept the neo-liberal thinking which was emerging internationally and locally (Chisholm, 1997).

The shifting influences and compromises in policy can be traced back before the 1994 elections when Nelson Mandela, the leader of the ANC (on visiting North America and the U.K) appeared to be marketing South Africa as an investment destination for foreign capital. In 1993, at a conference in the U.K, Mandela committed the ANC to a free-market economy and promised foreign investors that an ANC led government would do everything in its power to "guarantee the security of all investment against expropriation" (African Business, 1994:28). A month later, in his address to South African business people, he declared that the ANC had found it necessary to abandon its long held ideological commitment to 'nationalisation' of the major economic sectors in South Africa (like banks and mines). Thus the way was cleared for South Africa to receive loans from pro-capitalists like the World Bank and the IMF.

Kallaway (1997) argues that the political terrain that dominated South Africa by 1996 could be divided between centrists vs socialists. The COSATU and SACP

would fall in the latter camp in that they believed that a strong central state should be responsible for restructuring and reforming the nation in the interests of equity and redistribution. This group were the adherents of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP, 1994) which the ANC viewed as:

> ...an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework. It seeks to mobilize our people and our country's resources towards the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future (ANC, 1994:1).

The RDP was derived from the ideology of the socialist and welfarist spirit of the Freedom Charter and revolved around the need for the state to intervene in the economy in the interests of equality and redistribution. This is in tandem with the People's Education Declaration in that it revolved around the need for communities and parents to intervene and participate in the education of all children so as to ensure equality and quality for all the nation's children.

The centrists, Kallaway (1997) argues, would want full integration into the free-market and therefore privatisation and downsizing of the state would be integral. This group was willing to abandon the RDP for the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR, 1996). The GEAR is synonymous with global and neo-liberal tendencies like individual ownership, private entrepreneurship and the privatisation and deregulation of the free-market economy (Kallaway, 1997).

This forging of international links and attracting of new investments on world markets left many political activists (especially those in the SACP and COSATU) in a state of despair. Thus in analysing the context of text production, it is important to understand whose values were represented within the education policy documents, whose voices were able to be heard, whose voices were not heard and what the values were which underpinned the policy as text.

The context outlined above affected the way in which the notions of 'participation' were framed in the education policy texts post 1994. It was shown that policies emerge within the context of particular values, interests, pressures and constraints. The values of the ANC and the MDM pre-1994 shifted from what was desirable to

what was possible. This was because the ANC, as a leading partner in the GNU, was no longer exclusively accountable to 'its popular constituencies' but to all citizens of the country' (Greenstein, 1996). Thus the way was paved for the convergence of neo-liberalism which pervaded the policies of the former apartheid state and that of the forces operating outside of the state, which favoured a social democratic approach.

Analysis of the context of text production will reveal the way in which notions of 'participation' are framed in the education policies post 1994.

5.3 The context of text production

Ball (1993) asserts that social agency or social intentionality becomes evident within the context of text production. What this means is that the influences which emerged begin to take shape. The policy actors begin to construct a representation of the social intentions of policy in the form of policy as text. Due to the different ideological positions and histories of the actors, the textual construction would be a result of compromises and struggles.

Kallaway (1997) notes that:

> ...just as there are trajectories in the economic sphere, with free market and social democratic politics being promoted in parallel, so educational reformers appear to be following potentially contradictory or ambiquous policies (Kallaway, 1997: 41).

In formulating policy, policy actors use signifiers (words or language) to produce coherent meanings (discourses). Thus the language used is also an ideological exercise.

Analysis will focus on the shifts, shifting influences, continuities and discontinuities of education policy texts post 1994. In the previous chapters analysis focused on the education policies of the apartheid state (NP) and that of the MDM with regard to participation. These policies were different given the different ideological positions

of the two main policy actors. Within the MDM the notion "community participation" was aimed at entrenching participatory democracy. The NEPI stressed the importance of a strong central state to achieve this end. In contrast, the notion of "parental community" as articulated by the ERS, viewed 'community' as comprising of individual parents whose 'buying power' determined the quality of the product. As a result emphasis was on the participation of parents. The policy documents which emerged from the NP held that schools were individual institutions which would compete for consumers in order to sustain the quality of services. In none of the education policy documents of the NP was 'community' conceptually defined. "Community participation" was always coupled with "parental participation", which thus meant greater parental involvement in schools. Within the policies of the NP the notion of "parental community participation" served to introduce the market model into education. This model views parents as consumers who can choose in favour of the best product (education) for their children. Parents can, through user fees, contribute to the quality of the product. When one considers the class, race and ethnic fragmentation of communities in South Africa, the notion of choice will always be constrained and conditioned by parents' ability to afford user fees. What this means in the South African context is that schools in middle class areas would continue to have the best resourced schools while schools in historically underprivileged areas will continue to be under-resourced as parents in these schools are not able to contribute in the same way as parents of schools in middle class areas.

The education policy preceding the SASA enshrined social democratic notions of participation. However, these texts could not ignore imperatives for market conditions in the context of practice. This would have been out of sync pre-1994 when the general consensus was much more critical of capitalism and a free-market economy, particularly as enunciated by the MDM. Even notions of participation were contested and subject to the same ambiguous and contradictory outcomes. The next section will explore these phenomena in more detail.

How were these competing notions enshrined in the series of successive education policy texts produced after 1994? The purpose of the analysis is to answer two key questions: What notions of 'participation' are embodied in the key text, the SASA (1996)? Are these notions similar to the notions enshrined in the People's Education

Declaration and the NEPI or are they similar to those enshrined in the De Lange Report and the ERS?

5.3.1 The antecedent education policy texts

The Interim Constitution (1993) and the Constitution of South Africa (1996) assert that public participation is the cornerstone to democracy and assert the rights of citizens to participate not only in choosing representatives but in the legislative process as well. In this regard the Constitution states that all South African citizens are:

> ...equally entitled to the rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship; and equally subject to the duties and responsibilities of citizenship (The Constitution, 1996:3).

Thus the Constitution, being the supreme law which all education policy texts post 1994 have to be in line with, enshrines a social democratic notion of citizen participation. It enshrines the right of all citizens to participate in institutions in civil society so that a sense of 'ownership' over institutions from which they were previously excluded is achieved. In this regard, citizens have the right to participate in public schools. This notion of 'participation' and citizenship is in line with the notions which emerged from the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI.

Several factors have obstructed the participation of all, which are recognised in the Constitution. One factor obstructing full citizen participation is the level of socio-economic inequality, which means that the majority of the historically disadvantaged citizens remain disadvantaged.

Consistent with the spirit of the GNU and the notion of participatory democracy, the *White Paper on Education and Training* (WPET, March, 1995) was produced in the context of policy text production, following processes of consultation and public hearings involving role-players, stakeholders, like "teachers and other educators, students, religious and other community leaders, education and training NGOs and officials in the new education departments..."(DoE, 1995:5).

With regard to school governance, the WPET proposed that the term 'governing body' be used 5(29). A shift in the notion 'participation' of the ANC aligned forces is detected. In the 1980s, the People's Education Declaration and the NECC identified the major stakeholders at school level to be parents, students, teachers and workers. The De Lange Report referred to the management structure at school level as a 'school governing body' composing of parents and teachers as the major decision-makers. The subsequent White Paper (1983) referred to the governing structures at school level as 'local education management bodies' and 'parent representative bodies' would thus be a component of it. In the education texts of the 1990s (in the form of NEPI and the ERS) management structures at school level were referred to as PTSAs and SRCs (consisting of parents, teachers, students and workers) in the NEPI policy proposals and as management councils in the ERS. The term 'school governing body' can thus be traced back to the De Lange Investigation. The term 'school governing body' is used in all the education policy texts post 1994.

The WPET proposed that the school governing body be composed of the following:

> The parents, teachers, students, managers and other stakeholders who are seeking an equitable and democratic solution which will best serve the educational needs of all communities ... (DoE, 1995:68)

However, the WPET did not specify who constituted the 'communities' and the way in which communities were to participate on the school governing body. From the text it would appear as if communities would be parents of children at the school who may not have been elected on the governing body, but who have certain skills 'to serve the educational needs' of the school. It can also be interpreted to mean people who live in the same geographical area as the school who are not necessarily parents of children at that particular school, or non-parents who possess certain 'expertise' which can be of benefit to the school.

As a symbolic text, the WPET is vague on defining 'community' and promotes social democratic values but in its provisions it makes a clear shift to "parental communities" in that it stated that parents should constitute the majority since they have the major stake in the education of their children (DoE, 1995:70). This, Sayed (1997) argues, is problematic since it seems to undermine teacher and student

representation, which undermines equal participatory democracy and reinforces the proposals of the ERS of parents as major partners in education. This policy shift laid the basis for the balance of emphasis to shift from the notion of "community participation" which was enshrined in all the education policy texts of the forces operating outside of state power to that of "parental community participation" which was enshrined in the ERS.

The WPET (1995) was a symbolic, framework text which left the specifics unresolved. In order to develop education policy, the state appointed a commission of enquiry which reported in the form of the Hunter Report. The commission's brief from the Minister of Education, Professor Bengu, was to recommend:

> ...a national framework of school organisation and ownership, and norms and standards on school governance and funding which, in the view of the committee, are likely to command the widest possible support, accord with the requirements of the Constitution, improve the quality and effectiveness of schools, and be financially sustainable from public funds (Draft Education White Paper, 1995:7).

In terms of participation, the Hunter Report proposed that parents, students, teachers, non-teaching staff, the principal and community representatives nominated by parents and elected by the governing body should serve on the school governing body (Hunter Commission Report, 1995). In terms of community representation, the Report clarified the WPET's commitment to community participation on school governing bodies. The Report is, however, ambiguous on the selection process of community representation. It could be interpreted in two ways. It could imply that parents serving on the school governing body would nominate community representatives or parents in their individual capacity may put forward nominations and the school governing body elects. Since parents are to constitute the majority on the school governing body, it means that as a constituency, parents would have the majority when electing community representatives.

Furthermore, the Report qualified which members of the community could be represented on the school governing body. It stated that where a school was on private property, the owner or her/his nominated representative could serve on the governing body. In terms of this category, the Report stated that:

> Representatives of the community could bring in needed expertise in such areas as finance, building, personnel, management, law, etc (Hunter Report, August, 1995).

Community representatives in the Report now come to mean those with 'expertise'. This was contrary to the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI policy proposals in that the participation of civil society was not limited to those with relevant expertise. The concept "community participation" as enshrined in the policy texts of People's Education Declaration and the NEPI referred to persons who are able to reflect the views and sentiments of the community, however defined (Sayed and Carrim, 1997:31). Also, by qualifying community representation, it means that only certain people under certain conditions can participate in school governance. The implicit suggestion in this is that not all things are open to all people all of the time (Sayed and Carrim, 1997).

The Education White Paper on Education and Training (November 1995 and February 1996) constituted the government's response to the Hunter Report. The WPET (November 1995) was a direct response to the Hunter Report and included the committee's views and the ministry's response. The WPET (February 1996) listed the policy choices of the ministry.

The White Paper 2b (February 1996) drew from the Hunter Report in terms of proposing the composition of governing bodies. The main difference being that in the White Paper 2b it was proposed that the governing body and not the parents would elect community representatives. This denotes a further shift in policy texts in that 'stakeholders' (parents, teachers and non-teaching staff) grant 'stakeholder' status to those they regard as having the necessary 'expertise' to serve on the school governing body. Once again this constitutes a dilution of community participation in that only 'stakeholders' elect community representation. The way in which the notion "community participation" was envisioned in the policies of People's Education and the NEPI was that members of the community (however defined) are citizens and have the right to participate in public institutions such as schools so that a sense of ownership over the institutions is derived.

The WP2b also made reference to participatory structures such as SRCs and parent-teacher' associations (PTAs) which should be mandatory in each school. This signified a shift in policy as the previous texts, the WPET and the Hunter Report did not mention the existence of these structures. The existence of these structures was enshrined in the policies of People's Education and the NECC. Neither the De Lange Report nor the ERS mentioned these structures on school governing bodies.

The South African Schools Bill (April 1996), 3(16) went a step further in the legislative process. It outlined the composition of the governing body of a public school. The Bill recommended that the following persons would be eligible for membership on governing bodies: parents of learners who were currently at the school, educators, non-teaching staff, the principal, learners and members of the community who were co-opted by the governing body. The latter denotes a further shift in policy in that community representatives are not to be elected but co-opted. The term 'co-opted' implies that community representatives must be 'invited' to participate on school governing structures. Once again this is a contradiction to "community participation" as espoused in the policies of People's Education and the NEPI in that both envisioned that there would be equal representation of parents, teachers, students and the community (however defined) and they would be shareholders of a school (Vilakazi, 1991).

Section 16 (2) states that parents of learners should comprise the majority of the members of the governing body. In terms of co-opted community representatives, the Bill stated that co-opted members should have the same rights and duties as the elected members of the governing bodies. At a glance, it appears as if parent or expert community participation is more entrenched in the SASB than in its antecedent education policy texts in that these community representatives are afforded the same rights as the other constituencies. However, the SASB entrenches a parental majority which implies that the parent constituency would have the final say in co-opting community representatives.

Before the Bill was passed in Parliament in October 1996, Blade Nzimande, who chaired the Parliamentary Advisory Committee, had this to say about the SASB:

> As far as I am concerned, one of the most important changes being brought about by this Bill is the introduction of democratically elected governing bodies to all 29000 schools in our country. It is the ANC which has consistently fought for fully democratic and representative governing bodies. The South African Schools Bill lays the basis for communities to participate meaningfully in building a culture of learning ...(South African Schools Bill, Second Reading Debate, 24 October, 1996: 4690).

According to Ball (1992), comments, speeches and statements made by major role-players represent policy. Thus Nzimande's comment encouraging the participation of communities in the education arena, is symbolic policy, although the way in which communities were to participate in education was not defined in such a live policy text. Nzimande (1996) carries forward that tradition in the context of text production, contesting to have a social democratic notion of "community participation". This reading is ambiguous in the set of values enshrined in the legislated policy, the SASA. One is led to believe from the above statement by Nzimande that 'communities' referred to parents as well as non-parents who lived within the geographical area of the school and therefore have the right to participate in the processes of that school. On the surface, the language usage in terms of community participation in the SASB is closer to the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI than previous policy frameworks and proposals in that Nzimande refers to "...the basis for communities to participate meaningfully in building a culture of learning." (Nzimande, 1996). An example of this parallel of the SASB is that it is similar to a resolution from the NECC conference which called for the forging of links in schools between students, workers and community organisations (Resolution 2 and 3, 1985). The NEPI policy proposals called for " ...the active participation of various interest groups, in particular, teachers, parents, workers and students' (National Education Conference, March 1992).

The SASB (April 1996) differed further from the WPET (March 1995), the Hunter Commission (August 1995) and the White Paper 2b, (February 1996) in that it does not specify that community representatives need 'expertise'. The major difference in the Bill is that the previous policy texts propose that community representatives should be elected, whereas the SASB proposes that community representatives should be co-opted. To a certain degree, the notion of "community participation" as framed in the SASB is consistent with the way it is framed in the People's Education

Declaration in that community representatives have voting rights. However, on closer analysis it is weaker, in that although community representatives have the same rights as the other constituencies, the parental majority as enshrined in the Bill would ensure that the parent component would have the most say. Also, a parental majority would ensure that co-opted community representatives are those who would act in the interest of the parents at a particular school and not necessarily in the interest of education as a whole.

Thus the process of producing the final legislated text, SASA reveals contestation, ambiguity and slippage. What reading or meaning of 'participation' is framed in the final legislated policy text, the South African Schools Act (1996)?

5.3.2 The South African Schools Act (November 1996)

The SASA (1996) is a legislated education policy text passed in Parliament in 1996. It provides a national framework of school organisation, funding and norms on school governance which would command the widest public support (Sayed and Carrim, 1997).

In an attempt to institutionalise and enhance the notion of 'participation', the role and functions of governing bodies are spelt out. Chapter 3 and 4 of the SASA deals with public schools. Section 3(15-33) deals exclusively with school governance. Chapter 3 (23) deals with membership of governing bodies. According to the Act members with voting rights are: the principal, in her/his official capacity, elected parents or guardians of learners who must constitute the majority, elected learners from grade eight and upwards, elected educators and non–teaching staff.

Furthermore, 23(6) states:

> A governing body may co-opt a member or members of the community to assist it in discharging its functions (DoE, 1996: 18).

23(8) states:

> Co-opted members do not have voting rights (DoE, 1996:18).

The above denotes a clear trend for the notion "parental community participation" to dominate new education policy. The previous texts enshrined community representation to the extent that community representatives are either elected by parents or the school governing body and have the same rights and privileges as the elected members, leaving room for ambiguity. In SASA, the governing body may only co-opt community representative who have no voting rights. Sayed and Carrim (1997) argue that the rationale for the weakening of community participation, is the legal status that SASA accords the school governing body. This weakening of community participation and the granting of a parental majority as well as enshrining the notion of "parental community participation", is consistent with neo-liberal trends in that "...elements of the New Right discourse assert the supremacy of the individual in matters of social service provision" (Sayed, 1997:3). In other words, governing bodies are perceived as representative structures which articulate, with little intervention from those whom they deem do not have a 'stake' in education, the interest of individual parents who have the interest of their own children first and foremost and therefore the specific institution where his/her child is a learner. In this regard, Kallaway (1988) argues that granting parents the majority weakens the participation of civil society and parents as citizens on school governing bodies. The rights of individual parents as consumers are protected as opposed to the values and programs of social democracy as expressed in documents such as the Freedom Charter, People's Education Declaration and the NEPI.

The SASA specified that stakeholders such as parents, students and teachers should participate in education which emphasises a commitment to democratic participation. But granting parents the majority on the governing body suggests that parents have more 'stake' in education than the other constituents. This is in line with the neo-liberal notion of "parental community participation" which is enshrined in the ERS. It seems to suggest that citizens who are not parents have a lesser 'stake' in education. This is in line with the neo-liberal ideology in which parents are the consumers of education and should thus have the major stake in education.

The antecedent education policy texts discussed above seem to have addressed the demand of forces operating outside state power in the 1980s and early 1990s for communities to participate in educational processes. However, on closer analysis, the

way in which notions of 'participation' are framed in the WPET, the Hunter Report and the two White Papers (1995 and February 1996), reveal constestation and tension. Firstly, the role of communities is reduced to that of 'community representatives with expertise'. This amounts to representative democracy as opposed to the MDM's preferred notion of participatory democracy. The notion of representative democracy is inconsistent with the kind of democracy envisaged which would "... encourage collective imput and active participation by all..." (People's Education, Resolution, 2). In contrast to the MDM's collective understanding of community, is the NP's view which foregrounds the idea of choice in giving parents the majority power on school governing bodies. This notion of 'participation' is even further diluted in the SASA (1996) in that now community representation is optional in that it states that the governing body 'may' co-opt members of the community. A further dilution is the fact that in SASA (1996) members of the governing body who are community representatives, will not have voting rights.

The Preamble of SASA (1996) is consistent with the demands made in the 1980s and early 1990s by forces operating outside of the apartheid state in that it enshrines popular notions of participation such as "...lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society..." (SASA, 1996:5). However, this notion becomes diluted when analysing the composition of school governing bodies. It becomes apparent at this level of analysis that the language usage is framed in such a way that school governing bodies need not have community representatives, but that it '...may co-opt a member or members of the community to assist it in discharging its function' (SASA, 1996:18). The language usage here differs from that of the WPET and the Hunter Report in that it implies that community members need not have 'expertise' but refers to those members who can assist in the discharging of its functions, which amounts to the same as those community members who have resources which would assist the school in some way. The language usage in the SASA can be interpreted to mean that members of the community who live in the same geographical area as the school may be co-opted by the governing body. It limits the participation of community representation in that it means that co-opted members must be from the geographical area of the school and have 'expertise'.

This notion of "co-opted community representatives" represents a major shift in education policy texts in that none of the education policy texts which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s used the term "community representatives", neither did they qualify that community representatives need to have expertise. The People's Education Declaration and the NEPI used the concept "community participation" and implied equal representation on school structures by virtue of membership of a community. The education policy texts of the NP used the term "parental participation" in the De Lange Report and as "parental community" participation in the ERS. To reiterate the point made earlier, the way in which 'participation' is framed in the SASA is closest to the De Lange Report of the 1980s and the ERS of the 1990s and although the language usage is similar to that used by the forces which operated outside the apartheid state in the 1980s and 1990s, analysis of the texts reveal that ultimately, its provisions enshrine notions of neo-liberalism.

Analysis in this chapter focused on notions of 'participation' which emerged as a result of South Africa becoming a democracy. It became apparent that the education policy texts which emerged in this new context represented a convergence of two ideological positions. On the one hand the education policies reflect a commitment to the principles of social democracy which emphasises the rights of citizens to participate in public institutions such as schools so that a sense of ownership over the institution is gained. On the other hand, the education policies in the new setting reflect the legacy of the reforming apartheid state in that it proposes a parental majority which entrenches the rights of individuals who would act in the interest of their own children first and foremost. The latter is consistent with education policy texts produced by the NP.

In conclusion, this chapter analysed the processes involved which impacted on the policy as text and the text itself. By analysing the processes, I was able to show the way in which the legislated policy allocates, foregrounds and backgrounds certain values and whose interest the allocated values represent. This is what Ball (1992) refers to as the micro-politics of policy. In this regard I have shown that the antecedent education policy texts reflect notions of participation which are similar to those enshrined in the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI as well as those enshrined in the De Lange Report and the ERS. This 'convergence' of policies in

the antecedent education policy texts represents a potential compromise to neo-liberalism and social democracy. SASA however (being a legislated text), shows a firm and committed compromise to neo-liberalism as the convergence of social democratic principles is less evident due to the manner in which notions of 'participation' is framed. How does this legislated compromise affect the notion of 'participation' for the future? In order to lay the basis for an informed conclusion, I will reconstruct the objective and findings of my textual analysis.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Research findings

The purpose of this minithesis was to analyse notions of 'participation' in education policy texts from 1980-1996 in order to ascertain what notions of 'participation' are enshrined in the key policy text (SASA, 1996). It was my understanding that since SASA (a legislated education policy text) was produced as a result of South Africa becoming a democracy and since the ANC gained the senior position of power within the GNU, the legislated education policy text would enshrine notions of 'participation' which are consistent with those produced by forces operating outside the apartheid state in the 1980s and early 1990s. Although the ANC was not actively involved in the activities of the People's Education Declaration in the 1980s and the NEPI in the 1990s, the demands and policy proposals which emanated from these documents were consistent with the ANC ideology which can be traced back to the Freedom Charter.

On closer examination of SASA, it becomes apparent that it enshrines notions of 'participation' which are not in tandem with those which found expression in the People's Education Declaration. I therefore undertook a systematic probe into the notions of 'participation' which emerged in the education policy texts from 1980-1996. Three periods were identified, 1980-1990, 1990-1994 and post 1994 to trace the shifts, shifting influences, continuities and discontinuities around the notion 'participation'.

Ball's (1992) conceptualisation of policy-making and the policy process guided the analysis in each of the three periods. The context of influence and the context of text production were used to illuminate each period. In the period, 1980-1990, the third context, the context of practice was briefly analysed.

Chapter Two established that in terms of school governance, "parental participation" meant the participation of parents/guardians of children attending a particular school

(irrespective of the school's location) in the governance of such school. The same term "parental participation" is understood differently within the social democratic approach and the neo-liberal approach. Within the social democratic approach, the notion of parents as citizens with rights and obligations is emphasised whereas the parent is seen as an individual consumer within the neo-liberal approach. In the social democratic approach, parents are motivated by a sense of belonging and would participate for the sake of collective gain, whereas the neo-liberal approach sees the market as the key factor and collective interests are reduced in the face of the individual's own interests and personal financial gains. In practice, meaningful participation (as it was envisioned), could not be ensured. Even within the framework of social democratic thought "parental participation" could still be marginalised at will through a process of manouever or through the introduction of participating limitations or through parents limiting their own participation.

Analysis of the international literature on 'community' revealed that a range of competing definitions and understandings exist. Community theorists who were discussed, agree that territory is a common element for community. In the South African context prior to 1994, the notion 'community' is used interchangeably with notions such as 'the people' and 'the nation'. In the policy texts of the NP, concepts such as 'the nation', 'the people' and 'the community' referred exclusively to those who were classified as white (Hancock, 1990:10). In the literature of the ANC pre-1994, 'the people','the nation' and 'the community' referred to all South Africans who opposed apartheid and desired freedom and democracy and who owed allegiance to Africa. This notion of 'community' was enshrined in the Freedom Charter of 1955. In school governance terms then, parents would be a subset of 'the community' or 'the nation', with specific education demands.

Chapter Three outlined the economic, social, political and ideological conditions prevalent in South Africa in the 1980s. It was shown that because of the political and educational turmoil in the country, the National Party was forced to investigate alternative education policy options which would render apartheid education more feasible. It was shown that despite the state's intervention to reform apartheid education, student unrests continued in the 1980s and numerous political and educational organisations were formed which opposed apartheid. It was these social,

political and ideological factors prevalent in South Africa in the 1980s which set the agenda for policy-making. The policies of the state in the form of the De Lange Commission (1981) and the White Paper on Education (1983) as well as the policies produced outside of and in opposition to the apartheid state, the People's Education Declaration, were analysed. The purpose of this analysis was to understand what notions of 'participation' are enshrined in each of these significant policy texts.

Analysis of the education texts of the NP in the form of the De Lange Investigation (1981) and the White Paper (1983), revealed a notion of participation in school governance as confined to 'parents and teachers' (HSRC, 1981:201) and to '...parent representative bodies at local level ...(White Paper, 1983:18). In contrast, in the education texts of the NECC, a notion of '...collective input and participation of all' and '...student, workers and community organisations' was emphasised.

In the education policy of the NP, emphasis was on the parents and educators at a school. In the policies of the forces operating outside of and in opposition to the apartheid state, participation in school governance was inclusive of parents, teachers, workers and community organisations.

Chapter Four analysed the policy-making process of the government in the form of the ERS, and the MDM in the form of the NEPI. The point of departure for the ERS was capitalistic in nature. The ERS ignored the call for a democratisation of the education system. The structure proposed in the ERS Discussion Document was basically in line with the De Lange recommendations in that it proposed a singular education department with three management levels. The way in which "community participation" took place would be decided at the institutional level. By emphasising "parental community participation" at this level, it enshrined the neo-liberal ideology which ensured the protection of parental rights. In terms of the 'Model System' of schooling, schools in white areas would remain well-resourced while schools in historically disadvantaged areas would remain under-resourced, thus ensuring the perpetuation of the main inequalities in South African society. This "new right" approach favoured a free-market enterprise system of government which laid more emphasis on the needs of individuals and less on public or community interests.

During the early 1990s, further shifts took place in relation to the way "community participation" in education was understood and formulated. In my exposition I have assumed the policy-making process within the NEPI to be democratic and inclusive of all its stakeholders. Due to the very nature of inclusivity and consultation within the ranks of the MDM and the circular nature of the policy-making process, the policy options of the NEPI were widely accepted. In terms of participation, the NEPI proposed that participation at school level would consist of '...various interests groups, in particular teachers, parents, workers and students' (National Education Conference, 1992). This notion of participation is in tandem with social democratic principles in that it ensures the participation of all in public institutions such as schools.

In Chapter Five, analysis focused on the post election period with its new political landscape which set the agenda for the negotiation of policy options which would later be reflected in the SASA. From the outset, the ANC's position within the GNU necessitated the abandoning of some of its long held ideals and principles in favour of more "desirable and possible" policy options (Badat, 1995). This stance was the result of various influences both globally and nationally, for example, the collapse of socialism, the neo-liberal tendencies within the GNU (represented by the NP, the IFP and within the ANC itself) and the ANC's vague stance on capitalism.

I have shown the shifts in the notion 'participation' which are detected from the White Paper Education and Training (March 1995) to the Hunter Commission which stated that communities which are serviced by a particular school are stakeholders in the education of children at that school. The Hunter Report recommended that community representatives be nominated by parents and elected by governing bodies. A shift occurred between this recommendation and the White Paper (2b), influenced by international consultants. White Paper 2b recommended a parental majority on governing bodies and recommended that only governing bodies elect community representatives. The Schools Bill (1996) refined this trend further and stated that members of the community may be co-opted by the governing body, but co-opted members have the same rights as elected members. A major difference between the SASB and the SASA is that in the final legislated text, co-opted members (which means members of the community) have no voting rights on the

governing body. They merely play an advisory role to benefit the school with their expertise.

In terms of the developing educational legislation post-1994, the notion "community participation" is weakest in the SASA. Although "community participation" is recognised in its symbolic language and rhetoric, in its provisions, participation has been reduced to tokenism with community representatives having no voting powers. Effectively, the spaces which were created for citizen participation have been prescribed, which is in direct conflict with participatory democracy and a dilution of the citizen participation entrenched in the Constitution (1996).

6.2 Implications for future research

Philosophically, policies which emerged in South Africa prior to 1994 as articulated by progressive forces operating outside of the apartheid state were premised on conceptions that were embodied in the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter envisioned a society in which social and economic relations would mirror political victories. In the context of practice, failure to achieve this objective would have negative outcomes, thus subverting the rhetoric symbolised in the Freedom Charter. Normally, this would show prominently through the agitation and mobilisation exerted by excluded classes and groups.

Very similar considerations can be given in the analysis of SASA. The SASA (1996) must be viewed as a text and a product in which a variety of compromises were made. This minithesis explored the history of SASA and analysed antecedent policy texts so as to understand the reasons for the policy choices made. The messy realities and evolving chaos were revealed so as to understand the values foregrounded and backgrounded. Policy, as Ball (1992) puts it, is always in a state of 'becoming', of 'was' and 'never was'. By the same token, the notion of 'participation' as enshrined in the SASA is certainly not complete but in the process of 'becoming'. The context of practice is central to defining policy. Because of internal contradictions in the context of practice, policy actors 'read' the text in various ways and may still 'read' it to mean community participation as espoused by People's Education. An example

of this is Nzimande's position, which is "...for communities to participate meaningfully in building a culture of learning...". Using Ball's (1992) framework of policy analysis, I argue that this understanding of policy as evolving in and through texts and not necessarily completed at the legislative moment, means that policy analysts, policy-makers and ordinary citizens continue to develop education policy texts which may be inclusive of a notion of citizen participation and would ensure that all schools are open to all children at all times.

The notion that all things should be open to all people all the time (Sayed and Carrim, 1997) represents the ideal in a democracy. However, research in citizen participation in the education arena (Lukes, 1974; Newton, 1976; Vincent, 1996) has found that even if provisions for participation in education were increased, the process is never straightforward. They have shown that citizens who have traditionally been excluded were less likely to participate in school structures. The converse is also true, in that citizens who have traditionally been advantaged were more likely to participate in school structures. Although public or citizen participation was advocated by the People's Education Declaration and the NEPI, in real terms it very often meant that those who were already empowered would become even more empowered as they would be able to take full advantage of the principle of citizen participation. Within a social democracy, this is acknowledged. Within the neo-liberal ideology though, citizens are regarded as consumers and in the educational arena, citizens who are parents are the consumers of education and they are free to choose the best schools for their children. It is assumed that all have equal opportunity.

The education policies that emerged from the People's Education Movement and the NECC were symbolic and visionary in nature. The purpose of these policies were on the one hand, to confront the NP policies which were based on exclusion and discrimination and on the other hand and to answer the socio-political demands of the oppressed majority. Thus the policies of People's Education challenged the state and emphasised citizen power. Neither the People's Education Declaration nor the NEPI dealt with strategies for implementation. In the new post election context, activists who were part of the People's Education and the NEPI processes found themselves in positions of power to formulate education policy for all South

Africans. This context differs from the previous contexts in that other ideologies and positions had to be considered. It therefore becomes imperative for policy analysts and state critics to understand the context in which these new education policies emerged and to bear in mind that as social democratic principles become more embedded in South African society, the education policies will reflect this. At the same time, however, policy analysts, state critics and citizens ought not to be complacent in ensuring that the social democratic values over which the educational struggles were waged are subverted and abandoned in favour of market ideologies and values.

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