ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION: TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF WORKING CLASS SCHOOLS PRODUCING WORKING CLASS CITIZENS

DOMINIC DENVER JOHNSON

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

Supervisor: Dr N. Ravjee

November 2007

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION: TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF WORKING CLASS SCHOOLS PRODUCING WORKING CLASS CITIZENS

Dominic Johnson

KEYWORDS

Policy

Internal factors

External factors

Access

Higher education

Matriculation

Equity

Socio-economic area

School planning

Cultural change

Material resources

ABSTRACT

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION: TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF WORKING CLASS SCHOOLS PRODUCING WORKING CLASS CITIZENS

Dominic Johnson

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

This study investigates why learners from low socio-economic communities such as Delft, a township in the Cape Flats, fail to achieve matriculation exemption and do not meet the criteria for tertiary education admission. Using a case study approach the research sheds light on why this is happening in one school (School X) in Delft. I found the crucial factors to be both internal and external to the school. The in-school factors have to do with everyday practices related to curriculum and subject combinations, financial issues, school leadership and management and school support networks, including parental involvement. The external factors include the effects on schooling of the socio-economic conditions in Delft, the broader neoliberal policy context of the GEAR macro-economic policy which often pits the policy goal of increasing access against economic imperatives, and current tensions within the teaching profession which have an immediate impact on everyday school practices and on the school culture. The findings question the adequacy of current policies and strategies to increase access to higher education.

I develop the argument in three parts. Firstly, while national and institutional policies are in place to increase access to higher education, such policies tend to contradict each other. For example, the current funding formula for universities and the capping (in 2005) of student numbers contradict the policy goal of increasing access to higher education. Secondly, using the matriculation exemption as an indicator of a learner's potential to meet the criteria for university admission I found evidence of differential results by the type of school, based on historical advantage/disadvantage and socio-economic location. Thirdly, through a case study

of a specific school in Delft I explored a range of factors round materials resources, values and everyday school practices that influence students' academic performance and ultimately their chances of pursuing higher education.

DECLARATION

I declare that: ***Access to Higher Education: To Break The Vicious Cycle Of Working Class Schools Producing Working Class Citizens*** is my own work, and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Dominic Denver Johnson November 2007

Signed: ……

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heartfelt thanks to:

- My supervisor, Dr. Neetha Ravjee, whose insight, enthusiasm, guidance and willingness to assist was much appreciated.
- My wife, Philida, and kids, Lesley and Dennielle thanks for your constant support.
- My mother for making it possible to attend university and the sacrifices you made in the past.
- Finally a special word of thanks to all who participated in the study.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The great danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it (Michelangelo 1475 –1564)[1].

1.1 Background and Rationale

Between 2000 and 2005 only 28 out of 1 571 learners - just two percent - from the three high schools in Delft, a working class area close to the University of the Western Cape, qualified for a matriculation exemption, the South African school leaving certificate widely regarded as "the ticket to higher education[2]" (Kallaway, 2005: 28). This situation is not peculiar to Delft schools. The number of learners from South Africa's township schools[3] gaining access to higher education (HE) continues to decrease (Kallaway, 2005:22). This decrease occurs despite the existence of legislation and policies put in place since 1994 to correct the educational imbalances caused by apartheid.

This thesis investigates the reasons for this situation, using a case study approach. It examines why learners from Delft high schools are unable to access higher education. Three initial reasons motivated this study: first, my experiences as a teacher in Delft since 1995; second, the existence of policy imperatives to increase access to higher education and third, recent trends (2000-2005) in the national and provincial matriculation examination results. I examined these trends in relation to the school leaving results in a sample of township schools in Delft. Since 1994, our newly elected democratic government has put in place educational policies to improve education in general and to increase access to higher education. In this study I seek to understand why, despite these policy changes, learners from township schools, such as Delft schools, do not qualify to access higher education.

---

[1] The quotations at the beginning of each chapter are from the SADTU diaries for 2002, 2003 and 2004.

[2] Since 2004 the term "higher education" refers only to Universities and Universities of Technologies (previously known as Technikons), and not to Colleges of Education.

[3] Township schools are for learners from low socio-economic backgrounds (Kallaway, 2005). Such schools are found in working class areas; formerly Coloured and Black townships like Delft, Soweto, Langa, etc. as defined by the social geography of apartheid.

The case study is a high school in Delft (School X). My initial assumption was that most of the learners at School X had no interest in accessing higher education for various reasons. As time went on, I learnt that the learners do desire to pursue a university education but their access to higher education was often hampered by numerous factors, both internal and external to the school. This study seeks to identify the crucial factors that make a difference to whether a student attending a high school in Delft will or will not meet the criteria to qualify for access to higher education.

1.2 Research aim and methodology

The aim of this study is to understand *why* learners from School X in Delft are not entering higher education. It explores the factors influencing learners' chances to enter higher education, including the nature and extent of the support learners receive to overcome barriers to higher education.

For this investigation, I used a case study approach and relied on qualitative and quantitative data. I examined three sources of data: 1) policy documents; 2) national and provincial Grade 12 examination statistics; and 3) self-administered questionnaires to the Grade 12 learners and Grade 12 subject teachers at School X. The case study approach facilitated a holistic and meaningful understanding of the characteristics of the real-life situation (Yin, 2003:2). Also, as a research strategy it can be used to "contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena" (Yin, 2003:1).

The study explores a variety of factors around values, material resources and everyday school practices that could make a difference in the quality of the school experience and ultimately the learner's chances of success in pursuing higher education studies. The question arises: which are the critical factors that make a difference in students' abilities to access higher education? I identified the crucial factors as internal or "in school" factors as well as external or "out of school" factors. The school has control over internal factors. Such factors include the learner subject choices, quality of teaching and career guidance. External or "out of school"

factors are those that the school cannot control or has little or no influence over, such as curriculum choice, educational policy, broad socio-economic and political factors, poverty, higher education outreach programmes, enrolment capping at higher education institutions, social peers, finance and unemployment rates. The external factors often have their basis in the neoliberal macro-economic framework of GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) that has shaped South Africa's policies and socio-economic trends since the 1990's.

These external factors and internal factors are related. Accepting that combinations of internal and external factors play a role in influencing learners chances of accessing higher education, it is possible to argue that the external factors, on their own, cannot prevent access to higher education. There are numerous examples of learners from poor families and schools without higher education outreach programmes that do gain access to higher education and break the vicious cycle of working class schools that produce working class citizens. An example of this is the Orange farm-based Leshata Secondary School[4] in Gauteng (Sowetan, 28/12/06). This school faces challenges such as lack of facilities and pupils from poverty-stricken households. Hence, no good results were expected from this school after its inception in 1993. Yet it was the first Black school to register a 100 percent pass rate in 1999 and it has maintained a consistent pass rate of over 90 percent in the last few years (Sowetan, 28/12/06). This example shows that schools can overcome their external problems under certain circumstances.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

A strong trend in the literature on the history and sociology of education suggests that schools function in various ways to reproduce the existing class structure in any society. The classic study by Bowles and Gintis (1976), on how schools in the United States function to reproduce the dominant class structure of society is a good example of this school of thought. Similarly, Willis's (1977) study: *Learning to Labour: working class kids get working class jobs"* examined how working class

[4] It is a school on a farm in an informal settlement that is among the poorest of the poor in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

boys' resistance to schooling in a secondary school in the English midlands functioned to reproduce the existing class relations in English society. In South Africa, many studies have focused on how schools function to reproduce the class, race and gender stratification in South African society (Kallaway, 1984; Christy, 1985; Unterhalter and Wolpe, 1991; Harker 2000; Horvat, 2001). These studies focus on the various ways in which schools do this, through the hidden curriculum (e.g. teaching attitudes, an automatic respect for people in authority) and through the formal curriculum (e.g. restricting subject choices through tracking). However, Hendricks (2006:8) observes that very few case studies exist of the dynamics of changing the racialised inequalities in black, urban schools in South Africa.

The conceptual framework for this study draws from recent studies in this tradition (J. Williams, 1997; P. Kallaway, 2005; M. Cosser and J. Du Toit, 2002). This framework has two dimensions. The first dimension focuses on internal and external factors - both material and non-material - influencing learners' access to higher education. Kallaway (2005:1-31) and Cosser and Du Toit (2002:4) focus on the particular things in South African schools that curb learners' access to higher education. Examples include attending a township school like School X, subject choices at school, and learners and parents' socio-economic status. The study of Cosser and Du Toit (2002:98) explains the subject choices that exert an influence on learners' access with regard to higher education. The authors conclude that family background, in particular socio-economic status, is strongly correlated with learners' choice with regard to entering higher education. Similarly, Kallaway (2005: 28) observes that there is a clear pattern emerging from learners who attend former model C schools[5], whether they are African, Coloured or White. Their chances of success in the matriculation examination (in terms of obtaining a ticket to HE) are very high.

Based on the findings of these studies I examined local school conditions such as school resources, class sizes, absenteeism among teachers, learners' drop out rates,

[5] These are historically white schools, but open to all races since 1994 and are very much privileged in terms of resources.

and parent(s) involvement, that influence learners' choice to enter higher education or not. It is therefore not merely a question of choice but a combination of factors including matriculation results, motivation and ability which allow a student to access higher education.

The second part of the framework emerges in literature that looks more closely at access to higher education. The framework relies on Williams' (1997) considerations of the different discursive frameworks that shape access to higher education in the United Kingdom (UK). I elaborate on the relevance of the different perspectives as outlined by Williams (1997) to the South African context in the next chapter.

1.4 Limitations

A case study of one school was sufficient for this study. Ideally, a comparative study of access to higher education across different school contexts would show how the different dynamics of the schools directly influence learner's chances of meeting the criteria for tertiary education admission.

There were several other limitations to this study, such as the bureaucratic red tape in terms of obtaining permission for the study. For example to conduct research in Western Cape Education Department[6] (WCED) schools, one is required to secure consent from the department. One typically waits between 4-6 weeks for this permission. On receiving permission from the WCED, one still needs to apply to the school governing body[7] (SGB) for permission to do research at the school. This can take another 6-8 weeks or longer, depending on when the next scheduled SGB meeting will take place. These delays had a marked influence on my work. They left me with no time to do follow up group discussions or to collect additional information from the Grade 12 learners. Their September examination started within a few days and then the school holidays followed.

[6] It is one of the nine provincial education departments.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter Two is a literature review of the most salient research that is pertinent to this study. Chapter Three describes the research methodology adopted in this study. Chapters Four and Five outline the research findings and develop the central arguments around policy, the Matriculation examination results, school practices and higher education institutions (HEI's). Chapter Six provides recommendations and ideas for further research.

[7] According to the Schools Act (1996) it must consist of parents, teachers and learners and collectively they are responsible for the governance of the school.

CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR ACCESS

We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future. (Franklin D. Roosevelt).

The literature discussed in this chapter is in two parts. The first part focuses on the area of access to higher education and, more specifically, the underlying discourses on who should or should not "legitimately" have access to this level of the education system. I draw strongly on the work of Williams (1997) who uses Foucault's (1979) understanding of discourse to discuss what shapes views about access to higher education in the United Kingdom (UK). She understands the central concept of discourse as used by Foucault (1979) as "an exercise of power because of the ways it controls and constrains what can be said as well as the right to speak" (Williams, 1997:15). Her analysis of the policy documents that have shaped access to higher education in the UK since 1960 provides a valuable framework for considering what forces shape and control who has access to higher education.

It can correctly be argued that debates about access to higher education in the UK refer to a very different context to that of South Africa; however, there are a number of reasons why I believe her analysis is relevant to the South African situation. In the late 1980's, the Thatcher era, the UK moved from an elite higher education system to a mass system of higher education. This elite higher education system was based on class and large numbers of people, in particular working class and ethnic minority groups, were excluded from higher education. The Thatcher government rewarded universities that served the economy more effectively by creating closer links with industry and commerce. The assumption was that the UK economy was falling behind and that higher education should furnish the economy with the appropriate skills and work attitudes. It is against this background that UK higher education moved from an elitist to a mass system of education. The parallel assumption in the South African context is that South Africa needs to grow its economy to eradicate poverty amongst the masses. In the post-1994 period in South Africa, the first democratic government has also sought to change the previous

apartheid higher education system, which restricted access to the majority of people because of race gender and class. The imperative was to create a higher education system that would open up opportunities for tertiary education to all people in the country, especially those who had been excluded from the system in the past. However, while the stated goal of equity has been central to the new policies, broadening access to higher education entry requirements has been driven largely by a need to meet pressing economic priorities - a situation similar to the UK.

Thus the "massification" of the higher education system in South Africa, while very different in form to the UK system, is challenged by a desire to redress the inequalities of the past and to meet pressing economic needs. In both countries economic imperatives and demands to reverse historical patterns of participation in higher education provided a basis for the expansion of the sector. As Davies, Williams and Webb (1997:9) observe, the move to a mass system reflects an attempt to address the "rights of citizens in modern democratic societies and in addition, perhaps more significantly, address the real needs and pressing needs of the economy".

By examining Williams' interpretation of the different discourses on access to higher education I attempt to show how access is always shaped by competing discourses which may serve to disguise the ongoing effective exclusion of some groups from higher education even where such systems are publicly committed to equitable access for all people.

In the second part of this Chapter, I discuss the literature on various exclusionary practices that occur within schools on a daily basis and that may contribute to learners not accessing higher education. Here I draw on local literature, for example, Kallaway (2005), Cosser and Du Toit (2002) and Strydom (2002) and on international literature to show that increasing access to higher education is not a uniquely South African problem.

2.1 The discourse on access to higher education

Williams (1997:24-46) identifies five competing perspectives on access to higher education, which shape debates about who has a legitimate right to enter higher education and why. She points out that these perspectives should be viewed in relation to larger discourses on the individual, the market and redressing historical imbalances.

> The discourse of access can only be understood as one aspect of wider political and educational discourses. It has elements within it which stem from these wider contexts, which are recombined in particular ways. (Williams, 1997:27)

In this section, I first summarise Williams' five competing perspectives on access to higher education: the academic traditionalists, the marketeers, the utilitarian trainers, the liberal meritocrats and the access movement. I then discuss their relevance to the different perspectives on higher education in the South African context. For convenience, I will group these perspectives according to the type of criteria they emphasise: (a) merit-based criteria; (b) market-based criteria; and (c) historical redress criteria.

2.1.1 Merit-based criteria for access to Higher Education

The academic traditionalist and the liberal meritocratic positions emphasise individual and merit-based access criteria.

Academic Traditionalists

According to Williams (1997:28), the "academic traditionalists" believe that only those who manage to pass the Advanced level[8] (A-level) school leaving examinations should enter higher education in the U.K. These "voices" suggest that by accepting anybody who does not satisfy the criteria, standards are lowered

[8] A General Certificate of Education qualification in the UK is usually taken by students in the final two years of secondary education.

because ‘by mixing winners with losers you hold the winners back’ (Williams, 1997:30). In the UK, the A-level entrance requirement is a determining access criterion used by university examination boards, which are able to exercise power over standards and curriculum content.

This position holds that “academic standards” are often in opposition to the UK government’s access initiatives, which establish various entrance requirements that are regarded as having the same value as an A-level qualification. One such example is extended work experience. The parallel policy in South Africa is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). According to the academic traditionalists, A-levels in the UK denote quality and excellence, and one cannot reject their importance as far as higher education is concerned. Those who are able to obtain A-level passes should be given priority concerning opportunities, as they will ensure the continuation of “excellence” and high standards in higher education. However, as Williams (1997:32) points out, in this view, “the essence of excellence in higher education, unlike compulsory education, lies therefore in the inability of the vast majority to achieve its standards”.

The academic traditionalist perspective is strongly evident in South Africa. The Matriculation exemption in South Africa determines access to higher education and perpetuates inequalities by excluding the majority of people who have been disadvantaged by the policies of the apartheid regime and by poverty. Although the end of year Matriculation results increased significantly from 58% in 2000 to 71% in 2004 (Kallaway, 2005:1), most of these learners do not meet the criteria for university admission. I elaborate more on this issue in Chapter Four, which relates the conditions in the school to learners’ poor results.

Liberal Meritocrats

Williams refers to those in the UK who regard education as an individual’s right to higher education, based on merit, as liberal meritocrats. This perspective emphasises that people should be given equal opportunities to access higher education but priority should be given to mainly those who were historically disadvantaged, those who are under-represented such as females, the disabled and

the mature student (Williams, 1997:39). To make learning possible for people entering through different routes the curriculum should be flexible by using semesterization, modularisation and less specialized courses. Education is beneficial to the social or public good, something that should bring benefits not only to individuals but also to the society as a whole. Education should be relevant to individual career needs. The different skills acquired through formal and informal education are recognized and accredited.

This perspective overlaps with the discourse of the academic traditionalists at times. The notable difference between the two approaches is:

> on the basis of their justification for entry to higher education; whether it is an individual right gained by virtue of being "qualified", or whether it is a right to a particular sort of higher education linked to the requirements of the economy or society as a whole (Williams, 1997:39).

This perspective is also evident in the South African policy context (NPHE, 2001; White Paper 3, 1997). Some of these goals are accessibility in terms of the "packing" of knowledge acquisition into semesters, modules and credits, widening of "qualified" to include skills gained in different institutions and in contexts other than education and increasing access to historically excluded groups. In this sense life long learning has become important.

2.1.2 Market-based criteria for access to Higher Education

The marketeers and utilitarian trainers emphasis individual and market-based criteria.

Marketeers

The marketeers assert that education is a matter of individual choice. Those who have money to invest in themselves pay their own fees and they are the ones who benefit from education (Williams, 1997:32-35). Those who have money but fail to invest in themselves are not doing themselves a favour. Business discourse emphasizes that the role of education should be to increase economic growth. The

marketeers focus mainly on courses that bring more income, namely science, engineering and technology, which they believe, can achieve this economic growth.

Marketeers oppose government intervention that encourages massification (Williams, 1997:35). The marketeers propose that academics should decide on the nature of the universities and the selection of students who should attend. The role of government should be limited to deciding on the size and purpose of higher education through its control of finance but it should reduce its subsidies to individual students. The government financial aid should be in the form of loans. Preferences for loans should be to students who in advance of entering higher education show that they have the intellectual capacity but cannot afford paying their own fees. Words such as 'consumer choice' and 'competition' inform marketeers' language. Hence, institution and course choice must be a student's prerogative. However, more emphasis should be on courses that are likely to boost the economy. In order for choice to be possible, the government should avoid emphasizing the "sameness" of institutions (Williams, 1997). The argument is that differences promote choice.

In South Africa, the Higher Education White Paper (1997) argues for education to increase economic growth while being responsive to societal interests. This argument of economic growth and social interest is sometimes confusing because it is not clear whether to enroll more black students, referring to African, Coloured and Indian apartheid categories, in cheap courses or increasing resources for market-oriented courses that can achieve this goal of the Higher Education White Paper. Some policy analysts argue that while market-oriented courses can be good for economic growth, there are not enough resources to enroll most students in market-oriented courses (Cloete, 2003). In South Africa, there are those marketeers who believe that there should be an increase in resources in order to accommodate the majority of South Africans in courses that are market-oriented (Cloete, 2003). Cloete criticizes this view because the policy emphasizes that it can aspire to promote economic growth but it cannot regulate access.

This market-oriented approach fails to address the needs of the majority of people who were historically disadvantaged and cannot afford to pay their school fees. The National Plan for Higher Education (2001), partly in agreement with the marketeers, indicates that funding used to support academically able students must increase. For example the Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA), which was set up after 1994, will continue to provide funding, without any form of discrimination, and it should be available to the majority of South African students, who have insufficient funds but who want to study (Cloete, 2002).

Bertelsen (1998) argues that Universities are not businesses with the purpose of making profit, because they cannot meet the required standards of other businesses. Universities should rather concentrate on their core purposes of dissemination of knowledge and providing graduates with different skills to help them in job opportunities. It is in this light that universities should be generously subsidized to provide students with funds for fees.

Utilitarian Trainers

This perspective holds that education should train people for job opportunities (Williams, 1997:35). Utilitarian trainers argue that the purpose of education should be to produce highly skilled graduates for national economic success. The criteria should be broader in order to allow people to access education through different entry requirements, such as mature age exemptions, prior learning including experience and vocational qualifications. According to this view, education should involve training and preparing people for different job opportunities; education should prepare students to be future employees. The marketeers and the utilitarian trainers have similarities as well as differences.

> The trainers and the marketeers form alliances around some aspects of vocationalism but disagree on others. The divisions between them move and blur as each attacks the other for using the market differently. Both positions centralize the element of the consumer. For the marketeers the consumer is primarily the student. For the trainers it is the employers or the economy as a whole or "national needs" and the students are the products. (Williams, 1997:37).

The utilitarian trainer's perspective is evident in most of the equity and efficiency goals of the policy agenda of higher education in South Africa. Examples include the Further Education and Training (FET) policy, the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the introduction of learnerships linking theory to practice. It includes making similarities between work and higher education studies. However, there is a contradiction in this perspective. It puts more emphasis on mature learners because they believe that these students bring a lot of experience to the classroom, and not because it is a good in itself.

2.1.3 Flexible criteria for access to higher education

The access movement emphasises the "group" not the individual and alternative routes to access higher education.

Access Movement

Williams refers to those in the UK that focus on groups historically excluded from higher education as belonging to the access movement. Corrigan (1992) in Williams (1997: 42) describes the access movement as a change commencing from below, outside central state sponsorship and concerned with the structural rather than the individual nature of inequalities. Their focus points are social justice, political literacy, empowerment and community development. The emphasis that distinguishes the access movement from the liberal-meritocrats position is that it is portrayed "as a change initiated from below, outside central state sponsorship and concerned with the structural rather than the individual nature of inequalities" (Williams,1997:42).

There are strong elements of this discourse in the South African higher education policy framework. According to the Higher Education White Paper (1997), access "is a form of redressing the inequality caused by the policies and practices of the apartheid regime, which resulted in discrimination along the lines of race, geographical conditions, gender and disability" (DoE, 1997). Identification and redressing of these inequalities was called for. Some of the priorities are to open up the system to allow entrance through different routes, applying a wider set of

criteria in the selection of students and introducing bridging courses at universities. The Higher Education White Paper ensured that equity of access to higher education complements a concern for equity of outcomes. To ensure that increasing access translates into academic success, student support services are paramount. These include counseling, career guidance, financial aid and other essential support.

In this section, I discussed five competing views on access to higher education in the UK. Although the context of debates in the UK differs from the debates in South Africa, in both cases access is shaped by competing discourses that are used to exclude certain factions of society from higher education although equitable access policies exist. Although there is a policy emphasis on equitable access to higher education, exclusion from higher education of some groups continues (Williams, 1997). The different discourses identified by Williams (1997) are useful to understand the South African situation, but they are limited. They do not clarify what is going on in schools – for example, how to get the exemptions, how to acquire the skills that are needed for the economy, how to access equal opportunity interventions and how to access the alternative routes to higher education. It is for this reason that I draw on another set of literature.

In the next section, I draw on literature that focuses on how the continued exclusion of specific groups from higher education is directly linked to everyday practices in schools.

2.2 Exclusionary practices

The challenge of grappling with barriers that exclude learners from higher education seems to be a worldwide phenomenon (Heystek and Louw, 2002; Western et al, 1998; Gayle, 2002). There is much debate surrounding the issues of parental involvement, socio-economic status and supporting schools to overcome these barriers. Overcoming these barriers is a complex process and there are no 'quick fix' solutions. For example, in a comparative study of education reform in six countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and USA) Reimers found that many educational reforms of the past decade contributed very little to overcome the existing inequalities that exist between the rich and the poor. He asserts that

access to primary education in the relevant age group is a world declaration but that "access to the levels of education that are most important for social mobility and entry into the most modern and competitive sectors of the increasingly globalized economies remain the privileged reserve of elites" (Reimers, 2000:131-133).

According to Sayed (2004: 84-85) the concepts of educational exclusion and inclusion are contentious and difficult to define:

> On the one hand, the concepts have become a short hand for discussing inequity of class, race, gender, ethnicity, and poverty. On the other hand, from a government policy view, the concepts signify an understanding that social problems are interlinked and complex, requiring coordinated and cohesive actions (Sayed, 2004:84-85).

In this study, I use the term exclusionary practices to refer to the factors that influence learners on a daily basis and prevent them from accessing higher education. Following Strydom (2002), Cosser and Du Toit (2002) and Kallaway (2005), I divide the key barriers to higher education into two categories: learner and learners' context.

For example if a learner is physically disabled the context will determine access if the external environment is physically accessible or not. Even though a learner is highly motivated or a high achiever, the context will determine access to higher education depending on the availability of finance. In the learners' category, disability may be a barrier to learning and higher education, but it need not be because there are learners that are disabled who access higher education and succeed. The learners' category factors, (e.g. disability and finance), on their own, cannot and must not prevent learners from accessing higher education because systems have been put in place to overcome these barriers (e.g. bursaries and loans) for study purposes.

The literature on the learners' context, can be separated into "in school" and "out of school" factors. The "out of school" barriers may relate to: socio-economic

conditions, including lack of access to basic services, poverty, unemployment, factors that place learners at risk, degree of parental recognition and involvement, geographical location of school (e.g. a township or rural school), poverty and low paid jobs (Cosser and Du Toit, 2002; Kallaway, 2005:27). Some "in school" barriers include: an inflexible curriculum, inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services, a lack of human resource development strategies, poor academic preparation and school-leaving results (De Souza, 2003).

A third set of factors that hamper learning, and by implication access to higher education, cut across the learner and the learner's context. These factors may include negative and harmful attitudes such as discrimination resulting from prejudice against people based on race, class, gender, culture, disability, religion, ability, sexual preference, and other characteristics, directed towards learners in the education system. Other cross-cutting factors relate to language and communication, accessibility and safe structural environment, and a need for protective legislation and policies.

The following section discusses the literature on the ways in which out-of-school factors and school-related practices influence learner's access to higher education. The exclusionary practices discussed in this section are divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the out-of-school factors and the second part on the internal factors related to the school. Both parts focus on how these factors influence learners' ability to access higher education.

2.2.1 Out-of-school factors

In this section, I discuss the socio-economic factors that influence where a learner attends school (e.g. township school, ex-model C school or a private school) and how finance, values and attitudes influence learners' access to higher education. Secondly, I discuss the type, location and the legacies of unequal schooling that affect learners' access to higher education.

Socio-economic factors

Socio-economic status is a broad concept that comprises three main dimensions: occupation, education and wealth (Western, Mc Millan, and Durrington, 1998: 75). In the higher education context, the dimensions relating to parental occupation and education are most prominent. According to Western et al. (1998), socio-economic status influences the educational experience of young people. For example, aspirations for higher education or other activity on leaving school, and what the individual in fact does upon the completion of schooling are all, if not determined by one's socio economic status, then at least significantly influenced by it. Students from low socio-economic backgrounds display the lowest access and participation rates, remaining under–represented in virtually all fields and levels of higher education study in Australia, for example (Skuja, 1995; Martin, 1994).

According to Western et al. (1998:75), in Australia the economic status of families also contributes to the under-representation in higher education of socio-economically disadvantaged learners. Financial constraints, for example, can limit higher education opportunities for the economically disadvantaged learners who cannot afford the direct cost of a university education. According to Hall (2001:1) the distribution of social capital is represented by the quality of one's home environment, parents' educational level and the quality of schooling. In South Africa the distribution of social capital is still 'overwhelmingly determined by the legacy of keystone apartheid laws such as the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act' (Hall, 2001:1).

According to Western et al. (1998), the economic value of the community has an influence on learners' attitudes, beliefs, expectations and values about higher education. As shown in the case study of School X (Chapter Five), some learners accept that their parents have no money for further studies and that there are no alternative means (e.g. bursaries and loans) to finance their study. They become despondent and their attitude, beliefs and expectations towards higher education are negatively influenced because they do not know how and where to access information for bursaries. Financial income puts people in different socio-economic

groups that may develop different attitudes, beliefs, expectations and values about higher education. This is in addition to the lack of support for learners' higher education ambition by teachers. The culture in which a student grows up extends from their family and friends and affects their attitudes to education (Western et al.; 1998). They further argue that, for Australia, the low retention rate in secondary schools and an associated low participation rate in higher education by people in lower socio-economic groups may be largely attributed to lower aspirations, and less support and value placed on higher education.

A study conducted in South Africa by Cosser and Du Toit (2002) concluded that the subject choices available to learners at the end of Grade 9 and then again in Grades 11 and 12 to enter higher education constrains learners in different ways. For example, the subject combinations offered by many schools in low socio-economic areas often severely restrict learners' postsecondary educational, financial and employment options. This suggests that the quality of public education in township schools is not adequate to prepare learners to sit for exemptions and thus they do not qualify to apply for higher education.

Type, location and legacies of unequal schooling

The economic background of learners influences access to higher education indirectly through the type of school they attend. Learners from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds in the UK are more likely to attend a public high school, as they in general do not have access to private high schools due to financial limitations (Williams, 1987). In the UK, it is not a question of public versus private education for most, but a question of which public school you gain access to. That is to some degree true of South Africa as well. Some township learners leave the townships for better public schooling in other areas. This situation maybe true of Delft as well. Anecdotal evidence suggests that substantial numbers of Delft kids leave the area to attend school in other townships.

The type of school learners attend can influence their access to higher education. The quality of academic preparation, status, achievement and ambition are higher in

non-government schools and in ex-model C schools in South Africa. In township schools, learners are often academically ill-prepared and their achievements and ambitions of what they can achieve are sometimes very low. The location of schools also influences the learners' access to higher education (Kallaway 2005:28). According to Kallaway (2005:28), the exemption rate in township and rural Black and Coloured schools, from 2002 to 2004, has not increased to the level of ex-Model C and private schools. The "good" township and rural Black and Coloured schools surveyed in the Kallaway study have an exemption rate of between 5% and 10% of the total examination pass rate yearly. Kallaway concludes that there is no improvement in the quality of education to the poor. According to Kallaway (2007:30)

> Middle class kids experience an education that is largely unchanged in terms of quality and resources from pre-1994 practices, but there is evidence that working-class and poor kids, who attend public schools in the township and rural areas of South Africa, are increasingly alienated and disaffected.

It can be concluded that they are the ones who attend schools in townships and whose chances to access higher education are slim. A more detailed discussion follows in Chapter 4 on learners that attend township schools and their chances to access higher education.

2.2.2 In-school factors

The literature emphasises three main school-related factors that influence learners' access to higher education. These are school-leaving examinations, subject choices and parent involvement. By focusing on these three factors, my intention is not to suggest that these are the only internal factors that influence learners' access to higher education. First, I discuss the quality of the learners' Grade 12 examination. Second, I discuss the learners' subjects' choices that they require to access higher education. Finally, I discuss the parents' involvement and their influence in the learners' decision to enter higher education.

School-leaving examinations

According to Hall (2001:12), learners in working class schools in South Africa rarely perform well enough in the school leaving examination (end of Grade 12 examination) to even consider higher education as an option after school. He states "equity in access to higher education in South Africa cannot be achieved until the prior schooling system has been comprehensively reformed". In his comparison of the South African and United States of America (USA) contexts Hall (2001:7) draws on Orfield and Yen's (1999) study of desegregation in the USA schools. These authors argue that,

> in a period in which mandatory state tests for graduation are being imposed, college admissions standards are rising, remedial courses in college are cut back, and affirmative action has already been abolished in our two largest states, the harmful consequences for students attending less competitive schools are steadily increasing (Hall, 2001:7).

The context of neoliberal school reform in the United States gives meaning. Similarly, in South Africa the neoliberal reform evident in state policies, funding trends and strategies clearly illustrates how out-of-school factors often influence in-school factors. This relationship will be explored further in Chapters Four and Five.

Hall (2001: 8), in the South Africa situation, acknowledges that the Department of Education is correct in attributing social exclusion from higher education to "poor schooling [in-school factor] and the lack of financial aid [out-of-school factor] in the face of poverty". As shown in Chapter Five, this is certainly the case in the working class area of Delft in Cape Town, where very few students in any one year achieve the minimum requirements for entry to higher education, which in South Africa is the matriculation exemption. In South Africa, we need to move from an education system that is designed to protect privilege through exclusion based on race and class to one that provides opportunities through a framework of equity. In order for learners to benefit from the opportunities provided to achieve this equity, they need guidance when they choose their subjects for further studies.

Subject choice

When learners choose their subjects for high school studies (FET), it is important that they choose them correctly because incorrect choices can be detrimental to learners wanting to access higher education.

According to Cosser and Du Toit, (2002:16) learners make decisions in terms of their future academic prospects at two critical points, which they refer to as "branching points" in their secondary school years. The first critical point is at the end of Grade 9, when learners decide on their choice of subjects. The second critical point is when learners are in Grade 11, when they decide if they want to enter higher education and if so whether to apply to a technikon[9] or a university and which course of study to pursue. The authors indicate that learner's subject choices in Grade 9 "are in many ways constrained by their own ignorance of the consequences of selecting subjects for their upper secondary education, or indeed by their academic performance in the subjects they have taken to date" (Cosser and Du Toit, 2002:16). Since the choice of subjects that learners make at the end of Grade 9 may well determine whether a learner enters higher education after Grade 12, they argue that no study on learners' choice behaviour can afford to ignore this critical branching point (2002:16). As discussed in Chapter Five, this branching point manifests itself clearly in School X. Learners choose the incorrect subjects, subject combinations and subject grades (e.g. higher, standard and lower grade) which ensure that they are not eligible for the matriculation exemption. As noted earlier, learners' subject choices are not just individual choices, but are conditioned by the limited range of offerings available in the school.

Based on a national survey on student choice of more than 12 000 Grade 12 learners from 288 schools across the nine provinces in South Africa, Cosser and Du Toit (2002: 47-48) examined learners' intentions to enter higher education, the type of higher institution they choose and the field of study proposed within the next three

[9] This is not anymore. Technikons did not have university status until the promulgation of the Technikon Act, 1993(Act No.125 of 1993), when they were given the right to confer degrees. From 2004 the term "University of Technology" was introduced.

years (i.e. 2002, 2003 and 2004). Of the 12 000 learners approximately 72% intended to enter higher education; 14 % were unsure and 13% indicated that they do want to enter higher education. At local level (School X), learners preferred to access a FET college in favour of a university and technikon. In addition, at a national level, they found that technikons[10] (55%) were more popular than universities (45%) with the top two positions occupied by Technikon Pretoria[11] and Technicon Witwatersrand. In my survey at School X with 50 learners, 54% (27) indicated that they wanted to further their studies at a university, technikon or a FET college. This data corresponds with the national data that shows a high number of learners want further their studies.

A recent Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study found that only 14% of the Grade 12 students in 2001 enrolled in HE the following year (This Day: 17:08: 2004). The findings were partly based on an analysis of the education department's enrolment figures. In 2001, the national exemption rate was 14% and the enrolment figure in higher education in 2002 was below the expected numbers (This Day: 17:08: 2004). The low percentage of students entering higher education is a cause for concern for government because a few years ago the National Commission on Higher Education[12] (NCHE) had expected a boom in higher education. "The expectations were that the gates of higher education – learning institutions would be flooded with students" (This Day: 17:08:2004). The reasons for the low access rate to higher education included poor matriculation results, low exemption rate, affordability and the view that "learners don't take the right subjects to get them into universities and a number of them cannot afford it" (This Day: 17:08:2004). Jeffreys explains further that

[10] Now Universities of Technology.

[11] Merged with Technikon Northern Gauteng and Technikon North west and form Tswana University of Technology. Technicon Witwatersrand merged with Rand Afrikaans University and Vista University and formed University of Johannesburg.

[12] This report intended to serve as the basis for a process of transformation. It envisage a new system of HE characterized by increased participation by all sectors of society; by greater institutional responsiveness to policy imperatives, and by a new set of co-operative relations and partnerships between HE and the broader society.

> To improve the number of graduates we must have more learners enrolling at higher learning institutions. If this does not happen, the ultimate effect will be that the economy will suffer. (This Day: 17:08: 2004)

To increase the number of learners accessing higher education learners should be guided when making their subject choices at the end of Grades 9 and 11. In addition, the choice of subjects in schools should be broadened to give learners a wider choice of potential institutions and fields of study.

Parent involvement and their influence on access to higher education

A strong thread in the international and local literature (Comer, 1993; Heystek and Louw, 1999; Gayle, Verridge, Davies, 2002) emphasises the importance of parental involvement in ensuring access to higher education. These authors suggest that in addition to school educational attainment, issues such as social class, gender and parental education also influence a young person's likelihood of entering higher education.

Gene and Stoneman (1995:569) argue that the participation of parents in schools has a positive influence on the academic achievement of learners. According to Heystek and Louw (2002:21), "the relationship between parents and schools should change from a client type of relation to a partnership relationship". Wolfendale (1992:12) emphasizes that a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect, sharing of information, responsibility and accountability is important if we want this partnership to succeed. Heystek and Louw (2002:21) suggest that this is the type of partnership that is much needed in South African schools, but "it will need a change of attitude from parents as well as teachers to achieve this". According to Heystek and Louw (1998:27) schools must initiate the process for parents to be involved. They further state, "every school must identify their needs and then provide the opportunities and structures for the parents to be positively involved (Heystek and Louw, 1998:27).

In a study conducted in Wales and England, Gayle, Verridge and Davies (2002:15) assert that learners with graduate parents who were attending state schools are likely to study for a degree. Young people who attended state schools and did not have graduate parents had the lowest likelihood of studying for a degree. They state,

> the inter-related nature of schooling and parental education is that any substantive interpretation must be aware of the significant interaction between these factors (Gayle et al. 2002:15).

Their study also focused on family size. The authors also claimed that young people from larger families have a lower chance of studying for a degree.

At present, in Wales and England, an increasing number of people are entering higher education, but at a later stage, and mature students make up a large proportion of full time degree students (Gayle et al. 2002: 16). It is estimated that the off springs of these mature students are also more likely to enter higher education than they might have been had their parents not became graduates (Gayle et al., 2002:16). Williams et al. (1993) attribute these differences to career interest, role models and information resources provided in families from the different socio-economic groups.

Gayle et al. (2002:5) further argue that class, gender and ethnicity are the three giants in the path of aspirations towards equality of access to higher education. Although class, gender and ethnicity are important, one must remember that there is a complex and inter-related set of factors that influence young people's entry into higher education. Gayle et al. (2002) concluded that a family's social class; parental education; gender and ethnicity unequivocally influence a learner's chance of studying for a degree. However, the "direct effects of many of these factors are less important than we initially assumed" (Gayle et al., 2002: 69). They also emphasise the positive effects of support from a variety of role-players in the community. However, different authors highlight different aspects of community participation. Comer (1993:54) asserts that parents, teachers, and other caring adults, working cooperatively with schools, can provide learners with the support they need. Adults

can provide services such as tutoring and mentoring and can help to develop curriculum assessment and instruction programmes. Yantis (1996:52) states that staff cohesion is a key to successful community–based support to the school, and argues that: "What's inside affects what's outside".

2.3 Summary

This chapter has identified the ways in which competing discourses on access to higher education – in relation to the individual, the market and redressing historical imbalances – shape not only debates but actual patterns of access across national contexts. I drew on Williams' (1997) categorisation of the discourses shaping access debates in the UK context to understand the South African situation. I acknowledge that the context of SA differs from the UK, but they are also similar in that both have equitable access policies in place, yet students from particular groups in both societies continue to be excluded. I then reviewed the literature on the exclusionary effects of everyday practices in schools. Here, I located the problem of access in two sets of related factors: out-of-school and in-school factors. I showed that the location and type of school learners attend, the subject choices available at school, school-leaving examination and parent involvement in their schoolwork influence their school experiences and academic choices.

A central assumption of this study is that higher education can play a role in breaking the vicious cycle of working class schools producing working class citizens. Therefore, unequal access to higher education is a key issue. The literature review has also shown that unequal access to higher education is not a uniquely South African, but a worldwide, phenomenon. This study seeks to understand how these trends can be interrupted, and asks: how can learners/schools in low-socio-economic areas such as Delft break the cycle of unequal access? The next chapter describes the research methodology followed in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design for the study. It describes the case study approach adopted in this study, the research instruments used, the data collection and data analysis procedures, and the ethical issues relating to the research.

3.1 The research design

For the current investigation, a case study approach was chosen. I believed it was the best way to get a deeper understanding of the reasons for poor access to higher education by learners from the Delft area. This approach is in line with Yin (1994) and Borg and Gall (1996) who recommend the use of case study approaches (instead of a large-scale surveys for example, involving many schools) when in-depth understanding of a phenomenon is required. Berg (2001:231) asserts that "the case study method [has the ability] to open the way for discoveries [and] serve as the breeding ground for the insights and even hypotheses that may be pursued in subsequent studies." The advantage of a case study is that it allows one to get a holistic and meaningful understanding of the characteristics of the real-life situation. Yin (1994:13) describes a case study as:

> . . . an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), a case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied by whatever methods we choose. In their opinion, case study research is defined not by the method of inquiry, but the interest the researcher has in individual cases. The importance is what can be learned from a single case study. The emphasis is on "designing the study to optimise understanding of the case" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:436). There is little or no interest in making general conclusions.

3.2 Data collection procedure

Three main sets of data informed this study: higher education policy documents, end of year Grade 12 examination statistics between 2000 and 2005 and a survey of learners and staff in School X during September 2004.

3.2.1 Review of policy documents

I reviewed higher education policies and policy-related documents such as the National Commission on Higher Education's report (1996), the Higher Education Act 101 (1997), the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the transformation of higher education (1997) and the National Plan for Higher education (DoE, 2001) with respect to access to higher education.

3.2.2 Review of Grade 12 end-of-year pass and exemption rates

I analysed the Grade 12 end–of-year pass and exemption rates of the National Education Department and the Western Cape Education Department, selected Cape Town schools and the three Delft high schools. The reason for the review of Grade 12 statistics at different levels was to determine if the increased pass and exemption rate were reflected at all levels and in all schools.

3.2.3 Surveys

In addition to reviewing the relevant school documents, I conducted two surveys among Grade 12 learners and Grade 12 subject teachers at School X.

The learner questionnaire (Appendix A) had both closed and open-ended questions. Questions were designed to elicit information about the factors that influence learner access to higher education. Part A of the questionnaire sought information on four demographic variables (gender, home language, age and race) and on the

subjects the learners were studying for that year. Part B, consisting of 22 questions, required learners to provide information on internal and external factors that could have an effect on their access to higher education. This part had both closed and open-ended questions. For example, the first question required learners to write a short passage on their plans for the next 3 to 4 years. The idea behind this question was to determine the level of career awareness among the learners and their intentions to pursue higher education. Other than seeking information about career awareness and guidance, learners were also required to provide information on such factors as: the level of parental support in their schooling (for example, items 15 and 16); in school factors – for example, teachers efforts in supporting parental involvement (item 18); what they thought about the organisation of their school (item 21) and the occupation of the breadwinner in their family (item 20). Learners were required to respond to the questions by either ticking off or writing in the spaces provided.

The questionnaire for teachers (Appendix B) consisted of fourteen closed and open-ended questions. As was the case with the learner questionnaire, it requested demographic information (item 1) and sought to find out what the school is doing to help learners' access higher education. Teachers were also required to provide information on factors such as: the level of parental support in the learners schooling (items 6, 7, and 8); career awareness (item 9 and 10); what they thought about the organisation of their school (item 11); their vision of the school (item 12) and lastly their opinion of whether the school benefited from the post 1994 educational policies. Teachers were required to respond to the questions by either ticking off or writing in the spaces provided.

Both questionnaires were piloted to develop their validity. Validity in this instance refers to how well the instrument captures the information it is designed to elicit. Trochim (1991: 33) sees validity as "the best available approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inference, proposition, or conclusion". In the case of this study validity is about whether or not the questionnaire gathers information on the factors contributing to low access to higher education by learners from School X.

Developing the validity of questionnaire items is also about ensuring that the questions are asked unambiguously and in a language the respondents can understand (Gall et al., 1996). The instruments used in this study were developed with these validity issues in mind.

The nature of the research process was explained to participants before the actual administration of the questionnaire. This was done in order to gauge the willingness of participants to contribute to the study. The filling in of the questionnaires took place during normal school time. The Grade 8 to 11 attended the morning school assembly, and it was during this time that the Grade 12's participated in the survey. The learners took an hour to fill in the questionnaires. The learners were with their class teacher in their respective register class (Grade 12 A and Grade 12 B). While the learners filled in the questionnaires, I was present to deal with questions or ambiguities in the questionnaires. I assured the learners about the confidentiality of their responses and I reminded them not to put their name on the sheets.

With regard to the teachers questionnaire I approached each subject teacher individually in his or her classroom. I then explained the nature of the research to them. The confidentiality of their responses I guaranteed and reiterated to them. I asked them not to put their name or subject taught on the sheet. I handed the questionnaire to the individual teachers and waited for it. The participating teachers took about 15 to 20 minutes to fill in the questionnaires.

3.3 Data analysis

The policy documents were analysed to give a profound and detailed description. Then, the National and Provincial Grade 12 statistics were compared to determine whether the increased pass and exemption rates were reflected at the different levels and in all schools. The data collected in the two questionnaires were analysed by using the Statistical Programming for Social Scientist (SPSS) version 12.01 for Windows. A detailed analysis of the descriptive statistics will follow in the next chapter. The responses to the

research questions were first coded, then loaded onto an Excel spreadsheet and transported into SPSS. The closed-ended questions were more easily processed due to the uniformity in the type of responses. The open-ended responses were coded before they could be processed for computer analysis. According to Berg (2001:7),

> The analysis of qualitative data allows researchers to discuss in detail the various social contours and processes human beings use to create and maintain their social realities.

The analysis of the data was largely guided by the research questions. It was also placed within the framework provided by a review of the literature that looks at exclusionary practices.

3.4 Ethical Issues

Appropriate steps were taken to negotiate the ethical clearance for the project to the satisfaction of all parties concerned, including obtaining approval from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and the School Governing Body (SGB) of School X. During the process of research, all members of the school concerned were, as far as possible, treated with the utmost respect and were "protected" through the upholding of confidentiality regarding names of the participants providing information. Every effort was made to ensure that the school concerned would benefit from this experience. A copy of this study will be made available to School X and the Western Cape Education Department.

3.5 Summary

This chapter explained the qualitative and quantitative data that was used in the case study research design. It also described the data collection methods as well as the data analysis and ethics statement. I believe that the case study research design followed in the quest to investigate what the school of interest is doing to address

barriers to higher education was best suited for the study, taking into account the time and financial constraints.

The case study approach was adequate for this study, but it limited the research to explore how the schools internal practices influenced learners' opportunities to access higher education. A comparative study of two schools with different internal dynamics would have been ideal to get such an understanding. The next two chapters focus on the research findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4: POLICIES, PARTICIPATION RATES & MATRICULATION EXEMPTION RATES

Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. (John Dewey)

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part examines state policies relating to access to higher education in South Africa. The second part focuses on the statistics of the Grade 12 final examination between 2000 and 2005. The purpose of the chapter is to provide an in-depth and detailed description and analysis of the two above-mentioned aspects, and to show how education policy regarding schooling and Grade 12 results influence certain learners' chances to access to higher education.

4.1 Higher Education Policies and Participation Rates

Before the 1990's, as clear signals of impending socio-political change emerged, most South African higher education institutions opened their doors to students from the ethnically[13] defined non-designated groups. The question arises: which learners did they take in? Was it those learners who came from private schools or ex-model C schools who had better results or those from townships schools? If increasing access to higher education for "disadvantaged learners"[14] from "disadvantaged schools", such as Delft schools, is an important aspect of the national agenda, it is imperative that policymakers and educators continuously examine issues related to the implementation of current policies. In this section, I discuss higher education policies in relation to national enrolment and participation rates in South African higher education.

[13] When the Population Registration Act of 1951 was promulgated, four social categories established, namely Whites, Coloureds, Blacks, and Indians. These racial categories determined the public and private lives of South Africans society in a strictly fragmented and hierarchical way.

[14] Currently there is a lot of debate about the use of this word. I am using it here in the context of a person lacking the normal economic, social and educational opportunities and resources.

4.1.1 Increased access to higher education

Post-apartheid policies have been designed to support and encourage the transition from a system that excluded the majority of students from higher education institutions. It was in line with this policy shift that the National Commission on Higher Education's (NCHE) (1996) report was produced. The National Commission of Higher Education was appointed by President Mandela and in February 1995 submitted its Report, Framework for Transformation. According to the NCHE, (2004:61) significant changes in institutional enrolment patterns took place between 1990 and 1994. This report predicted that participation in higher education would increase from 20% in 1996 to 30% in 2005 (NCHE, 1996). Increased participation was viewed as the primary challenge to achieving equity. According to Cloete (2003), the government rejected the key proposal of the NCHE, massification, and opted instead for increased access through the planned expansion of the system using national and institutional three year rolling plans as instruments. According to Libhaber (2005:24) the state opted for this option to reduce the dropout rate and to ensure success.

The question arises: where the policies designed to support massification? The rhetoric certainly spoke to the issue of rights, access, non-vocationalism, redress, and so on. But the economic policies of GEAR did not endorse that trajectory. Cuts in social spending, for example, negatively effected educational provision.

After 1994, the South African state introduced several policies to face the challenges of the unequal higher education system inherited from the Apartheid era. In 1997, it introduced the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997). According to Libhaber (2005:19), this act set the grounds for better governance and representivity, but made a clear case for the need to "redress past discrimination and ensure representivity and equal access" (No. 101 of 1997:2). This act is non-discriminating and it guarantees access to higher education, but students need to qualify by meeting the criteria for application to higher education. It also gives higher education institutions the right to set their own entrance requirements in respect of particular higher education programmes. Institutions can now argue that

students either have or do not have the potential to succeed in higher education and thus allow or disallow them entry.

Also in 1997, the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the transformation of higher education (Higher Education White Paper) took forward the need to set goals for equity and redress. According to the Higher Education White Paper, the key goals of higher education were to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to South Africa's new realities and opportunities. This policy document describes higher education's role in a globalised, competitive, knowledge–driven world as being human resource development, high-level skills training (graduating professionals who have globally competitive skills and are socially responsible), and producing and applying new knowledge (vibrant research and development, which respond to the needs of industry and social reconstruction). The Higher Education White Paper also recognizes the need for strong state sponsored financial support and the use of various monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the quality of academic programmes and the success of students.

In South Africa, increasing access to higher education, especially by those excluded in the past, is therefore a policy goal stated in the Higher Education White Paper (1997) and in the National Plan for Higher Education (DoE, 2001).

In order to achieve the vision and goals set out in the Higher Education White Paper, the Department of Education (DoE) devised a National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) in 2001. The NPHE concluded that restructuring the institutional landscape was necessary in order to achieve the goals of equity, redress, quality and success, and to address the administrative, human and financial constraints facing higher education. The merger process, at this stage, seems far from being able to achieve the goals of providing better access to the entire population because of its limited space and "capping" of first entrance students to higher education (Libhaber, 2005:20). Libhaber argues that the new funding

formula encourages institutions to cap new first year intakes (Libhaber, 2005:23). According to her, the rationale behind the formula is quality; "taking in fewer and better students to ensure output and success" (Libhaber, 2005:22).

Schools are expected to play important roles in ensuring that learners get access to higher education irrespective of their socio-economic, cultural, religious or ethnic backgrounds. Yet four years after the release of the NPHE, Libhaber (2005: 19) observes that in higher education institutions,

> … the demographic composition of the student body is changing, equity of access still remains a problem, and has also not been complemented by equity of outcomes, with black students accounting for a larger proportion of drop-out rates than white students.

Libhaber (2005:19) links academic success to issues of widening access to higher education for previously disadvantaged groups in order to reach the equity.

> A major focus of any expansion and equity strategy must be on increasing the participation and success rates of black students in general and of African, Coloured and women students in particular.

One of the unintended issues that arises is that access, is

> … one of the state's main goals and crucial for the redress of and development agendas, is being sidelined by a focus on success, shrinking financial allocation to education, and a discourse of efficiency (Libhaber, 2005:23).

Financial barriers often prevent access and success of students and even more for disabled students according to Devlin (2000). The Devlin study done in Australia concluded that disabled students could not afford to pay for the support services provided to them. As a result, these prevented students from succeeding at higher education. We have to bear in mind that this situation is not unique to Australia or any country, but it is a global trend. For example higher education in South Africa is "quasi private" because it is only partially funded by the state and because the

rising cost of education is following a global trend more students are excluded on the basis of finance (Cloete, 2003).

> In a neo-liberal context, and taking into account the shrinking subsidies from the South African government, the burden of the cost of higher education increasingly falls on the shoulder of the student (Libhaber, 2005: 23).

Libhaber argues further that fees are used as a form of gate-keeping and that the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) cannot adequately support all students in need of financial assistance. The new funding formula for higher education is encouraging institutions to cap new students, creating a reduction in intake, while fee increases force financial exclusions (Libhaber, 2005: 23).

According to Pityana (Rapport, 17 April 2005) more and more people seek access to higher education, but there is not enough space in higher education institutions. For example, in 2004 the country produced more than 85 000 matriculants with exemptions, making them eligible to apply to higher education institutions. Our higher education institutions can only accommodate between 16 000 and 20 000 new students annually (Rapport, 17 April 2005). If all these eligible students wanted to access higher education in 2005 then higher education institutions would not have been able to accommodate these students due to a lack of space. Pityana (Rapport, 17 April 2005) states that because of the government's plans to accommodate at least 20% to 30% of the population between the age of 18 and 24 years, universities are confronted with accommodation problems. This means that some universities will need to accommodate up to a million students. Again, if universities are going to be faced with an overcrowding problem then they will have to choose their students based on merit and learners from most township schools will be left out once again. This problem relates to Williams' (1997:28-32) summary of the academic traditionalist perspective that only those with A-levels must be allowed access to university in the United Kingdom. In South Africa, if this merit criterion is used then most learners from township schools will be excluded from university and the vicious cycle of working class schools producing working class learners' will never be broken. As illustrated in the above discussion this

pattern is a direct consequence of the contradictions in the market versus equity policy tension.

While there might be good intentions in policy documents and high expectations about the role of schools in promoting access to higher education, the reality is that the implementation of policy always faces problems and challenges (Cloete, 2002:452). In addition, teachers have no say in the formulation of policy and they are only seen as "delivery agents" of pre-planned policy (Kallaway, 2007:30). The consequence is that for various reasons, including the lack of teachers involvement in policy formulation, not all students have the privilege to access HE (Cosser and Du Toit, 2002; Ntshoe, 2002), as illustrated in the next section.

Strydom (2002:7) identifies the recurring policy imperatives with regard to access to higher education. He acknowledges the need to increase access to higher education, but states that the quality of access can only increase if it is in line with notions of equity and redress. He argues that access should contribute to the social interests, the economic needs and the overall advancement of the country and that student financial aid can help advance the cause of increased participation. He acknowledge that the issue of student admission and selection is still complicated by the lack of clarity surrounding the criteria used to admit students in a way that would recognize prior learning and acknowledge other further education certificates besides matriculation endorsement. In addition, language is earmarked as one of the priorities in the academic access debate.

4.1.2 Enrolment and participation trends

Enrolment/Access

The above policy imperatives according to Strydom (2002) have created several challenges for higher education in terms of enrolment and participation rates. The NPHE (2001) proposed expanding the participation rates for the 18-24 year old cohort from 15% to 20% in the next 15 years. By increasing the participation rate to 20%, it will bring South Africa in line with other middle–income countries. It also recommended increasing the participation rates for students from the South African

Development Community (SADC) countries up to a maximum of 10% of student places. Jansen (2001:5) maintains that the participation rate would not increase in the medium-to-long term[15]. He states that NPHE (2001) made wild optimistic projections in terms of increased access rates to higher education based on one single factor "a significant improvement in the throughputs from the school system" (Jansen, 2001:6). He argues that there was a decline in the actual number of learners writing the final Grade 12 examination, the mass migration of learners to standard grade subjects and the elimination of repeaters writing examinations in 2000. Note that from 2008 higher grade and standard grade subjects will be eliminated from the curriculum. All learners will write one standardise paper.

In a comparative study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development[16] (OECD) (Education at a Glance, 2005: 242) of people who enter tertiary education for the first time in developed countries such as Iceland; New Zealand and Sweden their entry level to HE are between 80% and 82%. The United Kingdom had 48% and the USA 62% entry level to higher education. Developing countries such as Turkey, Mexico and Czech Republic had an entrance level of between 22% and 32%. No African country made the OECD study.

The average gross participation rate in South African higher education between 1990 and 1994 was approximately 17 %; higher than that of many poor developing countries, but lower than that of other fast-developing and developed countries (CHE, 2004: 62). University enrolment increased by 130% between 1985 and 2003 and by 27% between 1995 and 2003. The technikon enrolment increased by 289 % from 1985 to 1995. This indicates that technikons are a strong favour amongst learners' first choice to study at higher education. Total tertiary enrolment increased by 165% from 1985 to 1994 and by 25% from 1995 to 2003. In other words, tertiary enrolment doubled between 1985 and 1995 but increased by significantly less between 1995 and 2003 (Cronje et al. 2006: 305).

[15] See also Reddy (2001:2).

[16] Is an international organization of those developed countries that accept the principles of representative democracy and a free market economy. (www.oecd.org/edu/eag 2005)

Participation rates in 1994 were still highly skewed by race in South Africa: approximately 9% for Africans, 13 % for Coloureds, 40 % for Indians and 70 % for Whites (CHE, 2004: 62). This participation rate is highly skewed if one considers the overall population demographics. In 1996 the total population was 41,97 million. Of this total Africans were 76,7%; Whites 12,4%, Coloureds 8,4% and Indians 2,4% (South African Survey,1996/7: 2). According to Cronje et al. (2006: 306) the enrolment of Africans increased by 51% between 1995 and 2003, Coloured enrolment by 32%, and Indian enrolment by 43%. White enrolment declined by 12% over the same period.

According to the CHE (2004: 62) the 1994 headcounts enrolments at higher education institutions were:

- 47 % of students were White, 40% African, 7% Indian and 6% Coloured
- Of African students, 49% were enrolled in historical black higher education institutions, 13% historically white higher education institutions and 38% in distance education higher education institutions.
- 43% of the students were female and 57% male.

Enrolments between 1990 and 1994 showed an overall growth of one third (more than 130 000), with Historical Black Universities (HBU's) growing by 37% (28 000) and Historical White Universities (HWU's) by 8% (10 000) (CHE, 2004: 61). By 2000, African students had a 60% share of the total university student enrolment (Bunting, 2003:171).

The technikon sector grew tremendously, for example Technikon South Africa's enrolments grew by 126 % (38 000), while Historical Black Technikons (HBT) enrolment grew by 60 % (11 000) and Historical White Technikons (HWT) enrolments 41% (19 000) (CHE, 2004:61). By 2000, the Technikon sector had also become a majority African student sector. The proportion of African students in all technikons rose from 32% in 1990 to 72% in 2 000 (Bunting, 2002:171). The CHE (2004:61) stated that "these growth rates were a major contributing factor to the high-growth scenarios envisaged by the National Commission on Higher Education after 1994". Indeed, the NCHE envisaged in its recommendations a scenario of

'massification', and predicted a participation rate of 30 % in higher education by 2005. These institutions (public HEI's) would, according to the NCHE report, enroll 690 000 by 1999 and 740 000 by 2001 (CHE, 2004:63).

However, although these expectations (the NCHE 30% growth rate in HE) are not met yet, HEI's were required a few years ago to cap enrolments, intended to keep the annual intake of first-time entering students stable. The enrolment capping option is no longer operational. In March 2005, the Minister of Education released a document entitled "Student Enrolment Planning in Public Higher education" which required that institutions make enrolment decisions that are fully informed by the subsidy incomes projected in the Ministerial Statement on Higher Education Funding: 2005/6 to 2007/8 (Ministerial statement: 1/09/2005).

The capping issue illustrates that the existing policies are not an effective "buffer" for the threatening crisis because policies contradict and undermine each other. The contradiction is that the policies that are needed to regulate the growth of institutions are simultaneously limiting the number of students that can access higher education at any one time. For example, on the one hand, between 1995 and 2002 universities were reprimanded by the state over admission planning, especially their high intake of first year students. The state supported the capping of first entrance student intake because the higher education system would be unable to finance the uncontrolled growth of universities, most of which are designed to accommodate a limited number of first year students. On the other hand, the national policies encourage higher education institutions to give more chances to deserving students and increase the number of students who have been previously disadvantaged.

Institutions currently receive their subsidies on the output of students and it is more expensive for higher education institutions to admit academically under-prepared learners from township schools. The infrastructure of the institutions and the financing by the state remained virtually unchanged while universities grew tremendously (Pityana, Rapport, 17/04/05). According to SAUVCA and Naledi Pandor, the Minister of Education, the state subsidy is decreasing and there is no

hope for extra public funds (Rapport, 17/04/05). If the subsidies are decreasing who then is going to pay to prepare those learners whom come from township schools and who may be academically ill-prepared for university studies? Since most learners coming from township school cannot afford to pay university fees, will universities be able to carry the extra financial costs?

According to Pityana (Rapport, 17/04/05) higher education in South Africa is in a crisis due to the controversial higher education policies. He says that there are stable features in the system, which are mirrored, in the smooth admission and registration of students. However, according to Pityana, this stability is undermined by over–regulated admission policies.

By 2002, a dramatic change in the head count enrolment at public universities and technikons occurred by race: Africans 60%, Whites 27%, Indians 7% and Coloureds 6% enrolled (South African Survey, 2003/2004). In 2005, 60,9% of all students (449 241) in the public HE system were African, 25,2% (185 889) were White, 7,4% (56 618) were Indian, and 6,3% (46 357) were Coloured. African students made up an overall share of 60,2% (290 761) of contact programme enrolments and 62,2% (158 480) of distance programme enrolments (DoE, 2006:33).

Output/Success of students

The output of students is as important as the access of students to higher education. According to Pityana (Rapport, 17/04/05) the graduation rates must increase from 15% p.a. to 30% p.a. to achieve the policy goals. Pityana (Rapport, 17/04/05) argues that this can be achieved if academic development (bridging and foundation) programmes are funded through a new formula. He also says that the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) that focuses on size, coverage, as well as cut-off eligibility should be reviewed and strengthened. Similarly, a 2001 report by the South African Universities Vice Chancellors' Association (SAUVCA) suggests that access needs to be broadened in line with policy to meet the socio-economic development needs of the country (SAUVCA, 2001).

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1995: 32) access to and accelerated expansion of the higher education sector becomes meaningful only when tempered by a deliberate effort to accomplish equity and redress inequalities in the system. Equity in the context of higher education means dividing resources fairly and justly, which in turn implies positive discrimination in order to empower groups that have been historically disadvantaged. The author refers here to affirmative action. Ntshoe (2003) states that equity outcomes are necessary for analysing access to and accelerated expansion of the higher education sector in different contexts.

Ntshoe (2003: 384) asked the following questions that may guide the achievement of the stated outcomes:

> What does the broadening of access to and accelerate expansion of higher education mean to different participants in the system and what would access do to a mass system entail? Who is worthy of access in general and who are the new students to be accommodated in the accelerated process and expanded system? What mechanisms exist to control access, why are certain mechanisms used, and how are they legitimated? In addition, what form of rationing is used?

Ntshoe (2003: 384) concludes that the aforementioned questions are characterised by "contradictions, contestations and compromises by different participants in the higher education debates".

An understanding of the above background is critical to the policy intentions and implementation in order to increase access to academia. If the barriers learners from working class schools face when trying to gain access to universities could be understood, policies and related strategies should be devised to influence more learners to enter higher education. This will help to increase the enrolment figures and national demand for an appropriate balance of skills in the workplace.

In this section I have shown that even though the relevant policies are in place the target participation rates in higher education, as set by the *Higher Education White*

Paper and the National Plan for Higher Education, have not been met. I have shown some of the aspects of the policies that contradict each other and some of the problems around their implementation. An important issue that emerges is that policy should be revisited regularly to meet the challenges that arise and that the formulation of policy formulation should include all role players. The discussion in this section also raises the possibility that different policies are required. In other words, the key to increasing access to higher education may have more to do with a change in policy than in the identification of barriers to the implementation of existing policies.

Finally, the restructuring of educational policy after 1994 affected the organizational level of schools throughout South Africa according to Lemon (1999). The curricula were restructured to reflect non-racial, non-sexist and democratic values to produce graduates with skills and competencies needed in modern society such as, computer literacy, information management, communication and analytical skills. According to Strydom (2002), all these restructuring efforts are designed to enrich the quality of schooling. The next section probes the nature of pass rates in the Grade 12 School-leaving examinations.

4.3 Matriculation pass and exemption rates in South Africa

This section discusses the Matriculation pass and exemption rates at three levels: national, Western Cape Province and selected Cape Town schools.

4.3.1 National Matriculation examination results

The tables below show the total number of learners who achieved an ordinary pass[17] (Table 1) and those who passed with exemption[18] (Table 2) in the National Senior Certificate Examination (SCE) between 2000 and 2005.

[17] A Learner needs to pass five out of the six subjects, but it must include his /hers two languages and a minimum of 720 marks.

[18] A learners needs to pass five of the six subjects, but both languages on the HG(at least 160 marks from 400 marks) and an additional two subjects on the HG.

Table 1: National statistics showing students who passed

Year	Wrote	Passed		Failed	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2000	489 941	283 294	58	206 004	42
2001	449 371	277 206	62	172 126	38
2002	443 821	305 774	69	137 991	31
2003	440 267	322 492	73	117 604	27
2004	467 985	330 717	71	137 173	29
2005	508 363	347 184	68	160 997	38

Source: Combination of Mukwevho et al. (2004), Edu Source (2004, 2005) and my calculation of %.
NB: Candidates awaiting results are excluded in the calculation of the pass and failure rates. The data excludes pending irregularities

Table 2: National statistics showing students who passed with exemption

Year	Wrote	Passed	Passed with exemption	
			Number	Percent
2000	489 941	283 294	68 626	14
2001	449 371	277 206	67 707	15
2002	443 821	305 774	75 048	17
2003	440 267	322 492	82 010	19
2004	467 985	330 717	85 117	18
2005	508 363	347 184	86 531	17

Source: Combination of Mukwevho et al. (2004), Edu Source (2004, 2005) and my calculation of %.
NB: Candidates awaiting results are excluded in the calculation of the pass and failure rates. The data excludes pending irregularities

Table 1 and Table 2 show downward trends in the number of learners sitting for the Senior Certificate Examination (SCE) between 2000 and 2003. Although it appears that, there is an improvement in the exam results, especially since 2000, at the expense of fewer numbers of learners writing the SCE exams and an increase in the number of learners writing at standard grade. Table 2 indicates that since 2000, there has been a steady upward trend apparent in the Matric exemption pass rate while the number of candidates writing for endorsement has declined. This may be due to many more learners writing subjects on standard grade instead of higher grade (Bot, 2005:4).The highest pass and exemption rate were in 2003. The pass rate was 73% and the exemption rate 19%. Both, the pass and exemption rate, dropped in 2004 and 2005 although the number of learners writing the examination increased. It can be observed from Table 1 that from 2000 to 2004 the pass rate increased by 12%, and the exemption rate (Table 2) by 4%.

According to Cronje et al. (2006:293), Africans made up 83% of the total senior certificate-age population in 2003 and accounted for 51% of university entrance

passes and 8% of senior certificate A-aggregates. Whites accounted for 7% of the total senior certificate-age population and 29% of all university entrance passes and 66% of all A-aggregates.

According to Mukwevho et al., (2004:20-22) it appears that there are a number of explanations for the improved results between 2000 and 2003; for example, intervention strategies, implementation of the new continuous assessment policy[19] and a decrease in the number of learners writing for a matriculation exemption. Intervention strategies have included targeting schools that achieved between 0% and 20% pass rates, schools were assisted in analysing their situation and developing action plans, trial examinations to assess learners' levels of performance, Saturday and holiday classes were organised to assist learners in identified schools and the implementation of the New Continuous Assessment Policy. These targeted departmental plans made some impact because the National and Provincial Matriculation final examination results improved tremendously from 2000 to 2003 (Kallaway.2005: 1), but dropped again until 2005. One of the reasons that one can argue for the decline in pass and exemption rate after 2003 can be the increased number of learners sitting for the final Grade 12 examination.

According to De Souza the improved pass and exemption rate was "a multi-faceted, structured and diagnostic national learner's performance improvement strategy" (2003:7). The strategy included the following: vacant school–based managerial posts were filled, contact time between educators and learners was better utilised, the education department conducted specific remediation, additional subject advisors were appointed, attendance by educators and learners improved, school governing bodies and parents became more involved and ill discipline was reduced. Grade 12 preparatory examinations in June and September were made compulsory. Furthermore, additional classes and holiday schools were held, provision of learning, teaching and support materials was enhanced and educators were trained in the system of continuous assessment and its moderation. Special programmes in

[19] This was introduced as part of Curriculum 2005, emphasizing a certain amount of test, assignments and research project that contribute to the final examination mark.

targeted subjects (mathematics, physical science and life sciences) were funded. In addition, "the readiness of the provincial education departments to administer the exams was closely monitored" (De Souza 2003:8). Incentive schemes such as the National Teaching Awards have also played a role, as have the provision of additional classrooms, safe and secure learning environments, the commitments of the organized teaching profession and capacity building of school governance and leadership (De Souza, 2003:8).

These targeted departmental strategies have not been critically evaluated, but according to Mukwevho et al. (2004:21), the DoE believes that the afore-mentioned strategies have contributed to the improved results. While the intent of these various intervention strategies was to improve the results, it appears that in some instances they had negative consequences (Mukwevho et al., 2004:21-22). For example, according to Bot (2005:5) the increased pressure on schools to improve, has resulted in some learners being deliberately failed in Grade 11 or discouraged from registering for the examinations so as not to taint the picture.

The next section examines the trends in the Western Cape Province.

4.3.2 Provincial Matric examination results: WCED

The tables in the previous section indicate an improvement in the end of year Matric results at the national level, referring to all nine provinces in South Africa. However, we must not interpret this to mean that there were improved Matric results in all the schools in the Western Cape Province. Table 3 shows a summary of Western Cape Education Department Senior Certificate Results from 2000 to 2005.

Table 3: Western Cape Statistics

Year	No. of learners writing exams	No. of learner passed	% of learners pass	No. of learners failed	% of learners that failed	No. of learners pass with exemption	% Of learners pass with exemption
2000	38 201	30 378	80	7 823	20	9 167	24

2001	37 672	31 137	83	6 535	17	9 376	25
2002	38 121	32 987	87	5 134	13	10 117	27
2003	38 733	33 769	87	4 964	13	10 323	27
2004	38 886	33066	85	5 820	15	10 524	27
2005	38 586	32 573	84	6 013	16	10 394	29

Source: Mr.Theo Hamman: WCED examination department and my calculation of %

Table 3 indicates that the pass rate increased from 2000 to 2003 and then it declined in 2004 and 2005. Although the pass rate declined in 2004 and 2005, the exemption rate increased year by year. In the 2003 Senior Certificate Examination, schools in the Western Cape achieved a pass rate of 87, 1%, an increase of 0, 6% on the pass rate of 2002 and the highest pass rate achieved in the province since the amalgamation of the previous apartheid education departments (WCED, 2004).

This pass rate is encouraging, but it is important that other indicators be used as well in analysing the results. Most important is the quality of passes. A Matric endorsement is widely regarded as a proxy for quality as the learner is required to study at least four subjects on the higher grade. Two of these four subjects should include a first language HG and a second language HG.

Next follows Table 4, the dropout rate of the learners per grade in the Western Cape to show one of the other factors that influenced the matriculation results.

Table 4: Learners per grade in Western Cape

YEAR	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
2001	67 034	50 206	39 910
2002	69 752	51 618	40 468
2003	81 739	51 746	39 644
2004	80 756	54 199	39 451

Reproduced from DoE (2006:10)

Table 4 shows a pattern of decrease of learners in the following grade the next year. For example, 69 752 learners began in the senior phase (Grade 10) in 2002. The following year, 2003, the number of learners in Grade 11 dropped by 18 006 and in

Grade 12 in the same cohort learners numbers dropped by a further 12 295. In total (from Grade 10 to 12) the learners number dropped by 30 301 (43%).

Recent studies of increased dropout rates in schools suggest a dramatic drop off in enrolment after Grade 8 and more recently Grade 10 according to WCED (2006:13). A quantitative study by WCED (2006) of the Western Cape school enrolment figures indicates that only 45-52% of learners who enroll in Grade 1 reach Grade 12. According to the WCED (2006:13) study, the dropouts from schools are profoundly biased by race. This is evident in the results of the 2003 Grade 12 final examination. Those learners with exemptions and higher-grade passes are mostly white with very few black higher–grade mathematics and science candidates. The drop out and success rate at the Grade 12 level are related. According to the WCED study (2006:13), the drop out and success rate at Grade 12 can be traced to the first years of the schooling system. The study of over 30 000 Grade 3 learners from all schools in the Western Cape found that 37% were reading at Grade 3 level; 41% at Grade 2 level; 12% at Grade 1 level and 10% at below Grade 1.

In the same sample of children 37% were found to be calculating at the Grade 3 level; 11% at Grade 2 level and 37% at Grade1 level and 155 at below Grade1 level. The same upsetting tendency is evident in the Grade 6 results of 2003. The WCED study concluded, “these results are highly correlated to poverty and race” (2006:13). According to Kallaway (2007:30), “the dropout rate will increase if alienation and disadvantages in schools are not addressed”. The dropout rate in high schools may be due to learners being unable to cannot cope with the curriculum demands (Dieltiens, 2006:26; Kgobe, 20006:16). It could also be attributed to various other reasons.

The DoE presents contradictory statistics on the number of learners that dropout of school. On the one hand, the WCED (2006:13) study shows that only between 45-52% who registered in Grade 1 complete Grade 12 and on the other hand, in a

question and answer session Patel (2006:5-7), Deputy Director General for System Planning and Monitoring in the National Department of Education stated that:

> recent calculations by the DoE indicate that dropout rates are less than 2% in the primary phase of schooling, and less than 9% in the higher grades of schooling. These figures compare very well internationally, and do not suggest that there is a crisis of dropping out in the system.

4.3.3 Selected Cape Town schools

This section draws on a study by Kallaway (2005) to illustrate the differences in results among different types of schools in the Western Cape. In his study, Kallaway (2005:7) chose four categories of institutions with an eye to capture the profile of results achieved in schools with different class, race, and geographical background. Kallaway (2005:19-22) selected seven[20] schools in working class Coloured and African townships in Bellville and Cape Town. The language of instruction at these schools is English and/or Afrikaans. He also selected eight[21] high status prestige middle class and four[22] former middle class white-only suburbs of Cape Town and Bellville. For the purpose of this study, I chose one school from each category. I did this to illustrate an example of the different types of schools Kallaway (2005) used in his study.

Kallaway (2005:28) investigated whether there was a measurable shift in the redistribution of educational goods towards the previously disadvantaged. To put it another way, "do the end–of-school examination results demonstrate that Black and Coloured learners attending township schools, and therefore drawn from the least advantaged sector of the population, have significantly improved their results or

[20] Bishop Lavis Senior Secondary (mainly Coloured), Luhlaza High School (mainly Africans), Khayelitsha Senior Secondary (mainly Africans), Joe Slovo Comprehensive (mainly Africans),Mathew Goniwe Memorial High (mainly Africans), Oscar Mpheta High (mainly (Africans) and Spine Road Senior Secondary (mainly Coloured)

[21] Diocesan College (private Boys), Livingstone High (Co-educational),Paul Roos Gymnasium (Boys),Rondebosch Boys High, Rustenburg Girls High, South African College School (Boys), Westordford High (Co-educational), and Wynberg Girls High School.

[22] Fish Hoek High (Co-educational), Milnerton High, Plumstead High (Co-educational) and Settlers High School (Co-educational).

life-chances in the end of school/end of year external Senior Certificate examination"? (Kallaway 2005:7). To research his inquiry Kallaway (2005: 10-26) used a specific set of data chosen from the published Senior Certificate results (2002, 2003 and 2004) for a small number of schools in the Western Cape. He used four categories of institutions: (1) prestige city schools (2) suburban schools (former model C schools), (3) township/working class schools and (4) rural schools. Kallaway (2005:26) found that all schools in all categories have improved their results in the pass senior certificate category and that the prestige schools and former Model C schools still maintain an exemption rate of 80% or more. The exemption rate in township and rural schools has not improved and still is between 5% and 10% of the pass rate, suggesting that there is no improvement of the quality of education to the poor. His conclusion is thus that learners attending township schools chances of obtaining a ticket (exemption) to higher education is very slim. To understand the 'why' behind the statistics that Kallaway (2005) used I conducted a qualitative study at one school, discussed in the next chapter.

Table 5, reproduced from Kallaway (2005), is an example of the different schools he used to illustrate the discrepancies in the pass and exemption rate at the different types of schools. Rustenburg Girls High is a high status Cape Town school, Fish Hoek High is a Cape Town suburban school (ex-Model C School), Oscar Mpetha, an African township school and Bishop Lavis High is a Coloured township school.

As an example of the meaning of the results in terms of educational equity, Table 5 compares the types of passes obtained by learners in four types of schools in the Western Cape. The types of schools include ex-Model C schools, prestige city schools, rural schools and township schools. The differences between these schools include the school fees charged, the availability of resources, their location, class size and the type of passes obtain in Grade 12 final examination.

Table 5: Categories of Matriculation results: Coloured and African Township Schools, a prestige Cape Town school and a Cape Town suburban school.

			Type (I) pass				*Type (II) pass*			
High School	Year	No. Of Candidates	D	M	E	Total	P	N	S	Total
Bishop Lavis	2002	116	0%	2%	12%	14%	0	0	86%	86%
	2003	117	0%	2%	4%	6%	0	0	95%	95%
	2004	143	0%	5%	6%	11%	0	0	89%	89%
Oscar Mpheta	2002	107	0%	2%	3%	5%	0	0	95%	95%
	2003	117	0%	0%	3%	3%	0	0	97%	97%
	2004	102	0%	5%	1%	6%	0	1	94%	94%
Rustenburg	2002	151	28%	62%	7%	97%	0	0	3%	3%
	2003	134	32%	49%	15%	96%	0	0	4%	4%
	2004	141	30%	60%	4%	94%	0	4%	2%	6%
Fish Hoek	2002	198	11%	33%	8%	52%	0	11%	38%	49%
	2003	171	15%	29%	4%	48%	0	12%	41%	53%
	2004	185	12%	30%	8%	50%	0	17%	34%	50%

Source: Kallaway, (2005:14-22) citing Cape Times publishing results of the examination.

KEY

Type (1) Pass with exemption	***Type (11) Pass Senior Certificate***
D–pass with endorsement and distinction	P- pass senior certificate with distinction
M–pass with endorsement and merit	N- pass senior certificate with merit
E– pass with endorsement	S- pass senior certificate

According to Kallaway (2005: 15), the number of students sitting for the examination at Bishop Lavis High and Oscar Mpetha High was small despite the fact that these are schools with very high numbers of learners. Kallaway (2005:15) also indicates that the pass rate of township schools (Coloured and African) can be high, 97%, but the exemption rate is still low between 0-14 percent in the sample. This means that one in less than ten learners obtained the Matriculation exemption. It is also evident from the table that there was or is little to differentiate between the performance of learners at working class Coloured and African schools based on the above examination results in these samples.

Table 5 illustrate that there is a discrepancy between the pass and exemption rate between the two types of schools. There is a huge discrepancy between the Matriculation results, in terms of pass and exemption rate of schools in Cape Town suburban areas (e.g. Fish Hoek), prestige Cape Town schools (e.g. Rustenburg High) on the one hand, and township schools (e.g. Bishop Lavis High and Oscar Mpetha High) on the other hand. Using a sample of eight prestige schools in Cape Town the Kallaway study (2005:14-16) illustrated that these schools consistently achieved between 94% and 97% passes in the Type 1-pass category with endorsement or Matriculation exemption category. Rustenburg Girls High school (which represents this category of schools in Table 5) consistently achieved an exemption rate averaging 96%. Less than 6% of the learners fall into the pass Senior Certificate category.

The same exercise was carried out in four suburban middle class (former model C) high schools and a different picture emerged, according to Kallaway (2005). Here, the best school was Settlers High School, with 67% learners achieving pass with endorsement (or matriculation exemption) in 2003 and 78% in 2004. In Table 4, this category of schools is represented by Fish Hoek High School, which achieved a pass rate of 52% in 2002 and decreased to 50 % in 2004. The success rate in achieving the pass with endorsement was close to the results achieved in the first category of high status schools. On average at these schools, about half of the candidates achieved a pass in the category of pass with endorsement or matriculation exemption and half of them in the category in the pass Senior Certificate.

It is very clear from Kallaway's (2005) study that the opportunity for learners who attend township schools to access higher education are very slim (5% to 10%). The chance of securing university admission is much better (more than 50%) at suburban schools. If parents can afford the school fees and want to secure their child's ticket to higher education (+ 90 %), their best bet is one of the Prestige City schools. It is clear from the above statistics that the type and location of the schools

learners attend will enhance their chances to pass and to obtain an exemption in the final Grade 12 examination.

I have shown the similarities and differences between the Matriculation exams results of the different types of schools in the Western Cape. In the next chapter, I will show the similarities and differences in the Matriculation exam results of the schools Kallaway (2005) used in his study and the three Delft schools.

4.4 Summary

This chapter discussed educational policies such as the NCHE (1996), NPHE (2001), the White Paper (1997) and the Higher Education Act 101 of 1977. I discussed how they both complement and contradict each other as the equity targets of policies are not met. Two phases of policymaking emerged when considering equity policy in the four documents. The NCHE and the Higher Education White Paper represent two policy moments in the first participatory and broad consultative phase. They emerged in the context of a negotiated political settlement and prioritised equity and redress as the primary national goal for the transformation of higher education in South Africa (Cloete, 2003:16). The NPHE (2001) represents a policy moment in the second, more centralised phase of policymaking. It emerged in the context of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)[23] macro-economic framework and prioritised effectiveness and efficiency, ahead of equity, as key principles for the transformation of the higher education landscape.

The equity-efficiency tension of policy-making remains unresolved. It has allowed the national reform after 1994 to be subsumed under the global reform agenda, which the latter, as Cloete (2003:17) asserts "seldom set equity as priority". It would seem that the nature of policy is such that good intentions seldom translate into what was intended. It can also be as Kallaway (2007:30) emphasises that our policies are shaped by GEAR, which "reflect contemporary international fiscal

[23] In opposition the ANC's ideology on economic policy was the Reconstruction and Development Program. Once in government they implemented GEAR, an orthodox macroeconomic policy. It stressed deficit reduction and a tight monetary policy, combined with trade liberalization. The stated purpose of this policy was to increase economic growth.

politics". The fiscal constraints associated with this policy shift resulted in less money being available for education and other social services. He further states that "educational policy emphasizes individualism, accountability, choice competitiveness, managerialism and vocationalism that favour individual capacity versus public good" (Kallaway 2007:30). The educational effects of the GEAR policy places higher education out of reach for the township learner.

The chapter also described and explained the final Grade 12 examination results at national and provincial levels and at different types of schools. It has emerged that where and what schools learners attend determine their chances to pass and obtain an exemption in the Grade 12 final examination. In the Apartheid era, race and class determined access to academia, but now social class has emerged as a dominant factor as well.

The relevance of all these aforementioned policies to this study is that they all spell out that higher education enrolment should expand after 1994 in South Africa. Of particular interest and significance to this study, is the fact that these policies have been put in place to ensure that students from previously disadvantaged groups and schools are able to access higher education. However, with these policies now in place access to university still eludes most learners from Delft schools. The question is why. The next chapter presents the case study data in order to understand *why* learners from School X do not access higher education.

CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDY OF SCHOOL X

The aim of this case study is to explore why learners from Delft are not entering higher education. It identifies the barriers that prevent learners from accessing universities, the reasons behind the poor examination results and the nature of support given to learners to aide their access to higher education. The idea was to identify the possible internal and external factors that influence learners' chances to enter higher education. An in-depth study of School X will provide us with the complex theoretical and empirical explanations as to why learners from School X are structurally prevented from accessing university. It is out of my experience as a teacher in Delft, the existence of policy and the statistical national and provincial matriculation examination trends (2000-2005) that I decided to choose School X as my case study.

This chapter draws on primary documents from School X and a survey of its Grade 12 learners and Grade 12 subject teachers. The first section is a socio-economic description of Delft, where the School X is situated. The second section describes the Matriculation examination results of the three Delft high schools. The third section describes School X in terms of the learners, staff, School Governing Body, school fees and language of instruction. The final three sections discuss the survey data (descriptive data) only.

5.1 Context of Delft

Delft is a community about 20 km from downtown Cape Town and next to Cape Town International Airport. Its development started in 1989 similar to other such areas as a model residential area that served the legitimacy logics of the apartheid state. Intended as a Coloured residential area, the new townships were designed to alleviate the city's housing shortage for this racial group (Fataar, 2006:4). Delft currently has about 231 000 residents who live in formal and informal housing with an estimated 70% unemployment rate (Lotz, 2007).

Lotz (2007) suggests that Delft has a very high single parent family rate, "which creates domestic circumstances of instability and uncertainty" (Fataar 2006:9). He states that domestic life in townships can be likened to what Chipkip (2005, 144-146) has described as the "absence of virtuous or respectable family reproduction". According to Fataar, (2006:9) "virtuous reproduction" refers to

> the situation where families make ends meet on the basis of stable employment and income that enable them to rear the children at some distance from the illicit network.

There are currently six-sub areas in Delft and thirteen schools, three of them high schools[24]. A recent initiative by Whiting and Layman (2004:1) captures the broad socio-economic context of schools in Delft as follows:

> Delft, in Cape Town, is a housing development that is fraught with a community that are victims of high unemployment, high levels of poverty, high levels of crime and deviance, and a lack of the basic essential services, like sport and recreation, and schools that are vandalized, with unkempt and deteriorating grounds. These schools are deemed not conducive for learning and this leads to low morale amongst teachers and learners (2004:1).

With such socio-economic conditions the schools in the area are, arguably, faced with some of the worst barriers to learning and teaching in the Western Cape (Whiting and Layman 2004:2). Schools in Delft are further disadvantaged in many ways. Most are poorly resourced, with big classes, little parent involvement in learners' school activities. These unfavourable circumstances, no doubt, contribute to a low morale amongst teachers and learners, as was evident among teachers in School X.

The quality of the permanent school buildings is similar to other apartheid era township and is generally very weak. According to Fataar (2006: 8), this is because of "a development policy that favoured local construction companies with little

[24]At the time of writing up this research, there were three high schools in Delft. A fourth high school was established in 2005 (Mambamisami) and a fifth in 2006 (Leiden High).

experience in constructing buildings of this type and size". There are a small number of learners from Delft who attend schools, especially high schools, in former white areas and "established schools" with "good results" in Coloured areas. They are mostly from families whose parents have stable employment, can afford school fees and who "invest in the meritocratic symbolisation of schooling" (Fataar, 2006).

5.2 Matriculation examination results of the three Delft high schools

The three high schools serving the Delft community face similar challenges. Class registers (2003 and 2004) suggests high teacher to learner ratios (1:50), lack of teaching resources such as textbooks (Class registers and textbook inventory, 2003 and 2004). These inequalities are the legacies of Apartheid education. A study done by UNESCO (1998), about the difficulty disadvantaged racial groups experience in gaining access to higher education due to racial inequalities is evident in this study. These inequalities often originate from geographical, economic and social circumstances.

Table 6 compares the types of passes obtained by learners in the three Delft high schools between 2000 and 2005. I will refer to the schools as School X (case study), School Y and School Z.

Table: 6 Matriculation Results of the three Delft High Schools

YEAR	X - HIGH			Y – HIGH			Z- HIGH		
	Wrote	%Pass	Exemptions	Wrote	%Pass	Exemptions	Wrote	%Pass	Exemptions
2000	66	66,6	1	104	37,5	3	118	15,2	0
2001	102	40,2	0	85	56,4	1	77	45,4	0
2002	119	47,9	0	79	58,2	0	70	72,8	2
2003	85	51,7	0	84	54,7	0	92	80,4	3
2004	58	56,9	4	98	39,8	3	86	83,7	5
2005	70	52,9	0	80	38,8	3	98	69,4	3

Source: Mr Africa: WCED- EMDC-North (2006) and my calculation of %

Firstly, all three schools produced a very low Matriculation exemption rate for the past 6 years. In addition, fewer learners sat for the Matriculation examination at Schools Y and Z in 2005 than in 2000. At School X, since 2000, the year of the

school's first Matriculants, the number of learners who sat for the Matriculation examination increased, almost doubled, until 2002. It then dropped to a low of 58 learners in 2004 and then increased to 70 learners in 2005.

Secondly, Table 6 suggests School X pass rate is average and School Y's pass rate is below 40%. These statistics suggest that the improved national and provincial Matriculation pass rates since 2000 are not evident in two of the three schools. School X's results dropped from 67% in 2000 to a low of 40% in 2001. The pass rate then gradually increased to 57% in 2004 and dropped again to 53% the following year. School Y's Matriculation results increased from a low 38% in 2000 to a high of 58% in 2002. It then dropped to 39% in 2005.

Thirdly, it is also evident from the data that things could be changed to improve the Matriculation results, as School-Z has shown with its better Matriculation results. For example, it increased from a low 15% in 2000 and increased significantly to a high of 84% in 2004. In 2005 this school's pass rate dropped by 15%. In 2005, the principal of School Z was on study leave. Could the absence of the permanent principal have contributed to this drop in pass rate?

This comparative picture makes an interesting follow-up study. How can we explain these opposite patterns in three schools in the same area? The following questions arise: If all three schools share the same unfavourable circumstances, how and why can School-Z produce better results than the other two schools? Does school planning and specific school practices play a relevant role? Is management not producing the necessary leadership? Does the entire staff share the school's vision and if not why not? Does community support play a role? Does the socio-economic status of parents play a role?

One of the reasons learners from these schools are not getting into higher education is due to the poor examination results and low exemption rate. At School X, only five Matriculation exemptions were achieved over the past six years. The exemption rate at School X is below 1%. As Table 6 shows, the number of learners

from School X who wrote the Grade 12 examination and achieved Matriculation exemption, the ticket to higher education, is very low. Clearly, based on Matriculation results, only five learners from School X have qualified to study at HE by meeting the minimum criterion, which is a Matriculation exemption. It was therefore imperative to investigate the school-related factors that explain why learners at School X do not qualify for higher education. What is it about this school that causes it to produce such poor examination results? Do the learners sit for a Grade 12 exemption examination?

The quality of passes in the end of year Matriculation examination are not unique to Delft, as Kallaway's (2005) study shows, but to all schools in townships or working class areas (i.e. those which were formerly under Coloured Education (House of Representatives e.g. Bishop Lavis Secondary School) and African Education (Department of Education and Training e.g. Oscar Mpheta High school). In all of these township schools, 75% plus candidates obtained results in the pass Senior Certificate category and over 90% of the candidates fell into category S (ordinary pass). This picture changes dramatically when it comes to prestige city schools (mainly former white Model C high schools) and suburban (former Model C) schools.

5.3 Description of School X

This section presents a detailed picture of School X in terms of the learners, staff and the School Governing Body (SGB). Of the three high schools in Delft, School X is seen as a "better option" by parents living in the surrounding areas of Schools Y and Z. The school's intake reflects the social mix of the local area with most of the learners coming from working class and unemployed homes (Provincial Housing Department, 2000).

School X opened in 1995, with Grade 6 and 7, as a primary school and in 1996 it continued, with it first Grade 8 learners, as a high school. This is a school that was established post-Apartheid and is supposed to be different from other township

schools in terms of race and language, but it still operates according to Apartheid language policies.

5.3.1 Learners

At the time of this study in 2004, School X had 1 184 registered learners (Learners attendance register, 2004). The intake of learners still operates according to the Apartheid classifications prior to 1994, reflecting the trend observed by Kallaway (2005) in other township schools, mainly Coloureds with a significant minority of Africans. The main home languages of learners were Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa.

At the time of the study, School X's learners were divided into 28 different classes across the five grades: eight Grade 8 classes; seven Grade 9 classes; seven Grade 10 classes; four Grade 11 classes and two Grade 12 classes. Table 7 shows the total number of learners in the different grades.

Table 7: Learners per grade at School X

	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
2003	335	337	322	134	96
2004	397	314	279	143	61
2005	456	368	326	175	75

Source: School Attendance Register (2003/4/5)

In 2005, there was an overall increase in the number of enrolments in all grades. This is because School X had to accommodate learners from the newly established area, Leiden, whose school was scheduled to open in 2006.

Several interesting patterns emerge from Table 7. Firstly, in 2004 (the year of the case study), there were 61 Grade 12's but in 2003 there were 134 Grade 11's. In terms of the decreased number of learners the following year in Grade 12, it is unclear what happened to the 73 learners that were also supposed to be in Grade 12 in 2004.

Secondly, this declining trend of learner numbers is also evident for the 2005 Grade 12 cohort. In 2005, there were only 75 Grade 12's while there were 143 Grade 11's in 2004 and 322 Grade 10's in 2003. By the time this group of senior phase learners, who started Grade 10 in 2003, finished their final year, in 2005, they had diminished by 247 learners. In other words, the Grade 12 enrolments in 2005 represented a mere 23% of the 2003 Grade 10 enrolments. It is not evident from these figures whether the 67% decline in enrolment is primarily due to large numbers of learners dropping out of school, failing or transferring to other high schools. This is not part of the investigation, but essential information to obtain a total picture. One explanation for the annual decrease in the number of learners in Grade 12 would be a combination of internal and external factors to be considered.

Thirdly, Grades 8-10 do not show the same trend as Grade 10-12. From 2003 to 2004, the Grade 8's to Grade 9's decreased by 21 learners and from 2004 to 2005, the Grade 9 to Grade 10 increased with 12 learners.

The reduction in the number of learners is most evident in the senior phase. Amongst the Grade 10's and Grade 11's in 2003 to 2004, there was a decline of 189 learners. From 2004 to 2005, there was a decline of 104 learners. Amongst the Grade 11's and 12's in 2003 to 2004 there was a decline of 73 learners and from 2004 to 2005 a decline of 68 learners. A point to note is that there was an increase from the Grade 9's to Grade 10 from 2004 to 2005.

Here are two examples to illustrate why learners may leave School X. Firstly, it was well known amongst the teachers of School X that a certain Grade 10 learner who was physically handicapped could not manage the up-and-down walk on the staircases. Teachers reprimanded him for consistently coming late to class without considering the effort that he had to put into climbing the stairs. He became despondent and told several teachers that he intended leaving School X due to the fact that he struggled too much to get to classes. None of the teachers seemingly took serious notice of his outcry and he eventually (in 2004) dropped out of school. This example might not be representative of the sample, but it is solely to illustrate

a lack of inclusive school strategies that are sensitive to the needs of students with disabilities.

Secondly, the school had the privilege of boasting an A aggregate pupil in Grade 11. This girl wanted to study medicine at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Some teachers were concerned that the potential of this learner will go wasted at School X. They were mostly concerned about the lack of facilities at the school for science, physics and mathematics. A teacher had taken the initiative to apply for this learner to be accommodated at the Cape Academy of Mathematics, Science and Technology the following year. This school was especially created to pool the better science learners together and to improve the pass rates on the HG for Mathematics and Science. This could only enhance her chances of being accepted at UCT. This attempt by concerned teachers to enroll the high achieving student into a "better" school reflects Fataar's (2006: 9) argument that township schools "struggle to retain their normative role as a space for upward mobility through providing quality education".

There are other reasons why learners may drop out of School X and which are not unique to Delft or to School X. For example, learners may need to help parent(s) financially and may have to start working at an early age. Also, if parents cannot afford to pay the school fees and some teachers harass the learners because of it, or conditions at school and home may not be conducive to learning, the learner drops out of school. Gangsterism, drug abuse and violence in the community often flow over to the schools and may influence the decision of learners to leave school before completing Matric (Valley, Dolombisa and Porteus, 2002; The Teacher, 2003; Ngonini, 2005).

5.3.2 Staff

The staff complement of 37 educators consists of 1 principal (male), 2 deputy principals (male and female), 6 heads of departments (4 males and 2 females) and 28 post - level 1 teachers (12 male and 16 female). Of the 37 educators at school, 35

are permanent and two are temporarily employed. All educators have at least a RQV 13 qualification, meaning that they have a Matriculation certificate plus 3 years tertiary education (Teachers register, 2004). This is the minimum entrance level qualification for educators. The non-teaching staff comprise of two administrative staff (females) and two cleaners, one female and one male (Non-teaching staff register, 2004). In March 2006, a new principal was appointed – the third in the schools history.

The Grade 12 teachers that participated in the survey studied their subject at third year level at a university or a college of education (Teachers qualifications file, 2004). In addition, they all had at least 5 years teaching experience.

5.3.3 School Governing Body (SGB)

The school has a democratically elected governing body (since 2000). At the conclusion of the elected SGB's 3-year term in 2003, several attempts to elect a new governing body failed because a representative number of 10% (Schools Act, 1996) of the parents were not present at parents meetings to elect a new SGB. According to staff meeting minutes (2004), most of the teachers were not satisfied with those parents on the SGB. Teachers felt that those parents, serving on the SGB, did not have children at the school anymore and were solely there for personal gain. In addition, according to the surveyed teachers, the SGB did not carry out its duties as set out in the Schools Act (1996). The composition of the SGB was as follows: 6 parents; 2 teachers; 2 learners and 1 non-teaching staff member. According to the Schools Act (1996), the SGB should be divided into sub-committees (e.g. finance, discipline etc.) and meet on a regular basis to enhance the school governance. At School X these sub-committees were elected but did not function (Staff minutes, 2004). This seems to point to the absence of a vibrant SGB. (School Financial Report 2003, 2004).

The non-collection of the outstanding school fees – of R275.00 per annum for each learner – clearly contributes to the internal barriers of the school. The non-payment

of school fees leads to problems at school. For example, staff reported that the telephone had been cut several times, competitive sports activities were curbed and teaching equipment could not be bought since all schools are personally liable for these expenses. It is hoped that this initiative can increase quality education as resources can be purchased.

A strong theme in the critique of social spending trends in South Africa relates the lack of additional state funds to the macro economic policy of GEAR which leads to an increased reliance on private funding and greater polarisation and inequity in education (Oldfield, 2001, Kallaway 2006). This means that affluent communities continue to provide for their schools, thereby widening the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged schools and "perpetuating inequalities between schools and communities" (Bray, 2003:101). In 2007 School X will be part of the schools that do not pay school fees.

The next few sections present the findings from the learner and teacher survey questionnaires focusing on why learners are not accessing higher education.

5.4 Introduction to surveys

Two surveys were conducted at School X. One with the Grade 12 learners and one with the Grade 12 subject teachers. The purpose of the surveys was to determine the nature of support learners receive to aide access to university, the possible barriers that prevent learners from accessing HE and why the school has such poor examination results. The discussion in the next two sections is based on the analysis of the data collected from the Grade 12 learners and subject teachers' survey questionnaires at School X. the survey data were synthesised and analysed in the context of the broad literature on access to higher education.

50 out of 61 Grade 12 learners from School X returned completed questionnaires. This gives a response rate of 82%. The description of the respondents is by gender, age, population group and language. 18 % of the learners did not complete the questionnaire in full. 72% (n=36) were female and 28% (n=14) were males. The

learners ages range from 17 to 19 years for females and from 17 to 20 and over for males (Table 8).

Table 8: Age distribution of respondents in grade 12 (n = 50)

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	Percentage
17	4	11	15	30
18	7	20	27	54
19	2	5	7	14
20 and over	1	0	1	2
Total	14	36	50	100

Source: Learners survey: 2004

98% (n = 49) of the respondents stated their "race" as Coloured, and 2% (n =1) indicated Black. Afrikaans was the dominant home language of the learners (88%) followed by English (10%) and isiXhosa (2%).

Ten Grade 12 subject's teachers participated in the teacher survey. They included the two Senior Managers and eight post–level 1-subject teachers. Of the 10 teachers, four were females and six males.

5.5 Learners' future plans

The Grade 12 subject teachers were asked what they thought the reasons were why learners do not access HE. The subject teachers cited finance as the main reason for learners' not entering higher education. Three teachers felt that learners took the wrong subjects to qualify for a Matriculation exemption, and six felt those learners' lacked ambition and motivation. This is in line with my opening quotation (page 1); in this case teachers assume that learners' aims are too low, learners reach it, and teachers think that they have achieved much. Another six teachers felt the poor results of the Grade 12 learners discouraged them from entering higher education. Six teachers reckoned that the learners' domestic circumstances do not allow them to further their studies.

The learners were asked to write a paragraph about their future plans for the next 3 to 4 years. The table below indicates the learners' responses.

Table 9: The learners' plans (n= 50)

	Frequency	Percent
Did not answer question	10	20
Study at HE	14	28
Study at FET College	10	20
Study and Work	3	6
Work	10	20
No Plans	3	6
Total	50	100

Source: Learners survey 2004

Three of the respondents indicated that they have no plans made for the future and ten of the respondents indicated that they were compelled to enter the workforce. The reasons learners gave for this was mostly due to finance.

54% (n=27) of School X learners' planned to pursue further studies upon completion of Matric. Of these students, 28% (n=14) wanted to pursue their studies at higher education institutions, 20% (n=10) of the learners wanted to study at an FET[25] college and 6% (n=3) expressed a need to work first and then pursue their studies at a later stage. Most respondents who indicated an interest in pursuing higher education wanted to do so because they believed this would assist them to get a good job. Others stated that they felt higher education was a waste of good time. Only one male indicated that he could gain skills and knowledge by accessing HE.

Of the 28% (n=14) learners who want to pursue higher education, four of the learners indicated that they want to study at Peninsula Technikon, now part of Cape Peninsula University of Technology, and the other ten at the University of the Western Cape. Interestingly no learner mentioned the possibility of studying at UCT or Stellenbosch University. The reasons learners gave for pursuing a career in academia varied from a good job, good salary, to being successful and being independent. The courses that the learners wanted to study at Technicon were:

[25] Provide high level skills training and a balanced training programme, emphasizing both theoretical and practical skills linked to specific industry requirements. On levels 2-4 on the NQF.

Human Resource Management 1, Auditing 2 and Chemical Engineering 1. Of the learners who indicated, that they intended to study at a university four wanted to be social workers, five wanted to be teachers and one wanted to be an actuarial scientists. Those who indicated teaching and social work as careers felt that they could give something back to the community.

The following table indicates the gender of those who had applied to HE.

Table 10: Learners who applied for 2005 to higher education by gender

		Applied to HE		Total
		Yes	No	
Gender	**Male**	4 36,4%	7 63,3%	11 100,0%
	Female	9 31,0%	20 69%	29 100,0%
Total		13 32,5%	27 67,5%	40 100,0%

Source: Learners survey 2004

The number of female learners that applied for higher education studies is more than double that of the male learners. The 20% (n=10) learners who indicated that they were going to attend an FET college were doing it for the following reasons: the courses are short and cheap and the prospects of getting a job sooner are attractive to them. Seven of these learners wanted to do a computer course that would take them between 6 and 12 months to complete, and three learners wanted to study Management and Marketing or electrical studies.

6% (n=3) of the learners respondents needed to work first and then study at a later stage. Of the 6% learners, two learners wanted to study at a university and one at a technikon. Two of the three learners who indicated that they are going to work and then study qualified (according to their subject choices) to study at higher education institutions. One of these two learners has all his/hers subjects on the HG. All of them indicated that they would have to work for at least for 2 to 3 years to help their families financially.

Finally, from 28% (n=14) of the learners that plan to study at higher education institutions only four qualify to apply to higher education institutions according to their subject choices. This was an important finding, discussed in the next section.

Learners were asked to indicate their plans for the next 3 to 4 years in order to gauge if higher education form part of their plans. A high number of learners indicated that they wanted to further their studies. Most of the learners indicated a FET College for various reasons. Those learners that indicated they want to access HE only a third of them qualified to apply due to their subject choices. It is clear that subject choice and subject grade choice hampers learners' access to HE.

5.6 Factors influencing learner's access to higher education

The outputs of a school indicate whether a school is "successful" or not for example the performance of its Grade 12 learners in the National School leaving examination. The school practices or internal school-related factors of this school determine if it contributed or hindered learners' access to higher education. These school practices can be internal or external to the school and may affect learners' access to higher education.

This section draws on school documents and on the learner and teacher responses to the questionnaires to probe school - related factors that influence learners' access to higher education. Seven factors emerged strongly in the data. These are discussed below.

5.6.1 Learners subject combinations

In order to qualify to apply to higher education learners are required to pass two languages on the higher grade[26]. It must be a first language and a second language (UWC Prospectus, 2004). In the sample, the learners' choice of languages was as

[26] A learner needs a minimum of 160 marks from a possible 400 to pass a subject on the HG, 100 from a possible 300 to pass on SG and 75 to pass the subject on the LG.

follows: Afrikaans First Language HG 66% (n=33), Afrikaans First Language SG 16% (n=8), Afrikaans Second Language HG 10% (n=5) and Afrikaans Second Language SG 8% (n=4). Not a single learner studied English as a first language on the HG although 12% (n=6) of the learners indicated that English was their first language. The other language was as follows: English first language SG 16% (n=8), English second language HG 42% (n=21). It must be added that the learner whose first language was isiXhosa had to study English as her first language at school. Some learners studied two languages on the HG, not as a first and a second language combination that is required to qualify to apply to higher education, but as two-second languages.

Figure 1 indicates learners who studied two languages on the HG. I did not distinguish between first or second language. It shows that 38% of the learners have two languages on the HG, 34% have either Afrikaans or English on the HG and 28% have neither Afrikaans nor English on the HG. This means that the languages that the learners were supposed to do on the HG were creating a barrier for them to access higher education.

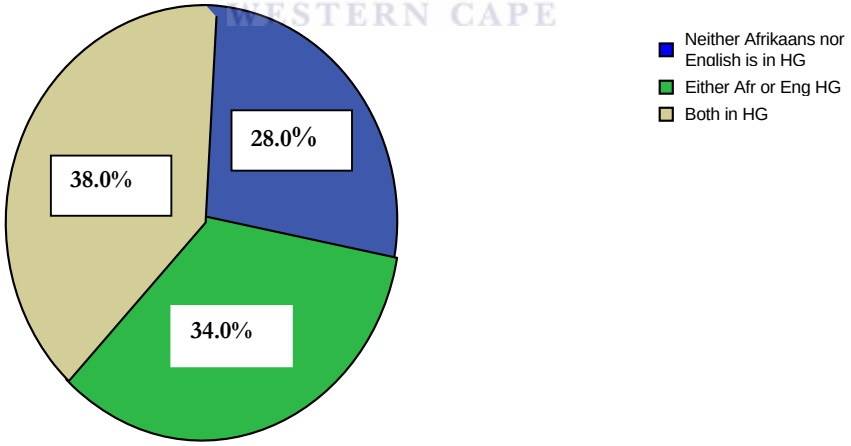

Figure 1: Learners HG Languages (Afrikaans and English)

Apart from the two languages on the HG, learners also need two other subjects on the HG to sit for an exemption examination in order to access HE. How many

learners qualified to apply to higher education institutions in terms of their other four subjects on the HG? Figure 2 shows the percentage of learners who qualified to apply in terms of their choice of remaining four subjects.

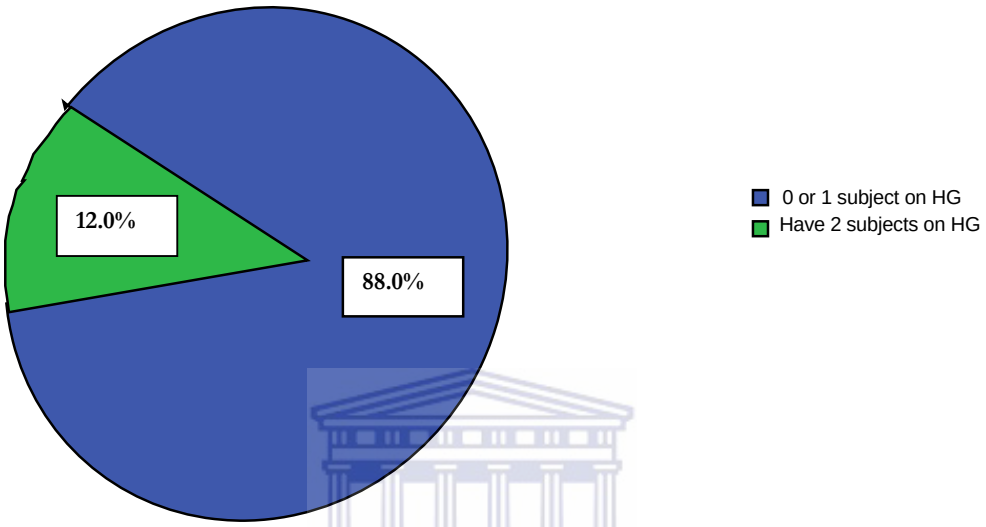

Figure 2: Learners subject choices

Firstly, only 12 % (n=6) of the learners had two or more subjects on the HG while the bulk of the learners (88% or 44) were excluded from applying to HE because they do not have two or more other subjects on the HG.

I have argued that the subject combinations of the majority of respondents do not qualify them to meet the criteria to apply to higher education institutions. Firstly, in terms of their languages, learners must study two languages at least. One as a first language and the other one as a second language, but both must be on the HG to qualify for a Matriculation exemption. I have shown that the English first language learners are studying the subject on the SG thus disqualifying them from meeting the minimum requirements to sit for an exemption examination. This also happened in the case of some of the Afrikaans first language learners who studied the subject on the SG. Secondly, from the learners' remaining four subjects, they must study two on the HG if they want to meet the criteria for application to higher education

institutions. Most learners did not study two or more subjects on the HG. These combinations of subjects suggest that the school is failing to guide learners' in terms of their subjects and grade choices.

Some Grade 12 subject teachers offered the following explanations regarding what prevented learners from accessing higher education.

> It could partially be contributed to a well-known fact amongst us staff that the school passed Grade 11 learners who actually failed the examination, but not that badly, in order to increase their learners' number in Grade 12 the following year. (T 2)

Another teacher had the following to contribute.

> Weak pass results also give the impression of not being able to perform at these places of higher learning. (T 5)

Not all explanations saw the learner as the culprit. One teacher stated, "Not enough support systems" (T 8)

It seems that the "branching points" that Cosser and Du Toit (2003: 16) refer to, the points where learners are advised at choosing their subjects at the end of Grade 9 for their senior phase, do not occur properly at School X because, according to the statistics, most learners are doing all their subjects on the SG, including their languages[27] (Fig.1&2). If choices had been more informed at the end of Grade 9 then learners' subject choices in terms of HG and SG subject combinations would not have reflected so badly in the Grade 12 final examination. Table 11 shows the quality of passes per subject in the final Grade 12 external 2004 examination at School X.

[27] See also discussion about Learners that qualify for HE

Table 11: School X's Grade 12's 2004 end of year results.

Subject	P	F	S	% - S	% + S	A	B	C	D	E	F	FF	G	GG	H
Afr 1 HG	37	0	0	94.9	100		3	7	14	13					
Afr II HG	5	0	1	100	100		3	2							
Afr 1 SG	9	0	0	90	100			1	8	1					
Afr I SG	4	0	0	100	100	2	2	2							
Eng I HG	27	0	0	100	100		4	6	10	5					
Eng I SG	25	0	0	100	100		1	4	11	5	2				
Eng 1 SG	10	0	0	100	100			1	8	12					
Geog HG	2	0	0	100	100			2							
Geog SG	25	5	10	62,5	87,5				2	13	10			4	1
B/Eco HG	3	2	0	60	60					3				2	
B/Eco SG	27	8	9	61,4	81,8			5	4	6	12			7	1
Bio HG	4	1	1	66,7	83,3			1	2	1					1
Bio SG	14	27	13	25,9	50			2	1		11			9	18
Phys HG	1	0	1	50	100			1							
Phys SG	3	5	1	33,3	44,4					2	1			1	4
Math HG	1	0	0	100	100				1						
Math SG	7	14	0	33,3	33,3				3	2	2			5	9
Hist SG	31	2	4	83,3	94,6			2	4	12	13			2	
Acc SG	8	1	0	88,8	88,9	1	1	1	3	1	2			1	
Typ SG	3	1	6	30	90					3					
Total	246	66	46			2	14	37	68	79	53			31	34

Source: Matric marks schedules (2004)

KEY:

P: Pass subject on that grade level
S: Switch to a lower grade if learner failed subject s(he) wrote in examination
% + S: Percentage plus those learners that were switched to a lower grade
% - S: Percentage minus those learners that were switched to a lower grade
A-H: Symbol distributions of what learners accomplished

Recall that the national and provincial Matriculation examination pass and exemption rates increased yearly between 2000 and 2003 (Tables 1, 2 and 3), but School X's results did not follow the same trends (Table 6). There were 61 learners enrolled in Grade 12 in 2004. Fifty-eight learners wrote the examination and three learners had incomplete results, meaning that they did not write all their subjects as applied for. According to the statistics (Table 6) School X had a pass rate of 56,9%

with 6,89% exemption rate at the end of December 2004. This section explains these results in terms of learner's subject combinations.

The quality of the learners' Matriculation pass was poor: 46 times across the twenty subjects (HG and SG included) that School X learners wrote exams in they were either switched from HG to SG and from SG to LG to pass the examination (See S in Table 11). Table 11 shows that 3 learners in 3 different HG subjects (Afrikaans 2nd Language HG, Biology HG and Physics HG) were switched to SG to pass. 41 learners were switched from SG to LG across 6 subjects to pass the subject. This meant that the pass rate of this school would have been much worse if it were not for the conversion of subject grades. This means that if one failed the subject on the HG (obtaining less than 40%) one could pass it on the SG (obtaining at least 33,3%). Also, if you failed the subject on the SG you could pass it on the Lower Grade (obtaining at least 25%).

The "good" results of the learner's language subjects are questionable. According to the school subject inventories (2000 to 2004), the 2004 Grade 12 cohort wrote their language subjects on the HG from Grade 8 to 11. Now, in 2004, these learners were not registered on the HG for their language subjects. For example, not a single learner registered and wrote English First Language HG in the 2004 Matriculation examination. The questions arise: Why did the change in language grades occur at this late stage, in Grade 12? Did learners register to write these subjects on the SG in order to achieve better symbols?

Other subject results showed the same pattern of good symbols. For example Accountancy SG, 1- A and 1- B symbol were obtained. This raises the question of why the relevant educators did not recognize the learners' potential and advise a switch to HG, thus increasing their chances for an exemption.

I have shown that the learners subject choice at Schools X do not allow them to apply to HE. Teachers fail to guide learners to do the right subject and subject grade choice in order for them to qualify for HE. The languages in the 2004 Matriculation

examination at School X reflect good symbols. The question arises: why are languages at School X a barrier for learners in terms of qualifying for HE.

Delft schools, and especially School X, clearly show a resemblance to other townships schools results in terms of pass rate and exemption rate (Kallaway, 2005). It was in this poor examination results context that our school of interest (School X), was chosen as the case study. It was in the ultimate hope of helping the school to identify, understand and address these barriers, along the lines proposed by the policy of the Western Cape Education Department, that the case study was undertaken. Furthermore, in the national and provincial context (Tables 1, 2 & 3), the discrepancies in terms of the pass and exemption rates are a matter of concern and it needs to be understood why the improved results shown in the aggregate for the Western Cape do not reflect or represent the results of many township schools. The data discussed in this section explains the low pass and exemption rates in terms of subject combinations and grade conversions on the HG, SG and LG.

When you look at the results of School X from 2000 to 2005 (Table 6) and especially at the 2004 results (Table11) various questions arise. For example, why did the school have such a low pass and exemption rate? How many learners accessed higher education on alternative methods, via e.g. the Alternative Admission Review Process (AARP) (http/www.ched.uct.ac/aclp/aard)? These tests, written in English, are designed to show the learners potential to succeed at university, regardless of their Matriculation results. What is School X doing to encourage learners to apply to higher education institutions? Why did learners not meet the minimum requirements to apply for higher education? How is School X going to increase the exemption rate? How is School X going to increase the quality of learning? Or how do the teachers help the learners make their vision a reality?

5.6.2 Language policy

Each school sets it own policies within the parameters of the national and provincial Education Department's guidelines. For example, each school has its own language

policy and which subjects will be taught to the learners. School X is no exception to other schools in terms of this. The language of formal instruction at School X is still according to the Apartheid language policy – Afrikaans and English. The predominant language of instruction is Afrikaans. Learners, whose first language is isiXhosa, are accommodated in the different grade sections of the English classes because the school did not make provision for isiXhosa as a language of instruction.

In terms of language, it could be argued that the learners' mother tongue creates a barrier at School X for them to access higher education. It was noticed that not one mother tongue English learner studied the subject on the HG as it is expected. The following questions arise: If a learners' first language did not suit the criteria to do it as a first language HG, did the school/teachers consider expanding the range of language subjects and the languages of instruction? Where any multilingual programmes put in place for learners and teachers? Were first language speakers registered as second language speakers in order to obtain better results?

The language policy at School X has clearly influenced the subject combination choices of certain learners. Each grade has only one English First Language class. Since 2005, isiXhosa First Language was introduced as a subject from Grade 8 to Grade 10. Prior to this learners whose first language was isiXhosa studied English or Afrikaans as their first language. All learners whose first language was isiXhosa studied English as their first language and Afrikaans as their second language even though most could not speak, read or write Afrikaans. Two views emerged in the teachers' responses. One view was that all parents and learners were comfortable with this arrangement because, according to a senior teacher, none of the parents or learners had lodged complaints with the principal's office about this situation. Another view was that members of the Afrikaans department had lodged complaints about this issue to the principal, but until the end of 2004, the school's language status quo was maintained.

As discussed in the previous section, the combinations of learner's subjects on the HG and SG level are problematic. To obtain an exemption it is compulsory to write

two languages and two other subjects on the HG. This is often not the case at School X. For example, a learner studied all her subjects on the HG, but did her second language, English, on the SG. Her chance of meeting the criteria to apply to HE was ruined. The following questions arise: was this her choice or the teacher's recommendation to study the subject on the SG? Did the learner receive adequate guidance in her choice of grade subjects from her teachers? Some learners did only one other subject on the HG, besides their languages. The question is, are learners aware of the consequences of choosing one subject on the HG if you want or do not want to access higher education? The point being made here is that learners' subject combinations did not allow them to apply to write for an exemption. For example, Mathematics should be taken in combination with certain subjects to qualify for an exemption. At School X, only 42% did Mathematics in 2004, with only one learner studying the subject on the HG (School documents, 2004).

Clearly, incorrect language subject choices restrict learners' post-school options for further study. The language policy at School X needs to be changed. Its current language policy has a ripple effect on both teaching (language of instruction) and on learner's language choices, which contribute to learners not meeting the criteria to apply to higher education.

5.6.3 Academic and career guidance

Career and academic guidance, if introduced early enough to the learners, may play a significant role in expanding their post-school study options. In addition, it can change learner's attitude to higher education. Some learner's mentioned getting negative remarks from their friends and family when they mentioned wanting to study further. For example, one of the Grade 12 boys at School X stated that some of his friends and family members are ignoring him since he told them that he wanted to pursue a career in higher education. The behaviour of his family and friends influenced his decision not to apply to higher education. His argument was that he did not want to be alienated from his community and family (Survey, 2004).

It is evident from the data that a subject like Career Guidance is not given the necessary recognition or esteem at School X (School Timetable, 2004). According to the school timetable (2004) it is offered at the Grade 12 level only. According to one teacher the career guidance that the school offers is of "little assistance, only in Grade 12 but then it is too late" (T8)

Learners were asked to rate the provision of career guidance at School X on a scale from very good (1) to very bad (5). 44% (n=22) of the learner respondents indicated that the career guidance offered was very bad and 14 % (n=7) of the respondents indicated that the career guidance was average. The rest, 42% (n=21) of the respondents did not indicate their opinion.

The subject teachers reported that the school organised the following for the Grade 12 learners: (a) visits to career exhibitions at different higher education institutions; (b) visits from public relations officers from different higher education institutions and FET Colleges, and (c) providing learners with booklets and brochures of higher education institutions and FET colleges. Teachers also gave extra classes in the afternoons, Saturdays and during the June and September holidays and an annual Matric Motivational Camp in the first quarter of the year. According to one teacher, "besides exhibitions by outside institutions individual teachers take the responsibility of informing pupils of the choices for further studies." (T3) Another teacher stated the following:

> They also went to Stellenbosch University this year. This was done to help learners to see they have choices in choosing a tertiary institution and to see what they offer. However, this was not enough! (T7)

Some teachers indicated that psychometric tests could be introduced by WCED. According to these teachers, it is good in ascertaining the scholastic strengths of learners. Others asserted that individual teachers should take responsibility for informing learners on further studies. One teacher felt that the school did very little to support learners' further study or career plans. Another indicated that the school

should select and offer subjects that met entry-level requirements at different higher education and FET institutions.

The level of academic and career guidance provided by the school seemed to be inadequate and uncoordinated. According to a subject teacher the fact that teachers did things on their own, sometimes without the knowledge of or support from their colleagues, was not helpful. In addition, as another teacher stated:

> No teacher is given the specific task of Guidance in general due to financial constraints. Therefore, no teacher feels obligated to perform this task. (T5)

The consequences of not offering career guidance in the lower grades had several effects. For example, learners made the incorrect subject combination choices, the wrong subject grade choices and did not apply to universities. In addition, many learners did not apply to higher education because of their parents' financial position. Maybe, if they had career guidance at school they would have known how, where and when to applied for financial assistance for post Grade 12 studies.

5.6.4 Financial issues

The education department has set norms and standards for school funding but it seems that it has very little impact on reducing inequalities. In the absence of increased funding from the state, poorer schools will continue to struggle with resource deficiencies (Karlsson, 2001). Due to School X's financial position, the learners were deprived of many resources. According to the survey data, 42% (n=21) of the Grade 12 learners felt that School X was under resourced.

The lack of resources includes a high teacher–learner ratio, no computer resources, no sports facilities, no science laboratory equipment and no library. This is a cause of major concern because it is a vital resource for learning, especially where many households do not have books. Teaching facilities are also limited to the board, chalk and talk, which can bore learners. This can lead to a lack of interest in

schoolwork by the learners. In addition, the unavailability of resources can contribute to a learner's poor performance at school. Most of the Grade 12 subject teachers indicated that the lack of finances, particularly due to many parents being unemployed and unable to pay make fee payments, as one of the reasons why learners from School X do not access HE.

5.6.5 School leadership and management

Edu Source (2004), in a review of school quality studies, observes that the quality of learning often increases when schools have a clear vision and well-defined goals. It further states that at the same time "vision and goals need effective leadership" (Edu Source 2004:6). This must be supported by the entire staff to take collective responsibility for learning. The study found a professional culture among staff to be a key characteristic that distinguished quality schools. It supports further research on creating incentives in school that encourage staff to have shared views on increasing learner performance or to value professional behaviour. The study explains further that at another level the challenge is that teachers need to be made aware that their "behavior as professionals has a direct impact on the performance of the learner" (Edu Source 2004:7).

The case study at School X suggests that this characteristic is absent among many of the staff of School X. This is illustrated, for example, by the conflict that took place over promotion posts at School X (SGB minutes 2003/4). As a second example, school attendance records (Attendance Registers, 2004 & 2005) show a high rate of absenteeism and late coming amongst both teachers and learners. Minutes of staff meetings suggest that at School X there is poor class attendance, punctuality and a failure on the part of most staff to rigorously implement the minutes, recently adopted by the school, to remedy these deficits (Staff Meeting minutes, 2004).

The question arises: how does this sense of direction get built into School X? A collective approach would definitely be a better and more feasible option for the

learners to benefit. If there is a collective approach among staff members then they can build the school's vision. Nine of the Grade 12 subject teachers who participated in the survey indicated that the school had a vision formulated on paper while one specified that there were no goals set for the school. Two of them felt that they were working towards the schools vision and seven stated that they were not working towards it. One did not indicate an opinion. It is possible that the lack of cohesive policy and the absence of consistent positive practices have filtered through to the learners in the way they approach their studies and in the high rate of absenteeism amongst learners. In addition, it is also possible that this behavior influenced the organizational issues at school as well.

The learners were asked if they thought their school was organised, disorganised, under resourced, well resourced, well managed or not well managed. They could tick off a maximum of three choices. The following were their responses. Three learners believed that their school was well organized; fifteen said that the school was under resourced and thirty-two felt that the school was not well managed. Two of the teachers said that the school was organized, whereas three stated it was disorganized. All teacher respondents indicated that the school was under-resourced, and most felt that the school was not well managed.

According to Edu Source (2004) effective management of the school is at the heart and soul of the success of a school. It can boost the Matric pass rate and access to higher education or render the school completely dysfunctional. The answer is at hand: if the management does not manage, you cannot expect much to happen at School X. In order to improve the Matric results and the quality of learning at School X, the WCED needs to intervene. WCED intervened on several occasions (SGB minutes, 2006). First, they introduce a mentor principal. This effort did not bring the results they expected. They then brought in a curator and eventually replaced the principal in March 2006.

Finally, in responding to the question: In your opinion, has [School X] benefited from the changes during the ten years of democracy since 1994? 22% (n=11) of learners indicated that their school had gained from the changes made after 1994,

and 54% (n=27) felt that they had not gained from the changed educational policies. Some teachers felt that the school had benefited from the changes during the ten years of democracy since 1994. One stated that with the new developments in education the school (learners) had indeed benefited as "opportunities at various centres of learning were open and learners could acquire the necessary skills and qualifications that could benefit them". (T 5) Others felt that the school had not benefited from the changes. The following were their reasons: there is more pressure on them because of learners' discipline problems, budgets cuts, a higher teacher to learner ratio and fewer resources at the school.

5.6.6 Parental involvement

Parental involvement in the learners' academic work was measured in terms of knowing their children's test dates, attending parent meetings at school and what functions and meetings the school organised. Below is a table indicating parents that attend school meetings and those that know their children's test dates.

Table 12: Parents attending school meetings and those that know their children's test dates.

		Parent Meetings		Total
		Yes	No	
Parent Test Dates	Always	4 66,7%	2 33,3%	6 100%
	Sometimes	5 45,5%	6 54,5%	11 100%
	Never	2 50,0%	2 50,0%	4 100%
Total		11 52,4%	10 47,6%	21 100%

Source: Learners survey 2004

Twenty-one learners responded to this question. The table indicates that very few parents are involved in their children education. The reasons, according to the learners, why their parents did not attend school meetings were as follow: Eleven learners did not indicate if their parents knew their test dates. Five had no time; three were not interest and two felt that it was a waste of time.

According to the 21 Grade 12 respondents, the school did the following to increase parents' participation level at school. Eleven teachers send letters as part of a management strategy to informing parents about the school activities. One of the teachers did home visits; three did nothing; one of the learners did not know what the teachers were doing to get their parents involve in the schools activities and meetings and five of the learners did not respond to this part of the question.

According to the teachers, there are various reasons why parents are not involved in their children's academic life. The various reasons are lack of interest, work related problems (for example traveling), irregular working hours, distrust in the SGB, receiving no notices of meeting and the impact of single parenthood. A few parents do the following to be actively involved in their children's education. They attend school meetings, participate in SGB elections and attend fundraising events. The reasons for parents' absenteeism from school meetings and functions can also be attributed to teachers not doing enough. One learner stated, "The functions that they have are poor and there are too few teachers at the school meetings. (L7)

The absence of parent involvement at School X may contribute to learners not qualifying to access HE. In addition, teachers and parents do not turn up at school meetings to meet each other. It can be assumed that at School X there are very few teacher–parent interactions, suggesting thin relationships between parents and teachers.

5.6.7 School networks and relationships

Western Cape Education Department

It is a well-known fact among teachers at School X that the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) intervened at the school on several occasions, but without success (SGB minutes, 2006). For example from September 2004 to June 2005, the school was placed under "mentorship" by the WCED. This is done to show the principal how to manage the school; a matter of in - service training. After

June 2005, the school was still at the same management crisis level as before (SGB minutes, 2005). One view to emerge in the data was that the crisis was caused by a lack co-operation within the Senior Management Team (SMT) because of the appointment of a post - level 1 teacher to principal, above the existing senior managers. Some felt that he had no expertise and experience in management and lacked the abilities to execute his responsibilities. Another view, claiming that the principal could not manage the school, suggested that some SMT members were deliberately undermining the principal in order for him to fail. They hoped that his service would be terminated or that he would be transferred so that they could move into his place. This promotional appointment from post level 1 to post level 4 caused teachers and SMT members to lose faith in the SGB's (School Governing Body) integrity when it came to the appointment of teachers in promotion posts. It was good that they had intervened, but why it took them so long? It is clear from the above example that WCED should not only be "involved" in the school when a crisis is looming, but on a constant basis.

Higher Education Institutions

Hall (2001) asserts that a major policy shift would occur if HEI's engage directly with the secondary school system at a substantial scale. Although there have been specific engagements around winter schools, mentoring programmes or extra mathematics and science classes for learners in Grades 11 and 12, South African universities have had very little involvement in the secondary school system (Hall, 2001). Projects that have attempted to improve the quality of schooling have often been limited in scale and duration.

It was learned from the three Delft school principals that the four regional HEI's (UWC; Peninsula Technikon, now part of CPUT; UCT and US) were not involved in any programme at their schools. The following questions arise: why are HEI's not involved in the schools of the communities in which they are situated? Should higher education institutions share and contribute their resources to schools especially as they are the ones that benefit from a better academically prepared learner? Are donor funds available to strengthen such relationships?

In order to increase the participation of under-represented groups, particularly adults and learners from rural and township schools, South African universities have developed alternative or "non–standard" entry qualifications and routes into higher education (Davies Williams and Webb, 2001:10). These alternative routes according to Davies et al, (2001:10) can be divided into three groups: vocational routes, access routes and the accreditation of prior learning. The vocational routes are clearly linked to the economic imperatives of educational policy. For example, in South Africa a national framework accompanied the access courses. This framework is the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and its purpose is for the quality assurance of such programmes. According to (Davies et al. 2001:11) the accreditation of prior learning (APL) is "a much more ad hoc collection of arrangements with a varying degree of activity both within institutions and nationally"

Universities (e.g. UWC) introduced several approaches to widen access and to admit non-traditional students by "selection criteria other than the Matriculation endorsement" (UWC, 2004:115). For example students are considered on Senate discretion and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Senate discretion students was introduced "at a time when the qualifying pool of Matriculation exemption students were, against initial NCHE projections, at an all time-low, and the higher education system reflected an almost zero percent growth while the dwindling students numbers at the traditional bases of historical black universities significantly reduced the confidence level and affected the sustainability of these institutions" (UWC, 2004: 115). The questions are: do the school and learner know about this method of accessing higher education? Does School X arrange for their learners to write these entrance tests at different higher education institutions? On the flip side of the coin: do the universities inform schools of this option?

The poor quality of graduates in HE and the high failure rates among first-year university students prompted universities to introduce entrance exams. By introducing these entrance tests, they want to gauge the quality of matriculants

before registering them and the lack of confidence the university have in the Matriculation examination. By introducing these new entrance test learners from Delft schools will be excluded because they are academically ill prepared.

In 1997 it became lawful in South Africa that higher education institutions should increase the participation of non-traditional students for example RPL, Senate discretion students, which also incorporates all the groups for example disabled students.

Alumni

The fact that School X is still relatively new and achieved such a small number of exemptions over the past five to six years allows one to assume that this school does not have ex-learners in high positions at companies that can sponsor or direct development within the school. It will be in School X's interest to start as soon as possible to work with their ex-learners so that those who are in a position to contribute financially or otherwise can do so. This kind of relationship can only benefit the learners and the community. In such a way parents can play a more directive and involved role.

The case study data suggests a thin support network existed from previous alumni for learners who wished to access higher education.

5.7 Overview of findings

In this chapter, I have analyzed the various internal and external factors that impact on the learners' access to higher education. Although poverty and socio-economic factors can have a key influence on post-school educational opportunities, the case study clearly shows that if a school's internal dynamics are in order it may still produce good results, but with the everyday practices not in order the school will not produce good results. If learners qualify for HE parents should then invest in their children's further education with additional state support. This is in line with

what Williams (1997) (marketeers' perspective) states that to invest in learners' education.

This research project was designed to investigate why learners from School X do not access HE. Firstly, the analysis of the higher education policy documents in Chapter Four suggests that policies on access sometimes contradict each other. The targets set by the Higher Education White Paper (1997) and the NPHE (2001) have not been met because the existing national and institutional policies seem to contradict each other. For example the capping on the number of first time entering students to universities tends to be prejudiced against economically disadvantaged students who want to access higher education. In this case, it will be the weaker student coming from township schools who will not get a place in higher education. My reasoning is the fact that the emphasis of the funding formula for higher education institutions has changed from input to output. I have argued, by pointing to trends in the Matriculation results, that it is township school learners who are often ill - prepared for higher education. They are the ones that need extra help and they are the ones who may be most likely to not complete their studies in the minimum set time. Due to the extra time and money that these learners will take to complete their courses, the higher education institutions will have to wait for their subsidies which will only be paid when these learners complete their studies. Therefore, for higher education institutions to operate smoothly they need further funding. Alternatively, they tend to avoid the recruitment of needy students because they see these students as a liability.

Secondly, in Chapter Four I analyzed the national pass and exemption results and showed that it increased year by year up to 2003. The same pattern was evident at the provincial level and one would assume that this was the case with all schools in the Western Cape. However, an analysis of selected schools in Cape Town showed a different pattern to the national and provincial trends in the pass and exemption rates. The statistics clearly indicated that learners' Matric results were strongly influenced by the type of school they attended, based on location and historical advantages and disadvantages. This indicates that learners in township schools

chances of accessing higher education are slim due to the legacies of apartheid education and of the poverty in townships in which schools created post-1994 are located. Recall that School X was created in 1995. This analysis has showed that access to higher education institutions was, and continues to be, a race issue and a class issue.

To confirm how class and race issues influence learners' chances to access higher education an analysis of the three Delft schools, with only Coloured and African (Apartheid definitions) learners, was done in Chapter Five. The analysis of the statistics of the three Delft schools indicated an alarmingly low exemption rate ranging from 0 % to 6%. These statistics give an idea of how many learners in areas such as Delft meet the minimum criteria to apply to universities. It is clear that when you stay in low socio-economic areas such as Delft, your chances of accessing higher education are extremely slim. This analysis also showed that to even obtain an ordinary pass in a township school is often a challenge.

Thirdly, I gained a more informed view of why learners from Delft do not access higher education when I analyzed the data of the case study: School X. The main aim of the case study was to explore the factors influencing learners' low academic performance and their chances to access higher education. I have showed that it is a combination of related factors that exclude learners from higher education. By doing a case study, I found why learners from School X do not access higher education. The case study allowed a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973:6-7) of everyday practices that is occurring in schools.

I focused on two sets of factors, namely the factors that are internal to the school and those external to the school. The external factors were: socio-economic factors, higher education outreach programmes, finance, etc. The internal school-related factors were school leadership and management, school planning, parent involvement, school outreach programmes and subject choice. Based on these internal and external factors, I argue that the ability of schools to "turn things around" is dependent upon the extent to which they are able to plan and manage both the internal school-related factors and the external factors related to the

broader community and the higher education context, both of which are increasingly shaped by the neoliberal policy context of the GEAR macro-economic framework. In all of these tasks, school leadership is a key to effective change and increasing learners' chances to access higher education. I argue that School X must network with other institutions and organisations, such as higher education institutions and alumni associations, in order to enhance the learning process. On the other hand HEI's should be more involved in schools and make their resources available to schools in order to enhance the quality of teaching. Learners would then be better prepared to access higher education.

Based on the analysis of higher education policy, the Matric pass and exemption rate at National, Provincial, selected Cape Town Schools and local level (three Delft schools) and the case study, School X, I have argued that all these afore-mentioned factors contribute collectively in one way or another to the low access rate of Delft learners to HE. These factors should not be seen as isolated factors but as integrated factors.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The one exclusive sign of a thorough knowledge is the power of teaching (Aristotle).

This study set out to investigate why learners from low socio economic areas such as Delft on the Cape Flats are not accessing higher education despite policies on HE which promote the goal of equity, including the nature and support learners receive to overcome barriers to higher education. My approach was a case study from School X and I relied on qualitative and quantitative data. The broad literature suggests that internal and external factors influence learners' access to higher education. The conceptual approach also relies on Williams (1997) considerations of the diverse discursive frameworks that shape access to higher education in the United Kingdom (UK). The importance of these different perspectives to the South African context is that they show how some groups are disqualified from higher education even where equitable access policies are in place. The national and provincial Grade 12 examination statistics showed a yearly increasing trend in the pass and exemption rates not evident in School X or the other two Delft schools. My empirical study shows that if School X concentrates on its internal factors (e.g. parent involvement, absenteeism amongst teachers, subject choice, career guidance, quality of teaching etc.) then they might be able to increase their pass and exemption rates.

In conclusion, I focus on the cultural change that needs to occur in our schools and communities, the networking that schools need to do and on how learners are being failed by the system.

Each year much attention is given to the end of year results for Grade 12. Matric results are printed in national newspapers, time is devoted to it on the news and learners eagerly await their Matric ball throughout their final year at school. It appears that Matric is the ultimate achievement. Is Grade 12 not a stepping-stone to assist one in gaining access to higher education rather than an achievement in itself? When a learner enters Grade R it should be a given that the exit point is Grade 12.

No fanfare should accompany it since school is a 12-year programme. However, the latest school attendance policy for learners states that it is compulsory education to Grade 9. Nevertheless, since aims are set too low and then achieved, what should be viewed as the norm is now viewed as a major achievement. This is exactly what Michelangelo (1475 –1564) warned us about.

> The great danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.

The research has shown that it is not necessarily the learners, but their teachers, who often underestimate their potential and aims in life. A large number of learners indicated that they wish to further their studies but only a very few qualified to do it. The majority of them did their subjects on the standard grade and passed. Some of them even obtained very good symbols on the SG indicating that they had the potential to do it on the HG. This is a good example of how the school/teachers failed the learners. They seemed to let learners believe that they were not good enough to write and pass their subject(s) on the HG. Thus lowering the learners aims and they achieved it, but with their achievement, they cannot access higher education.

Learners need teachers who believe in them and who set high goals for them to achieve. They need teachers who see beyond their school career and who can assure them of a place in this technological, global economy. School X is a typical school that only concentrates on the pass average of the Grade 12 examinations. When specific school interventions with the Grade 11's in 2005 and the Grade 12's in 2006 increased the pass rate from 42 % in 2005 to 68% in 2006, everyone was singing high praises for the "good" results. Yet learners' subjects were switched from HG to SG and from SG to LG to pass their subjects. Once again, the praises were because the aim was to achieve an above 60% pass rate, which was managed, and shifted the school out of the learning school project[28].

[28] WCED schools who obtained less than 60% in their last final Grade 12 examination forms part of this project. WCED sets a standard June and September examination for all these schools. At school X this was the only assistance the received from WCED.

All schools are supposed to gain good results, but with the unequal distribution of resources it seems not to be possible. Learners in low socio-economic areas have a disadvantage when they start their life. A good quality education seems to be luxury for them.

DoE policy documents maintain that teachers must educate learners so that they can face the challenges the future will bring to them. We must nurture them and teach them to aim high and even if they sometimes do not achieve their aims, to not fall too low. We should build our youth for the future with education as the corner stone of this building process. If we deny learners a good education then we are denying them a good life because the education process is as important as the outcome.

If education is life (Dewey) then all learners should have access to free and quality education. This is happening at a formal level because learners are at school. I am questioning the quality and values of what these learners receive as education with regard to its ability to promote access to higher education. This is not happening in many township schools. This luxury is only provided for those learners in ex-Model C and private schools. This quality education is evident in the number of exemptions obtained by township schools on a yearly basis, which is very low.

The core of a teachers work is engaging with their students around knowledge. How and when they do it is of utmost importance to the learning process. If teaching conditions are not conducive to learning, the teaching process will fail. The violence in township schools, disciplinary problems with learners, absenteeism among learners and teachers, high teacher - learner ratio, and so on, contribute to a low moral amongst teachers in school. Are teachers satisfied with the remuneration that they get for their effort? If teachers earn a market related salary, will they then disseminate their knowledge more eagerly and on a regular basis? Will they be more dedicated and spend more time with their learners? Will they leave their second job, which many teaches need to make ends meet, and concentrate on the power which they have in changing a society? Will teaching be more respected as a profession?

My experience has shown me that it is the loyal teachers who are most qualified to be leaders. Loyalty must be the principal qualification for every teacher. Disloyalty does not just happen overnight. Becoming disloyal is a process. It is so subtle that most teachers do not recognise it for what it actually is. They become autonomous from the set-up. The rules of the organization no longer control them. Such teachers are still part of the education system but do what they want to do, in spite of contrary instruction. For example late-coming, absenteeism amongst teachers, poor quality of work, and so on, may be both causes and effects of a profession that is not well. This behaviour affects the delivery of quality education to learners. It leads to poor results and influence learners' chances of accessing higher education. It is also in such cases where teachers do the minimum work and aim just to push learners over to pass. This leads to teachers setting low aims for their learners and learners accept and reach it.

Higher education institutions should also play their part. They should stop targeting only 'successful' schools in their outreach programmes. School X and other township schools can only benefit from their expertise and resources. It is imperative that School X build these outside links with HEI's and other organisations, but it is also crucial for higher education institutions to reach out to their surrounding schools and expand their "feeder schools".

The education department should also have strong links with schools and not only visit schools for punitive measures. It is imperative that the WCED intervenes to improve the quality of learning at School X. Here, learners' educational opportunities are being lost and these learners are missing the opportunities to compete for the high skill jobs that can break the vicious cycle of poverty. A definite way for School X to improve its pass and exemption rate at Grade 12 level will be for the WCED to intervene with a whole-school evaluation and quality assurance development plan (DoE 2001). Whole-school evaluation is the corner stone of the quality assurance system in schools. It enables a school and external supervisors to provide an account of the school's current performance and to show

to what extent it meets national goals and the needs of the communities. This approach provides the opportunity to acknowledge the achievements of a school and to identify areas that require attention. Whole-school evaluation requires a school to continually look for ways of improving, and requires government to commit to the provision of development programmes designed to support a school's efforts at improvement (DoE 2000).

I see the failure and low aims of learners and teachers as a three-tier system linking the school/education department, parent and learner. The one is as important as the other. The school and the education department fail the learner in many ways. For example, they draw up policy – one size to fit all. Resources, learner-teacher ratios, safety and the financial conditions of learners in township schools differ from those learners in ex-Model C schools, but they are expected to write the same national Grade 12 examination paper and obtain good results. It seems that the education department's aims for township schools differ from those in ex-Model C schools because the education department knows the short comings in township schools and yet these problems prevail at many township schools.

The formal education level of most parents in townships is lower than that of their children's. Sometimes parents aim is for their child to finish school to help them cover the bills. If they make Grade 12 in the process then it is seen to be a high achievement. In some cases if learners make it and decide to pursue higher education most parents did not make provision to pay their fees.

The schools and parents expectations may be low for the learners who themselves work towards that low goal, and achieve it. When learners want to do something better with their poor achievements, they realise that their school and parents have failed them by giving them poor guidance and advice. For example, either their Matric results are too poor or their parents did not make financial provision for them to further their studies.

Finally, the case study data paints a picture of a township school on its own, isolated from the Department of Education, except in times of extreme crisis, and from higher education institutions. It is a picture of a school "going it alone" as it grapples with its multiple internal problems, including a lack of resources, low staff morale and curriculum practices that clearly do not support an academic trajectory for its students. The absence of whole-school evaluation support and development on a regular basis adds to this situation. All the afore-mentioned being addressed can only improve the learners' school marks and make them entitled to access higher education in an attempt to break the vicious cycle of township schools producing working class citizens.

REFERENCES

Bak, N. (2002). *Thesis Guide*. Bellville. UWC.

Ball, S.J. (1990). *Politics and Policy Making in Education*. Londen: Routledge.

Ball, S.J. (1993). Educational market, choice and social class: the market as a class strategy. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 141: 3-19.

Ball, S.J. (1994). *Educational Reform*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Becher, T. and Kogan, M. (1992). *Process and Structure in Higher Education.* London: Routledge.

Berg, B.L., Hughes, C., & Tight, D. (1997). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Science. Fourth Edition.* Boston : Allyn and Bacon.

Bertelsen, E. (1988). The Real Transformation: The Marketisation of Higher Education. *Social Dynamics,* 24(2): 130-158.

Beugh, S. (1988). Annual Report. Department of Education. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Bisseker, C. (2004). New Matric Exam Spells Class War. *Financial Mail*, 16 January: 3

Block, A. (1994). Marxism and education. Reynolds,W. and Martusewicz, R. (ed.), *Inside/Out: Contemporary Critical Perspectives in Education.* New York: St. Martin's Press: 61-78.

Bot, M. (2004). The 2004/05 education Budget. *Quarterly of Education and Training in South Africa.* 11 (1):11-16.

Bot, M. (2005). School Education in South Africa. Tracking change over ten years. *Edu Source.* 48: 1-10.

Boughey, C. (2002). *From Equity to Efficiency: Access to higher education in South Africa*. Rhodes University.

Bowen, W. and Bok, D. (1988). *Shape of the River: Long–term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions.* Princeton: University Press.

Bowles, S. and Gintis. H. (1976). *Schooling in Capitalist America.* New York: Basic Books.

Bray, E. (2003). Review of Education and Equity: The impact of states policies on South African education. *Perspectives in education.* 21(4) 101-103.

Bunting, I. (2002). Students in transformation in higher education. Cloete, N.; Fehnel, R. , Massen, P., Majola, T., Perold, H., Gibson, T. (Eds.), *Transformation in Higher Education: Global pressure and local realities in South Africa.* Lansdowne: Juta.

Chipkin, I. (2005). "Functional" and "Dysfunctional" communities: The making of ethical citizens. Robins, S.(Ed.), *Limits to Liberation after Apartheid: Citizenship, Governance and Culture.* Ohio: University Press: 134-156.

Christy, P. (1995). *The Right to Learn: The struggle for Education in South Africa.* Braamfontein: The Sached Trust.

Cloete, N. (2002). Policy Expectations: Cloete, N., Fehnel, R., Massen, P., Majola, T., Perold, H., Gibson, T. (2002) (Eds), *Transformation in Higher Education: Global pressure and local realities in South Africa.* Lansdowne: Juta.

Cloete, N. (2003). Equity and Development in Post Apartheid. Cloete, Pillay, Badat and Moja.. (Eds), *A regional perspective for Higher Education.* (Jamie Currie, in press).

Comer, J.P. (1993). The community classroom. *Newsweek*, 121 (20): 56.

Cooper, D. and Subotzky, G. (2001). *The Skewed Revolution: Trends in South African Higher Education 1988-1998.* Bellville. Education Policy Unit, UWC.

Cosser, M. and Du Toit, J. (2002). *From School to Higher Education: Factors affecting the choices of Grade 12 learners*. Human Research Council: Cape Town.

Cronje, F., Dimant, T., Lebone, K., MacFarlane, D. (2006). *South African Institution of Race Relations.* Johannesburg.

Davies, P., Williams, J., Webb, S. (1997). Access to Higher education in the late twentieth century: policy, power and discourse. Williams, J (Ed.), *Negotiation Access to Higher Education. The Discourse of Selecting and Equity.* Buckingham: SRHE& Open University Press: 1-23.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Department of Education. (1997). *Education White Paper 3: A programme for the Transformation of HigherEducation*, Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (1998). *Quality Education for All: Overcoming barriers to learning and developing.* Report of the National Commission on Special Needs and Training National Committee on Education Support Services. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (1997). *Understanding the South African Schools Act. What public school governors need to know*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Higher Education. (2001). *National Plan for Higher Education*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (1996). *National commission on higher education report: A framework for transformation*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (2005). Education at a Glance. *OECD Indicators*. 242-243.

De Souza, C. (2003). Senior Certificate Exams 2002: Plausible Progress or Passes below Par? *EduSource Data News*, 39: 1-28.

Devlin, Y. (2000). *Students with disabilities in higher education: at whose cost and what price?* Discussion paper for Equity and Diversity Unit, University of New South Wales.

Dieltiens, V. (2006). Patterns of Exclusion. *Quarterly Review of education and training in South Africa*. 13: (2): 17-26.

Edu Source No.44 August 2004. The Education Foundation Trust.

Fataar, A. (2006). Educational renovation in a South African "township on the move": A social-spatial analysis. *International Journal of Education Development.* Doi:1016/j.ijeduddev.2006.10.019

Foucalt, M. (1979). *On Govermantality, Ideology and Consciousness*, 6: 5-22

Gall D.G., Borg, W.R., Gall, J.P. (1996). *Educational Research: An introduction*. New York, Longman Publishers.

Gayle, V., Verridge, D., Davies, R. (2002). Young people's entry into higher education: quantifying influential factors. *Oxford Review of Education.* 28 (1):5-17.

Gene, H and Stoneman, Z. (1995). Linking family processes and academic competence among rural African Americans youth. *Journal of Marriage and the family.* 57: 567-579.

Gibson, P. (2001). Higher education as a market: A problem or a solution *Higher education studies.* 26 (1): 85-94.

Gilmour, J. (2001). Intention or in tention? Recent education reforms in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development.* 21: 5-19.

Hall, J. and Tinklin, T. (1988). The experience of disable students in higher education. *The Scottish council for research in education.* 85: 14-25

Hall, M. (2001). Access to higher education: race, resource and social exclusion. *The Journal of South African and American Comparative studies,* 5: 1 -20.

Harker, R., Bourdien, P. (2000). Education and Reproduction. *Sociology of education,* 831- 854.

Hendricks, M. (2006) Education and Social Differentation in South Africa. *Africa review of Books.* 2 (2): 8 - 9.

Heystek, J. and Louw, E.M. (1999). Parental Participation In School Activities - Is It Sufficient? *South African Journal of Education.* 19 (1): 21-27.

Howell, C. (2002). *The implications of White Paper 6 for higher education in South Africa: Developing a programme of action*. Education Policy Unit. University of the Western Cape.

Horvat, E. (2001). Understanding Equity and Access in Higher Education: The Potential Contribution of Pierre Bourdien., Smart, J. C. (Eds). *Handbook of Theory and Research. XV11:* 195-236.

Institutional operating plan. (2004). University of the Western Cape. Bellville.

Jansen, J. (2001). Does the national plan effectively address the critical issues facing higher education? *South African Journal of Higher education.* 15 (3): 5-9.

Jeffreys, C. (2004). Few students enroll in higher education. *This Day*, 17 August: 5

Kallaway, P. (2005). *Education in South Africa. The Matric results of 2002 and 2003 tensions, unintended consequences, deepening inequalities: The uncomfortable truths of the Western Cape?* Faculty of Education. University of the Western Cape.

Kallaway, P. 2007. The crisis in teaching. *The Teacher* 12 (9): 30.

Karlsson, J., Mc. Pherson, G., Pampallis, J. (2001). A critical examination of the development of school governance policy and its implications for achieving equity. Education and Equity. Motala, E and Pampallis, J. (Eds.), *The impact of state policies on South African education,* Heineman.

Kgobe, P. (2006). Mapping the zones of educational exclusion. *Quarterly Review of education and training in South Africa*, 13 (2): 8-16.

Lemon, A. (1999). Shifting inequalities in South Africa's schools: Some evidence from the Western Cape. *South African Geographical Journal,* 81 (2): 96-105.

Libhaber, A. 2005. South African Public Higher Education: Access or success. *Quarterly Of Educational Training in South Africa,* 12 (1): 18-24.

Mabokela, R. (2000). *Voices of conflict: Desegregating South African Universities.* New York and London: Rantledge Falmer.

Mac Millan and Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in Education* (3rd Eds.) New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Makhafola, G. (2006) Orange Farm School proves dedication brings results. *Sowetan,* 28 December: 7.

Martin, L. (1994). *Equity and General Performance Indicators in higher education.* Canteberra: Australian Government Publishers Service.

Moore, R. and Lewis, K. (2003). Curriculum Responsiveness: The implications for curriculum management. A concept paper and literature review prepared for the South African University Vice Chancellors Association. Cape Town: UCT.

Motala, E. and Pampallis J. (2001). *Education & Equity. The impact of state policies on South African education.* Pretoria: Heinemann Publishers.

Mouton, J. (1999). *The practice of social research in South Africa education.* Oxford University Press.

Mukwevho, T; Khosa,V and Kgobe,M. (2004). *Inside the Matric Results. An Analysis of the Matric results.* Centre For Higher Education Policy Development,Evaluation and Management. 19-24.

Neave, G, & van Vought, F. (1994). Government and higher education in developing nations. A conceptual framework. Relations across three continents. *Government and higher education, Oxford*. Pergamon: 1(21): 264-319.

Ngonini, X. (2005). Voilence in society and in the school: a test for democracy, human rights and social justice? *Quarterly of education and training in South Africa,* 12(2): 12-13.

Ntshoe, J. (2002). The Political economy of access and equitable allocation of resources to higher education. *Institution for educational research*, Unisa, South Africa: 23: 381-398.

Ntshwani-Khumalo T., Mngadi, D., Bot, M. (2004). A Tertiary Update October 2003-September 2004: *Edu Source Data News,* 46. 10-26.

Oldfield, S. (2001). Education and equity. The impact of state policies on South African education. Education and Equity. Motala, E. and Pampallis, J. (Eds) *The impact of state policies on South African education,* Heineman.

Patel, F (2006) Q&A with Firoz Patel: Deputy Director General System Planning and Monitoring National Department of Education. *Quarterly Review of education and training in South Africa,* 13 (2): 5-7.

Pityana, B. (2005). Hoër onderwys in krisis..R*apport*, 17 April: 30.

Power, C; Robertson, R and Beswick, G. (1985). *Access to Higher Education: Participation, Equity, and Policy,* Final Report. National Institute of Labour Studies Incorporated.

Provincial Housing Department, (1999). *Regional Housing Development.* Briefing Report. Bellville Office.

Provincial Housing Department, (2000). *Regional Housing Development.* Briefing Report. Bellville Office.

Reddy, J. (2001). *A critique of the National Plan for Higher Education.* Paper presented at the Special Seminar on the National Plan for Higher Education. Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, 7th March.

Reimers, F. (2000). *Unequal schools, unequal chances: The challenges to equal opportunity in the Americas*. David Rockefeller Center series on Latin American Studies. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 131-133.

Sayed, Y. (2003). Educational exclusion and inclusion in higher education in South Africa: creating a new national framework /consensus. *Access & Exclusion*, Tight, M (Ed). Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association, (2001). The challenges of Access and Admission.

Statistics South Africa. (2005). Census 2001 - Primary tables-Western Cape, Census 1996 and 2001 compared. SSA, Pretoria.

Strydom, J. (2002). *Access to Higher Education.* A Research project for the FOTIM and FHFTT. Bloemfontein : University of Free State.

Taylor, S. (1997b). *What is policy? Educational policy and the politics change*. Londen: Routledge

Tight, M. (2004). Access and Exclusion. *International Perspectives on higher education research:* 2: 83-101.

Tirisano (1999): *Five years implementation plan for education in South Africa. Call to action; Mobilising citizens to build a South African Education and training system for the 21st century.* Statement by Professor Kader Asmal, Minister of Education, Tuesday 27 July 1999.

Trochim,W. M. (1991). Developing an evaluation culture for international agricultural research. Lee, D.R., Kearl, S. and Uphoff, W. (Eds). *Assessing the Impact of Agriculturural research for sustainable development.*

Unterhalter, E and Wolpe, H. (1991). *Apartheid education and popular struggle* Johannesburg. Sigma Press.

UNESCO. (1995). *Learning the treasure within*. Report of the international commission on education for the twenty-first century. Paris.

Valley, S., Dolombisa, Y., Porteus, K. (2002). Violence in South African schools. *Comparitive Education*, Teachers College, Columbia.

Western Cape Education Department. (2006). *A human Capital Strategy for the Western Cape. A focus on youth.* Cape Town. Government Printers.

Western, J., Mc. Millan,J., Durrington, D. (1998). *Differential Access to Higher Education: The measurement of socio-economic status, rurality and isolation.* University of Queensland.

Williams, J. (1997). Instructional rhetoric and realities. In Williams, J. (Ed). *Negotiation access to higher education. The discourse of selecting and equity.* Society for Research into higher education, UK: 87-107.

Williams, T. (1987). *Participation in Education*. ACER Research Monograph. Acer, Hawthorn.

Willis, P. (1978). *Learning to Labour: Working Class kids get working class jobs*. Hamshire: Gower Publishing Company.

Whiting, S., Layman, C. (2004). *Developing a model for the upliftment and development of a school:*. Delft. Unpublished paper.

Wolfendale, S. (1992). Learning support in higher education: principles, values and continuities. Wolfendale, S and Corbett, J (Eds). *Operating doors: Learning support in higher education,* Londen: Cassell.

Yantis, J. (1996). Get staffs involved in community relations. *The Education Digest*, 61: 52 –55.

Yin, Robert. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Third edition. Beverly Hills, California: Sage.

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

School X: Documents

1. Learners attendance registers (2000-2004)
2. Teachers attendance register (2000-2004)
3. Non-teaching staff attendance register (2000-2004)
4. Marks schedules 2000-2004
5. School Inventory 2000-2004
6. SGB meeting minutes (2003-2006)
7. Staff meeting minutes (2003-2006)
8. School Financial reports 2003 and 2004
9. Teachers qualifications file
10. School Timetable (2003-2004)

WCED: Documents

1. Theo Hamman, Examination Department.

Delft Statistics

Heinrich Lotz, Town Planning City of Cape Town, Bellville (2007)

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GRADE 12 LEARNERS

Thank you for participating in this research project.

The purpose of this questionnaire is for you to assist me understand your plans for your post grade 12 years. Your honest response to the following questions will be helpful. The information will be treated privately and confidentially, and will be used for my mini-thesis (80 page report). There is no need for you to write your name on this form.

PART A: Demographic information

Please tick the following:

1. GENDER

MALE	
FEMALE	

2. AGE

17	
18	
19	
20 +	

3. HOME LANGUAGE

AFRIKAANS	
ENGLISH	
XHOSA	
OTHER	

4. RACE

COLOURED	
BLACK	
OTHER	

5. Tick your subjects for this year and indicate if you are doing it on the higher or standard grade.

SUBJECT	HG	SG
AFRIKAANS FIRST LANGUAGE		
AFRIKAANS SECOND LANGUAGE		
ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE		
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE		
ACCOUNTING		
BIOLOGY		
BUSINESS ECONOMICS		
GEOGRAPHY		
HISTORY		
MATHEMATICS		
PHYSICS		
OTHER		

PART B

1. Write a short essay about my plans for the next 3-4 years.

*Important points: You will not be judged on spelling, handwriting, grammar etc. You need to think realistically about your plans.

……

…..…….

……..

2. Have you ever been on a university campus?

YES	
NO	

3. Describe your visit.

……

……

……

4. Is there anyone in your family (household) that has a post Grade 12 qualification?

YES	
NO	

5. If yes, who?

Mother	
Father	
Brother	
Sister	
Uncle	
Aunt	
Cousin	
OTHER	

6. Tick off the type of qualification?

University degree	
Technikon diploma	
Other specify	

7. Do you know someone in Delft that has a university or Technikon degree?

YES	
NO	

8. If yes, who?

Neighbors	
Family	
Friend	
Acquaintances	

9. How many people, in Delft, do you know that have a university or Technikon degree? (State the number)

……

……

10. (a) Do you think that a university or Technikon qualification leads to success?

YES	
NO	

(b). Explain your answer in no.10 a.

……

……

11. Have you applied to study at a higher education institution in 2005?

YES	
NO	

12. If yes, name the institution?

……

……

13. If you do not plan to study at a higher education institution next year can you explain why?

……

……

14. How would you rate School X's provision of career guidance on a scale of 1 to 5?

1	Very good	
2	Good	
3	Average	
4	Bad	
5	Very bad	

15. Do your parents know when your test dates are coming up?

Always	
Sometimes	
Never	

16. Do your parents attend school meetings and functions?

YES	
NO	

17. If, no, what do you think the reason(s) can be.

……

……

18. What are the principal and teachers doing to get your parents involved in school meetings and functions?

……

……

19. What is the employment status of the breadwinner (parent) in your family?

	YES	NO
Employed		
Unemployed		
Disable		

20. What is the occupation (kind of work) of the breadwinner?

Labourer	
Domestic Worker	
Factory Worker	
Officer Worker	
Professional Worker (e.g. teacher, social worker etc.)	
Artisan (e.g. mechanic, builder, etc.)	
Other: Specify	

21. I think my school is:

(a) Organized		Disorganized	
(b) Under-resourced		Well resourced	
(c) Well managed		Not good managed	

22. In your opinion, has [School X] benefited from the changes during the ten years of democracy since 1994?

YES	
NO	

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

Thank you for participating in this research project. The purpose of this questionnaire is for you to assist me understand Grade 12 learners' plans after completing their final exams. Your honest response to the following questions will be helpful. The information will be treated privately and confidentially, and will contribute to my research. There is no need for you to write your name on this form.

Please answer the following questions and tick where appropriate.

1. GENDER

MALE	
FEMALE	

2. POSITION

Senior Management (Principal, Deputy Principal, HOD)	
Grade 12 Subject Teacher	

3. Name the activities that your school offers to motivate learners to enter higher education?

……

……

4. What do you think are the barriers that prevent Grade 12 learners in your school from entering higher education?

……

……

5. Do learners' parents attend school meetings/activities regularly?

YES	
NO	

6. If no, what do you think may be the reason(s) for parents not attending school meetings/activities?

……
……

7. Name the activities that the school offers to get parents involved.

……
……

8. What career guidance does the school provide for learners?

……
……

9. How would you rate the school's provision of career guidance on a scale of 1 to 5?

1	Very good	
2	Good	
3	Average	
4	Bad	
5	Very Bad	

10. Explain your choice in no. 9.

……
……

11. I think my school is:

(a) Organized		Disorganized	
(b) Well resourced		Under resourced	
(c) Well managed		Not good managed	

12. Does the school have a vision, and are you working together towards that vision?

……

……

……

13. Is the school benefiting from the post 1994 education reform policy?

YES	
NO	

14. If yes, briefly explain how?

……

……