

**THE UTILIZATION OF A PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE
QUALITY EDUCATION TO A HISTORICALLY
DISADVANTAGED PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN
CAPE**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Magister Educationis in the Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape.**

Supervisor: Dr C.G. Williams

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LIST OF KEYWORDS

partnership

quality education

mutual benefit

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commitment

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respect

communication

facilitation

sustainability



ABSTRACT

THE UTILIZATION OF A PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE QUALITY EDUCATION TO A HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE.

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Eleven years into the South African democracy there are still huge challenges facing South African public schools, especially with regard to the notions of equity and redress. Increasingly historically advantaged and disadvantaged South African schools are entering into partnerships in an attempt to address the challenges facing them. This study focuses on one such a partnership between two primary schools in an attempt to ascertain whether partnerships can in fact ameliorate the situation.

The literature survey which preceded the empirical study revealed that not much research had been done in the field of partnerships, especially partnerships between schools – be they primary or secondary. I was thus compelled to review international and national literature on partnerships between schools and other institutions in general. The literature survey revealed invaluable research findings regarding partnerships, which are generalisable to partnerships between schools. It revealed the importance of a geographically accessible partner with common but also distinctive interests and aims. A commitment from staff from both schools is seen as necessary for the development of a

partnership with capacity building being the main criterion. The literature suggests that there be constant dialogue to assist with the maintenance and development of the partnership activities. Monitoring activities is also needed to check each partner's performance. The literature cautions against power, authority and lack of trust creating a barrier to a partnership.

A decision was taken to do a case study of two diverse primary schools in the Western Cape. After careful consideration, it was decided that qualitative research methodology and research methods would best serve the aims of the study. Evidence gathered through interviews was supplemented by documents kept by the schools, the researcher's observation and informal dialogue with other staff members. My research aim was to highlight some of the factors which helped and hindered the primary school partnership.

The research findings reveal the sharing of resources and staff development opportunities as some of the strengths of the partnership and geographical location and limited involvement of the staff as some of the weaknesses. The partnership between the two diverse schools enables the historically disadvantaged school to access scarce skills and resources. The disadvantaged school is also able to develop real expertise in specialized areas as it works in close collaboration with the advantaged school. The partnership broadens the pupils' experiences by exposing them to a different learning and social environment and increases the range of options available to them.

Based on the findings, the study provides guidelines and recommendations towards establishing and improving partnerships between diverse primary schools. The study also suggests further areas of research with regard to partnerships between schools.

May 2005

DECLARATION

I declare that *The Utilization of a Partnership to Provide Quality Education to a Historically Disadvantaged Primary School in the Western Cape* is my own work, that has not been submitted before for any degree examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Nazli Salie

May 2005

Signed:



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- I wish to thank the Almighty Allah for my source of strength and hope.
- Dr Clarence Williams, thank you for your careful supervision and guidance despite a full programme.
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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The 1996 mission statement of the Department of Education envisions a South Africa in which all people have access to lifelong education and training opportunities which will contribute towards improving the quality of life and the building of a peaceful, prosperous and democratic society (South African Government Department of Education, 2003).

Through legislation such as the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act (both of 1950) the racial categories of 'Black', 'Coloured', 'Indian' and 'White' became entrenched. 'Black' was used to refer to those of indigenous African origin; 'Coloured' referred to a population descended from the miscegenation of indigenous tribes such as the Khoisan with the 'White' Europeans; and 'Indian' referred to a population descended from indentured plantation workers from India. Within this study it will be necessary to use the terms 'Black', 'Coloured', 'Indian' and 'White', when referring to the schools so as to distinguish the different schools where the discrepancies in the education are evident.

At present there are glaring disparities in the traditionally Black, Coloured and Indian schools. The poor conditions in most of the Black schools are not conducive to teaching and learning. Some of these schools do not have basic facilities such as running water and toilets, and there are many small and under-resourced schools in remote and rural areas, that still have mud walls (Chisholm 2001:2). After the 1994 elections, it was the expectation of the disadvantaged that the new government would

make provision for quality education by providing schools with better qualified teachers, much needed resources and free education. Due to various financial constraints it is problematic for the state to meet all the challenges.

The historically disadvantaged schools fall far short of the advantaged schools, most of which have the following:

- well-qualified teachers
- well-resourced libraries
- computers
- administration staff
- supportive Parent Teachers Associations
- active Governing Bodies
- small classes – pupil-teacher ratio averaging 1:18
- pass rate 95 - 100%
- low drop-out rate
- brick buildings
- good security
- sport fields



Some of the historically disadvantaged schools have the following, in comparison:

- substantial number of educators are not qualified
- no electricity
- no library and no computers
- no administration staff
- no Parent Teachers Association

- inactive Governing Bodies
- large classes – pupil-teacher ratio 1:38
- pass rate of the nation-wide, standardized high school graduation exam is less than half of the pass rate of the advantaged schools
- high drop-out rate
- no sport fields
- lack of security that results in theft and vandalism
- mud-walled buildings (Soweto and Its Aftermath,1996)

The advantaged schools have the basic resources that are conducive to quality teaching and learning. The parents of the learners are in the middle to higher income bracket, and can therefore afford to pay the fees to support the maintenance of quality education at the schools. Additional educators can be employed to reduce class numbers and to do specialized teaching such as Art, Music, Sport, Remedial Teaching and Counseling. These schools also have sponsorships from big business companies to which the parents are attached and the companies get greater exposure from these schools than from the Black schools.

1.2 AIMS

1.2.1 Strategic Aim

- To investigate the utilization of a partnership as a tool to provide quality education to a historically disadvantaged primary school in the Western Cape.

1.2.2 Research Aims

- To make a literature survey of how partnerships in different settings are utilized to mutual benefit of all role players.
- To do a case study of a partnership between two culturally and socially diverse primary schools in Cape Town.
- To make recommendations to optimize the utilization of partnerships between two diverse primary schools.

1.3 MY MOTIVATION

The successful twinning of two diverse schools which has been sustained for nine years, has motivated me to research partnerships. The case study of a White privileged school in the southern suburbs and a Black historically disadvantaged school in a township, will be utilized to encourage other schools to follow suit. From

documentary evidence it has been found that the twinning between the two schools has progressed to:

- annual joint planning meetings of senior staff from both schools;
- sports coaching conducted by teachers from both schools;
- computer training sessions for the township pupils conducted by a teacher from the privileged school;
- Junior Primary Workshops held on Saturday mornings conducted by Junior Primary teachers from both schools;
- A joint cricket team, that play matches on Wednesdays;
- Music – joint choirs;
- Art lessons held at the privileged school.

An analysis was done to ascertain whether learners from disadvantaged schools in the Western Cape can benefit from a partnership with well-resourced schools by being exposed to facilities which do not exist at their schools. If there is evidence of benefit, then these ideas must be shared with other schools. The partnership between these two schools will be used as an example to other schools. If there are shortcomings, then successes from other partnerships will be investigated.

1.4 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.4.1 Quality of Education

Potter and Powell (1992) consider quality education to be both efficient and effective. Efficient as in when a school actualizes its aims and priorities as contained in a development plan. Education is regarded as effective when the school satisfies external criteria, such as the demands of the parents and learners, and does well against comparable institutions in key areas of performance, examination results being one of them. They consider the improvement of the quality to be everyone's responsibility. It should furthermore be a continuous process, based on a well-managed regime of review and development. There should be a development plan to control the pace of development, in order to keep it manageable as far as possible by identifying the priorities that are do-able and then communicating them to all those associated with the school, including all learners.

Moulder (1990:107) argues that quality education in South Africa can be attained if schools have teachers who are:



- well qualified
- who are able to enrich their teaching with appropriate technology
- good leaders, managers, administrators and organizers.

Moulder (1990:107) claims that to obtain quality education, the education system must give priority to people's growth needs (self actualisation) and to their basic needs (self-reliance). He continues that educators must prepare their students for work and link what they teach to what happens in the workplace. Just as technical training that does not develop understanding is soon obsolete, so academic theorising that does not develop practical skills is an expensive luxury that schools cannot afford.

1.4.2 Partnerships

At a three day international conference, Partnerships for Change, in Manchester, UK in September 1993, delegates from business and industry, local government and local communities exchanged their experiences of how to achieve sustainable development. From the document, Partnerships in Practice (1994), it is found that a successful partnership is one which is flexible, and where there is mutual benefit.

In order to create a partnership, it is important to recognise differences and limitations of each partner in the community. The group should try to accommodate the objectives of all its members. It should provide opportunities to access various stakeholders, thus gaining knowledge and understanding between partners.



Ideally, a partnership within in a city should include members of the following groups: central government, local authorities, the business community and private sector, non-government organisations and community organisations, local people (both men and women). Partnerships could also include small groups of people within the community such as women's groups, indigenous groups, labour unions, grassroots people, etc. For a successful partnership, the partners need to work on turning any weaknesses that may exist into strengths or at least be aware of the problems they can create.

There are, however, certain obstacles to partnerships of which one must be aware.

These include:

- Ignorance of cultural values can lead to providing solutions not geared to the context.
- Instability because of dependence on links between bodies that are not natural allies.
- Conflicting interests that limit scope and life of the partnership
- Problems with co-ordination, language and communication
- Long work process
- Domination by more powerful partners.
- Self interest of dominant partners.
- The notion that gain by one partner means the loss by another (Partnerships in Practice 1994).



In the document Partnerships in Practice (1994), a warning is sounded that there should be an awareness of the sensitivities with regard to partnerships, namely parasitism, patronisation, changing behaviour both positively and negatively and dependence.

1.4.3 Mutual Benefit

According to a report, The Partnership Concept (1998), mutual benefit is one of the domains that helps define the context of a successful strategic partnership. It is believed that for the partnership to succeed, all the parties must have something to gain. The possible mutual benefits of a partnership could be the achieving of productivity gains. One partner could, for example, accomplish higher student

achievement scores, improved teaching or increased parental support, while the other could have an increased programme enrollment, have more scholarships applied for and awarded.

Both partners could experience improved quality, and reduced or redirected cost resulting from increased efficiency. As a partnership matures, there is the willingness to take risks and this may result in new or revised programmes, new services and new opportunities. A more positive work environment could be created by reducing the conflict that sometimes develops between schools of different backgrounds. The effective partnership could also reduce the isolation between and within the organizations while increasing the potential for more systemic thinking and supportive joint action (The Partnership Concept, 1998).



1.4.4 Sharing

According to High School Partnerships (2000), sharing enables the partners to make the most effective and efficient use of existing resources. Schools can share classrooms, facilities and expertise with the disadvantaged partner. Sharing can further enhance family and community participation in shared responsibility for education as well as the well-being of the children. There can be an increase in the participation of partner schools' communities in the planning and management, and delivery of education and other human services. More examples of what could be shared by school partners are: ideas, report cards, common interests (such as doing things together as a choir or band) and developing criteria for assessment to evaluate the progress of the partnership.

1.4.5 Commitment

The Partnership Concept (1998) suggests that a partnership should be about joint improvement of the schools. To achieve this, there should be the commitment to develop shared organizational values, mission, and goals to guide the partnership through a process that enfranchises all the staff members of both schools to the partnership. The partners require a long range view as well as willingness over time to relinquish some organizational controls in favour of the shared governance that would have to be put in place. There should also be the commitment to identify and institutionalize recognition and reward systems that will reinforce the partnership goals. The partners should be committed to accommodate the objectives of all the members. It is my opinion that the partners must have a commitment that goes beyond the call of duty and that role players should be prepared to work outside school hours.

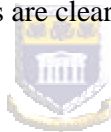
1.4.6 Trust

According to the document, Partnerships in Practice (1994), trust should be built among the sectors of the society – for instance getting the staff of the respective schools to trust each other, getting the pupils to trust the teachers/coaches with whom they are involved and parents of the respective schools to trust each other. Noquera (2001) claims that trust is the absolute key to a long term successful partnership. He believes that for partners who are willing to invest the time in forging a relationship

where tangible changes for the better can be produced, trust will gradually develop and from that trust can come a willingness to test new ideas and to try things that have not been considered before - things that can actually lead to lasting change. Trust is built on an explicit track record as well as personal relationships where people deliver on promises made.

1.4.7 Respect

Noquera (2001) argues that in order for a partnership between two schools to be sustained, relationships between the parties involved must be based on mutual respect. It must be clear from the outset who is going to benefit from the collaboration activity and be sure that expectations and roles are clearly defined.



Disrespect can come from the arrogant belief that the one partner is more knowledgeable and better able to find solutions to complex problems and that the other partner lacks the sophistication to understand the problems. There should be the abandoning of traditional thinking and breaking down of prejudices. It should be acknowledged that each partner has a valuable role to play and each has concerns and responsibilities that have to be taken on board. A partnership should start by identifying the needs of the respective schools and then see how all the stakeholders can get involved in meeting these needs.

1.4.8 Communication

The C.B. Smith Primary School Improvement Plan (1999) has targeted collaboration and communication as high priorities in a partnership. It is necessary to use the resources at hand to support those priorities. Some funds should be made available to provide release time so that staff and parents of the relevant schools can meet on a regular basis. The combined team can collaborate in identifying school problems, defining goals, formulating policy, shaping direction and ensuring the implementation of the desired action. For good communication and cultural sensitivity, the project must be carefully designed together with local counterparts to accommodate the distinct needs of the disparate cultures. Attention should be paid to the communication process – language, literacy, style and attitude. There could be various forms of communication such as a quarterly newsletter, meetings or a handbook that outlines guidelines and provides a school calendar.

1.4.9 Facilitation

Nelson and Watt (1999) define facilitation as “guidance given to ensure success and has special relevance to the support and guidance various disadvantaged populations have needed as they entered the academy in increasing numbers”. It is important that the key members of the partnership team (the facilitators) have a skilled understanding of each partner’s institutional environment.

In the initial stages of the partnership, the facilitators, who could be the headmasters of the schools, should ensure that each representative can verbalise the viewpoint,

goals and objectives of their schools and understand those of the partner school. The facilitators would then be in a position to plan outcomes and establish how communication and support will flow. Then it will be possible to share a primary agenda of serving the needs of the target schools, rather than struggle over dominance of one or the other agenda. (High School Partnerships, 2000)

1.4.10 Sustainability

According to the document, *Partnerships in Practice* (1994), sustainability is an important factor in the success of a partnership. It is acknowledged that building and sustaining relationships between schools could be difficult, but when commitment is present, tangible changes for the better can be produced. People are looking for changes that will improve their society and look for ways to get personally involved in affecting these changes. A key to sustainability is a “system’s approach” – one that treats the society as a system rather than a set of separate sectors (i.e. the education, the school and the people). Local communities and governments can be involved in partnerships to ensure sustainable resource management. There should also be long term support to help solve their problems.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It is the aim of this research to do a case study of a partnership between a advantaged school (School A) and a historically disadvantaged school (School B) in the Western Cape, in order to evaluate the partnership and to investigate future possibilities to optimise the utilization of partnerships in education.

The researcher's awareness of the partnership between the two schools, lead to the formulation of the following questions that directed the literature survey:

- Why is there a need to form a partnership?
- How is the partnership defined?
- What are the objectives of the partners?
- Who are the role players who contribute to a successful partnership?
- What resources are needed to make the partnership successful?
- What are the necessary conditions for a partnership to be successful?
- What social effects does the partnership have on the respective communities?
- How does each partner benefit?
- What successes are there in partnerships?
- What problems are experienced in partnerships?

By formulating the above questions, the researcher was able to formulate an overall approach to the enquiry.

This research investigates the benefits of a nine-year long partnership between School A and School B by identifying the various factors which contributed to the success of the partnership as well as to identify the problems which were encountered. The following questions directed the empirical study:

- Is there a need for the partnership?
- What are the aims of the partnership?
- Who are the role players in the partnership?

- How is the development of the partnership communicated to all the roleplayers?
- How does the partnership affect the teachers, pupils and parents of the respective schools?
- How does each partner benefit?
- What social effect does the partnership have on the school community?
- What are the strengths of the partnership?
- What are the weaknesses of the partnership?
- What logistic challenges need to be met in order for the partnership to be successful?
- What problems have been experienced with regard to the partnership?



1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

A thorough review of the literature is an essential component of planning research on a topic (Breakwell, Hammond and Fife-Shaw, 1995:21-22). This I did through the library by accessing electronic data bases, and other resources. Although my focus was mainly on educational partnerships in primary schools, I also looked at partnerships in general as not much has been written on the subject. The literature review was a tool for me to understand discussions, views and debates about policies, and recommendations of international organizations, authors and other researchers.

Before I proceeded with the research at the respective schools, I submitted a letter from the Department of Education at the University of Western Cape and a copy of

my proposal to the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to request permission (*see Appendix E:104*). After permission was granted, I informed the respective schools about the research and made contact with persons who could assist with interpretation during the interviews (*see Appendix F:105*). I made arrangements for the interviews to be scheduled with the respective persons.

I also searched for information about educational partnerships in the Western Cape on websites of the Western Cape Education Department (wced.wcape.gov.za) and Joint Education Trust (www.jet.org.za).

My research is both qualitative as well as quantitative where the two methods are seen as complementary – the weaknesses of the one will be the strengths of the other (Bulmer and Warwick 2000:309). I chose the case study method in order to identify key issues which would merit further investigation. The reason that I chose the partnership between School A and School B for the case study, was that it had been regarded as a successful partnership, the location (both schools being close to where I live) as well as my being attached to School A as a teacher, at the time of the research. Hence, I could directly observe the case. Cozby (1997) regards this as useful. Since not much research has been done on this subject before in South Africa, the case study will be valuable in providing me with information regarding a partnership of this nature. Bell (1999:10) recommends a case study approach as it is particularly appropriate for individual researchers, because it gives the opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale.

1.7 RESEARCH PROGRAMME

This study attempts to determine the need for education partnerships to improve the education in disadvantaged schools. It examines strengths and weaknesses of collaborative activities in education.

Chapter two contains a specific review of various educational partnerships. International and national sources are viewed comprehensively to identify factors which will enhance partnership as well as to caution against those that will hinder its success.

Chapter three focuses on the research design with the aim of discussing critically the role of the partnership between the advantaged school and the historically disadvantaged school. This chapter addresses the methodological approach chosen, the process whereby the data obtained was organized and interpreted, and the motivation behind these choices.

Chapter four endeavours to analyse and interpret the results of the empirical investigation by describing, discussing and summarizing the main results.

The concluding chapter focuses on the findings of the empirical investigation and provides recommendations towards guidelines for a programme to enhance the educational partnerships which will lead to improved quality of education.

In the next chapter, the researcher will review literature on educational partnerships. International and national literature, documents and articles will be referred to so that the researcher can support the theory that partnerships can improve the quality of education in disadvantaged schools.



CHAPTER 2 - A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The information I have chosen for this literature review is related specifically to the aim of my research which is to contribute towards the utilization of partnerships as a tool to provide quality education to historically disadvantaged primary schools.

After spending long hours doing intensive research utilizing libraries and the internet, I have to agree with Lemmer (1999:166) that there is very little discussion in literature concerning partnerships between educational institutions. He claims that the reason for this is the isolation of education in the traditional, state-funded education model which was traditionally the cause of little or no contact between educational institutions. Bureaucratic procedures (in the past) prevented schools from having contact with other schools and with institutes of higher education. The lack of contact prevented the establishment of beneficial, long-lasting partnerships. Because of the shortage of literature on the subject of partnerships, in primary schools to be more specific, I have generally reviewed literature about partnerships in various educational institutions. I use the outcomes of successful partnerships and investigate the unsuccessful partnerships and attempt to analyse the weaknesses, barriers and constraints of the approach to partnerships.

In this chapter, I look at various definitions of partnerships. Then I investigate the reasons why partnerships between schools are imperative in South Africa. Following

this, the aims and benefits of the partnership are investigated. Necessary conditions for successful partnerships are reviewed. I then show the outcomes of successful partnerships.

2.2 DEFINITION OF PARTNERSHIPS

Lemmer (1999:150) gives many names to co-operation between schools, as well as other educational institutions, and the 'world' outside of the educational environment. In some countries it is generally referred to as partnerships in education, but terms such as school-community connections, stakeholder participation, networks, compact coalitions, alliances, are but a few terms used to describe co-operation between educational institutions. Hutchinson and Campbell (1998:137) regard collaboration and partnerships as broadly positive with connotations of 'motherhood' and 'apple pie'. It is difficult other than to agree with the idea of organisations working together for the common good.

Bastiani (1993:105) defines an educational partnership as a sharing of power, responsibility and ownership which need not necessarily be equal. A degree of mutuality should be present which should begin with a process of listening to each other and which incorporates responsive dialogue and 'give and take' on both sides.

Although goals and aims should be shared and based on common ground, the important differences must be acknowledged. A commitment to joint action, in which parents, pupils and professionals work together to get things done is considered an important aspect of the partnership.

Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995) quotes from the Partnership Resource Kit (1995) that defines partnership as an undertaking to do something together, a relationship that consists of shared and/or compatible objectives and an acknowledged distribution of specific roles and responsibilities among the participants which can be formal, contractual, or voluntary, between two or more parties.

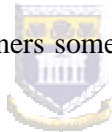
2.3 WHY PARTNERSHIPS ARE REQUIRED

During the twentieth century, the state exerted the greatest influence on education which led to a view that education was an insular activity. Although, until recently, the state was viewed as satisfactory for transmitting society's priorities to the education system, there has been, especially during the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, a stronger movement in the direction of recognising the "need to utilise outside influences in education" and ending educational isolation (OECD 1992).

Gore (1995), (as quoted by Atweh, Kemms and Weeks 1998), and Lemmer (1999:149) draw our attention to the report of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) which discusses the partnership phenomenon in OECD countries, which indicates that this movement had its origin in the supposed failures of education systems funded and governed entirely by the state. Lemmer (1999:150) observes that the concern that education should be provided in a different way from what had been the case in state-isolated schools, emerged clearly by the 1980s and 1990s and this led to large-scale education reform in USA, Britain, New

Zealand, Australia, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, as well as in other countries. The first attempt in reform was to standardise education and training by centralised control and a second attempt was to focus on educator professionalism and decentralised decision making.

Another reason why partnerships are needed to improve education is highlighted by the OECD report (1992:22-24) that criticises the insular nature of education in the past which created an academic emphasis and neglected an emphasis on vocational training. Consequently, the relevance of the outcomes of the education system was not brought into line with the needs of a changing workforce. It further points out that the perception exists that educational standards have actually declined at a time when they should have been on the rise. It has been observed that schools have not succeeded in establishing among learners some of the lifeskills required in the world outside the school (Malloy 1999).



Goduka (1999:92) reports that decades of apartheid schooling in South Africa have resulted in inequalities in the education system and which left a multifaceted legacy which was actively challenged by students. There was a cry for a relevant and legitimate education system that would benefit all South African children and students. His observation that the matriculation pass rate of 98% for white students and 42% of Black students in 1999, is evidence that Black students are at a major disadvantage. With the result that presently still very few students are matriculating with Mathematics and Science on the higher grade; hence do not qualify for admission to science, commerce and engineering faculties at tertiary institutions. Another disadvantage is that Black students speak English and Afrikaans as a third or

fourth language, but schools, colleges and universities have devalued indigenous languages, although they are officially recognised under the new constitution. Goduka (1999:94) is further concerned that the social context of schooling affects teachers' expectations. Matric results show that Black students who are from economically disadvantaged families and whose cultural and emotional needs the present system of education is poorly equipped to meet, are more likely to fail than students from economically advantaged families. This is particularly disconcerting as many Black students who fail in school are capable and intelligent. They start school with high expectations and a strong desire to do well. The social context that schools construct for learning, which specifically refers to the understanding of expectations that teachers and learners use to make sense of one another's behaviour, is seen as a reason for this situation. This context is formed over time as teachers and learners interact with one another, accumulate experiences, attribute meaning and develop expectations about future behaviours (Goduka 1999:94).

Similarly, in his argument, Ogbu (1986) (as quoted by Goduka, 1999:95) states that power and status can be clearly understood by looking at the educational performance of the caste-like groups in the United States. He believes that these children do not perform well in school because years of discrimination and oppression have taught them that working hard in school is futile. Instead they develop strategies to help them cope with the cultural demands and expectations that dominate most schools. Some of these strategies accentuate cultural differences as a form of resistance and protest. Goduka (1999:94) agrees with Ogbu (1986) that these learners who openly display a lack of interest in school and seem to take pride in their 'failures', or behave in ways that are considered inappropriate by educators, may

actually be protesting against cultural expectations fostered by the school expectations that they feel are arbitrary and discriminating.

According to a report by Chinsami in the document, Education for Africa Forum (2003:69), one of the most difficult challenges faced by the country's educational authorities, is the provision of adequate education and training in South Africa's disadvantaged schools. Chinsami feels that if interventions are to be successful, disadvantaged schools serving impoverished people must be given huge support by educational institutions and departments. Expectations of ordinary South African's who had to endure inferior 'Bantu' education in the old dispensation were very high and included access to free education, quality teaching and learning and education in adequate schooling facilities, improved learners performance in examinations and subsequent improvement in the qualifications they received. The challenges facing the public schools, despite transformational policy framework, still remain to a large extent those challenges that faced South Africa ten years ago. During the transition there was much interest from different educational constituencies in finding out characteristics of effective schools and how to go about improving South African schools. A number of school development, school effectiveness and school improvement initiatives were started, both by the new government utilizing donor funding, and by non-governmental organizations. However, studies of school development projects in South Africa over this period have revealed that these initiatives have not had a significant impact on teaching and learning and subsequent learners' performance (Chinsami 2003:68). Some of the main reasons for the failure were the implementation of single change programmes or the lack of integration of many programmes initiated in schools. Where there was evidence of some

improvement in learners' performance, the improvement could not be maintained. International research is increasingly showing that one-off initiatives directed at a particular aspect of the schools work with the intention of bringing about meaningful and sustainable innovation and change will not work. What is needed is a holistic look at the school, its structure, its people, its processes, its values and culture. The new government has inherited a huge apartheid backlog and has struggled to improve the educational situation. With 90% of the education budget being spent on teachers' salaries alone and education already the highest expense in the budget, the Government does not have sufficient funds to ensure that all schools have quality education (Poverty and Inequality in South Africa 1998).

2.4 AIMS AND BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIPS



In her literature review around issues relating to the reform of teacher education, Gore as quoted by Atweh, Kemms and Weeks (1998:14), claims “Not surprisingly ... collaborative and partnerships programmes are frequently touted as the single most efficient, effective, and important way of reforming both teacher education and schools concurrently”. Sohng (2001:116) refers to Van Wyk who illustrates the exceptional benefits found in a unique partnership. Although it is not an educational partnership, she quotes Henderson and Bela (1994) who have found that there is evidence beyond dispute that when schools and families form a partnership to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life. Sohng (2001:116) also refers to Dauber and Epstein (1993), Chavkin (1993) and Bastiani (1988) who claim that in other major studies the link between parent involvement and learner achievement has also been established. The literature also emphasises the

positive effects on parents of improved family-school relations, such as increased confidence of the parents, better understanding of what is happening in school (Swap 1993:10) and a feeling of empowerment, especially evident in disadvantaged communities. Swap (1993:10) adds that educators also benefit when family-school relationships improve because they experience "... support and appreciation from parents and a rekindling of their own enthusiasm for problem solving". Most policy makers and educators endorse the need for school-family-community partnerships to improve education (Sohnge 2001:16). The role of parents in a school partnership must not be underestimated. Other benefits of this unique partnership (as listed by Van Wyk in Sohnge 2001:117) are decreased truancy, improved attitudes of learners to their studies and a decrease in the dropout rate. She refers to Haberman (1992:33) whose studies stress that these benefits occur irrespective of the socio-economic class to which the family belongs.



Lemmer's (1999:169) and Madsen's (1996) discussion affirms that schools alone cannot shoulder the enormous reform challenges confronting the education systems of the world. They stress that the community as a whole must accept the shared responsibilities for educating children. He further argues that the dimension to the idea of partnerships is that unparalleled changes and progress in technology compel countries to let their workers keep on learning. The ideal is to create a community of lifelong learners.

Alie (2001:48) refers to the OFSTED 1996 Report (paragraph 45) and the Elton Report (1989) which recommend that schools should develop an active partnership with parents as an aid to promote good behaviour. The document, Partnerships That

Work, also reveals that high quality work-related learning can help learners of all abilities to develop new skill and abilities, to find new motivation and interest (Hull 2000:11) . Whilst some schools can deliver such learning themselves, partnerships with local advantaged schools are often efficient and effective means of achieving these aims (Hull 2000:8).

Nchabeleng (2000:11) also indicates that working partnerships have become a political and operational imperative, driven by external factors such as the changing role of the State which has influenced the rise of partnerships. The political imperative for partnership is to enhance service delivery, especially to rural areas. Nchabeleng (2000:11) further observes that partnerships between government and other role players are developed in order to extend the reach of the state - either physically, or to enable rapid response or policy experiments through pilot projects. The benefit, therefore, is that the Government's use of partnership arrangements with local NGOs and small businesses creates the potential not only for the empowerment of these entities, but for more effective service delivery to citizens. An additional benefit of a partnership of this nature is that more money is circulated in the local economy. The benefits of the partnerships referred to by Nchabeleng (2000:11) can also be applied to primary school partnerships. All development activities should be characterised by the need to maximise the use of limited resources, namely human, financial and material. Working in partnership with others should enable disadvantaged schools to access scarce skills and material resources, while reducing the duplication of effort. Partnership can also enable disadvantaged schools to develop real expertise in specialised areas as they work in close collaboration with advantaged schools instead of trying to develop the capacity to answer all

developmental needs in a given community or area. Partnerships That Work also reveals that the benefits to be gained from their partnerships is that the advantaged school offers a wide range of courses, the teaching staff are experienced and well-qualified and facilities are often state-of-the-art (Hull 2000:4). Furthermore, the report regards links with the two partners as an opportunity to broaden the learners' experiences by exposing them to a different learning and social environment or by increasing the range of options available to them. In the case of this report, there are key implications in terms of staff development for both partners, the cost of using specialist resources, the relationship of provision with other curriculum offers and organizational planning (Hull 2000:4, 11).

Collaborative working arrangements also have the potential not only to use existing resources most effectively, but to also build capacity in partnering organisations. Thus working in developmental partnership creates the necessary synergy of purpose, values, skills and expertise to enable each respective organisation to both give to the relationship and take new capabilities from it.

Nchabeleng (2000:12) further states that by working together, we can see and try new ways of engaging partners. They will be challenged to forge new theories and approaches for resolving development challenges. Working with other organisations will provide the partners with fresh ideas and opportunities for skills development through creatively sharing the best of what each partner has to offer. Contacts could then be exchanged, and the potential for each organisation to leave the partnership with enhanced skills, networks and reputations will be created.

2.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARTNERSHIPS

Swap's (1993) reference to learners that are "working hard" and Bastiani's (1993) inclusion of learners "in joint action ... to get things done" are significant in the debate concerning partnership in education. That pupils are also partners in education should not be taken for granted (Lemmer 1999:153). Lemmer (1999:153) refers to the argument of Westwood (1995) that the most fundamental partnership of all, as far as positive learning outcomes go, is that between learner and teacher.

Certain reforms have emerged from such a partnership. Learners offer, amongst others, valuable feedback and connections forged by means of learners' own network. Learners can influence adults outside the school system by their attitude toward school policies. Learners get involved in school activities such as community service, waging battles against pollution, crime and corrupt government in the community (Lemmer 1999:154). These reforms will be useful in primary school partnerships.

Lemmer (1999:154) also refers to the successful partnerships between teachers who did not have time to work together and had previously been teaching in isolation. According to the view of Spady (1986:61), the accent fell on work done in teams, on joint action, on the use of wider expertise than that of a single teacher for a group of learners. Such a school partnership based on mutual responsibility, shared aims and goals and a commitment to joint action by educators had innumerable advantages. Teachers as the partners, felt more secure and felt more free to experiment, because the successes as well as failures were accredited to the team as a whole. The self-esteem of teachers was enhanced by the feeling that certain of their ideas and

approaches that may have been suppressed in the past could now be applied in a team setting. Because the partners are involved in a daily learning situation, they can share ideas, experience the successful methods of others and evaluate each other's approaches. Pupils reap the benefit of the increasing improvement in teachers' teaching abilities. These benefits can be applied to the primary school partnerships.

McLaughlin (1997:26) affirms that valuable partnerships can also be built between one school and another. He reports a number of resounding successes experienced with science projects involving high school and primary school learners which could also apply to primary school partnerships. Whereas schools in the traditionally isolated situation only experienced incidental contact and cooperation, there was now no reason why partnership could not be built up. Since we live in an era in which cost effectiveness and productivity have become important principles, the trend of partnerships obliges schools to share resources to a greater extent than was the case in the past. There can be an exchange of expertise regarding instructional programmes, for example, in Mathematics or Science or Technology education. Buildings and staff can be shared for specific activities.

Bernauer (1996:71-77) also reports a technology integration project and the establishment of an interactive technology lab in which various institutions, including universities, were involved. The final deduction was that partnering breeds success. Some schools do not have funds to implement expensive interactive technology labs. There is therefore no reason why schools cannot establish communal facilities and utilise these to optimise learning opportunities for all learners. McLaughlin (1997:26) further comments that there is no one single best or correct method for partnering

between schools. There are numerous possibilities depending on the region. Many ideas can be taken from other kinds of partnerships.

2.6 WHAT IS NEEDED FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

A number of principles for genuine partnerships are taken into account by Gore (1995:14). He sees democracy as an important requirement in partnerships and states that relationships should be avoided where expertise is seen to belong more clearly to one set of participants than another. He sees the necessity of taking the distinctive interests of all parties into account in the planning of the partnership. He believes that there should be development of trust, communication and understanding of each partner's distinctive interests. Problems associated with a lack of, or limits on, reward and recognition of the participants for collaborative activities need to be acknowledged and addressed. He believes that all involved in the partnership should be jointly responsible for, and involved in, the planning of the partnership from the beginning (Gore 1995:19).

The research in the document Partnerships that Work implies that effective partnerships depend on critical success factors such as good planning, management and organisation. The researcher claims that to achieve these factors schools should take maximum advantage of the opportunities available, draw on and support the development of good practice and improve existing provision (Hull 2000:4).

Lemmer (1999:167) agrees that a partnership should involve all the relevant stakeholders, plan specific strategies with a view to the continuous improvement of learning experiences offered to all learners at the school. He believes that the

isolation of the school must be broken and that schools must enter into partnerships with outside organisations. That there be greater knowledge or expertise regarding educational law, quality management, quality assurance, multicultural education, continuous development of personnel, technological education, skills education and curriculum development are identified by Lemmer (1999:167) as some of the requirements for partnership.

From the document Partnerships That Work (2000), there is the agreement that effective partnerships between schools require senior management support, a clear vision why the partnership is being developed and a high level of senior management commitment and support (Hull 2000:12-13). It further states that effective monitoring and evaluation of the partnership must be incorporated into the school's quality improvement cycle from the outset. The document also states that partnerships are most effective when the vision and strategy are understood at all levels of the schools involved. Staff will feel a degree of ownership and commitment to the partnership through involvement at an early stage in the planning process. Furlong, Barton, Whiting and Whitty (2000:88) affirm that for a partnership to be successful, teachers from the different schools need opportunities to work and plan together on a regular basis. They list the key features of collaborative partnerships as the following:

- **Planning** will give all teachers an opportunity to work together in small groups.
- **Documentation** will codify the emerging collaborative practice.
- **Content** – the partners should recognise the legitimacy and difference of each other's contribution to an ongoing dialogue.
- **Contractual Relationship** should be negotiated and personal.

- **Legitimation** – there should be commitment to the value of the collaboration (Furlong *et al.* 2000:81).

To further explain both Lemmer (1999:168) and Parret's (1990) requirements, one partner could bring expertise to the school which could contribute to higher quality management. Quality assurance could be built into all processes and this could lead to improved achievement of learning outcomes. Teachers, as the other partner, could reach a better understanding of working with multicultural groups and there could then be a new culture of learning. The school could develop into a learning community.

The view of Swap (1993:57-58) and Bastiani (1993:105), on the other hand, depict fairly accurately the meaning of an educational partnership. First, they feel that learning success should be considered to be central to the partnership. Second, all parties concerned should be clearly identified, namely parents, educators and the broader community. Third, the principles on which such a partnership is founded should be clearly indicated. These principles should include shared aims, goals and mission based on common ground. They further state that educational endeavours should be owned by the partners. There should be a management style of participatory decision-making in place. Lemmer (1999:152) adds that other principles should include a commitment to success, joint action, mutuality and good communication in the form of a constant dialogue among partners. These will later be illustrated in the different examples of partnership.

Nchabeleng (2000:19) adds another perspective to the requirements of partnerships. He sees capacity as not only one of the primary outcomes of working in partnerships, but that it is also one of the primary needs. He believes that capacity overlaps with conceptual and social needs. The conceptual area relates to the extent to which people and organisations work with knowledge, ideas and information, and their capabilities to visualise, forecast, compare, synthesise and plan. The social area relates to how effectively relationships are built, maintained and managed (both within the organisation and with outside parties).

Furlong *et al.* (2000:88) state that the number of schools that are involved in the collaboration would be likely to affect the nature of the partnership. They caution that close collaboration would be challenging with large numbers of schools. They continue that although selection criteria should be written into the partnership agreements, they cannot always be applied when recruiting schools. They believe that the most common criteria would be the willingness to be a partner.

Nchabeleng (2000:19) believes that through the process of partnership, various activities should be undertaken, enabling the partner organisations (and the partnership) as a whole to achieve their goals and deliver the desired goods and services to beneficiaries. There should be monitoring activities to test that deadlines are met and budgets are adhered to. It should also test that each partner's performance is meeting agreed standards and that outcomes are appropriate and useful. He further suggests that after the partnership has served its purposes, it is important for proper closure to take place. Partners need to recognise and celebrate the successes, challenges and learning that have emerged from their work together.

They also need to recognise that the explicit purpose for which they have come together is complete.

According to Williams (1994:110) a non-legalistic document which indicates the respective responsibilities and roles of both partners is recommended. The author feels that clarifying criteria for partnership and articulating them in an appropriate form is a concern, especially as such criteria have an important role to play in ensuring that the contexts for teacher education are appropriate and that all involved are able to fulfil their responsibilities adequately.

Hull (2000:11-12) states that what must be considered is whether the schools are geographically accessible. Another consideration is to choose a partner which matches the nature and interests of the learners, their learning needs and abilities. The document stresses that initial research will pay many benefits in the long run.

Questions that could be asked are:

- What does the partner have to offer?
- Can contacts be identified?
- How far is it realistic for learners to travel?
- What time and cost will be involved and who will pay if there is cost involved?

2.7 BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Lemmer (1999:160) and Sohng (2001:116) agree with Bastiani (1993:13) who states that “Partnership is easy to talk about, much more difficult to achieve in practice.”

Hutchinson and Campbell (1998:137) also note that the ambiguity of the term 'partnership' has both a positive (we can all sign up to it) and negative (the reality will be more difficult) aspect. Lemmer (1999:164) refers to the OECD report that argues that "the 1990s" will determine whether partnerships prove to be a passing fad, or whether they consolidate their position, to become a permanent, integral part of the education process. The report summarises a few of the obstacles such as distrust, prejudice, misconceptions and isolation resulting from the traditional state funded educational model as well as poorly developed communication skills between the partnerships.

When Atweh *et al.* (1998:13) refer to literature from Beck and Black (1991), Campbell (1988), Feldsman (1993), Knight *et al.* (1992), Kyle and McCutcheon (1984), Levin (1993), Lieberman (1992), Miller (1992), Oakes *et al.* (1986), they found that there can be limitations as well as benefits in collaborative forms of research. Johnson (1994) also argues that all projects are not suited to the collaborative approach, nor is less collaborative research necessarily less adequate.

I have summarised the limitations of the collaborative approach as researched by various authors. There appears to be a general consensus in the respective readings with regard to socio-economic, traditional, cultural and financial barriers to partnerships.

The report, Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995:1), suggests that lack of time and poor communication are among the most frequently cited problems in building a strong partnership. Miller argues, as quoted by Atweh *et al.*

(1998) that power and authority are issues which tend to challenge partnerships. Another barrier that Higgins and Merickel (1997:173-174) have found was lack of trust between the partners. According to the document, Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995), a serious barrier to building partnerships is when key stakeholders will not or cannot participate. They too relate these to barriers such as turf issues, lack of time and resources, differences in socialization. These problems can cause partnerships to flounder or prevent them from being built at all.

According to Williams, in Perspectives in Partnership (1994:88), one issue is what kinds of expertise the different partners have and how it should be shared. Cushing and Kohl (1997) in Partnerships and Student Success (2002:1), caution against staff burnout which is identified as an obstacle to partnership between schools. High levels of exhaustion and frustration among the staff at most schools led to teachers and administrators finding the idea of extending themselves beyond the school overwhelming. The negative attitude could impede partnerships as the teachers as the one partner, would perceive their communities (the other partner), as uncaring or bereft of resources that could contribute to a successful partnership (Partnership and Student Success 2002). In Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995), Mawhinney (1993) claims that territorialism is one of the most pervasive hindrances to collaboration. There are the unresolved issues of information sharing, resource mingling, and professional turf. Staff of the one school may feel that the proposed partnership implies that they are not doing their job properly, or that the partnership will reduce the need for their services.

There is consensus in the two reports, *Partnership and Student Success* (2002:2) and *Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships* (1995:1), that limited or lack of communication could hamper the success of the partnership. There is the agreement that there should be frequent, clear and regular communication. Problems could arise when goals of the proposed programme are not clearly communicated, or when individual expectations or needs are misunderstood. Not keeping the partners informed of progress or changes during the project can also be a barrier to a successful partnership. Publicizing and communicating successes within the partnership is seen as a high priority in sustaining a partnership. The report *Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships* (1995:1) quotes Kunesh and Farley who point out the need to establish communication and decision making processes that recognise disagreement among members as part of partnership building, and to establish ways to deal with conflict constructively. In the same report Mawhinney (1993) warns that conflict among the partners can occur because of differences in how they define and understand cooperation, coordination and other linkages. The document further stresses that not only do partners need to communicate, they have to also be speaking the same language. Does Partner X understand the partnership to mean the same as Partner Y? Do they see the roles and responsibilities in the same way? Do they both have an understanding of what kind of commitment is required? If there is not a common understanding of what it means to work in partnership, difficulties may develop and conflict may result.

Seamen *et al.* (1992), as quoted in *Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships* (1995:2), see the allocation of funds within a partnership as also

presenting problems. Partners may feel that their share of the grant is unfair or inadequate.

Other barriers are described in Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995:2). Firstly, there is a lack of flexibility which could challenge the partnership. Given the busy schedules and heavy workloads that most partners deal with, a lack of flexibility could be a serious problem. It has implications for scheduling meetings, meeting timelines, and generally getting along. Secondly, accountability could also be challenging to building partnerships. Who is the partnership accountable to? Who are the respective partners accountable to? It must be borne in mind that there are different methods of being accountable and different purposes to evaluation. The partners may have different indicators of success and different concepts of meeting goals. Evaluation poses challenges for partnerships as well. While one recognises the importance of accountability, the evaluation data required by one partner, or the monitoring and reporting system used by another, may not be appropriate or relevant for the partnership. Thirdly, as quoted by Fargason (1994), Mitchell and Scott (1993) in Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships (1995:2), there should be the awareness of the difference in socialization by the partners due to different cultures. They may have very different approaches to decision making, lack team work skills, or disagree on how the partnership should be structured. They may have different priorities and viewpoints. Fourthly, change and uncertainty can negatively affect both partners. When a partner is in the midst of change or reorganisation, it can be difficult to obtain commitment to a partnership or to involve that partner in planning and programme development. If individuals are uncertain of whether their positions are going to continue, or if contracts are going to

be renewed, they may not place a great deal of importance on an external partnership, or may be reluctant to take on tasks and responsibilities. Lastly, ineffective meetings could pose significant challenges to partnerships. Meetings without goals or a good facilitator, taking too much time on paperwork and planning, and people not contributing to or not attending meetings were cited as deterrents to participation. Seamen *et al.* (1992) and Bradford (1993) agree that the process of choosing appropriate partners, developing an agreement on the project goals and design, and preparing funding proposals and applications are time consuming (Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships 1995:2). Once the group is functioning, the extra time required to reach recommendations and make decisions in a diverse group can be seen as an obstacle or deterrent.

2.8 CONCLUSION



Although the literature review was not specifically about primary school partnerships, it emphasised the importance of partnerships and collaboration to support disadvantaged institutions. The suggestions and recommendations can be modified to apply effectively to primary schools to improve the quality of education.

The literature focuses on the importance of selecting suitable partners who are geographically accessible, with distinctive interests and aims. The staff from both schools should be committed to the development of the partnership with capacity building being the main criterion. There should be constant dialogue to assist with the maintenance and development of the partnership activities. Monitoring activities should be put in place to check the partners' performance.

The literature cautions against power, authority and lack of trust creating a barrier to partnerships. The disadvantaged school should not be seen as inferior because of their current situation with regard to lack of resources and unskilled workforce.

The review of literature reveals that despite the obstacles and constraints, partnerships and collaboration are increasingly endorsed and the author of A Guide To Promising Practices In Educational Partnership (1996:1) mentions that educational partnerships have multiplied. While some educational partnerships have become vehicles for fundamental education reform, others have delivered services to learners and schools to improve education or learner outcomes.

From the literature survey presented above, I am now in a position to argue that the collaborative approach used in the various studies has the potential to assist primary schools to better understand and implement the processes associated with partnerships to improve the quality of education.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I document the design and methodology followed during my fieldwork. Empirical social research requires a strategy or a plan in terms of which particular studies are carried out, embodying ideas about the task of social research, the research design to be used, and the choice of particular methods of the data collection (Bulmer and Warwick, 2000:27).

This chapter is particularly concerned with the appropriateness of the different kinds of methods for the research. It further aims to describe the conditions under which the methods were used for the different kinds of data collection and to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of one against those of another.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR USING THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Bell (1987:4) describes researchers who use the qualitative perspective as being more concerned with understanding the individual perception of the world and they seek insight rather than statistical analysis. They doubt whether social ‘facts’ exist and question whether a ‘scientific’ approach can be used when dealing with human beings. In contrast, Hammersley (2002:19) refers to Hargreaves’s shift to the qualitative method in the 1970’s which was prompted by powerful criticisms identifying unresolved problems in the ‘positivist’ research. They both agree though,

that there are times when qualitative researchers draw on quantitative techniques and vice versa. Neumann (2000:149) states that the qualitative research style is more flexible and encourages slow focusing on the topic throughout a study. He sees it as a more inductive process, and much of the narrowing occurs after the researcher has begun to collect data. The concept, as explained by Morse, Swanson and Kuzel (2001:237), is similar. They state that qualitative researchers label a concept as it develops from the narrative data. Data such as narrative data from interviews and field notes from observation or participant observation, would be analysed through processes of analysis that use coding and categorizing to generate concepts that are explanatory building blocks of the qualitatively derived theory. Neuman (2000:17) quotes Denzil and Lincoln, who argue that qualitative research expanded greatly and is rapidly replacing out-dated quantitative-style research. Mason (2002:227) and McNiff (1996:14) caution that all research is problematic, precisely because there is no guarantee of truth especially concerning human beings, because the notion of truth is itself problematic when desires and will, attention and intentions, are involved.


3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

For the research of how a partnership can improve the quality of education of the historically disadvantaged Black school, I have chosen the case study approach as it is particularly appropriate for an individual researcher because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale. Bell (1999:10) refers to Adelman (1977) who describes a case study as an umbrella term for a family of research methods which have in common the decision to focus on inquiry around an instance. As in all research, evidence is collected systematically,

the relationship between the variables is studied and the study is systematically planned. Bell (1999:10) refers to Nesbitt and Watt (1980) who point out that sometimes it is only by taking a practical instance, that we can obtain a full picture of this interaction. Although observation and interviews are most frequently used in a case study, no method is excluded. A great strength of the case study method is that it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify, or attempt to identify, the various interactive processes at work. These processes may remain hidden in a large-scale survey, but may be crucial to the success or failure of systems or organizations (Bell 1999:11).

Although case studies may precede a survey and be used as a means of identifying key issues which merit further investigation, the majority of case studies are carried out as free-standing exercises. I have endeavoured to identify the development of the partnership between the two schools and by observing, questioning and studying the relationship, I acknowledge that each school has its common and its unique features. It was my aim to identify these features and to show how they affect and influence the way the schools function. Since I am a single researcher gathering all the information, a selection had to be made. I therefore selected an area for study and decided which material to present in the final report. Since it was not always easy to cross check, I had to be cautious against distortion (Bell 1999:11). Bassey (1981), in Bell (1999:12), regards the case study as a valid form of education research if they are carried out systematically and critically, if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are relatable, and if by publication of the findings they extend the boundaries of existing knowledge.

Best and Khan (1986), in Ragin (1994:92), caution that although the case study looks deceptively simple, in order to use it effectively the researcher must be thoroughly familiar with existing theoretical knowledge of the field of inquiry, and skillful in isolating the significant variables from many that are irrelevant. The researcher should be aware that subject bias is a constant threat to objective data-gathering and analysis. There is thus the danger of selecting variable relationships based upon preconceived convictions and the apparent consistency of a too limited sample of observations. Also effects may be wrongly attributed to factors that are merely associated rather than cause-and-effect related.

Although I am an individual researcher, with limited funds and time, I have used more than one method of data collection. This is known as triangulation. Neumann (2000:125) describes triangulation as a method of combining qualitative and quantitative styles of research and data.  The two methods have different complimentary strengths (Ragin 1994, and Mouton 2001:275). Being a teacher at the advantaged school, I had the advantage of being an observing participant. Cohen and Manion (1980) regard observation studies as superior to experiments and surveys when data are being collected. I was able to observe ongoing behaviour as it occurred and was able to make appropriate notes about salient features. Because the case study took place over an extended period of time, I was able to develop a more intimate and informal relationship with those whom I was observing, generally in a more natural environment than those in which experiments and surveys are conducted. I was able to observe the partnership for a period of two years from the vantage point of the advantaged school. I attended the joint annual planning meetings and the celebratory functions. I watched some of the sport activities and observed some of the Art

lessons. During these events, I kept a written record of the behaviour I saw and the conversations I heard between the school principals, teachers, pupils and families. With permission of the principals of each school, I sifted through notes, files and documents of each school. Extensive tape recordings were made of interviews with the staff, pupils and parents.

3.4 SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

Black (1999:17) defines random sampling as the method of drawing a portion of a population so that all possible samples of fixed size have the same probability of being selected. According to Bell (1999:126), the number of subjects in an investigation will necessarily depend on the amount of time available. As all researchers are dependent on the goodwill and availability of subjects, it can be very difficult for an individual researcher working on a small-scale project to achieve a true random sample.

Breakwell *et al.* (1995) warn that poor sampling could introduce unknown sources of error into calculations so that the statistical results may prove difficult to interpret. Best (1986) agrees that size may be a factor that affects accuracy. A large sample, carelessly selected, may be biased and inaccurate, whereas a smaller one, carefully selected, may be unbiased and accurate enough to make satisfactory inferences possible. I have used the rule of thumb of Ogunniyi (1986:16) that suggests that between one fifth and one twentieth should be an adequate sample of a population in which the characteristics are randomly distributed. School A has approximately 600 pupils and 50 teachers, while School B has approximately 1000 learners and 30

teachers. For the case study, I have interviewed 60 persons from School A – 10 staff members (especially those directly involved with the partnership), 30 pupils (10 pupils from each of Grade 5 to 7), 10 past pupils who are representative of the pupils affected by the partnership and 10 parents including those serving on the PTA as they are representative of the parent population. From School B, I have interviewed 80 persons - 10 staff members, 45 pupils (15 pupils from each of Grade 5 to 7), 15 past pupils who are representative of the pupils who were affected by the six-year partnership and 10 parents. Except for the pupils of School A, which is a boys school, I have a gender balance of fifty percent as males and females have a different perspective on the subject.

Table 1. Sample size chosen for interviews.

SCHOOLS	SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B
ROLL	600	1000
PUPILS-PRESENT	30	45
PUPILS-PAST	10	15
TEACHERS	10	10
PARENTS	10	10
PRINCIPAL	1	1

3.5 INTERVIEWS

Interviewing is considered to be one of the most common and most powerful ways used to try to understand our fellow human beings. Fontana and Frey (1998:47) caution that the written or spoken word is never without ambiguity while Converse (1987), as cited by Fontana and Frey (1998:49), reports that interviewing has been used successfully since the nineteenth century. Generally, the interview involves one or more people being present, occurs in the field, and are informal and can be non-directive. Neumann (2000:370) regards a field interview as involving a mutual sharing of experiences. A researcher might share his or her background to build trust and encourage the informant to open up, but does not force answers or use leading questions (Dick, 1998).



I used preliminary interviews in the form of discussion with the staff, pupils and parents of both schools. At this stage, I was just trying to find out which areas or topics were important and at which people certain questions should be aimed. I was also trying to establish which areas should be explored and which areas should be left out. These interviews needed a minimum of note-taking as long as they were clear enough to extract points of interest, and topics for inclusion in the study.

An unstructured interview centres round a topic, and in skilled hands, could produce a wealth of valuable data. Such interviews, however, require a great deal of expertise to control and much time to analyse (Bell, 1999:138). I therefore decided to use the guided interview to ensure that topics which are considered crucial to my study were covered. No questionnaire was used, but a framework was established by selecting

topics around which the interview was guided. I allowed the respondent a considerable amount of latitude within the framework. Although certain questions were asked, the respondents were given the freedom to talk about the topic and to give their views. The questions had to be well thought out, and I had to probe at the right time being cautious not to interrupt the flow of the conversation. Another reason why I used the guided interviews, is that since the framework was established beforehand, the analysis would be greatly simplified and this was very important for my research as my time was limited. I used three types of questions during the field interviews. At the early preliminary stage, I used descriptive questions to enable me to explore the setting and learn about members.

Example:

- What is your position at school?
- Give an example of an activity that would improve the quality of education at your school?
- If the partner school offered classes at their venue, how would you travel there?



These descriptive questions were followed by structural questions which were asked gradually after spending time in the field and data was beginning to be analysed. It started after I organized specific field events, situations, and conversations into conceptual categories

Example:

- Are only the pupils who show talent in Art, selected to go to Art classes?

Contrast questions built on the analysis that were verified by structural questions (Neumann 2000:373). These questions focused on similarities or differences between elements in categories or between categories. As the researcher I asked members to verify similarities or differences.

Example:

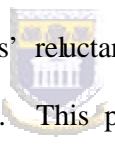
Do you consider your partnership to be mutually beneficial or a one-sided partnership only?

3.6 PILOT

I used a pilot study as I acknowledge that interviewers are human beings, not machines, and their manner may have an effect on the respondents (Bell 1999:139). Problems could have occurred if the respondent was too eager to please the interviewer, if there was even the least bit of antagonism between the interviewer and respondent, or the tendency of the interviewer was to seek out the answers that supported his preconceived notions.

I conducted the pilot study using a principal from another school, five teachers and five pupils from both a historically disadvantaged school as well as from an advantaged school, other than the schools in the case study. Some of the questions used were found to be ambiguous and some words had a different meaning for people of different cultures. With the help of these teachers and pupils, the questions were restructured. For example when referring to 'parent', pupils from the first category referred to their biological parents, while pupils from the second category referred to relatives who were taking care of them. Most of the teachers and pupils from the

Black school spoke English and could answer the revised questions used in the pilot study. When the pupils from the Black school showed uneasiness in the presence of a male teacher, I decided to have a female teacher present when there was a need for translation.

During this pilot study, I practised the prompts, encouraging people to talk, quelling others who would not stop and rerouting others who went off on a tangent. I attempted to refrain from leading the respondents and corrected any body language that was seen as problematic. I also practised the strategy of reading statements to the interviewee and asked for a degree of agreement or disagreement which the statement invokes. The statement was found to be more provocative than the questions which inhibited the respondent. The statement comes from other people, and so reduces the bias in the form of the interviewees' reluctance to disagree with the interviewer (Dillon 1985 in Macintyre 2000:87).  This pilot study allowed me to check all technicalities involved in the use of the tape recorder. The timing needed for the actual interview was established as well as an adequate time gap between each arranged interview. I tried the focus group interview method by taking the five pupils together. As I managed to get a response from every pupil for every question, I saw the merits in using this method as it saves time. I was also made aware that I should caution against people breaking into small conversations during a focus group interview (Babbie and Mouton 2001:292). The pilot study, therefore, revealed most problems that could have hampered the collection of the data.

3.7 COLLECTION OF DATA THROUGH INTERVIEWS

For this case study, I gathered data by interviewing staff, learners and parents of the respective schools, and used data from newspapers, schools, government agencies, and other sources. These interviews were conducted during the third term in 2002 when everyone had settled into school. The interviews were semi-formal so that the atmosphere was relaxed. During my interviews, I made use of a tape recorder in order to give the respondents my full attention. Borg and Gall (1989) encourage the use of the tape recorder as the entire conversation is recorded providing an accurate record and the interview can be replayed as often as needed. Cohen and Manion (1980) recommend that the interview be planned carefully. The questions provided information about the role players, the activities, the relationships, the effect of the partnership on the individuals, limitations, problems or challenges, and so on. I did not encounter difficulty with the interviewing process at School A, as I was an educator and parent at the school. The language barrier needed to be addressed during the interaction with School B as the first language is Xhosa. I had to be sure that the vocabulary used, had the same meaning for people of both cultures. Fortunately most staff members were English speaking. As there was the belief that the research would be of benefit to the respective schools, there was a willingness to participate. An interpreter was required for the interviews with the pupils and the parents at School B. In the Xhosa culture, the learners respect their teachers very much. As observed in the pilot study, the respect for the male teachers (especially) inhibited the pupils from being as honest as they would have liked to be during the interview. Since I found that the pupils were more comfortable with the female teacher, seeing her as a mother figure, I engaged a female teacher as an interpreter for the pupils. The interview with

the parents was conducted at school where they felt more comfortable. I chose an interpreter who was a trusted member of the community, a teacher from School B, who had full knowledge of the research. Because parents work and were not readily available, I had to choose from the parents who were home.

After permission was granted from the headmasters of the respective schools to proceed with the research, I made contact with deputy principal of School B. After an agreement was signed between the two of us that she would be remunerated to assist me to select respondents according to my sample description, schedule appointments, act as interpreter and provide me with a venue. I made the same arrangements at School A myself.

The interviews were scheduled for the beginning of the third term as the atmosphere was still relaxed as preparation for the examinations had not yet commenced. I asked for a room which provided a measure of comfort and privacy. I aimed for a courteous, relaxed interaction so that the interviewee would leave the interview feeling that his views and explanations had been valued and recorded accurately. I checked the tape recorder and had enough cassettes available before the interview. I always suggested the number of questions I would ask in order to define the parameters of the interaction and to suggest the amount of time needed.

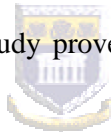
My first interviews were with the principals of the respective schools. They were fully aware of my research by then as we had had informal discussions and from my presence at the different partnership functions. The interviews were held in their respective offices and there was no interruption. This way we could communicate

freely and I could illicit more information. I provided the principal with an outline of the study with a sample description of people I wished to interview. As with all the other interviewees I endeavoured to keep the interview short and to the point which I thought would yield data that was vital and fresh in contrast to a long and tedious interview that would lack dynamism and become tiresome (Macintyre 2000:85-86). I gave the interviewees a brief description of the purpose and procedure of the research, including the duration of the study (*see Appendix A:100*). I also informed them that participation was completely voluntary and could be terminated at any time. Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy were guaranteed. I offered to provide the schools with a copies of the final report. The duration of one hour was enough since much information was gathered at preliminary interviews. The headmasters were informed that the research would be assessed by the University of the Western Cape for examination purposes only, but should the question of publication arise at a later date, permission would be sought by the principals of the respective schools.

I then proceeded to interview the teachers and parents (*see Appendix B:101 & Appendix C:102*). individually as I thought they would speak more openly if they were alone. I asked for permission to use the tape recorder and offered that they could listen to it on completion of the interview. Parents from the School A were easy to interview as the atmosphere was relaxed and they were familiar with the researcher. They spoke openly and honestly. Although the parents from School B were not familiar with the researcher, they too spoke freely as they trusted that their school would benefit from the research. Parents who were selected were all able to speak English fairly well; hence the interpreter was not needed.

I used the focus group interview method with the pupils (*see Appendix D:103*). This was not only beneficial in that it saved time, but the pupils were more willing to talk with the others around to encourage them. They also added to comments of their peers. There was minimal need for the interpreter. Grade 5 pupils were able to express themselves well enough and once more the peers' presence was invaluable.

The sharing of the researcher's background did indeed build trust and encouraged the respondents to open up, as suggested by Neumann (2000:370). The time allowed of forty five minutes to one hour for the interviews was enough to gather the data needed for the study as a framework had been established. The interview process proved to be a successful data collection tool because the researcher adhered to the ethics of interviewing, the sample size was manageable, a good strategy was applied during the interviewing process and the pilot study proved invaluable in eliminating problems that could have hampered the process.



3.8 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is mainly an inductive process for organizing all the data that have been gathered into different categories to enable the researcher to identify certain patterns with the aim of seeing the relationship among the categories. There is a cycle of phases in qualitative data analysis. There was discovery throughout the research project with the aim of identifying the tentative patterns. Data was placed into specific categories. There was then the assessment of the reliability of the data, with the main aim of refining and establishing emerging patterns in the data and the writing down of all the emerging patterns. The article, Local Qualitative Study (2004),

advises triangulation of data collection sources and methods to help determine whether or not there had been corroboration. Corroboration is a search for convergence of information on a common finding or concept and helps to assess the sufficiency of the data. Babbie and Mouton (2001:275) agree that triangulation is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research.

The researcher started with the analysis as soon as the data, which included field notes and interview transcripts, was selected. The data collection and interim analysis took place almost at the same time. The data was divided into understandable units. An organized system of topics was used for categorizing the data that had been selected. The comparative technique which means distinguishing contents which are the same and contents which differ is the main tool that was used when analyzing the data. The researcher developed a classification system while collecting the data. The following steps were used:

- Obtain a holistic sense of the picture.
- Generate topics from the data.
- Compare the data for duplication of topics as they emerge.
- Experiment with the provisional classification system.
- Refine the organizing system.

3.9 CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

The analysis of case study data involved the following: organization of the findings; the question of whether generalization was appropriate to case study data, and the issue of theory development (Babbie and Mouton 2001:270). According to Yin (1994), in Babbie and Mouton (2001:270), the modes of case study analysis include pattern-matching and explanation-building. Patterns emerging from the data were matched with the patterns in the theory or in alternative predictions. Should the patterns concur, I assumed that the study had enhanced internal validity. Explanation-building is a specific kind of pattern-building, where the idea is to generate explanations about the case.



Qualitative research is characterized by the fact that the results are descriptive in nature. Although the researcher used mainly words for clarifying the results of the research, a quantitative research methodology was used to express the results in numbers and percentages.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

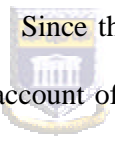
Ethics begins and ends with the researcher, hence a researcher's personal moral code is the best defence against unethical behaviour (Neumann, 2000:90). Bell (1999:39) refers to Cohen and Manion (1994) who advise all researchers to aim at careful preparation involving explanation and consultation before any data collection begins. Research ethics is about being clear about the nature of the agreement you have

entered into with your research subjects. Ethical research does not only involve getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take material from, but it also involves reaching agreements about the use of the data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated. And it is about keeping to such agreements when they have been reached (Bell, 1999:39). Although no contract, protocol or code of practice can resolve all problems, Cohen and Manion (1994:381) consider that a code of ethical practice makes researchers aware of their obligations to their subjects and to those problem areas where there is a general consensus about what is acceptable and what is not (Bell, 1999:40). We should at all times avoid making people subjects without their knowledge and thus have no chance to safeguard their own interests. However harmonious relationships in a school appear to be, however democratic the organization, trust does not automatically exist between the professionals. It has to be created, says Simons (1984) in (Bell 1999:42). Although Johnson (1994) supports researching in one's own institution because the benefits are cost effective, and management and administrative issues are justified, I needed to be cautious to adhere to research ethics.

The researcher should be aware of promising too much. Since the guarantee of anonymity for an outside reader may be possible, it may not confer the same degree of obscurity for those within the school. The researcher should ensure that this does not lead to problems. Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the participants are totally dependent on the integrity of the researcher to present their views in a balanced, objective manner.

I have heeded the warning of the authors, Sapsford and Evans (1984) and, Blaxter (1996) in Bell (1999:40) and produced my own personal code of practice which made clear the conditions and guarantees within which I would work in order to ensure my own, my colleagues' and my school's integrity. The fact that the headmasters of both schools expressed interest in and support for the study, convinced me that the topic would be worthwhile and would have a good chance of being successfully completed in the time allowed (Bell 1999:40).

3.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has attempted to provide a thorough account of the methodology as well as the rationale for the methods used.  Since the primary source of information was qualitative research, the researcher's account of the process is central to determining the credibility and trustworthiness of the research. It was thus imperative that a considerable amount of detail be acquired.

Qualitative research has been criticized by proponents of quantitative research as being too subjective and without an explicitly stated hypothesis at the outset to guide the ensuing research. This could have a limiting effect on the value of the research. There is also the danger of the researcher becoming so immersed in the study that so-called objectivity becomes non-existent. The researcher's attachment to the school could raise a lot of ethical issues and difficulties.

Although the sample size appears small, McMillan and Schumacher (2001:403) note that 'case' refers to an in depth analysis of a phenomenon and not the number of

people sampled. Hence the purposeful sampling strategies used in the research are reported in the study to enhance the data quality. The researcher also used the strategy of triangulation to ensure validity.

The researcher is working in a full time position and in terms of individual limitations, time was the main one. Work commitments meant that minimum time could be allocated for the empirical study which was done mostly after school hours. Finding times to suit both the researcher and the interviewees was quite a challenge.

In the chapter that follows, the researcher will present the results of the empirical investigation.



CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The case study was chosen to ascertain how a partnership between two diverse schools could improve the quality of education of a historically disadvantaged school. This chapter provides a detailed description of the case, an analysis of the issues and the researcher's interpretation of the case. Guba and Lincoln (1985), in McMillan and Schumacher (2001:491), refer to these interpretations as "lessons learnt". Because the researcher was in the field for a prolonged time, the tendency of the participants in the study to exhibit contrived behaviours for the benefit of the researcher was minimized. Furthermore, the researcher was able to see whether behaviour was typical or atypical. This study has what Guba and Lincoln (1989), in McMillan and Schumacher (2001:409), referred to as confirmability or validity.

4.2 PROFILE OF THE TWO PARTNER SCHOOLS

4.2.1 School A

This boys school had its origins in Cape Town in the early 19th century. As an "independent, high class educational foundation", it was financed in those far off days by public subscription and the fee-paying parents of its scholars. From its early beginnings this school had grown over the last 175 years to be one of the grandest of

educational institutions in South Africa. The school then moved to an estate in an elite area where it is to be found today. The junior school has rugby fields, tennis courts, a swimming pool, a gym hall, a library, a computer laboratory, an auditorium, an amphitheatre and a large school hall. A famous South African politician and well-known international sportsmen are some of the past students associated with this school.

The junior school which separated from the high school in the early 20th century, consists of 680 boys, 45 well qualified teachers and a support staff of 8 specialist teachers that include a counsellor, remedial and enrichment teachers. There was a teacher-pupil ratio of 15:1 in 2003. Fifty percent of the teachers are employed by the Western Cape Education Department, while the others fill School Governing Body posts. The pupils are drawn from mostly affluent, influential families who live in the surrounding areas. School fees in 2003 were approximately R12 000 per annum. After the school had opened to all population groups, there is now approximately 30 percent of pupils who are classified as Africans, Coloured and Indians. Music and Art are completely integrated into the school curriculum, with specialist teachers at the helm. The school offers many extra-mural activities and has a strong parent support body. There is a very strong Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which is responsible for fund raising. There is a well functioning School Governing Body which is responsible for the governance of the school. The school is provided with a 24 hour security patrol.

4.2.2 School B

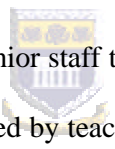
This co-educational school was established in the 1940s in a predominantly White area as a Dutch Reformed Church School. As a result of the Group Areas Act, the school was moved to a Black township in the 1950s. At first all the pupils were from the informal settlement. Today only 40 % of the pupils are from the township in which the school is located, while the others come from other townships because of the good reputation of the school. The pupils come from lower income families. The school had difficulty collecting the R20 per annum school fees which were charged in 2003. Most pupils walk to school leaving in the early hours of the morning or they use public transport. Their environment does not make learning easy due to the high unemployment and crime rate. The pre-fabricated building is situated in the township. There is one small playing field and a library is housed in a container. Computers and the container in which the computers are housed were donated by private sector organizations which became aware of the school after the formation of the partnership between the two schools. The school also received a gift of cricket nets from an overseas school which has ties with School A. The school has a few pupils who have managed to become businessmen, teachers, principals and one past student is a medical doctor in the U.S.A.

At present there are 29 teachers employed by the Western Cape Education Department, many who once were pupils at the school. There are 1150 pupils, 2 secretaries and 4 general assistants. There is a teacher-pupil ratio of 40:1. There are no facilities for extra-curricular activities other than the cricket nets. Music in the form of a choir forms an integral part of the school curriculum. There is an active

Governing Body. This school is regarded as a community school where there is an excellent relationship between the school and the community. The community has formed a neighbourhood watch which keeps an eye on the school after hours.

4.3 THE FORMATION AND NATURE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership between the two schools originated after the euphoria of the 1995 Rugby World Cup, when the Western Province Schools Rugby Union requested that schools find a “rugby twin” for coaching purposes. The name of School B was forwarded to School A and the first contact between the two schools was in the form of a rugby coaching clinic. The twinning progressed to a partnership which envisaged the following:

- 
- a Joint Planning Meeting of senior staff to be held twice a year;
 - sports coaching to be conducted by teachers from both schools;
 - computer training sessions for School B pupils to be conducted by a teacher from School A;
 - Foundation Phase Workshops to be held on Saturday mornings by FP teachers from both schools at School A;
 - Physical Education sessions to be held on Saturday mornings at School A where School B teachers work through exercises and games programmes;
 - joint choirs to be trained to sing at assemblies;
 - regular visits to take place between the schools by the teachers and the pupils;
 - meetings to take place between PTAs and Governing Bodies of both schools;
 - School A librarian to assist with the setting up of the library at School B;
 - School A teachers to take conversational Xhosa lessons.

In 1996, through the generosity of a closed corporation, a small computer laboratory was established at School B where computer training could take place. A teacher from School A provided the pupils from School B with computer training. In the same year the School B choir sang at a School A Prize Giving. Joint choirs were trained that sang at assemblies of the respective schools. Music plays a big part in the programme. At School A on Saturday mornings, Foundation Phase and Physical Education workshops were held by Junior Primary and Physical Education teachers respectively.

In 1997 a prominent company donated two containers to School B. These were converted into their first library. The librarian from School A assisted in the setting up of the library as well as assisting with the administration. Art classes commenced whereby 20-25 pupils from School B were transported to School A and together with about 10 boys from School A were given Art lessons by a teacher from School A.

In 1998 an Art exhibition and auction were held to raise funds for School B. Every boy from School A, as well as the Art pupils from School B had at least one piece of work on display and parents were invited to buy them. Fifteen items had been selected for auctioning along with a Madiba silk shirt donated by the then President Nelson Mandela. A substantial amount of money was raised at the event.

The joint choir performed at the University of Cape Town Medical School Graduation Ceremony in 2000.

In 2001 School B received new cricket nets from a foreign school which raised funds for the development of sport in South Africa. The foreign school learnt about School B's need for cricketing facilities through its relationship with School A who had previously gone on a cricket tour (Gainsborough-Waring (2001:23).

In 2003 a combined cricket team of School A and School B was established. This combined team had fixtures arranged with other schools in School A's league. Pupils from School B were given English lessons by a teacher from School A in order to understand terms used in cricket. This was also the year that School C, a girls' school, joined the partnership.

4.4 RESULTS OF THE CASE STUDY



Selected parents, teachers and pupils of the respective schools were interviewed to establish their views on the partnership between the two schools. Following Gergen (1985), in Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002:432), who says “that to tell it like it is” is to “tell it as it may become”, my action oriented research was specifically aimed at bringing about practical achievements rather than merely aimed at developing understanding. The information gathered, is presented and analysed under the following categories:

- successes of the partnership;
- problems in the partnership.

These categories are linked to the aims of the study. I have structured the results chapter so that it provides direct answers to my research questions and so that the

central questions are answered first, followed by the subsidiary questions flowing from these. I have chosen to examine the successes and problems in the partnership between the two diverse schools in order to promote a better understanding of the partnership and to facilitate informed decision making.

4.4.1 Successes of the Partnership

It was through rugby that the partnership originated. School B teachers were trained to coach their pupils and matches were played between Schools A and B, and the schools fielded a combined team against other schools in rugby matches. There was agreement by teachers and pupils from School B that both teachers and pupils benefitted by the exposure to rugby and the coaching techniques. The rugby ability of the pupils from School B had improved remarkably and the teachers had become better coaches.

Previously School B had to travel 10 kilometres to practise cricket and then were not even sure if they would get a turn. The relationship with School A resulted in a foreign school donating money for cricket nets for School B. As School B now has its own cricket nets, all the boys at the school have been given an opportunity to improve their cricket skills. This progressed to Schools A and B forming a cricket team comprising of pupils from both schools. The combined team played matches against schools in the league of School A. As there was a need for the cricket players from School B to know the cricket terms, an English teacher did basic English with the boys from School B. This initiative further developed the vocabulary of the pupils.

Respondents from School B who did Art at School A on a Wednesday together with 10 pupils from School A said that they had not held a paint brush in their hands previously. The Art teacher at School A entered paintings of School B pupils in the Cape of Good Hope Bank Competition. This company generously financed materials and paints to be used by the pupils. The teachers who have been interviewed from School B spoke positively about the opportunities that were available to them since the partnership. The Art teacher from School A had entered the work of pupils from School B in competitions as well as participating in the kite festival. School B was placed in a position to win prizes for their school using their artistic ability. A parent from School B's response was:

My son's Art work was displayed at the exhibition. I am so proud of him. I did not know that he is so talented. He was inspired by the Art classes that were held at School A.



The parent indicated that had it not been for the partnership, her son's talents would not have been developed. A pupil from School B was offered a scholarship to an Art School. Teachers from School B who accompanied their pupils to the School A Art classes learnt through observation the method of instruction and class management of the teacher from School A. Pupils from both Schools A and B agreed that they enjoyed the joint Art lessons as they were able to learn more about each other.

Teachers from both School A and B thought that they had a vibrant combined choir. A teacher from School A was happy that School B had an African influence on their music. School A assisted School B by raising funds to provide the school with a piano. School A also provided a pianist to accompany the choir of School B when needed. The joint choir got positive exposure by performing before wide audiences.

They sang at various prize giving and celebratory assemblies. It was an honour for them to perform at the graduation ceremony of the University of Cape Town Medical School in 2000. Pupils from both schools reported that they enjoyed singing together. A pupil from School A indicated that he liked learning songs from the African culture.

Parents from School A spoke very strongly in favour of the exposure the partnership had given their children. The parents of the children who were involved in the Art, Music and Sport commented on how School B was able to benefit from the facilities and expertise of School A. They regarded the partnership as being successful as their children now interacted with the pupils from School B as a direct result of the partnership. The children from School A were made aware that not all children were as privileged as they were. Pupils from School B said that the partnership with School A provided them with opportunities to do Art, sport and interact with children outside their environment to which they would not have been exposed otherwise. The handing over of the cricket nets by School A and the foreign school, gave some parents, teachers, and pupils from School A the opportunity to see where School B was situated. Most of them had never been in the area before. Here are some of the responses from the parents:

The twinning of the two schools creates an awareness amongst the pupils of less privileged pupils and provides an opportunity for personal involvement by pupils and parents. (School A)

My son had the opportunity to visit School B a few times and this has exposed him to different cultural backgrounds. Perhaps it has taught him to appreciate his own school and its facilities. (School A)

Our schools do not have the facilities to develop our children fully. I am grateful that School A has opened their hearts to the underprivileged. (School B)

I think the partnership is of immense value to both schools to share ideas and experiences and to remind pupils that we are all part of South Africa. (School A)

The partnership has encouraged an awareness of how other people "live" to a degree. Maybe it will make the pupils of School A more altruistic and encourage empathy for those less privileged. (School A)

Through this partnership, we have acquired computers, a piano, cricket nets and funds through joint fundraising activities as well as expertise from the teachers of School A in planning and curriculum matters. (School B)

The partnership has opened the eyes of School A and made them more sensitive and aware of the economic divide. Hopefully this will break down stereotypical racial barriers. (School A)

School A and B had annual planning sessions and alternated the venue between the two schools. The meetings were held during the first term of the year and the schedule of events for the year was decided on. Both teachers from School A and B agreed that it was useful to coordinate the activities planned for the year. School B had the opportunity to indicate their needs such as requesting that a teacher from the School A accompany their choir at the Eisteddfod and for funds to build a hall. The planning meeting also provided some staff members with the opportunity to meet.

A library was established at School B as a direct result of the partnership. School B was assisted by a teacher from School A in setting up the library. A pupil's response from School B whether he thought the library was useful, was that he had no reference books at home and the public library was far away, and so it helped to have a library at school.

Staff and pupils of School B were happy about their school being provided with computers as this would give them the opportunity to become computer literate. At

the start of the partnership teachers from School A taught staff from School B basic computer skills.

The partnership between the two schools recognised the ability of some of the pupils from School B to study at School A. School A provided scholarships to some of the pupils from School B. A past pupil who was interviewed expressed his gratitude for being selected to study at the high school of School A. He said that he would never have been able to afford attending that school. He felt that he now had a future where he could study further and achieve his dream of becoming an engineer.

4.4.2 Problems in the Partnership



Teachers, parents and pupils from Schools A and B were asked what they thought were the problems experienced in the partnership and what could be done to improve the partnership. I will discuss the responses in this chapter and in chapter 5 I will make recommendations to improve the partnership.

School B had a much stronger interest in soccer. At the planning meetings that I attended, there was always a request to have soccer included as one of the sports. School A does not play soccer; hence did not consider the request. As School A is a boys school, there were no sport activities for the girls. This effectively excluded about 50% of the pupils from School B. As only a team with some reserves were chosen to play rugby and cricket, this further reduced the number of pupils exposed to the sport. A respondent involved in the coaching of the combined cricket team,

indicated that although the concept was good, there was still not enough interaction between the boys because of the language barrier and the short time spent together.

Art classes were held on a Wednesday afternoon at School A. An average of 23 pupils from School B accompanied by two teachers, joined 10 pupils from School A at the School A Art room. A teacher from School A conducted the lessons. The teachers found extending themselves beyond school hours overwhelming and the class size was too big. The teachers from School B observed while the teacher from School A did the teaching. Because of the language barrier, and the fact that the pupils from School B had not had Art lessons before, the lessons were necessarily basic. This caused some boredom in the pupils from School A. The two schools are located 20 kilometres apart. The pupils from School B thus had to be transported to School A in a bus provided by the latter school. This resulted in the lessons being only one hour. A respondent from School A was despondent that she was not reaching enough children nor providing the standard that she would have liked to provide. She was not sure that by observation only, the teachers from School B were getting enough training to conduct Art classes at School B. Teachers from School B who were interviewed in 2002, remarked that the enthusiasm that was there at the beginning of the partnership was waning. They said that they were previously involved in more Art competitions and were provided with Art materials from sponsors initially. The lack of materials made it difficult to sustain the Art classes at School B.

The distance of approximately 20 kilometres between School A and School B places many constraints on the partnership. Although transport had been made available to

School B, by School A providing a 25 seater bus with a bus driver at the expense of School A, the bus is not always available. A teacher from School B had to use his private vehicle to transport his sports team to School A or other venues. Parents were not always available to assist when approached. Because the bus was a 25 seater, the number of pupils was limited. Respondents from both schools mentioned that they would have liked more regular interaction with the teachers from the partner schools with regards to planning, workshops and so on. Respondents from School A expressed uneasiness about entering the area in which School B is located. This was due mainly to negative publicity in the media, the reputation gained by the township due to the apartheid system and the fear of ‘violence’ in the township. Parents from School B who were interviewed expressed the problems they experienced to support their children who participated in the partnership activities when they were held at venues other than at School B.



The limited number of teachers, pupils and parents involved in the partnership, has been identified as a major problem. The following percentages represent the number of people from both schools who were actively involved in the partnership in 2003.

Table 2. Number of people involved in the partnership

ACTIVE IN PARTNERSHIP		SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B
STAFF		24%	27%
PARENTS		20%	0%
PUPILS	ART	2%	3%
	SPORT	5%	4%
	MUSIC	10%	6%

These results indicate that in 2003, of the 50 teachers on the staff of School A, only 12 teachers including the principal were actively involved in the partnership and 8 of the 30 teachers at School B including the principal. Of the 600 pupils from School A involved in the various activities of the partnership, the numbers of pupils doing Art, Sport and Music were 10, 30 and 60 respectively. Of the 1000 pupils at School B involved in the partnership, the number of pupils doing Art, Sport and Music were 25, 36 and 60 respectively. From the 10 parents who were interviewed from both Schools A and B, 2 parents from School A assisted with the partnership and no parent from School B. When the headmaster of School B was injured in an accident in 2003 and a teacher who was involved in the sport coaching died, the partnership programme slowed down. At the time of the interviews, the headmasters were the protagonists of the partnership. Although it has its merits, the absence of the headmaster and the teacher who had died from School B, indicated a serious problem regarding the sustainability of the partnership.

At the start of the partnership there was a fair degree of enthusiasm and workshops were organised on Saturdays. The teachers from School A mentioned that there was a measure of absenteeism from these workshops. The teachers from School B explained that according to the culture of the Xhosa, funerals were generally held on Saturdays. Saturdays are also the days that people from underprivileged backgrounds are able to catch up on the household chores and shopping. At the time of the interview in 2003, there were no more teaching workshop activities on Saturdays.

The planning meetings had an attendance of an average of 25% of staff from the respective schools. Not all staff members were aware of the developments of the partnership as there was no documentation of the progress. There was agreement by respondents that the meeting was formal and the time did not allow much opportunity for sharing and discussing of ideas. When there was an informal gathering, staff members of the respective schools would stand together and chat among themselves. This occurrence could be due to the language barrier or lack of confidence to socialise. The limited time spent in meetings also did not allow for staff members of the two schools to get to know each other. From the responses from parents from School A, few were aware of the partnership and many had not yet been approached to assist. They indicated that they would be only too happy to be of assistance and made some valuable contributions as to how they would be willing to assist. Parents from School B were aware of the partnership and their benefits, but were not active in any way. This too, was a major weakness in the partnership as parents are a valuable source. A parent from School B offered to teach Xhosa to teachers and parents from School A.

The fact that a co-educational school twinned with a boys school was problematic in that the girls were not given as much opportunity as the boys to be involved in the partnership. The activities were mainly sport, Art and Music. This was being addressed in 2003 when a girls' school joined the partnership. How this partnership is functioning falls outside the ambit of this study.

There was agreement amongst the respondents from School A that the roles and responsibilities of the two partners are not clearly defined. There appears to be the

understanding that only one partner could bring expertise to the partnership which could contribute to higher quality education at the other school. Partners are furthermore not kept informed of progress or changes during the project. It is not clear if everyone in the school is aware of the main principles of the partnership as well as the practical details thereof. Also the information from the planning meetings was not conveyed to every staff member.

4.4.3 Discussion of Results

This section discusses the empirical data that were collected during the interviews and the observation, focussing primarily on whether the utilization of partnerships was a useful tool to provide quality education to a historically disadvantaged primary school whilst comparing it with other partnerships with regards to similarities and differences. It has been revealed that the goals for the partnership which has developed between the two schools were for the most part not those set out in the idealized model described at the beginning of this chapter.

Bastiani's (1993:105) definition of an educational partnership seems to best fit the partnership between School A and School B. He claims that the sharing of power, responsibility and ownership need not necessarily be equal for the partnership to be successful. Although teachers of School A did not perceive this as an ideal partnership, there was a degree of mutuality which started with the process of listening to each other. Goals and aims were shared and based on common ground, while the important differences were acknowledged. There was a commitment from the teachers, parents and pupils to work together. The self esteem of teachers from

School B had been enhanced by the feeling that their ideas and approaches that they had previously suppressed were now applied in a team setting. What has been revealed in the study is that the partnership between School A and School B is a partnership of equity. This means that each school put in what they were capable of, and need played a role in determining the type of benefit which accrued to different partners, as did relative contribution to the partnership. The different partners contributed and benefitted differently, but within agreed parameters.

Concerns were expressed by the teachers of both schools, in agreement with Goduka (1999:92), that the inequalities in the education system caused by the apartheid system left Black students at a major disadvantage. The partnership endeavoured to address this issue to a certain extent. The activities of the partnership provided School B with opportunities, developed skills and improved the confidence of the pupils. Goduka's (1999:94) concern was that Black pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to fail, since years of discrimination and oppression had taught them that working hard in school was futile. The partnership, however, afforded the pupils from School B opportunities such as scholarships at Art schools and at School A. This motivated the pupils to attempt to achieve their goals. The partnership provided School B with access to skills and material resources and state-of the-art facilities provided by School A. These benefits are similar to the partnership benefits discussed by Nchabeleng (2000:12).

Mclaughlin (1997:26) makes reference to the isolation of schools in the past where contact was incidental. Likewise the schools in the Western Cape also had little contact with each other and when they did, it would have been with similar schools

with similar facilities and resources. The respondents from School B indicated, they were not aware that the kind of facilities and resources seen at School A were available. They were used to improvising and making the best of what they had. The partnership provided the opportunity for the two schools to be in contact and to cooperate. By sharing the facilities of School A, they were able to provide a better quality of education to the pupils of School B.

The study of the partnership between School A and School B reveals that there is a lack of parent involvement. Hull (2000:9) discusses, in the document Partnerships that Work, an effective monitoring and evaluation programme which is documented and made available to all the role players. The document also indicates respective responsibilities and roles of the partners. Lemmer (1999:152) also refers to the importance of constant dialogue among partners to sustain the partnership.



4.5 CONCLUSION

The research findings of this study reveal that partnering of diverse schools helps to provide quality education to the historically disadvantaged school. The partnership between Schools A and B meets most of the criteria for a successful partnership. These criteria being that both partners were willing and motivated with a unified aim of improving the quality of education. Though there were many positive outcomes, there were factors that impeded the success of the partnership.

The study showed that the partnership had added dimensions to the limited school programme of School B by the exposure provided by School A. School B is now

regarded more highly by the community and is chosen above the other schools in the area for their children to attend. Pupils of School B had been granted opportunities to attend institutions of higher education and offered bursaries and scholarships. Teachers who previously worked in isolation had been motivated to share and work together in an Ubuntu spirit. Boundaries have been broken – people of diverse backgrounds have rallied together to assist one another. The plight of the historically disadvantaged school had been exposed and addressed to a certain extent.

Although there were factors that impeded the results of the partnership, the partnership was reasonably successful. The partnership would have been more successful if the schools were closer in proximity. The teachers could have worked and planned together on a more regular basis. If School A had been a co-education school, girls would have had the opportunities and exposure that the boys had. This aspect has been addressed by adding a girls' school to the partnership. The partnership would also have been stronger if more people at School A had been able to speak Xhosa as it is very important that partners communicate and that both partners understand what the other is saying (Building Strong and Effective Community Partnerships 1995:1) . In the following chapter, based on the research findings of this empirical study, I will make some recommendations on how to improve partnerships between the schools and to alleviate problems that have occurred.

CHAPTER 5 - RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The partnership under investigation has had wonderful results for both partners. The privileged school assists the disadvantaged school with much needed facilities, well qualified teaching staff and the pupils are exposed to a different learning and social environment. Staff from the disadvantaged school are exposed to incidental skills like training in organizational planning, and rugby and cricket coaching. The link between the two schools minimizes the high cost of technology for the disadvantaged school as these are available at the privileged school. The partnership presents the privileged school with a very successful outreach project and an awareness of the challenges that disadvantaged schools face. The partnership has created an awareness of cultural diversity in both schools.

The study has, however, revealed certain factors which are inhibiting the optimalization of the partnership. Reports from the National and Provincial District Development Conferences (1999-2000), confirm that one of the most difficult challenges facing the country's educational authorities is the provision of adequate education and training in South Africa's historically disadvantaged schools. These schools serving deeply impoverished people, facing problems such as overcrowding, lack of books, lack of funding and absence of well qualified educators need huge support in the form of partnerships with privileged schools.

In this final chapter, based on the research, I will provide recommendations and guidelines towards maximizing partnerships between diverse schools.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 Choosing Partners

In order for a partnership to work it is not advisable to choose a partner that is a mirror image of the school (Hull 2000:13). What is important is that the schools should determine those factors where compromise is not an option. The two partners should share the same core values, principles and approaches, have relevant capabilities (and sometimes resources) and have something to gain from the relationship. The distinctive interests of both parties should be taken into account when planning a partnership. There should also be a development of trust, communication and understanding of each partner's interests (Scribner, Hager and Warne 2002:67). The selection criteria, of which the most important is the willingness to be a partner, should be written into the partnership agreements. The schools should be geographically accessible. A school should be chosen that matches the nature and interests of the pupils, their learning needs and abilities. Initial research will pay benefits in the long run. To start a partnership these are some of the questions to be addressed:

- How might staff become interested and involved in the partnership?
- What is the current understanding and perception of the staff of the quality of education?

- What experience have staff of working outside their own schools?
- How are those involved going to get to know each other and build a working relationship?
- What will parents want to know about the new development and what will they be concerned about?
- What will pupils want to know about the development which will help them make a decision?
- How will communication with staff, pupils and parents be maintained?

It is recommended that documentation that will codify the emerging collaborative practice be utilized. A non-legalistic document which indicates the respective roles and responsibilities of both partners could be drafted. The criteria should ensure that the contexts for teacher education are appropriate and that all that are involved are able to fulfill their responsibilities adequately. The document could agree to approaches to, and forms of reporting. The aim could be to minimize duplication and bureaucracy while providing integrated and relevant information. The document should spell out how each school will assist the other.

5.2.2 Capacity Building

It is advisable to involve all staff members with the partnership at an early stage, with a view to the continuous improvement of learning experiences offered to all the pupils (Hutchinson and Campbell 1998:139). This will enable staff to have a feeling of ownership and commitment to the partnership. Training workshops could be held so that teachers from the different schools have more time to plan and work together on a regular basis. Seminars could be held for both management and teachers on the new curriculum and assessment procedures (Scribner *et al.* 2002). The aim of these seminars should be to empower staff from both schools with knowledge and expertise regarding topics like educational law, quality management, quality assurance, multicultural education, continuous development of staff, technological education, skills education and curriculum development. When there is change or re-organisation, it is recommended that new staff be involved in the planning and programme development to try to maintain the commitment. It is critical that the staff from both schools are committed to the development of the partnership. Experience has shown that there is greater coherence, motivation and success for pupils when the staff from both schools are clear about the rationale for the partnership, feel well prepared to manage the demands and are actively involved in developments.

For further capacity building it is recommended to have on-site classroom and school visits and lesson observation, coaching and mentoring. By being involved in a daily learning situation, by class exchanges, for example, the teachers could share ideas, experience the successful methods of others and evaluate each other's approaches. Teachers of the same subjects or learning areas could have an exchange. They could,

for example, first go to the partner school for a day to observe the management style of the respective teachers. Teachers from both schools could provide work for the exchange teachers and then swop classes for just one day per term. A possible constraint could be a shortage of teachers to supervise classes at the disadvantaged school, when the teacher leaves for the exchange programme. A possible solution could be to obtain assistance from the privileged school which might have a pool of relief teachers.


It is important to improve the following skills of the two partners:

- communication skills including writing skills, specific skills for communication system and language proficiency;
- financial management skills to enable clear accounting for resources to communities, partners and donors;
- administrative skills to design and run systems for the upkeep of the partnership and project activities;
- project management skills including planning and coordination, as well as the skills necessary to build and utilize monitoring systems;

It is important to have effective planning meetings with goals, good facilitators and all or most of the staff attending where everyone present should contribute. If more teachers are involved it will reduce the workload; hence there will be less reluctance to participate in the partnership. Meetings should be scheduled well in advance and I would recommend spreading three planning meetings throughout the year – one at the beginning, one in the middle of the year to monitor and one at the end to assess the partnership activities. There should be an attempt to standardize the approach to

decision making, improve teamwork skills and try to reach some common understanding of the issues at hand.

It is important that the interests of both schools are taken into consideration. An example taken from the partnership in my research is that one school played rugby while the other school had a stronger interest in soccer. I would recommend that both sporting codes be catered for and that the teachers from the respective schools assist to develop each other with regards to rules and coaching skills. I further recommend that the privileged school assists the disadvantaged school with acquiring suitable sports gear.

With regards to the subjects taught at the respective schools during the partnership, it is important that the level of instruction and content be suitable to maintain the interest of the pupils (Scribner *et al.* 2002).  If it is possible, the lessons should be taught at both schools alternatively to enable more teachers from the disadvantaged schools to observe. It would be useful if teachers from the disadvantaged schools are trained to teach the relevant subjects as they will then in turn train more teachers on their staff. This is one way that more pupils can be exposed to to the various subjects such as Art. I would also recommend that teachers from the disadvantaged school be trained to do basic remedial teaching as there is often only one school clinic that services too many schools, hereby limiting the frequency and efficiency of service.

It would be beneficial to the partnership if there could be regular social functions between the two schools. Interaction between the staff of the two schools could be encouraged with music for relaxation, games to break the formality and the venues

alternated between the schools. When there are celebratory functions at the schools, there should be careful consideration of the times to ensure maximum support from both schools. During social and celebratory functions catering could be done by both schools jointly with the serving of traditional foods. I would also recommend that a social function such as a games afternoon or evening be held for the pupils to get to know one another.

5.2.3 Balancing Maintenance and Development

The schools should be assisted with maintaining the work it does on a day to day basis with the idea of continuing to obtain its objectives. It should be avoided where it is seen that only one partner could bring expertise to the partnership which contributes to higher quality management (Lasley, Matczynski and Williams 1992). The staff of the disadvantaged school should be ensured that the partnership does not imply that they are not doing their jobs properly.

It is important to be sensitive to the partner school by becoming knowledgeable about the culture of the partner, by learning how to respond to various situations such as death, initiation, dietary preferences and general etiquette.

It is imperative that constant dialogue be maintained between partners. Partners should be kept informed of progress or changes during the project (Williams 1994:88). A communication and decision making process should be established that recognizes disagreement among members as part of the partnership building and that suggests ways to deal with conflict. The partners should be honest and

straightforward and not be afraid to say what they wish because they feel indebted to the other partner. They should attempt to speak the same language as the partner. More teachers from the privileged school could learn to speak the language of the other school. It is important to confirm that both partners understand exactly what is meant. There must be certainty that they see the roles and responsibilities in the same way, and that they both have a common understanding of what commitment is needed. Everyone in the school should be made aware of the main principles of the partnership as well as the practical details. Every possible opportunity could be used in raising relevant issues through meetings with those who are actively involved, brief presentations at staff meetings and even briefer explanations could be given on paper. The explanations will also need to be followed up at regular intervals to ensure that new staff are involved and that colleagues are aware of the changes and developments which are taking place from time to time. Publicizing and communicating the successes within the partnership is seen as a high priority in sustaining the partnership.

I recommend that new partners be engaged. Fresh ideas and opportunities could be provided for skills development by sharing the best of what each partner has to offer. Contacts could be exchanged and each school can ultimately leave the partnership with enhanced skills, networks and reputations.

Tushnet (1993), as quoted in A Guide to Promising Practices in Educational Partnerships (1996), states the importance of utilizing one of the main resources - the parents. The parents should be kept informed and involved in the partnership as much as possible. During my research I encountered parents from the advantaged school

who offered to do reading programmes with the pupils from the disadvantaged school and parents from the disadvantaged school who offered to teach Xhosa to the parents and teachers of the advantaged school.

5.2.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

I recommend that monitoring activities be put into place to see if goals have been achieved, to test if the partners' performance is meeting agreed standards and that outcomes are appropriate and useful. This would enable partners to recognize and celebrate successes, challenges and learning that have emerged from their work together. This way they will also recognize that the explicit purpose for which they had come together is complete. It is advisable that one person, other than the headmaster, from each school monitor the progress of the partnership activities. Parents who are unemployed could also be used to assist with the monitoring process to relieve staff who are overloaded. A report on the events for each year could be produced. It should be decided who the partnership is accountable to, and who the respective partners are accountable to (Maeroff, Callan and Usdan 2001). It is important to ascertain that the partners have the same indicators of success and the same concepts of meeting goals. These are some useful questions to explore the impact of the partnership:

- To what extent and in what way has each partner organization changed and benefitted?
- How has each partner used the learning and experience gained from the partnership?

- Given that partnerships can be used as a pilot for structural change, have partners seen and tested new ways of doing things, and have they spread their lessons internally?

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Because this can be considered as an exploratory study, only two schools were selected across a socio-economic spectrum. Future research could select more than one partnership between other primary schools in the Cape and compare them by measuring the successes and weaknesses.

This study also confirmed that there were pupils who were positively influenced by the partnership. Further research could also explore the effect that the partnership had on pupils who were exposed to the more affluent side of life, but then had to return to the township. How did the partnership affect these pupils?

The next section will discuss the limitations and problems encountered during this empirical investigation.

5.4 LIMITATIONS AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE STUDY

The first phase of the research was limited to a primary school to which the researcher was attached. The fact that I was both the researcher and a teacher at the school might have had a negative influence on the final results and analysis.

The non-availability of South African sources, particularly in the form of theses and journal articles, was limiting although it does not invalidate its findings. Very little has been written on the subject of partnerships in primary schools internationally and especially in South Africa.

A longer period of observation would probably yield better results. The programme should specifically allow more time for learning of appropriate verbal interaction skills.

The measures used in this research should be scrutinized and refined to produce more reliable results. The different measures in terms of assessing specific areas might have influenced the results.



As I was teaching at the time of my research, I had difficulty in finding suitable times for the interviews. I also had to find the most suitable time during the school year which did not coincide with the start of the academic year, the athletics season or exam times.

Anecdotal information gained from participants during the investigation indicated that some changes occurred as a result of the partnership programme, but measures used to pick up subtle changes were not in place. For example, many participants commented that as a result of the partnership they felt good about themselves, and many of them felt part of a group where everyone cared about one another.

In 2003, I accompanied my husband to Kuwait when he was offered a job there. My departure from South Africa presented me with the challenges of not having access to necessary literature, not being able to follow up on some of the interviews and being distracted by the new environment.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Having considered the factors that enabled and constrained the implementation of a partnership programme at the two diverse schools, I offer a summary of insights for others who might be interested in pursuing a collaborative approach which could assist the process of improving the quality of education at disadvantaged schools.



Firstly, we have to acknowledge that educational authorities in South Africa face a major challenge to provide adequate education and training to disadvantaged schools. After 1994 impoverished people expected free education, quality teaching and learning, adequate schooling facilities, improved learners' performance in examinations and subsequent improvement in the qualifications they received. The educational authorities, on their own, are unable to provide the necessary support to all these impoverished schools.

Secondly, on the specific issue of partnerships between schools, my research has revealed very positively the benefits of such a programme for both schools. The link between the two schools not only boosts the morale of both staff and pupils, but the teachers feel valued by others, hence value themselves. The exposure to better facilities stimulates the pupils' interest and aspirations for better qualifications.

Thirdly, there are several challenges and priorities which need to be tackled to achieve the goal of quality basic education for all citizens of South Africa. These include building capacity of educators and school management, and achieving desired learning outcomes through improved teaching and learning methods. I would argue that the most immediate challenge in this regard is to improve access to teaching and learning materials and to consolidate partnerships with other schools particularly in the areas of educator training and rehabilitating school infrastructure.

The key to successful partnerships seems to be rooted in an understanding that partnerships depend on structures and attitudes. Structures need to facilitate the work of the partners, rather than make it more demanding and attitudes need to be based on the conviction that there is mutual benefit to be gained from the partnership. I remain convinced that no disadvantaged institution can meet the demands of quality education alone.



Finally, the study on which this research is based, affirms the usefulness of diverse schools working together for quality education. The challenge now is to ensure that primary school partnerships become an accepted initiative. As events unfold, hopefully the partnerships will grow, new challenges will emerge and exciting opportunities will become available in order to expand collaborative ways of approaching change for effective learning and teaching.

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APPENDIX A

PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

HEADMASTERS/TEACHER/PARENT/PUPILS

Date: _____ Start: _____ Stop: _____ Duration: _____

GENERAL QUESTION

How do you determine the quality or success of the partnership?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. How was the partner school selected?
2. How long has the partnership been in existence?
3. In your opinion, what are the objectives of the partnership?
4. What are the shared values of the two schools?
5. Do you have a document (legalistic /non-legalistic) which indicates the respective responsibilities and roles of the schools?
6. Do you have clear criteria for the partnership that ensures that the context for education is appropriate and that all involved fulfill their responsibilities?
7. Are all staff members aware of the main principles, as well as the practical details of the partnership?
8. How are staff and pupils made aware of the partnership?
9. What are the developmental challenges that your school faces?
10. Which of these challenges come from the school?
11. Which of these challenges come from external factors?
12. Can you define your approach to the partnership and what standards have you set?
13. Does the partnership live up to your standards?
14. What do you think can be done to improve the partnership?
15. How do you think the partnership can be sustained?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

HEADMASTER /TEACHER/PARENT/PUPILS

Date: _____ Start: _____ Stop: _____ Duration: _____

GENERAL QUESTION

How do you determine the quality or success of the partnership?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. How long have you taught at this school?
2. What do you teach at this school?
3. Are you aware of the partnership between your school and another school?
4. How have you been made aware of the partnership?
5. Do you attend the planning meetings of the partnership?
6. If not, why and which teachers do attend?
7. What is your involvement in the partnership?
8. How often do you meet with teachers from the partner school?
9. How do you travel to the partner school?
10. In which language do you communicate with people of the partner school?
11. How have you benefited from the partnership?
12. What are the developmental challenges that your school faces?
13. Which of these challenges come from the school?
14. Which of these challenges come from external factors?
15. Can you define your approach to the partnership and what standards have you set?
16. How do you select pupils to attend activities? Only those who show talent?
17. What do you think can be done to improve the partnership?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

HEADMASTER/TEACHER/PARENT/PUPILS

Date: _____ Start: _____ Stop: _____ Duration: _____

GENERAL QUESTION

How do you determine the quality or success of the partnership?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been a parent at this school?
2. Are you aware of the partnership between your school and another school?
3. Has your child participated in any activity at the other school. If yes, what was the activity?
4. How do you think your child benefits from the partnership?
5. How has your child been affected by the partnership?
6. How do you think your school benefits from the partnership?
7. Are you involved in the partnership in any way?
8. If you are not involved, how would you like to be involved?
9. What would else would you like to have included in the partnership?



APPENDIX D

PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

HEADMASTER/TEACHER/PARENT/PUPILS

Date: _____ Start: _____ Stop: _____ Duration: _____

GENERAL QUESTION

Why do you think that partnership is successful or not successful?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. In what grade are you?
2. Are you aware of the partnership between your school and another school?
3. Do you know the name of your school' partner?
4. Where is your school's partner situated?
5. Are you involved in any activity at the partner school?
6. If yes, in what activity are you involved in the partnership?
7. Where is the activity done?
8. How do you get there?
9. Do you know the names of any of the teachers or pupils of the partner school?
10. In what language do you speak to the pupils of the partner school?
11. Have you made any friends at the partner school?
12. What other activities would you like to have in the partnership?

APPENDIX E

21 Domingo Road
Retreat
7945
31 January 2002

The Director
Western Cape Education Department
Cape Town

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a M.Ed student investigating the utilization of a partnership to provide quality education to a historically disadvantaged primary school in the Western Cape. I am a student of the University of the Western Cape and my supervisor is Dr Clarence Williams. I hereby request permission to do an empirical research of School A and School B.

I have enclosed a copy of my proposal for your perusal.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Nazli Salie

St.No. 2042054

APPENDIX F

21 Domingo Rd
Retreat
7945
25 September 2002

Headmaster School B
School B

Dear Sir

My proposal to research the utilization of partnerships to improve the quality of education in historically disadvantaged schools has been accepted by the University of the Western Cape.

As I have chosen to do a case study of the School A and B partnership, I will need to collect data in order to evaluate the partnership. If you would kindly grant me permission to do so, I will need to interview a cross section of the School B population as follows:

- the headmaster
- 10 staff members
- 15 learners from grade 5-7
- 10 past learners who were involved with the twinning since its inception
- 10 parents



If possible, I would like a gender balance of 50% male and 50% female.

I would appreciate it if you could provide me with a teacher who could act as the liaison person between you and myself, and who could assist me with the selection of the population.

I would like to conduct the interviews early next term between 14 and 21 October, if that suits you.

If you have any suggestions with regard to the research, please feel free to convey them to me.

I have enclosed a copy of my research proposal for your perusal.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nazli Salie