EDUCATION POLICY REFORMS AND THE QUALITY OF RURAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: PERCEPTIONS OF NDWEDWE COMMUNITIES

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of a Master of Social Science degree in Public Policy at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Howard Collage), South Africa
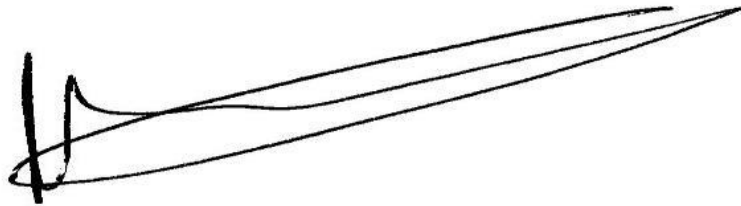
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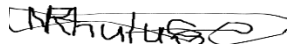
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

This Dissertation is written in honor of my father Sazi Abednigo Khuluse who worked tirelessly in order to provide me and my siblings with the opportunities he never had himself. All my life is accredited to this man who continued working hard regardless of the chronic pain he suffered, and inability to walk properly. Hlongwa, Gabhisa, Mtumaseli you are a real legend, uyindoda emadodeni.

I dedicate this work to my mother Jabulisile Divi Khuluse (*Iqhawekazi lami and my pillar of strength)* and the rest of my family. To my siblings Lihle, Zama and Sifiso, I say *there is always a room for improvement, the sky is the limit*. I would like to pose a challenge to my younger cousins Ayanda, Sthabile and Thembeka that if we were able to do it, you too can do it. The ball is in your court so start running. Dedication and hard work is all it takes. This is my proof that nothing is impossible.

CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

ACRONYMS

ACT- Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

ANA- Annual National Assessment

ANC- African National Congress

CAPS- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

DoE- Department of Education

DoH- Department of Health

EFA- Education for All

FET- Further Education and Training

GET- General Education and Training

KZN- KwaZulu-Natal

MDG- Millennium Development Goals

MEC- Member of the Executive Committee

NATU- National Teachers Union

NSC- National Senior Certificate

NDP- National Development Plan

NPM- New Public Management

NQF- National Qualifications Framework

NNSSF- National Norms and Standards for School Funding

NSNP- National School Nutrition Program

OBE- Outcomes Based Education

OECD- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PIRLS- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

PPN- Post Provision Norms

RDP- Reconstruction and Development Program

RNCS- Revised National Curriculum Statement

RSA- Republic of South Africa

SGB- School Governing Body

SADTU- South African Democratic Teachers Union

SAHRC- South African Human Rights Commission

SASA- South African Schools Act

SAQA- South African Qualifications Authority

TIMSS- Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

VSP- Voluntary Severance Package

UN- United Nation

UNICEF- United Nations Children's fund

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Nompumelelo Khuluse

ABSTRACT

The year 2016 marks 40 years since the June 16, 1976 student uprising where school children from Soweto marched against the introduction of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in schools. The police responded by firing the protesting students with teargas. This resulted in widespread protests across the country where students revolted against the government up until the following year. During that time there were 19 education departments serving different populations. After a protracted struggle, the Government of National Unity under the leadership of the African National Congress came into power in 1994. This saw the passing of the new constitution which included education in the bill of rights under section 29. This dissertation focused on determining how far the country has gone in improving the education of previously disadvantaged sectors of the population since 1994. The study was premised on that opening the doors of education to all would be the first step in leveling the playing field, given the institutionalized inequality in the education system under the previous dispensation. The main objective was to determine the extent to which rural schools are in a position to provide quality education. Specifically the study sought people's perceptions about the quality of education in rural areas including policy and experiential factors that facilitate or inhibit the provision of quality education in rural areas. A qualitative research approach was adopted using a case study of Ndwedwe Education Circuit and thematic analysis was used to analyze data. The results show that most rural schools lack basic infrastructure such as running water; electricity; proper ablution facilities; computers; and libraries. Students are strongly aggrieved by shortage of teachers which leads to teachers teaching subjects they are not qualified for. Furthermore students in rural schools are demotivated and they don't seem to have big aspirations for the future. These were identified as some of the factors that inhibit the provision of quality education. The dissertation concluded that the quality of education remains poor in most schools in rural areas. As a result these schools qualify as small and non-viable schools which have been conceded by the department of education as a category of schools that are unable to provide quality education in South Africa. The recommendation is that small and non-viable schools in rural areas be merged to create mega schools which could be better resourced and able to retain teachers and enhance performance.

KEY WORDS: Quality Education, Rural Education, Social Justice, Education Policy, Capabilities Approach.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Education, training and innovation ...are core elements in eliminating poverty and reducing inequality, and the foundation of an equal society" (National Development Plan, 2011: 261).

1.1.   Introduction

Education is an important tool that can be used to combat poverty. Mr. Nelson Mandela once said that it is through education that a child of a domestic worker can become a doctor. In South Africa the issue of education date as back as the 1650s when colonialism began and introduced slavery and forced labour. The ancient of slavery subjected Africans to blue collar worker while whites were designated white collar jobs. In 1953 the apartheid government introduced Bantu Education Act which was a way of formalizing and imposing the idea of 'white collar jobs for the whites and blue collar jobs for the natives. This Act formalized apartheid by enforcing racially separated education. The belief was that natives do not need to be educated beyond their level of labour.

This was intensified by the then minister of education's decree that Afrikaans will be used as the medium of instruction which led to the 1976 student uprising. This was a student protest against Afrikaans which took about 176 student lives and thousands were left injured. When the new democratic government came into power in 1994, education was one of the main issues that it needed to deal with. This was of utmost importance because in 1955 the ANC's Freedom Charter promised that in the new democratic government education will be available for everyone. This dissertation uses this clause from the freedom charter as the starting point to see if the extent to which the government has achieved its goal of opening the doors of education especially for previously disadvantaged people.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief introduction of what is contained in the study. It provides problem statement, background and outline of research problem, background and outline of research area, significance of the study, research objectives and key questions, and the structure of the paper.

1.2 Problem Description

This thesis looks at how the country has moved towards the envisioned future of opening the doors of education and culture for all. It further highlights policy reforms geared towards improving the quality of education since the dawn of the democratic dispensation. The study at hand wants to determine how far the country has gone in improving the education of the previously disadvantaged black masses.

1.3 Background and Outline of Research Problem

The importance of education derives from that the Apartheid government institutionalized deprivation of a black child in education through the Bantu Education Act No 47 of 1953 and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act 49 of 1953. The principles underpinning these acts are encapsulated in a statement by the then Minister of Native Affairs Mr. Hendrik Verwoerd "…the African should be educated only for enough for them to be useful labours". He also maintained that "there is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour…What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice" (Clark and Worger, 2004). This therefore resulted in a curriculum that was designed to prevent a black child from accessing early learning programs as well as higher education. Contrary to this white children were afforded a diversified curriculum with emphasis on Maths and Science "while black s were faced with a curriculum that emphasized biblical studies and a watered down version agricultural studies" (Department of Education, 2012:4). The compulsory school age varied across racial groups: age seven to sixteen for whites, seven to fifteen for coloured and Asians, and seven to thirteen for blacks (DoE, 2012: 4).

Bantu education Act created separate Departments of Education for different races. The bulk of the funding went to white schools whilst black schools got the least funding. This had direct implications for quality of learning material, facilities and teachers (DoE, 2012: 4). For instance, "apartheid funding resulted in an average teacher pupil ratio of 1:18 in white schools, 1:24 in Asian schools, 1:27 in coloured schools, and 1:39 in black schools" (DoE, 2012:4). Garson posits that even the quality of teachers varied as 95% of teachers in white schools had qualifications as opposed to 15% of teachers in black schools (in DoE, 2012).

The disparities in the learning environment ensured minimized life chances for a black child. "The majority of universities were exclusively for the use of whites while a few others had restricted admission and segregated classrooms for blacks" (DoE, 2012:4). Additionally, there was no financial aid for black students, and banks did not offer study loans for blacks and coloured (ibid). Furthermore the apartheid era had policies such as job reservations which reserved white-collar jobs for whites whilst blacks were designated blue-collar workers. In 1955, the now-ruling African National Congress (ANC) mapped out how the envisioned democratic future would look like in the Freedom Charter. Opening the doors of education to all is amongst the key issues in the Charter. After the dismantling of apartheid and the advent of democracy in 1994, the ANC embarked on a program of rebuilding which entailed righting the wrongs of the previous dispensation. At dawn of democracy the Constitution included education in the Bill of Rights. A strong focus for the new government then, was to create a single, unified education sector that would meet the needs of all South African citizens equally. This democratic government was faced with redressing inequalities, increasing access, decentralizing school governance, revamping the curriculum and adopting pro-poor funding.

The current government deserves to be lauded for establishing a single, unified system of education for the whole of South Africa. Some of the achievements include:

- Access to universal primary education. The country Report on MDGs shows that the country stands at over 95% children attending primary school,
- Access to early childhood development,
- Inclusive access to education for s with barriers to learning,
- Provision of learners support materials,
- A transformed curriculum,
- Upgrading of un/under qualified educators,
- Compulsory primary education of nine year,
- No fee schools,
- Progress in the eradication of mud schools with R8.2 billion having been allocated to the program (DoE, 2012:4).

It is worth pointing out that it is common course that the historical legacy of under development and inequality persists in the previously disadvantaged communities. Persistence challenges include:

- Backlogs in infrastructure;
- Inability of rural and township schools to attract appropriately qualified educators; and
- Lack of management skills.

This research is premised on that opening the doors of education to all would be the first step in levelling the playing field. The point of entry is that the National Planning Commission's Diagnostic Report found that "the quality of education for poor black South Africans is substandard" (2011:13). This raises the question: how can the doors of education be opened to all if Black working class children continue to receive second grade education whilst the rich and mostly white attend privileged schools?

The National Development Plan which is South Africa's Vision 2030 policy document (2011) identifies education as the core element in eliminating poverty and reducing inequality. It goes on to say that education empowers people to define their identity, take control of their lives, and raise healthy families, take part in developing a just society, and play an effective role in the politics and governance of the country (NDP, 2011). This study aims to examine the education system and highlight the policies that have been enacted in order to move away from the oppressive past towards creating a better life for all. President Nelson Mandela once said "It is through education that the child of a domestic worker can become a doctor".

1.2.1 Background and Outline of Research Area
Ndwedwe Education Circuit falls under ILembe education district. This circuit is mostly made up of schools in Ndwedwe Local Municipality. This is a category B municipality as it is completely rural. Underdevelopment persists after 22 years of democracy. The municipality has a population of 140 820 people. Ndwedwe has low education attainment levels with about a quarter (22.3%) of the population 20 years and above who have never attended school (Census, 2011). Another quarter (22.2%) of people 20 years and older having completed matric. Less than a fifth (2.9%) of this cohort has a post-matric qualification. A very high unemployment rate of 48.7% of which 58.3% are youth. In terms of service delivery, 4.7% have flush toilets, 9.3% with piped water and

37.3% with electricity. The life expectancy is also low with only 6% of people above the age of 65 (Census, 2011).

Figure 1: Map of Ndwedwe Local Municipality
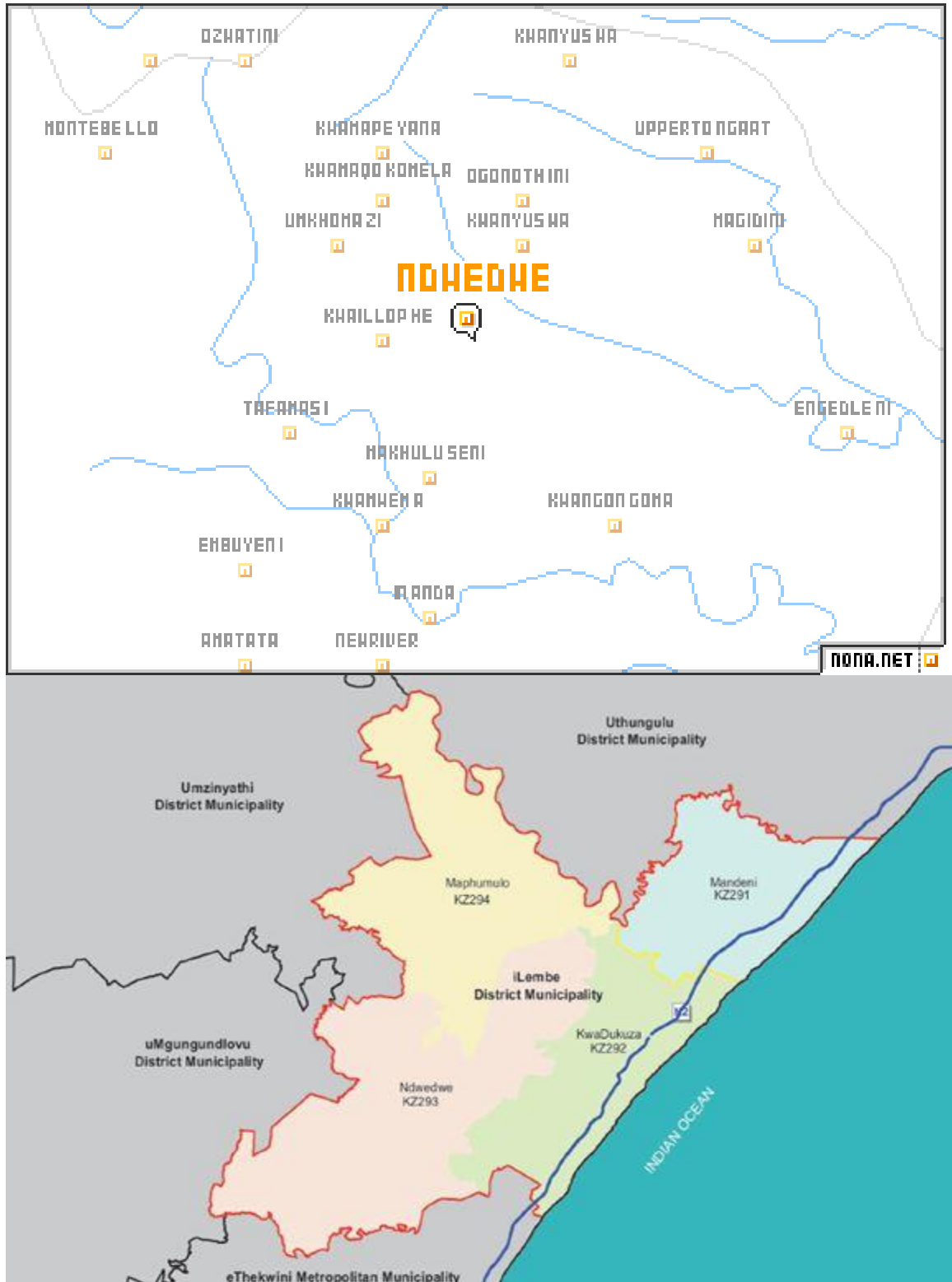
1.4. Significance of the Study and Rationale

Even though a number of studies have been done on the quality of education, this research seeks to dig deeper into the issue of rural education from a social justice perspective. The significance of this study lies in that it seeks to get voices of learners on the education they are getting. This is the indication of whether we are serving the beneficiaries. An important question that refused to escape me is: Is it possible for a child going to a rural school (in some cases, underperforming school) to dream big? Does the sky seem to be within their reach? Are these learners able to have big dreams after school? Does a bright future seem to be a possibility? I undertook this study as I felt that if the answer to any of these questions is 'NO' then our democracy is failing the majority of its people. I hold that education is the only escape route for a child born into poverty, hence if our schools deny learners that escape opportunity then a lot of corrective work needs to get underway. This is also an important public policy study as learners perception about education will help to review and check the achievements and setbacks of the policies that have been put in place since 1994 to improve the quality of education.

1.5 Research Objectives and Key Questions

The main objective is to determine the extent to which rural schools are in a position to provide quality education. Is the environment conducive for teaching and learning? The specific objectives are to:

i. *Determine perceptions about the quality of education.*
    This part of the research delves into perceptions using the following indicators: availability of infrastructure; availability of teachers; matric pass rate; and culture of teaching and learning. A look at these aspects will indicate whether or not s stand a chance of getting quality education. The key questions are:
    - To what extent are the doors of education opened to all?
    - Does a student in a rural school stand a chance as promised during the struggle?
    - Has the playing field been leveled to shed the label 'previously disadvantaged'?

ii. *Establish facilitating factors in advances made in the quality of education.*

This objective focuses on advances made and how they came about. This looks at both policy and implementation levels. The key questions are:

- How far have we advanced?
- What are we doing right?
- What are the drivers of positive change?

iii. *Establish factors that inhibit progress towards provision of quality education.*

Focus is on what still needs to be done or where are we falling short? What conditions need to exist in order to make advances? What changes need to be addressed urgently?

iv. *Analyze education policy reforms.*

Here I zoom into how education policy has evolved under democracy. This exercise helps make sense of perceptions of participants as I can locate their responses within the policy landscape. Here the assumption is that community members and current students may be aware of practices without necessarily being aware of where they come from.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter One is the introductory section which outlines the research problem and objectives. This section also includes the historical background of the South African education system as well as a brief background of the study area. *Chapter Two* is the literature survey which provides what forerunners in the field of education have to say. *Chapter Three* is the synopsis of South African education policy in post-apartheid South Africa. It will undertake a detailed discussion of the policies adopted by the post-apartheid South African government in an attempt to open the doors of education to all. It will also provide a historical background of the SA education reforms including the challenges and success since 1994. *Chapter Four* is the theoretical framework which details the theoretical lenses through which data is analysed. *Chapter Five* is the methodology which details the techniques and methods used to collect, process, and analyse data. *Chapter Six* outlines the research findings. *Chapter Seven* provides a discussion of findings in line with the theoretical framework, literature review and the country's policies. *Chapter Eight* presents concluding remarks and recommendations whilst also pointing out areas of further research.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter has given a brief background of this research paper. It discussed the starting point from which the research is derived. It provided a problem statement, background of research problem, significance of the study, research objectives and key questions, and the way in which the paper is structured.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on access and quality of education within the human rights perspective. It briefly examines what is meant by education as a human rights and accessibility of education. It further looks at the quality of education including the features that help to improve education quality. Furthermore it looks at the quality of South African education and the market related approach to education.

2.2 Education as a Basic Human Right

Ray and Tarrow (2014) proposes that human rights are held by all people simply by virtue of being humans. They argue that human rights are opportunities entitled to people by virtue of belonging to the group to which they apply (ibid). Orend defines a right as "a justified claims on someone, or on some institution, for something which one is owed" (2002:17 in Sharon, 2013). This means that one have a reason to claim an entitlement which another one has a responsibility to honor (Sharon, 2013). For instance, a citizen of a country whose constitution provides for the provision of health care services has a right to claim that which is promised and the government is obliged to carry out the Constitutional provision and deliver those services. Orend went on to define *human right* as "a high-priority claim or authoritative entitlement, justified by sufficient reasons, to a set of objects that are owed to each human person as a matter of minimally decent treatment" (2002:34 in Sharon, 2013).

Education was first recognized as a basic human right in article 26 of the Unite Nation's (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). According to the UN, education as a human right means that all people irrespective of citizenship, national legislation, race, sex, religion or any other status are entitled to an opportunity for formal education (1948). Vally and Zafera (2007) hold that education is not just a human right in itself, but it is also an important tool for the socialization of learners and teachers into a culture based on human rights, democracy and critical citizenship. This means that it is through education that people can understand the culture of democracy and rights. Furthermore, it is through education that they can be active citizens who participate in political arrangements. This suggests that education is an important human right that enables people to understand and exercise other human rights.

Likewise Ray and Tarrow (2014) argue that a human right to education is an ultimate section that guarantees all the other rights. They argue that this offers a dual perspective of education as a human right and education about human rights (ibid). In a critique of South African education system, Tilky (2011) reaffirmed that the human right approach to education is about the role of education in raising awareness about rights including the rights to education and other human right. Sharon (2013) postulates that a human right to education is about providing children with basic primary education that will make them more likely to be literate, numerate and have the basic social and life skills necessary to secure a job and have a fulfilling life. She goes on to say that "the more education people have, the better off they can be" (Sharon 2013:2). William and Rideout (2014) argue that a right to education is an obligation since there is no right not to be educated if one chooses to. According to the UN Declaration of Human Right, primary education is to be accessible and compulsory for all children while secondary education is not necessarily compulsory but accessible. On the other hand higher education is to be available on the basis of merit. William and Rideout (2014) also argue that even the fundamental right to primary education is influenced by poverty level which raises questions about whether it can be provided to all children especially in developing countries.

In South Africa the journey towards securing education as a basic human right only began after 1994 when the country became democratic. This was established in section 29 of the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution. The Constitution provides that "everyone has the right: (a) to basic education, including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible" (RSA, 1996). The Constitution also obliges the government to protect, promote and give effect to this right. It also provides that all the three spheres of government (national, provincial, and local) are interdependently responsible for the advocacy and provision of this right. It gives citizens the right to take the government to court if their right to education is not protected. In their study on education policy changes through a right based framework Spreen and Vally (2006) argue that after decades of apartheid, the constitution's poetic phrases and promises of justice became the symbol of hope for social justice.

2.3 Access to education

2.3.1 The Sustainable Development Goals

Article 28 of the Convention on Children's Rights provides for the rights to education and the government's responsibility to provide free and compulsory primary education (United Nations, 1989). The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) made a commitment to improve access to education around the globe. They believed that making education accessible to all people would be the first step in alleviating poverty and changing lives. Goal 2 of the MDGs committed countries to universal primary education while EFA include early children education, adult education and quality education (Lewin, 2009). Both MDGs and EFA goals aimed at achieving universal access to education by 2015. According to Lewin (2009), by 2009 the countries that were furthest from achieving the goal of universal access to education were from Sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa's MDG (2015) final report shows that the country was successful in achieving goal two by 2009. The report shows that the country achieved universal (99%) enrolment of primary school aged children and gender parity in schools across the country and increased the matric pass rate to 76% (ibid). It also reveals that the country made slower progress in improving the quality of education as a result of not achieving the goal of efficient use of resources. The MDGs were succeeded by the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at ending poverty and hunger, improving education and health, combating climate change, and making cities more sustainable by 2030. Goal number four (quality education) of the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at ensuring "inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030. This goal has seven main targets as follows:

- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;
- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education;
- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university;
- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship;

- By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations;
- By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy;
- By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (Statistics South Africa, 2016: 4).

2.3.2 Compulsory Education

In South Africa education was not easily accessible for the majority of black South Africans during the apartheid era. At dawn of democracy, the new democratic Constitution provided that everyone should have access to basic education. This was also translated in other education policies such as the South African Schools Act (SASA) and the National Education Policy. SASA is the main legislation aimed at promoting access, quality and the democratic governance of schools (Taylor, Fleisch and Shindler, 2008). It seeks to ensure that all children should have access to the same quality of educational opportunities including the same quality of teaching and learning and similar educational facilities (Gardiner, 2008). To achieve this, it introduced compulsory education for all learners between the age of seven and fifteen which is from grade R to grade nine. This means that a child who has not finished grade nine or reached the age of fifteen is obliged by the law to be registered in a school. The Department of Education refers to compulsory education as "the cornerstone of any modern, democratic society that aims to give all citizens a fair start in life and equal opportunities as adults" (2003). In order to facilitate compulsory education, the government introduced a no fee policy that categorized schools into five quintiles with quintile one being schools that are located in poorer communities while quintile five represent schools located in well off communities. According to the No Fee Policy, schools from quintiles one to two are exempted from paying school fees.

Research shows that as a result of this policy South Africa has achieved closed to universal basic education access (Christie, 2008; OECD, 2008; Mashau, Mutshaeni, and Kone, 2014). This means that this policy has been a success story in the South African education system. The OECD (2008) holds that by 2003 there was 96.6% enrolment rate for children between the ages of 7 and 15 with the majority of children within the school going age attending schools and finishing grade 9. Jansen and Taylor (2003) also highlighted that in the same year South Africa had achieved the highest enrolment rate in Africa with a gross enrolment rate averaging over 100% for primary school and over 70% for secondary school. Taylor, Fleisch and Shindler (2008) also found that access to education grew extensively in the 1990s with the enrolment increase of 16.6% between 1991 and 2005. However, Badat and Sayed (2014) argue that openness and accessibility of schooling does not necessarily mean that students actually attend school and attending school also does not mean that they are actually learning. This raises questions about the actual education that learners receive once they are in the system. The following sub-section takes a closer look at the quality of education that learners receive once they are in schools.

2.4 Quality of Education

Education is simply defined as the acquisition of knowledge or skills. Ayers et al (2009 in Martin, 2015) specifically defines education as an enterprise for gearing human beings to reach their full measure of humanity. They go on to say that education is a journey for a person to become more thoughtful, powerful, capable, courageous and exquisitely human in their pursuit. Their definition simply means that education is an aspect of life through which one can realize their full potential. The World Education Forum held in Dakar (2000) which led to the establishment of EFA goals stressed the need for access to education, while at the same time it emphasized the need to improve the quality of education. This suggests that everyone has a right not just to education but a right to quality education. Babaci-Wilhite (2013) concurs that rights can only be ensured if the education offered is of high quality. Tikly (2011) defines quality education as an opportunity to develop great capabilities that are afforded to individuals. He also argues that quality of education is a right that every person should have to develop other rights. Moreover, Ladson-Billings (2009: 467 in Martin, 2015) argues that "when we fight about education we are indeed fighting for our lives.

According to Fredriksson (2014) quality is that which develops every member's potential in every new generation. He argues that quality education is the education that fits present and future needs of all students regardless of their circumstances and prospects. He goes on to say that quality education should relate to the time, place and particular learners and their circumstances (ibid). This means that the provision of quality education is not a one size fit all, and it cannot be the same for all learners in different places, time and circumstance. Fredriksson believes that reading, writing and arithmetic are essential parts of quality education. In their interpretation of education, scholars take into account Amartya Sen's notion of capabilities approach to social justice (Tilky, 2011; Alexander, 2008). Sen (1999:293) defines capabilities as "substantive freedom of people to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choice they have". In simple terms capabilities means opportunities that individuals have, to realize their full potential/talents. They imply opportunities for individuals to converts whatever resources available to them into certain achievements or outcomes (Tilky, 2011). So the point here is that in order for a country to provide good quality education it needs to have institutions where material and social resources are available to everyone in order to possess and exercise basic capabilities that make up a decent life (Alexander, 2008). This would derive from a well-functioning school system, where students have access to all the resources necessary for schooling. This includes an appropriate learning environment where they have desks, water, textbooks, qualified teachers et cetera.

2.4.1 Effective Schools

Garson (2000 in Kruger, 2003) maintains that a good culture of teaching and learning is the most important factor to improve the quality of education. According to Kruger (2003), a good culture of teaching and learning can only be achieved when there is good instructional leadership which will then lead to an effectiveness of a school. He goes on to say that principals are accountable for the success or failure of the school's academic outcomes. He maintains that the role that principals play in the tone and ethos of the schools is important in building a sound culture of teaching and learning. Therefore, he suggests that principals should be leaders of instruction and inspiration, focusing on rising their school's teaching and learning practice. Kruger (2003), states that the school's effectiveness depends on the principal's ability to introduce quality instructions that can create favorable conditions while promoting a sound culture of teaching and learning. Put simply,

this says that principals (and school management in general) need to play a key role in creating an environment that is conducive for teaching and learning.

2.4.1.1. Disruptive Behavior

Rossouw (2005) argues that lack of discipline hamper teaching and learning process. He goes on to say that if disruptive behavior prevails education cannot be successful. Mayer, Moor and Ralph (2000) posit that quality schools usually have high levels of orderliness and discipline as learners are actively engaged in educationally productive activities. Bad behavior hinders the efforts to create a good culture of teaching and learning. Effective functioning of the schools will be possible when both teachers and students are disciplined (ibid). Mabeba and Prinloo refer to discipline problems as "disruptive behavior that significantly affects fundamental rights to feel safe, to be treated with respect and to learn" (2000: 34).

Mosekoameng (2010) found that lack of discipline is a serious problem that drives teachers out of the profession. Likewise, Marais and Meier (2010) concurs that it is impossible to teach misbehaving learners. They go on to say that "learners dignity, self-respect and self-esteem cannot develop in an environment where discipline is not maintained" (Marais and Meier, 2010). Naong refers to lack of discipline as disproportionate and intractable part of every teacher's experience (2007 in Moyo; Khewu and Bayaga, 2014). Scholars believe that parents are responsible for their children's lack of discipline at school (Masekoameng, 2010; Marais and Meier, 2010; Ndamane, 2008). Louw and Barnes argue that lack of discipline is entirely the parent's fault (2003 in Masekoameng 2010). They point out that 'there are no problem children but only problem parents' (ibid). Likewise, Marais and Meier argue that if parents avoid their responsibility of good upbringing of their children at home and at school will be unavoidable (2010). They go on to say that lack of parental care and adult role models in the society is another factor that leads to disruptive behavior. In the same way Ndamane (2008) maintains that parents contribute to the lack of discipline in schools. He argues that parents shift their role to discipline their children to teachers and they perceive their role as external from the school environment when it comes to discipline. He goes on to say that parents sometimes interfere with the teacher's work by not allowing their children to be punished (Ndamane, 2008). On the other hand Rossouw (2005) believes that teachers are somehow responsible for student's misbehavior. He argues that in ill functioning schools teacher's misconduct also have negative effects on student's behavior.

Other factors that contribute to student's disruptive behavior include inexperience/ignorance; curiosity; need for belonging; need for recognition; and need for power (Marais and Meier, 2010). In his study on discipline in South African public schools, Rossouw (2003) found that some schools are beginning to resemble a war zone. He believes that the reason for the decline in the level of discipline over the years is the overemphasis of human rights, especially children's rights (ibid). Marais and Meier (2010) argue that the issue of disruptive behavior in schools became the issue of national concern after the banning of corporal punishment in response to ideas of democracy and human rights. Naong concurs that the abolition of corporal punishment left a huge gap that cannot be filled leading to different kinds of disciplinary problems (2007 in Marais and Meier, 2010). He also found that while some people reacted positively to the abolition of corporal punishment others felt that there are no alternatives to corporal punishment meaning that teachers will never be able to discipline s (Marais and Meier, 2010). In an attempt to deal with ever-increasing disciplinary problems, the South African government introduced the Alternatives to Corporal Punishment (ATCP) distributed to all schools in 2001(ibid).

Moyo et al (2014) describe corporal punishment as infliction of physical pain on the body. On the other hand the ATCPs emphasize communication and respect between teachers and students and they recommend detention, verbal warning, community work and demerit as appropriate disciplinary measures (Moyo et al, 2014). Research has shown that regardless of the introduction of ATCPs, lack of discipline and disruptive measures persist and are increasing in many South African schools (Moyo et al, 2014; Marais and Meier, 2010).

2.4.2 Language of Instruction

Research has revealed that the issue of quality education cannot be separated from the discussion about the language of instruction (Qorro, 2006; Senkoro, 2005; Kinyaduka, 2013; and Babaci-Willhite, 2013). Qorro argues that "language of instruction is a vehicle through which education is delivered" (2006: 3). He argues that the role of language of instruction in education is like that of a pipe in carrying water from one place to another. In this case, language is used to carry education from teacher to students and among students.

Furthermore, Kinyaduka (2013) argues that proficiency in the language of instruction has an impact on student's academic performance and outcomes. Qorro (2006) suggests that the language

of instruction will function effectively only if both teachers and learners understand it in a way that they can discuss debate, ask and answer question. He maintains that these factors are important for teaching and learning and they determine the quality of education (ibid). Likewise, Senkoro points out that a good quality education is that in which teachers and learners use the language they fully understand and are in full command. In addition, Hoadley (2012) upholds that quality is relative to the language of instruction. He goes on to argue that there is a strong relationship between the language of instruction and test language. In his study on the language of instruction and the quality of education in Africa, Senkoro (2005) is critical of the use of English as the language of instruction in many African schools. He argues that learners, teachers and parents have been made to believe that English is equal to education which leads to a fear of using indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in African schools. Senkoro believes that this affect the standard and quality of education as people believe that education without English cannot meet/match the international standards (Senkoro, 2005). He found that there is fear of lack of employment among those who have not been taught in English. At the same time Senkoro (2005) discovered that many scholars have indicated that countries cannot develop or industrialize by using a foreign language in their education system. He argues that learners would be more likely to excel when they are taught in a language they fully understand where they are comfortable to express their thoughts.

Similarly, Babaci-Wilhite (2013) argues that the use of English is a form of dependency on the European institutions. He goes on to say that this shows that the colonialists replaced African education with the system that serves European needs. Babaci-Wilhite (2013) also point out that using a foreign language as a language of instruction makes language a barrier rather than an aid for both teachers and students. He maintains that children of rich parents are more likely to have access to English literature and films and to have traveled and exposed to the use of English. He goes on to say that wealthy urban learners have better opportunities leading to greater levels of English proficiency than their counterparts in poor urban and rural areas. Cooke and Williams (2002 in Babaci-Wilhite, 2013) state that "if children in developing countries have little exposure to the language of instruction outside the school and if teaching the language of instruction is ineffective inside the school, then low quality education is inevitable".

2.4.3 Role of Teachers and Infrastructure

Kamlesh (2015) argue that quality education means learning the right things and learning them well. He argues that teachers are the backbone of education and that quality education depends on the quality of teachers (Kamlesh, 2015). Research has also found that there is a relationship between quality of education and availability of infrastructure. Cohen and Bhatt (2012) argue that teachers work become much easier when the school have proper infrastructure. They state that infrastructure help teachers to carry tasks that are tied to the curriculum and assessment (ibid). They go on to say that improved infrastructure help schools and teachers to carry instructions more broadly. Williams' (in UNICEF, 2000) in a study of 50 000 learners in Latin America found that, learners from schools that lacked classroom materials and had inadequate library facilities, were significantly more likely to get lower test scores and higher grade repetition than students from well-equipped schools.

In their study on Flemish secondary schools Cuyvers, Weerd, Dupont, Molso and Naytten (2011) found that students who have access to good quality infrastructure in their schools are more likely to get high scores than those whose schools have poor quality infrastructure. This goes to shows that teachers' work can be more effective when they have the infrastructure and this is more likely to produce sound learning environment. Cuyvers et al (2011) posits that school infrastructure contribute to the well-being of learners while Cuesta, Glewee and Brooke (2015) found that infrastructure development increase enrolment in schools. Cuesta et al (2015) also found fond that despite the huge infrastructure development in Latin American schools over the years learning did not improve and in other cases it actually declined. They argued that schools that improved infrastructure retained more unprepared learners into the system (ibid). The point here is that quality education needs quality teachers and those teachers need to be provided with proper infrastructure for them to work effectively. However, even though the development of infrastructure is more likely to improve the quality of education but this is not always the case as education sometimes decreases regardless of improved infrastructure.

2.4.4 Quality of South African Education

In South Africa the notion of quality education is provided for in the South African Schools Act which advocates for both access and quality. In this country the quality of education is generally measured by the annual National Senior Certificate (NSC) statistics for matric exams. We commonly hear people talking about the school performance in relation to the matric pass rates. They believe that a good performance of matric learners means a good school. However, Spaull (2013) refutes the idea of using the NSC results as the indicator of the quality of education. He argues that these results are inaccurate and misleading since they only account for the people who reach grade 12. He maintains that out of 100 people that start grade 1, only 50 make it to grade 12 and 40 of those pass with only 12 of them qualifying for university (ibid). His main point is that the NSC results only reflect the best performing students that make it to grade 12 and it does not take into account that more people opt for the less demanding subjects. Another problem with the NSC exams is that it pass requirements is only 30%. Spaull (2013) refers to it as substandard and encouraging mediocrity. Apart from the matric results, South Africa has been part of local and international studies on the quality of education such as the Annual National Assessments (ANA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS).

2.4.4.1 Annual National Assessments (ANA)

ANAs are national assessments that look at student's numeracy and literacy skills. In these tests the national department set the exam paper for various grades and the school conduct and mark those exams. These assessments have shown that majority of South African learners are underperforming in languages and mathematics. In their study that looks at how far has South Africa come in realizing the constitutional goals, Badat and Yusuf (2014) highlighted that according to the second ANAs grade 9 learners across the country only received an average of 12.7% in mathematics. They also found that these results keep declining as students progress to higher grades, i.e. Grade 1 learners received 68% and this dropped to 27% in grade 6 and down to 12.7% in grade 9 (ibid). Research also shows that South Africa performs worse than many low income countries in education (Spaull, 2013).

International studies have discovered that in South Africa geographical locations seems to be playing a big role on the inequality in the provision of education. For instance, in 2011 the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) found that the knowledge of grade 9 learners residing in the KwaZulu-Natal province were on an average of 2.5 years behind their counterparts in the Western Cape Province (Spaull, 2013). This is a study which conducts international assessments of student's knowledge of mathematics and science around the world. In the same year the Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS) survey which asses learner's ability to read also found that the quality also differ between rural and township students. Van De Berg (2008) agrees with this in saying educational performance in South Africa is extremely weak with extremely large differences between schools serving different population groups. The General education System Quality Assessment proved that the majority of poor black South Africans who really need to escape poverty, usually receive education of low quality (Department of Basic Education, 2013). In addition, Christie (2010) also states that the education that the government provides for the poor may contribute to their disadvantage rather than remedy it.

Scholars have argued that the South African education system is failing to provide young people with quality education (Badat and Sayed, 2014; Souden, 2007, Christie, 2008; Van der Berg, 2008). There is agreement that this education is substandard and keeps deteriorating. Statistics show that even though education has been made accessible in South Africa quality is not guaranteed. If just over 10% (12%) of grade 9 learners passed the national mathematics assessment, this is telling. Spaull (2013) points out that the majority of South Africans are below the education level they should be in, in terms of curriculum and in general. He concludes that South African education is inefficient, underperforming and unfair to its beneficiaries (ibid).

2.5 Right to Education and Neoliberal Policy Dichotomy

South Africa became a democracy shortly after the end of the cold war when globalization, modernization and capitalist ideologies were predominant around the world. The neoliberal

approach supports the capitalist ideology (free market competition) and argues that the government should leave space for the private sector to be involved in the provision of public resources.

In line with this approach SASA gave school governing bodies the right to generate extra funding to supplement government funding and improve the quality of education (DOE, 1996). As a result children from wealthier families can afford to attend schools with higher fees which the poor would not be able to afford. A school with higher fees is also likely to have higher quality of education because they can afford the best teachers and other resources. Badat and Yusuf (2014) argue that rich parents are willing to generate substantial financial resources for their children's education and are able to take them to schools that perform better, which the poor are unable to do. This neoliberal approach is then problematic to the notion of human rights and redressing the past because the previously disadvantaged remain unable to attain the education that the rich have. Christie (2008) argues that this approach further increases instead of decreasing the level of inequality because advantaged schools in wealthier communities could generate thousands of rands while other schools could barely collect the fees.

Likewise, Spreen and Vally (2006) maintains that education policies have resulted in a tension between cost recovery and addressing historical backlogs. This means that SASA contradicts its self in advocating for access to quality education for everyone while at the same time advocating for schools to generate their own funding. The idea for schools to generate extra funding reflects in the quality of education that s receive because those who have money can afford better quality. This means that education is not equally accessible for everyone but instead it is determined by one's level of wealth and the education of high quality is for those who can afford it. Therefore children from wealthy families receive better education while the poor receive second grade education. Martin (2015) points out that second-grade education does not translate into meaningful and purposive education for the majority of learners.

As a result former Model C schools perform well compared to previously disadvantaged schools. Children from poor families might have the opportunity to enroll in a school but the quality of education could not be the same as that of the rich schools where parents generate extra funding to make sure that their children get the best education possible. Christie (2010) points out that there are children who attend schools with poor teaching and learning in such a way that failure is

guaranteed while their rich counterpart in advantaged schools have guaranteed success. She goes on to argue that this market related system of fees is unfair and against the human right to education because it violate this right for poor children.

The main point she makes is that the right to education is subordinate to the market since not everyone has the right to quality education but instead they have the right to the education they can afford (ibid). Lastly, Christie (2010) argues that instead of providing free and compulsory education for all, the government introduced the market related system of fees which discriminate the poor who cannot afford to pay. She further notes that even though poor schools do not pay school fees there are still other costs of schooling which affect the right to education for poor children which are not catered for. Vally and Zafera (2007) also make a similar argument in saying that rights that are created for justice often do not operate on a level playing field and that education policies that cater for access to basic education are inadequate because of their blindness to the needs of transformation.

The South African Human Right Commission (SAHRC) also argued that there are two systems of education in South Africa mirroring the problems of two economies existing (2006 in Badat and Sayed, 2014). It states that 60-80% of black and especially poor and rural students are marginalized in education. Badat and Sayed (2014) state that in a two-tie system of education the poor (mainly black learners) attend in a poorly resourced education system, while the wealthy attend private schools that mostly accommodate whites and the new black elite. These wealthier learners are also likely to attend universities upon finishing school (ibid). Likewise, Spaull (2013) make the same point in saying that there are two public school systems in South Africa with the first one accommodating the smaller and better performing 20-25% wealthier s who achieve larger scores than the larger system which accommodate the poorest 75-80% of s. He goes on to say that these two systems differentiate s according to geographic location, wealth, socio-economic status and language.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed access to education and the quality of education from the human rights perspective. The government has made some stride in ensuring close to universal access to basic education which was facilitated by the provision of free education for the poor. The literature

illuminates that access to education is not an end in itself as quality is not guaranteed. It reveals that in order for quality education to be achieved schools first need to have effective school management which will ensure the effectiveness of the schools and produce quality results.

Language is another important factor that contributes to the quality of education and it is important that both teachers and learners fully understand the language used for learning. Teachers and infrastructure are also crucial for attaining quality education as they are the cornerstones of the learning process. It is revealed that South Africa has one of the lowest qualities of education in Africa. Assessments show that learners have low numeracy and literacy skills. Literature further reveal that in as much as the government provide free education for the poor this doesn't close the gap between the rich and the poor since the rich will continue to get better quality education as their schools will have better resources

CHAPTER 3: SYNOPSIS OF EDUCATION POLICIES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter takes a closer look at the education policies that have been introduced since 1994 to deal with the injustice of the past. There have been more than a hundred education policies introduced into the system since the end of apartheid. This chapter will only focus on 10 policies that seek to address issues of quality and rural education. These will include funding policies, curriculum reforms, teacher redeployment program, school feeding schemes etc.

3.2 South African Policy Background

The South African policy discourse is rooted in the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm associated with the neo-liberal public sector. This approach is associated with modernizing agendas of the New Labor in Britain but has been adopted in different national settings. NPM emphasizes planned, managed and modernized approaches to policy development. The characteristics of NPM include customer concept, competition and contracting out. These characteristics are found in the county's Batho Pele "People First" principles. White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) speaks of the culture of customer care and adoption of the tools of the new public service management. The NPM paradigm is Associated with technical approaches to policy development under the rubric of professionalizing the policy process. The question is: can neo-liberal public policies drive social justice?

3.3 NDP on Transformation

In the National Development Plan (NDP) the government acknowledges that inequality and inequity continues as opportunities continue to be determined by race gander, class geographic location, etc. "Inequality hardens society into a class system, imprisoning people in the circumstances of their birth. Inequality corrodes trust among fellow citizens, making it seem as if the game is rigged" (Packet, 2011). A further concession is made on that government policy in education, housing, transport health and social welfare services has not reserved the inherent privilege attached to race. "Historical privilege and deprivation continue to define opportunities. The generations of investment in the skills and opportunities of white people give many a deep reserve of human and social capital on which to draw. While the black middle class has recently been able to develop these reserves, many black South African leaving in historically deprived areas have been denied this opportunity" (NDP: 2011:412).

These concessions on why inequality continues suggest that if the country is to have a somehow equitable society, human and social capital has to be improved among the previously disadvantaged. This thesis argues that progressive education policy is a key to eroding inequity and inequality. Let the goal be expanding the black middle class. Let the schools teach to create a new generation of black South Africans who can compete with their white counterparts for opportunities. This is the essence of social justice.

"Justice and the feeling of being treated justly are critical elements of inclusion and nation building" (NDP, 2011:414). Vision 2030 seeks to create "a sense of inclusiveness that touches all South Africans including the poor. This means tackling the factors that lead to unequal opportunities and taking extraordinary measures in education and skills development, especially of black people and the poor" (NDP, 2011:414). The NDP says redress is necessary to solve the problem of unequal opportunity and identifies affirmative action, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), progressive taxation, preferential procurement and land reforms as some of the interventions to this end.

The current government has adopted the capabilities approach to development and acknowledges that capabilities are critical to broadening opportunities and the nation building process. "Education endows a nation with skills and makes it more productive. Education opens up new opportunities, not just in terms of employment but also through the increased confidence that literacy brings" (NDP, 2011: 415). The country acknowledges that people's capabilities make them more empowered. Education training and innovation are central to South Africa's long term development and are core elements in eliminating poverty and reducing inequality and the foundation of an equal society (NDP, 2011: 261). The NDP acknowledges that higher education provide opportunities for social mobility and simultaneously strengthens equity, social justice and democracy. Our schools should therefore produce learners that can access higher education as this has been identified as a springboard to social mobility and social justice.

The NDP further acknowledges that a good education system is crucial to addressing poverty and inequality. It argues that there are other mediating factors that determine s' performance such as the psychosocial wellbeing of learners. Hence provision of other services such as housing, basic services and social security are important for building an education system that benefits learners. The NDP argues that "to overcome our apartheid legacy it is essential that everybody has access

to services of consistently high standard regardless of who they are and where they live. This requires that specific consideration be given to the most vulnerable children especially those who are living in poverty or with disability" (NDP, 2011: 265).

It also acknowledges that "Teachers are central to education and teaching should be a high valued profession" (NDP, 2011:265). The importance of high quality teachers for math and science is largely emphasized. The NDP places a responsibility on South African Counsel of Education and specialist math science and other subject associations to lead continuous development of teachers on the promotion of professional standards. The bursary programs for teachers can also improve teacher education. It also advocates for education institutions to have capacity to implement policy and where such capacity lacks, measures to be taken. The NDP also calls for districts should provide targeted support to improve practices within schools and ensure information sharing with schools. Parents need to be given meaningful information on their children's performance. Assessments must enable learners to compare their performance with their counterparts in other schools in the district.

Policy makers and directors need to be able to access information that helps them determine the rate and extent of progress in different sectors of the education system, including reasons for underperformance and schools requiring intervention. There is also Need for capacity to support schools that are performing poorly. The NDP also acknowledges a need to address infrastructure backlogs so that all schools meet the basic infrastructure and equipment standards set by the Department of Education.

3.4 Post 1994 Education Policy Reforms
When the new democratic government came to power in 1994 it aim was to restructure the whole education system in order to overcome racial, gender and anti-poor bias (OECD, 2008). The government has tried to transform all aspects of the education system and the racially fragmented education was dismantled and replaced by a unified education system with provincial sub-system (ibid). Moreover, education has been made more accessible for those who were previously denied or had limited access (OECD, 2008).

The first step in dealing with the past in education was section 29 of the Bill of rights found in the new South African Constitution (1996) which provides that:

Everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education; and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible;
Everyone has the right to establish and maintain, at their own expense, independent educational institutions that do not discriminate on the basis of race; are registered with the state; and maintain standards that are not inferior to standards at comparable public educational institutions. - RSA, 1996

In coming with new ways of delivering education the government introduced various policies and legislations in line with the Constitution to address issues of equity and inclusive education, resource development, financing, governance, curriculum, adult education, early childhood development etc. OECD (2008) argue that even though the 1996 Constitution was the main imperative that directed change but political contestation between the education department and interest groups played a huge role in the choosing of policy mechanism.

3.4.1 White Paper on Education
The first step in an attempt to deal with the past was the formulation of the 1995 White Paper on Education which provided for the steps to be taken for policy formulation (Department of education, 1995). This White Paper located education within the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) and pointed out that education is an important element of human resource development. It advocates for the development of a national qualifications framework to accredit learners' outcomes or achievements (DOE, 1995). It also advocated for the development of education policies that address under development, inequitable development and learning opportunities for all while ensuring quality education and non-discrimination for all learners (DOE, 1995). Stemming from this, the government introduced policies such as the South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) [number 58 of 1995]; National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996 and the South African Schools Act (SASA) No.84 of 1996.

3.4.2 South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) No. 58 of 1995
South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is a legislation made for certification and quality assurance and it provided for the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which began operating in 1996. The aim of SAQA Act was to introduce a national framework for learning outcomes and to contribute to the human development of learners. It provided for the

establishment of NQF. The role of NQF was to provide for the Registration of national standards and qualifications. In 2008 NQF replaced SAQA and became an Act on its own known as the National Qualifications Framework Act. According to the DOE (1995) the objectives of NQF were to:

> *create an integrated national framework for learning achievements; facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths; enhance the quality of education and training; accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby Contribute to the full personal development of each and the social and economic development of the nation at large.*

3.4.3 South African Schools Act (SASA) No.84 of 1996
The preamble of the South African Schools Act stated that:

"...this country requires a new national system for schools which will redress past injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all s and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all s, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organization, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the State; ..." -Republic of South Africa, 1996c.

SASA focuses on access, redress and quality. It aims to ensure that all s of all races and gander enjoy the right to access quality education without discrimination. It provides a framework for governance and funding of schools. Chapter 2 of this Act prohibits corporal punishment and makes schooling compulsory for children between the ages of 7 and 15 which mean that the first 9 years of school from grade 1 to grade 9 is compulsory. Chapter 3 provides for the development of School Governing Bodies (SGB) made up of parents and teachers responsible for governing the schools. These bodies have the right to make their own admission and language policies and generate extra funding for their schools to supplement government funding and improve the quality of education

(DOE, 1996). Chapter 4 provides for the payment of school fees determined by the SGB and also give right of exemption from payment to parents who cannot afford to pay.

3.4.4 School funding

3.4.4.1 National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF)

SASA makes provision for funding public schools in an equitable manner in order to ensure learners' right to education and redress the inequalities of the educational provision. The National Norms and Standards for School Funding were introduced by the DOE in 1999 to address inequality. This policy divided schools into five wealth quintiles and provide funding accordingly. Being in quintile one means that the school is located in the poorest community while the fifth quintile signify schools that are located in the richest communities (Mestr and Ndhlovu, 2014). Schools in poorest communities receive more funding than schools in better off communities. According to OECD (2008) poorest schools in the first quintile receive 35% of the total school allocation while the least poor in the fifth quintile receive 5%. The second quintile receive 25%, third 20%, and the fourth receive 15%. The OECD (2008) review found that the quintile system does not reach all needy schools. It states that some schools in poorer communities are ranked as quintile 3 or 4 (OECD, 2008: 161).

3.4.4.2 School Fees and Exemption Policy

SASA provides for the establishment of SGBs with the responsibility to generate extra fees for their schools through charging school fees. In 1998 the Fee Exemption Policy was introduced. The aim of this policy was to exempt poor parents from paying compulsory school fees, improving access to education through abandoning school fees for learners from poor families.

3.4.4.3 No Fee Paying School Policy

This policy was derived from the NNSSF and first implemented in 2007. The aim was to exempt poor schools from paying fees based on the poverty level in their area. The main objective was to alleviate the effect of poverty on access to education and specifically targeting education spending on the poor. As a result all schools falling under quintile one and two are not allowed to charge school fees. OECDE (2008) states that fee exemptions and no fee schools do not, of course, cover all costs for sending a child to school. These do not consider that school uniforms, cost of transport, and stationary and other learning material also put a significant burden on poor parents (ibid).

3.4.5 National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996

The aim of the National Education Policy was to provide a framework within which national education policy would be located. This Act sought to facilitate democratic transformation of the national education system so that it can serve the needs of all the people of South Africa and uphold their fundamental human rights. It outlines fundamental principles which would serve as a premise for all status on education. These principles include the protection of fundamental right of every person to have equal access to education institutions. They are also about enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of all learners. In its education quality assessment, the Department of education posits that this policy "laid out broad features of policy for democratic transformation, while other legislations introduced changes to the content and methodology of curriculum 2005 (C2005) and Outcome Based Education OBE" (Department of Basic education, 2013).

3.4.6 Curriculum Reform

The curriculum has been at the forefront of the South African educational transformation which has led to large scale curriculum reforms. Immediately after 1994, there were attempts to abandon the unequal and disproportionate Bantu Education curriculum. This curriculum socialized black people to servitude and imparted passiveness, undermining teacher's creativity and autonomy and was not in line with the new ideas of development and transformation (Onwu and Sehoole, 2015). Curriculum change was a step towards breaking away from the apartheid curriculum and to address, skills, knowledge and values (Mouton; Louw and Strydom, 2012). The bottom line was to create a curriculum that takes into account values in education, diverse cultures, extreme backgrounds of learners etc. Focus was on rationalizing and consolidating the syllabus of racially segregated educational departments and to remove racist, sexist and offensive language. The curriculum was then revised in four main steps with the first being the cleansing of racist elements immediately after winning the elections, followed by an introduction of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and Outcome Based Education (OBE) implemented from 1998. The third one was the revision of C2005 in 2001, and the last one was the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) of 2011. The Department of Education (2013) and Mouton et al (2012) refer to the curriculum reform as most important and controversial component of education policy since 1994.

3.4.6.1 Curriculum 2005 and Outcome Based Education

Drawing from international curriculum developments namely from New Zealand and Australia, Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was launched in March 1997 and implementation started in 1998. This curriculum was grounded on principles of Outcome Based Education (OBE). More emphasis was placed on outcomes, results and success rather than input. It introduced a framework where teachers were open and able to create their own learning program and support material. To achieve this, subjects were replaced with learning areas and textbooks with workbooks and portfolios (Mouton et al, 2012). Vandear and Killen provide a simple description for understanding the difference and relationship between C2005 and OBE by pointing out that C2005 was "an attempt to bring outcome based framework for school education in South Africa" (2003: 125) . Chisholm (2003: 3) describes OBE as "a guiding philosophy for C2005… and its initiator's pedagogical rout out of apartheid education".

Upon it introduction C2005 was well received by the public, but later on, it encountered a lot of criticism based on its theoretical grounds and early outcomes in areas such as literacy and numeracy (DOE, 2013). It was criticized for being too elaborate, involving a lot of new and unnecessary terminology, and relying on poorly trained teachers. In 2000 a Ministerial Review Committee was commissioned to evaluate the curriculum and it found that that the implementation of this curriculum was made difficult by:

> *"a skewed curriculum structure and design; lack of alignment between curriculums and assessment policy, inadequate orientation, training and development of teachers; learning support material that are variable in quality, often unavailable and not sufficiently use in classroom; policy overload and limited transferee of learning into classroom and; and Shortage of personnel and resources to implement and support C2005"* - Chisholm, 2003: 3.

3.4.6.2 Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

The ministerial committee recommended a revised curriculum system that will be in line with teacher orientation and training, staffing and sourcing of curriculum structures, as well as support material (Chisolm, 2003). It also proposed cutting the number of learning areas, reintroduction of History and development of Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). The RNCS was meant to "promote conceptual coherence, have a clear structure and be written in clear language, and design and promote the values of a society striving towards social justice, equity and development through the development of creative, critical and problem solving individuals"

(Chisholm, 2003:4). This was developed and became a policy in 2002. This new policy considered teachers as the key players in educational transformation and they are considered as interpreters, mediators and designers of learning programs (Msila, 2007). It identified education as "the intervention of an educator in a life of a child on his way to adulthood" (Stuart et al 1987 in Msila, 2007:152). Vandeyar and Killen (2003) maintain that the RNCS was not a new curriculum but a restructuring and strengthening of C2005 and acknowledged the OBE principles. They go on to say that the expected outcomes remained the same and only assessment standards changed.

3.4.6.3 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)
In 2009 the Ministerial Task team reviewed the implementation of RNCS and discovered challenges that impacted negatively on the quality of teaching. This resulted in the introduction of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) as an amendment to the RNCS. The aim was to resolve longstanding problems in the curriculum delivery process. It places more emphasis on grade by grade and subject by subject assessment. Every subject in each grade has a signed and comprehensive policy that gives details on what teachers have to teach and access. This new curium was first implemented in 2011 with the main aim of reducing teacher's work load. CAPS is seen as a step to "go back to basics" with the aim of improving the capacity of teachers and making sure that they have clear guidance as to what to teach and how.

3.4.7 Teachers
It is important to note that teachers play an important role in education and it development. It is impossible to have quality of education without quality teachers. Onwu and Sehoole (2015) argue that the quality of education cannot exceed the quality of teachers. In South Africa when the democratic government came into office in 1994, one of the priorities in education was to improve the quality of education and for that to happen teachers had to be considered as the key role player in educational development.

3.4.7.1 Teacher Rationalization Policy
The first audit of teacher education was commissioned in 1995. This audit indicated that teacher supply was not in line with the demand and newly qualified teachers were not able to find employment simply because supply and utilization policies was predicated on premises that were ethnically and racially based (ibid).

It's also indicated a high number of unqualified or under qualified teachers which had a negative influence on teacher development especially in-service teachers (Hofmeyer and Hall, 2006 in Onwu and Sehoole, 2015). The audit also revealed that the main problem was with the quality of teachers and the teacher development program. Collages of education were then closed and teacher education offered at university and those that were not closed were incorporated to universities in order to produce and supply sufficient teachers (Onwu and Sehoole, 2015). In addition the government introduced the teacher's rationalization program implemented from 1997. The aim of this program was to ensure equitable distribution of teachers across all schools and provinces. Teachers were redeployed to different schools and those who were not willing to move to other schools were given an opportunity to leave the education system and apply for voluntary severance packages (VSP). VSPs were awards given to teachers who wanted to leave the teaching profession during the redeployment period. The aim of this program was to right-size the education system and promotes equity among provinces and all teachers. This was to be achieved through the equalization of teacher salaries and equalization of teacher-learner ratio. In the end the teacher rationalization policy resulted to an increase in the number of new teachers and increased salary and pension benefits. Furthermore this policy led to a large number of experienced teachers leaving teaching and taking the VSP. The large number of teachers who opted for the VSP also led to large provincial overspending.

3.4.7.2 Teachers Incentives Policy

Teachers play an important role in the delivery of quality education. McNeil, (2004) maintains that in poor schools teachers are the best resource that s have toward better education. Their performance and commitment is what leads to the successful implementation of the curriculum reforms (Poti, Andrew and Muchativugwa, 2014). Rural areas are known for being poor, under resourced and marginalized. As a result the majority of teachers prefer teaching in urban school resulting in rural schools having a shortage of teacher and all qualified teachers opting for urban schools. As a result it was difficult to find people to teach in rural school. In 2008 the Department of education realized that teachers' performance is tied to their satisfaction and introduced incentives for teachers who teach in 'remote' and 'other' schools (DOE, 2014). Other schools refer to schools that are hard to teach and schools where principals have requested that some posts be incentivized (ibid). This was done to retain teachers in these areas as teachers tend to prefer schools

in urban areas. This incentive scheme was introduced so that teachers would stay in the rural schools. The objectives included:

- addressing the issue of shortage of teachers in rural schools,
- retaining qualified teachers to work in rural public schools, and
- ensure quality education in rural schools.

This policy is implemented differently across provinces. For example in the Northern Cape, Western Cape and Free state incentives are given to all teachers in farm school while in KZN they are only given to teachers in poverty "nodal areas" (DOE, 2014).

3.4.8 Other Policies

3.4.8.1 National School Nutrition Policy (NSNP)
The National school Nutrition Policy (NSNP) was first introduces in 1994 as Primary School Nutrition Program managed by both Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Education (DoE). It was first targeted at primary school s in poor areas and later (2009) extended to include secondary schools. The aim of this policy was to 1) provide poor s with daily meals to enhance their learning capacity; 2) promote healthy lifestyles through nutrition education and; 3) advocate for the development of food gardens in schools (Department of Basic Education, 2014). Other objectives included alleviating short-term hunger; providing an incentive for children to attend school regularly and punctually and; Addressing certain micro-nutrient deficiencies in children (OECD, 2008: 60).

The meals are provides to s in quintiles one to three as well as identified special schools in both primary and secondary schools on all school days (DoBE, 2014). Meals are provided at an average cost per day. In 2014 this was set at R2.60 for primary and special identified schools and R3.46 for secondary schools (ibid). Monitoring and evaluation reports show that the program is reaching the majority of targeted s. However there are still challenges when it comes to the quality and quantity of delivered food which leads to noncompliance with the necessary menu option (KPMG, 2008). It also appears that the goal of establishing food gardens have not been met fully as only about 50% of schools had functioning gardens by 2008 (ibid). It also appeared that the use of quintile system to identify schools is not effective as this looks at the community in which the school is located and sometimes not align with the actual poverty levels (KPMG, 2008).

3.4.8.2 Learner Transport Assistance Policy

This policy was first introduced in 2012. The aim was to improve access to quality education through coordinated transport system, improve the planning and implementation of integrated transport service, ensure effective management of learner transport system and provide reliable, safe and secure transport for learners.

3.4.8.3 National Policy on Assessment and Progression

This policy was introduced in 2012 and first implemented in 2015. It provided that s should not stay in the same phase (e.g. foundation, GET, or FET) for more than four years. This means that you can only repeat once in each phase. This was to be achieved by progressing s who do not meet the promotion requirements. According to this policy s are promoted to the next grade even if they do not qualify.

3.5 Education Policy Reviews

Most scholars who have studied the post-apartheid South African education are critical of it and they believe that the system is failing the youth of South Africa. Jansen (2002) argues that regardless of thousands of policy documents produced in post-apartheid South Africa, actual change in schooling remains so little. He maintains that education policy failure is the result of the lack of resources, poorly trained teachers, poor implementation strategy, and lack of policy coherence. Jansen also believes that if there were enough resources, there would be fidelity between policy and practice. Furthermore, he points out that South Africa is more fascinated with making policies rather than implementing them and that "policy implementation is a way of muddling through difficulties experienced in practice through policy" (Jansen, 2002: 202). He also states that the government's ability to implement policies is questionable and suggests that the period between 1994 and 1999 was more symbolic rather than practical as the government focus on the establishment of new ideological and political organizations and institution to display a departure from the apartheid education system. This resonates with other scholars who also believe that policy goals are symbolic and illusive for transformation and enhancing opportunities for the marginalized learners (Christie, 2008; Spreen & Vally, 2010; Sayed & Ahmed, 2011).

Soudien (2007) argues that policy measures of the democratic government have not sufficiently comprehended the legacy of apartheid which continues to shape the character of social behavior and performance of children in school. His main point is that rich children continue to perform better than poor children and he believes that this is the result of the country's history and that policies have not been able to overcome this problem. Badat and Sayed (2014) also maintain that the South African education fails to enhance freedom for all and embody a restricted notion of social justice. They go on to say that the government's failure to act with urgency in reforming the South African education system betrays the constitutional mandates and cause the historically disadvantaged to remain with crises of education. They conclude that "as a consequence of policy, the doors of learning remain completely shut for the majority of South Africans" (Badat and Sayed, 2014:127). They go on to say that "there is still a long road to be travelled to realizing social justice and Constitutional imperatives and goals in education" (Badat and Sayed, 2014: 129).

In looking at education decentralization policy which gives the educational responsibility to provincial authorities, Sayed and Soudien (2005) found that decentralization policies may exacerbate more than reducing inequality. This means that such policies may exclude people rather than including them. They point out that when a norm such as gander, class or race is invoked, on the other hand it creates its own exclusion. They see decentralization policy as one thing that produces exclusion. These policies gave schools the power of governance including the right to generate funding. In doing so richer s end up having their kids in better schools while the poor are excluded because they cannot afford such schools. Likewise, Badat and Sayed (2014) also argue that educational decentralization policy create grate social inequality across provinces.

Badat and Sayed (2014) talks about the decentralization policy in relation to provincial equitable share aimed at ensuring that each province spends an equitable share on each leaner. Each province get it share of the budget and have the right to decide how they redistribute it across social services including education, health and social welfare (Badat and Sayed, 2014).

As a result of this policy, educational expenditure differ from province to province so does performance (ibid). An example of this is provided by Spaull (2013) where the Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) of 2011 shows that the average Grade 9 s in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) was 2.5 years of learning behind those from the Western Cape in science and the Eastern Cape was 1.8 years behind Gauteng. Badat and Sayed (2014) conclude that provincial decentralization creates great inequality across provinces in education since provinces do not have the same capacity to deliver high quality of education as a result of colonial and apartheid history. They argue that the government needs to rethink this process in order to achieve social justice in education. Christie (2008) points out that despite numerous policies, the provision of quality education for all remains elusive. She goes on to say that through its policies, the South African government has not been able to change the core activities of education and this is evident in the great inequality in student's experience and achievement in schooling (ibid). Finally Nussbaum (2004 in Christie, 2008) argues that we should not expect that all norms we want will be achieved through a policy of fostering economic growth.

In their study on education policy changes through a right based framework Spreen and Vally (2006) argues that after decades of apartheid, the constitution's poetic phrases and promises of justice became the symbol of hope for social justice. They go on to say that despite all the laws and changes in South African education, social injustice still remains pervasive after years of democracy. Spreen and Vally also maintain that the high enrolment rate in South Africa does not mean that the system has retained learners and provide quality education. They posit that poverty is still a major obstacle to education as a result of the cost of school fees, uniform, transport money and stationary. They go on to say that all these factors affect access to education while things such as lack of electricity, desks, water and sanitation and other facilities affect the quality of education s receive. They conclude that education as a human right remains elusive and argue that "right to education is effectively guaranteed, while depriving people of the enjoyment of many rights and freedoms where the right is denied or violated" (Spreen and Vally, 2006: 354).

Additionally Smit (2001) argue that teachers need to be more involved in education policy formulation because they are the ones who implement them. She points out that they are expected to change themselves and do what is in line with the specifications of policy makers who do not know them and the context they work in. likewise, Soudien (2007) argue that policies should not be done to people but work with people in an engaged and ongoing way. He goes on to say that the reason why the South African education system fails young people despite increasing investment in it is because of the neglect of managerial matters of schooling, teaching, textbook and time. Vally and Zafera (2007) also argue that the constitution's notion of right to education cannot be achieved effectively if citizens are denied the right to be heard and to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

In his study on rural education Gardner (2008) expressed his concern with the government's notion of equality. He argues that the democratic government treats all schools as equal while they don't operate under the same conditions. He believes that rural education should be treated as a separate category since schools in rural areas usually lack basic resources such as classrooms, water, electricity, and have no internet as well as public or school libraries. This means that these schools do not have the access to the same quality of teaching and learning as their counterpart in in urban areas resulting in their right to education being compromised. He also blames the government's emphasis of urban development which leaves rural areas trapped in the legacy of poverty and neglect. He makes a point that the realities faced by people in rural areas cannot be addressed by policies made out of the context of these areas. Similarly, in his account of social justice in education Tikly (2001:91) maintains that "a social justice approach does not require all s to have access to the same kind of quality inputs. Past injustices along with differing educational needs mean that s require different kinds and levels of resource in order to develop their capabilities".

3.5 Conclusion

It is now evident that the new democratic government has made a number of changes to improve the quality of education and leveling the playing field for previously disadvantaged and advantaged people in education. The first step was the constitution which provided for the right to education for everyone which led to a number of reforms aimed to ensure this right.

These reforms include the qualification frameworks for accrediting student's achievements and certification; the National Education Policy to facilitate democratic transformational; and the SASA which ensures that all s of all races enjoys the right to education. SASA also provided for the creation of SGBs and payment of school fees. The government also introduced the norms and standards for school funding which divide schools into quintiles where schools in poor communities receive more funding. Furthermore, the government also introduced the fees exception policy for poor parents who cannot afford school fees. As poverty and inequality continued to strike poor communities the government introduced a no fee policy for schools located in poor communities. School feeding scheme and learner transport were also introduced to deal with problems of poverty and inequality. Besides the issue of poverty and funding the government has also transformed the curriculum starting with the cleansing of racial elements, to the introduction of C2005 and OBE and then the now in place CAPS system. The government also introduced policies pertaining to teachers including the teacher rationalization policy for teacher redeployment and the teacher incentives policy for teachers in remote schools.

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the theoretical framework used to observe and understand the study at hand. A theoretical framework shapes what we see and how we see it. It is an important tool that guides, builds and support the study. This research looks at the South African education system through the lenses of social justice theory. Social justice is premised on that society is responsible for the undeserved suffering of its members, hence society as a whole should redress deprivation and come up with social means to ensure that harm is avoided (Irani, 1995). In looking at the South African education system, this dissertation says that existing inequality in the education system was part of the social engineering of the apartheid era. Hence the current government has a constitutional duty to bring redress.

4.2 The Theory of Social Justice

Social justice is a relatively new concept that was born out of labuor struggles during the industrial revolution and the advent of socialist views of organization of society. The concept has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon political culture. Social justice rose as an expression of protest against what was perceived as capitalist exploitation of labor. Its focus was on developing measures to improve the human condition. Social justice was born as a revolutionary slogan premised on the ideals of progress and fraternity (UN, 2006:12).

By the end of the 19th century social justice was used by social reformers to appeal to the ruling classes to attend to the needs of the poorer classes (Zajda, Majhanovich and Rust, 2006). Proudhan (in UN, 2006) identified justice with social justice and social justice with respect for human dignity. Zajda et al maintain that in a broader sense social justice refer to "an egalitarian society, that understands and values human rights, and that recognizes the dignity of every human being" (Zajda et al, 2006:1). The UN argues that those in power need to realize that their legitimacy derives from their capacity to serve the people. "Social justice is impossible unless it is fully understood that power comes with the obligation of service" (Zajda, 2006: 9). A reference to legitimacy brings us to the issue of self-interest, general interest and the common good. The essence of democracy resides in a shared understanding of the common good.

In a democracy the people elect a government that resonates with their interests. A democratic government therefore has a duty to serve the people who elect it into power. In the case of developing countries like South Africa the 'serving' translates into issues of redistribution where the masses look up to the government to improve their life situation. Social justice requires the existence of strong public policies geared towards the overall social goal of improving the welfare of the citizenry. When this condition has been met, then all are in a position to develop as individuals and as social beings. Social contract theorists such as Rousseau and Mill emphasize the role of the state in prioritizing the welfare of its citizens and ensure that some basic human rights are protected. The point of departure is that a government dedicated to social justice and the ideology of egalitarianism goes beyond policy rhetoric and has to ensure more equitable and fair access to resources and socially valued commodities (Zajda et al, 2006).

This thesis argues that social justice refers to fair distribution of goods and opportunities which is in line with the UN's contention that "social justice may be broadly understood as the fair and compassionate distribution of the fruits of economic growth" (Zajda, 2006: 7). This line of thinking gets more frowns in the globalized world order dominated by capitalist interests. They argue for merit rather than equity. This dissertation argues that the playing field needs to be leveled to allow a black child to stand compete with a white child who has always been ahead given the social engineering under apartheid. Social justice would argue that the education of children from previously disadvantaged communities needs redress because this cohort of society was only trained to be good laborers under apartheid. Since social justice says that if a cause the deprivation of B then A is responsible for restoring B, now the South African education system needs to create an environment that will ensure redistribution of equal opportunities.

4.2.1 Social Justice in Roman Law

In a nutshell social justice is "an abstraction emerging from an intuition embedded in human nature that, in any interaction among humans a person should get what he or she deserves…no person should receive undeserved benefit or be made to bear undeserved burden" (Irani, 1995: 3). This is the principle of intrinsic justice. Another aspect is comparative justice which is an Aristotelian formulation that persons be treated equally. This is premised on the notion that equals should be treated as equals, and unequal be treated unequally.

In ancient times these principles were widely accepted though not articulated in the language of rights. The language of rights came from the Roman law rooted in Stoic Philosophy. Ancient judiciary language used concepts such as violation, deprivation, harm, and so forth calling for remedial action. Justice entailed restoring a people who suffered deprivation or harm to the state they deserve. Judicial thought and language became embedded on the removal unjust benefits or burdens rather than adjudication of conflicting claims in accordance with the right of the parties (Iran, 1995:3). This judicial though was applied in the enforcement of contracts. In a case where the judge found a contract to be unfair, the judge would alter the terms of a contract to make it somewhat fair.

Social justice is premised in that "society is responsible for the undeserved suffering of its members…society as a whole should repair the deprivation and should construct means to ensure that such harm is avoided" (Irani, 1995:3). Iran maintains that if A does something that causes deprivation or harm on B then A would be held responsible and required to repair the damage. If B suffers deprivation in the course of ordinary life but no individual could be considered responsible for repairing the damage, since human thinking was framed in religion, the focus was on the justice of God. Why did God permit undeserved suffering? The answer was that God is a just God and could not be held responsible for the unjust suffering hence the authorities had to rectify unjust situations. Society was responsible through it social norms, its laws and economic practices- to create situation where the underprivileged and powerless would not end up in a state of deprivation of their property and freedom. The premise was that a just society was ordained upon the ruling authority the task of maintaining a just society. This thesis argues that in South Africa A (the government) is responsible for the deprivation of B (black people) and therefore required to repair the situation. We are saying the government should eliminate differences between people arising from birth.

4.2.2 Social Justice and Entitlement

Piachaud (2008) looks at social justice in relation to Robert Nozick's entitlement theory. This theory is premised on that:

(a) A person who acquires a holding in accordance with the principles of justice in acquisition is entitled to that holding.

(b) A person who acquires a holding in accordance with the principle of justice in transfer from someone who is entitled to a holding is entitled to the holding.

(c) No one is entitled to a holding accept by repeated application of A and B.

Nozick argues that distributive justice is just if everyone is entitled to the holdings they possess under the distribution (1994 in Piachaud, 2008). "This follows Locke's notion that mixing one's labor with the world can generate ownership providing the position of others was not worsened compared to when the acquisition was not unowned or held in common" (Piachaud, 2008: 35). Justice in transfer requires fair contract without stealing, fraud, enslavement or excluding others from competing in exchange. Justice in acquisition involves exclusive property rights over the material world. If past acquisitions or transfers did not satisfy the conditions for justice of acquisition, Nozick argues that a principle of rectification for past injustice is necessary (Piachaud, 2008). In the South African case, this notion of justice in acquisition is the basis for land reform where those who were previously dispossessed by past racial legislations are entitled to land redistribution, restitution and tenure reform.

4.2.3 John Rawls' Theory of Social Justice

In recent years 'social justice' is associated with a moral and political philosopher, John Rawls particularly his books titled *A Theory of Social Justice* (1971) and *Political Liberation* (1993). He draws on Bentham and Mill's utilitarian principles, the social contract ideas of Locke, and the categorical imperative ideas of Kant. John Rawls is an American political philosopher known as the founding father of the theory of social justice. In his first and most influential book titled, *A Theory of Social Justice* published in 1971, Rawls developed principles of justice meant to govern a modern society. Rawls believes that in order for a society to be considered a just society, its needs to be fair to all its citizens. He maintains that a principle of justice is whatever that would be chosen by a free and equal person under conditions that are fair (Arneson, 2008).

He goes on to say that in order to decide whether a society treats people fairly, we need to examine their access to primary social goods. He defines these primary social goods as things that any rational person who wants to develop and exercise her capacities for a conception of good and a sense of justice would want (ibid). He broadly categorizes these goods in term of rights, liberties, opportunities, income and wealth. Furthermore he states that the most important good is self-respect which he defines as one's sense of value and convention that his plan of life is worth living.

4.2.3.1 Rawls' Principles of Justice
In his principles of social justice he talks of liberty and equality principles. The *liberty principle* maintains that everyone is entitled to basic human rights. He argues that "each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties" (Rawls, 2005: 5). The *equality principle* is about fairness and focuses on redistributive justice. This principle is subdivided into *differences principle* and *fair equality of opportunities*. It requires that "each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties with a similar system of liberty for all" (Arneson, 2008: 220). Then the principle of fair equality opportunities requires fair redistribution of opportunities to qualify for social competition. It argues that everyone should have equal chances to exercise their natural abilities.

4.2.3.2 Principle of Difference
In relation to the 'principle of difference' Wolff maintains that Rawls' principle of justice derive that we should judge the society by how well it treats the worst-off. He goes on to say that a system that gives incentives for those who work hard provide extra stock than a system of flat equality. "Indeed the extra stock ... could, in certain circumstances, be redistributed to make everyone better off" (Wolff, 2008:18). In education, this does not mean that all children should attend public schools even if their parents can afford private schools. The point is that public schools should build capabilities among working class children who should be afforded a decent education. The same goes for housing, it does not mean that everyone should live in an RDP house. Those who can work hard and afford better housing should be encouraged. The judgement on the extent of justice is on how are living conditions for instance in informal settlement. Social justice theory says that systems that perpetuate/enforce inequality cannot be just. Examples of this include gravel roads in rural areas because they don't pay rates, potholed roads in townships and or informal settlements while affluent neighbors are well taken care of and they can claim for damages caused by roads on their cars.

This principle also posits that social and economic equalities should be arranged such that they are to the greatest advantage to the least advantaged. Ronald Dworkin (1981 in Wolff, 2008) challenges Rawls by asking that before we devote resources to help the less fortunate, shouldn't we at least investigate how they came to be in that position? Is it fair to tax those who work hard in order to benefit those who laze around whilst they have equal talent and equal capacity to work hard? This argument asks the question of entitlement and deserving. For example, In terms of rural housing- is every household deserving of an RDP house? The sight that on sees when traveling in the rural areas is somehow disturbing. Even well- built homesteads get an RDP house which says there is no targeting; it is a free for all housing projects. Dworkin maintains that those who work hard should reap the reward whilst those who do less should face the consequence of their choices. He argues that equality cannot make hard workers subsidies 'scroungers' or the deliberately underproductive (Dowrkin, 1981: 19).

4.2.3.3 Politics of Difference

Cohen (1989) argues that an adequate theory of justice should use the currency of advantage which includes both welfare and resource. Rawls' theory permit inequality in the differences principles which says equal distribution of resources is likely to be inefficient. An unequal situation where those who work hard produce more whilst the worst-off benefit from that inequality in income and wealth is, according to Rawls acceptable inequality. For instance, the child support grant is targeted to children born of parents without an income benefit from it. Other working parents can be said to be funding the program through taxation. In term of old age pension, those who have contributory pensions generated from one's employment do not get a full amount of pension that government provide to all pensioners. They might get a percentage of it depending on the amount of their contributory pension pay out. This is the 'differences principle which rejects equal distribution of resources. In *A Theory of Justice* Rawls proposes that "each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For that reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others (Rawls, 1971:3). Greene (1998 in Zajda et al, 2006) argues that Rawls' conception provides a regulative framework for what individuals think and do in a free society. He/she maintains that Rawls' theory is not universal instead Rawls perceives a self-determining citizen as an individual not as participant member of society (Green, 1998 in Zajda et al, 2006).

For this reason Maxine Green prefers Jurgen Haberma's (1979) theory of 'communicative democracy' a better alternative for educating for social justice. In communicative democracy members of the community come together voluntarily to discuss matters of importance and must justify preferences through arguments, explanations and other modes of persuasion. Green embraces that social justice is concerned with human rights that all people are entitled to. In education she advocates that teachers become activists that raise student's conciseness to conditions of oppression and to ways to work for the eradication of social injustice and disparities.

4.2.4 Social Justice Education
White and Talbert (2005 in Zajda, 2006 et al) clarify that education for social justice goes beyond functionalist and vacationalists-oriented perspectives that highlight education for jobs to a model where schooling becomes a transformational pedagogy. They maintain that:

> *we must prepare children for active participation as global citizens; this means that we have to teach for social justice…Advocates for social justice suggest that our schools are often demeaning and disempowering places where children and their teaches are either bored into submission or where the transmission and socialization techniques destroy any hope for critical thinking-*
> White and Talbert 2005 in Zadja et al, 2006:3.

Maybe South Africa needs to view schooling as a process of preparing children for competitiveness in a globalized world. At the beginning of 2015 there were contended voices where teacher unions were challenging government policy that pushes children who have failed 'through the system'. This new law says that a learner cannot fail twice between grade 10 and 12. On 27 January 2015 Daily News published an article titled *Stop Passing Failure: Teacher Union Push for Change*, which revealed that teachers unions were pushing for change against a policy that stipulate that no learner may stay in the FET phase for more than four years. I.e. learners in Grade 10, 11 and 12 can only fail once, thereafter they must be promoted. South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) KZN deputy secretary Bheki Shandu was quoted saying "this policy of passing through the system learners who failed (known as progressed learners) is not sustainable and will lead to a total collapse of our education system" (Daily News, 2015). From the union's perspective this over-burdens the teachers with a responsibility to support progressed students without support for teachers to take on that responsibility.

Teachers also complained that even students now have an attitude that says even if they don't work hard they will move on to the net grade. To clarify the government's position national head of communication in the department of basic education said the policy is not unique to South Africa, it is use in Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Japan, Korea and UK. Mhlanga further posit that the Western Cape had 2687 progressed students at matric in 2014 and 31% (838) of them passed matric. He says if the progression policy was not in place these students would have been held back unfairly. National Teachers Union's (NATU) Allen Thompson correctly argued that nationally 60% of progressed students failed matric. Teachers complain that these learners are disruptive in class "they are a serious threat to our education system because there is no criteria of competency to promote learners and that is a disaster for our future leaders" (Daily News, 2015). Thompson said the KZN MEC for education said "we need to change our attitude towards those learners who are failing. The policy to push through learners who have failed is a correct one, and rather than discourage them, we need to pull out all the stops to support them" (ibid).

The point is that promoting learners who have failed is disempowering. By passing through learners who have failed, the government gets to save money by reducing the number of years they spend at school. This destroys the future prospects of these young people. A 30% pass rate at matric is equivalent to passing through students who have failed. The government seems to be of the view that as long as people have a matric certificate the government has fulfilled its duty. Could the issue of passing failure be said to be teaching for social justice? How are these learners expected to fare as adults? Can they compete with their counter parts that actually did pass? We are saying children should be given a good education in a no comparative manner systems. This can only be guided by the established standards in education. Comparing private/middle class schools with public schools would not serve any purpose because of the built-in inequality in the two. One is for affluent children while the latter is for working class or poor middle class children. In this case focus is on whether the public school system (especially in rural areas) provides an environment that allows children to flourish. The point is not to say that all children should have access to savvy gadgets e.g. tablets, etc. but at least all should have qualified teachers, books, desks, and an environment conducive for teaching and learning to take place.

4.3 Capabilities Approach

Teaching for social justice means teaching for impact, what impact are our public schools having on the future of the country? Here focus in not on equality but on equity. Let the playing field be changed so that the poor stand a chance of being productive adults. Let the education system provide the poor an opportunity to escape poverty. This is the essence of capabilities approach. Capabilities approach is premised in that realizing the basic capabilities for all would enable them economic, social and political freedom to lead the type of life they have reason to value (Alexander, 2008). "From a social justice perspective a focus on capabilities is not about evening out people's differences in talent, capacities, potential, etc. But a focus is on designing institutions in which social resources are available to everyone in order to possess and exercise basic capabilities that make up a decent life (Alexander, 2008: 2).

The capabilities approach is about developing an environment that is suitable for human flourishing. The main idea of capabilities approach is that the environment or social arrangement should be able to expand people's capabilities i.e. freedom to achieve fuctionings that are important to them. Unterhalter (2007) defines functionings as "valuable activities and states that make up well-being". They relate to goods and income, but they describe what a person is able to do or be as a result. For example, when a person's need for food (a commodity) is met they enjoy the functioning of being well nourished (Unterhalter, 2007). On the other hand capabilities are the alternative combination of fuctionings that are feasible for a person to achieve. They are also the substantive freedom a person has; to lead the kind of life he or she has a reason to value.

4.3.1. Significance of Capabilities approach in Education

In explaining the significance of using capabilities approach in education Unterhalter (2007) maintains that this approach is able to go beyond subjective assessments that focus on what people say they want out of their schooling, resources (e.g. spending per child), or outcomes in a form of examinations results. This approach also requires evaluations to focus on the range of educational choices that are available to people, whether they have genuine capability to achieve a valued educational functioning (ibid).

It also asks whether people's educational aspirations (what they hope for now and in the future) had been adopted to their circumstances, and whether the low income group had a range of valued learning opportunities to choose from out of which they then select minimal primary education. "The capabilities approach therefore invites a range of more searching questions with regard to equality than just a focus on desire satisfaction" (Unterhalter, 2007). It alerts us to look at whether learners are able to convert resources into capabilities, and then into functionings (Unterhalter2011 in Unterhalter, 2007). If we evaluate inputs only, each child in the class appears to have access to equal amounts of resource while "if we evaluate the link between resources and capabilities, it is evident that there are considerable inequalities that standard evaluation tend to overlook. Amartya Sen's capabilities approach acknowledges that capabilities can be diminished or enhanced through education. This means that a generally poor quality education can be a serious life-long disadvantage. This approach considers the equality of capabilities through education. The focus is on how free are the children to participate in education.

4.3.2. Capabilities that Are Involved in Education

This approach conceptualizes equity and quality in education within a social justice framework. "the capabilities approach sees education as playing a key role in the empowerment of those who are disadvantaged- it offers a firm philosophical basis for issues of social justice and entitlement for all" (Polat, 2011:520). Sen and Nussbaum believe that equality is central to acquire social justice and that equality of capabilities is the most important factor to aim for. Sen (1980) acknowledges that individuals require different levels of resources in order to acquire the same level of capabilities to function. This basically means that people are different and they need to be treated as such depending on their different status or situations. Sen also argues that people have different abilities to convert resources into meaningful out-puts. Polat (2011) maintains that in the classroom barriers to learning resides in the problems of the curriculum and teaching methods and not in the child. This means that the type of education and the way in which it is received, is the main determinant of the out-put or results that will be produced by beneficiaries of that education. An example is that a student in rural areas that walk long hours to get to school will need transport in order to attain the same ability as other students whose homes are closer to the school (Nussbaum, 2003).

The capabilities approach focus on what people are able to do and to be, and by so doing it address inequalities within families, inequality of resources and opportunities as well as educational deprivation (Nussbaum, 2003). It directs governments to think about obstacles to full and effective empowerment of citizens and advice measures that address those obstacles (ibid). Nussbaum (2003) argues that for Sen any society that values Equality of all and has this as its social goal equality of capabilities should be the primary equality to aim at.

4.4 Politics of Differences in Education

When looking at inclusive education Wolff (2006) argues that we can alter children's opportunity by adjusting conversion factors such as internal (personal capacity), external (e.g. family support) institutional (rules of the game). He goes on to talk of corrosive disadvantage which means advantage that causes further disadvantage, and fertile functioning which means functioning that boosts other functioning. Let us take the external factor which is parental help with homework for instance. Having an illiterate parent or one with elementary education would deprive a learner of an opportunity to get parental support with homework. This therefore becomes a corrosive disadvantage. On the other hand a student doing accounting while his/her father is an accountant has a fertile functioning. In improving the education system therefore, the state need to direct resources to address corrosive advantages and fertile functioning. One way the South African government has done that is through the school-feeding scheme. A learner with empty stomach would not concentrate in class and possible cause the learner to fail. Therefore the feeding scheme addresses this corrosive disadvantage.

Young maintains that identifying equal treatment ignores deep material differences in social position, division of labor, socialized capabilities, normalized standards and ways of living that continue to disadvantage members of historically excluded groups. Young's politics of positional differences is opposed to the identification of political equity that equates equality with sameness as this ignores group differences in public policy and in how individuals are treated. "Public and civic institutions may be either morally required or permitted to notice social group differences, and to treat members of different groups differently for the sake of promoting equality or freedom" (Young, 2008:79). He maintains that equal respect does not mean treating everyone in the same way.

4.4.1 Politics of positional difference

The politics of positional differences relates to issues of justice regarding structural inequality. "Persons suffer injustice by virtue of structural inequality when their group social position means that the operation of diverse institutions and practices conspires to limit their opportunities to achieve well-being" (Young, 2008:79). People suffer culture based injustice when they are not free to express themselves as they wish, associate themselves with others with whom they share forms of expression or practices. They also suffer this injustice when they cannot socialize their children in the cultural ways they value or when their group situation is such that these bear significant economic or political costs in pursuing a distinctive way of life. Young posit that structural inequalities sometimes build on perceived cultural differences. "…thinking about justice and group differences focuses on issues of liberty and tends to obscure issues of inequality in opportunities structured by the division of labor, hierarchy of decision making and norms and standards that institutions apply to reward achievements" (Young, 2008:80).

He talks politics of positional difference which he defines as an approach that defines social group as constituted through structural social process which position people differently along social axes which generate status, power and opportunity for the development of capability or the acquisition of goods. "Important axes of structural social privilege and disadvantage concern the social division of labor, hierarchy of decision making power, practices of sexuality and body aesthetic, and arrangement of person s in physical and social space" (Young, 2008:80). The disadvantaged suffer from structural inequalities which Tilly (1998 in Young, 2008: 80) calls "durable inequality". Young maintains that this inequality become embedded as institutional rules and practices, the operation of hegemonic norms, the shape of economic or political incentives, the physical effect of past actions and policies, and people acting on stereotypical assumptions – all conspire to produce systematic and reinforcing inequalities between groups. Differently positioned people often have unequal opportunities for self-development and access to resources, to determine their life conditions and those of others. Structural inequality does not necessarily make every member of the disadvantaged group suffer deprivation but they do make most members of structurally-disadvantaged groups susceptible to deprivation.

Merit which Berry (2001 in Young, 2008) propagate in his critique of all versions of politics of difference involves equal opportunity in a sense that it rejects a system that rewards positions explicitly on the basis of class, race, gander, family background, etc. the principle of merit is premised on that "all who wish should have the opportunity to compete for positions of advantage and those most qualified should win the competition. Positions of authority/expertise must be occupied by those who demonstrate excellence and who best exhibit the demeanor expected of people in those positions. It is therefore not an injustice if anyone else loses" (Young, 2008: 82). Young holds that the disadvantaged do not merit the opportunities that will help them advance in life such as jobs, income status etc. their deficiencies are not their fault and a decent society will support their needs, ensuring them a dignified life. Differences-blind treatment or policy is more likely to perpetuate than correct injustice (Young, 2008). The politics of positional differences focuses on issues of inclusion and exclusion and how they make available or limit the substantive opportunities for people to develop capacities and achieve well being

4.5 Racial Inequality

Structural racial segregation in South Africa was reinforced through the job reservation legislations which set aside blue collar jobs for black workers while white collar jobs were reserved for whites. This produced durable inequality along racial lines, separate schools and categorization of people and their grading/valuing. Black people were restricted to lower-status positions in the social division of labor. Young defines segregation as "a structural process of exclusion from residential neighborhood, opportunity that leaves the worse residential options for members of denigrated groups" (2008: 85). The segregation served to limit the opportunities of many to learn and use satisfying skills in socially recognized settings, to accumulate income or wealth, or to attain positions of power and prestige. Young maintains that an ant-racist politics of differences argues that such liberties to disadvantage cannot be overcome by race-blind principles of formal equity in employment, etc. "Where racialized structural inequality influences so many institutions and potentially stigmatizes and impoverishes so many people, a society that aims to redress such injustice must notice the process of racial differentiation before it can correct them" (Young, 2008: 86). The politics of positional differences look at the implications of group differences for values of freedom, equity and justice.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at education through the lenses of social justice theory which is about fairness and equality of opportunities. Social justice is premised on that people should get what they deserve and be treated equally. It says that if A cause the deprivation of B, then A is responsible for restoring B. In education this means that the education system was responsible for the deprivation of equal opportunities in the past now needs to create an environment that will ensure redistribution of equal opportunities.

CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction
This chapter outlines a methodology used to collect and analyze data. It looks at the research design, methods of data collection, research approach, data treatment, data analysis, methodological reasoning, ethics and limitations of the study. The importance of methodology lies in that it gives a clear direction of how research should be conducted.

5.2 Research design
The research design of this paper is interpretative since it aims to capture lived experiences and perceptions of the community in order to understand and to interpret meaning (Henning, 2004:19). Researchers working in the interpretive tradition assume that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously. They also believe that knowledge can be derived from others' experience by interacting with them and listening to what they tell you. Finally they assume that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task (Terre Blanche and Kelly, 1999). "Interpretative research …relies on first-hand account, tries to describe what it sees in rich detail" (Terre Blanche and Kelly, 1999: 124).

5.3 Data collection
Twenty face to face interviews were conducted with former learners from each of the six sampled secondary schools in Ndwedwe Municipality. The interviews took place at the respondent's place of residence. Further data was collected through six focus group discussions with current learners from the six sampled school. Furthermore on site observation was carried out at each of the schools during the school visits to meet with the students.

5.3.1 Sampling
Ndwedwe Education circuit has a total of 54 secondary schools distributed over six education wards. One school was sampled from each ward using *simple random sampling*. This entailed writing down the names of the school within each ward and putting them in a hat and then drawing one school at random. Sproul (1995: 113) describes simple random sampling as "a probability sampling method in which each element in the population has an equal, known and nonzero chance of being selected".

Principals of the sampled schools were visited to negotiate entry and to set appointments for focus group discussions with current learners. The principals assisted with choosing the learners that are above the age of 18 and most of them were from grades 11 and 12. This qualifies as *purposive sampling*. This is a non-random sampling technique where a sample is arbitrarily selected because characteristics they possess are deemed important for the research (Sproul, 1995). A total of 20 former learners were sampled in the community around sampled schools. Former learners were sampled using *snowball sampling* where the researcher had to find one respondent who would then identify another potential respondent. This sampling method has a limitation in that a person is more likely to refer you to those close to them.

5.3.1.1 Participating Schools
This research was conducted in six schools across the six educational wards under Ndwedwe education circuit namely:

- Khanyisa Secondary – Ubhaqa education ward;
- Ngcongangconga Secondary – Phambela education ward;
- Sibonginhlanhla Secondary – Ndwedwe education ward;
- Isifisosethu Secondary – Ozwathini education ward;
- Indukwentsha Secondary – Insuze education ward; and
- Ngungwini Secondary – Umdloti education ward.

5.3.1.2 Research Participants
The first sets of participants were current learners above the age of 18. All these learners reside around the school and some of them walk long distances to get to the schools. At Khanyisa and Ngungwini participants were all grade 11 learners while at Isifisosethu and Indukwentsha they were grade 12 learners. Lastly at Ngcongangconga participants were from grade 11 and 12 and at Sibonginhlanhla participants were learner from various grades from grade eight to grade eleven with the majority from grade 11. The second sets of participants were former learners of these schools. The majority stays at home while others do casual jobs and very few have degrees and decent jobs.

5.4 Research Approach: Case study

This thesis uses a case of Ndwedwe as a demonstration effect of how the education system is experienced and perceived in rural South Africa under democracy. The case study allows for an in depth understanding of a particular context. Comprehensive understanding of the quality of rural education is made possible by listening to narratives of the local people and going beyond what they say and making of narratives by referring to the country's policy. The choice of a case study approach is made based on that the scale of the study is small. Denscombe (2003) points out that one of defining characteristics of this approach is that "it focuses on just one instance of the thing that is being investigated". This study focuses on the quality of rural education in Ndwedwe education circuit yet the findings might give an insight of a wider situation. This approach enables the researcher to get in-depth answers. Using the case study approach enables the researcher to delve into the details and discover things that might not have become apparent through other research approaches (Denscombe, 2003). Stake also argues that a case study is based on an assumption that a phenomenon is investigated as a "bounded system" (1988:255 in Henning, 2004). This means that the studied social entity can be bounded by parameters that show specific dynamics and relevance.

5.5 Methods of Data Collection

Methods of data collection are not chosen randomly but are determined by the research question and objectives. The study at hand used a combination of methods in order to make use of each method's advantages and strengths. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with former learners and focus group discussions were held at the schools with current students. Whilst on site, observations were made to make sense of what the learners were saying.

5.5.1 Interviews

Henning (2004) maintains that the main task of interviews is to bring the researcher's attention to what individuals think, feel and what they have to say about it. Open-ended interviews allow participants to give their subjective perspective on issues. Interviews provide a personal way of collecting data where the researcher gets a chance to interact with participants. Semi structure interviews were used as methods of collecting data from former learners that were visited at their places of residence. There was no prior encounter with respondents as no appointments were made beforehand. This ensured that the researcher found respondents in a more natural setting.

Semi structured interviews using open-ended questions were used to capture the perceptions and experience of former learners in their own words. The semi-structured nature of the interviews conducted suggests that participants were presented with questions which served as a direction for a discussion on issues. Participants were allowed to give as much detail as they wanted to. During the discussion, the researcher was able to probe and seek clarity on responses that are not clear. The interviews were done in isiZulu language which is the home language for the people of Ndwedwe. This method of collecting data was appropriate for a case study since it allowed for more in-depth insight into issues (Denscombe, 2003).

Denscombe maintains that "if the researcher wishes to investigate emotions, experiences and feelings rather than more straight-forward factual matters, then he or she may be justified in preferring interviews to the use of questionnaires (2003: 165). This is compatible with the study at hand since it investigates perspectives and experiences. Henning refers to phenomenological interviews which are "interviews that yield data of participants' lived experiences and worldviews will give rich phenomenological data" (2004:33). He goes on to say that "a phenomenological researcher believes that the participants can give their experience best when asked to do so in their own words, in lengthy individual reflective interviews and in observing the context in which some of this experience has been played out" (Henning, 2004: 37).

5.5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups made up of between ten and twelve participants were used to collect data from current learners. Edmund (2000) argue that groups of over ten people become cumbersome with interaction among participants less effective and discussion difficult to control. These groups comprised of learners from grade 8-12 who are above the age of 18. These learners were selected by school principals based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study. The majority of these learners were from grade 11 and 12 and very few from grade 8-10. These groups were dominated by male learners. A discussion guide was used to direct the flow of the discussion to ensure that all the key questions central to the study were answered. A focus group discussion is a qualitative research method that entails discussing a set of issues with a pre-determined group of people. The strength of this method derives from that it allows the researcher to identify a wide range of views and opinions in one session and to gain understanding of the issues from the perspective of the participants themselves (Hennink, 2007).

Focus groups were developed to counter a limitation in the use of interviews as a method of data collection. Focus groups are believed to create greater spontaneity in the contribution of participants as there is no directive-intervening. Focus groups somehow replicate everyday social interactions (Hennink, 2007). Hanson-Easey *et al* (2015) maintain that focus groups promote informality and allow participants to direct the discussion. "It is the creation of a group dynamic that enables spontaneous issues to arise from the discussion and participants to highlight issues that are important to themselves (sic)" (Hennink, 2007: 5). Hennink (2013) further say that the discussion element of this method gives participants greater control of the issues raised in the dialogue, as they are essentially discussing among themselves rather than directly with the interviewer. The discussion allows the emergence of issues that the researcher did not anticipate. Furthermore, participants are able to react to the comments of others which may lead to reflection, refinement or justification of the issues rose which in turn provides deeper insight and context in which issues are discussed (Hennink, 2007). Patton (1990 in Hennink, 2007) posits that focus groups provide an opportunity for participants to provide checks and balances on each other which are key to rooting out false and extreme views. Hennink maintains that focus group discussions allow for "social moderation of views expressed by group members, which provides an important quality check on the information provided" (2013: 3).

The focus group method is not intended for reaching consensus. The group environment provides an opportunity for an explicit discussion of differences in opinion as they emerge in the group (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003 in Hennink, 2007). Focus group discussions allows for the production of in-depth data not accessible by quantitative approaches (Hennink, 2007). Focus groups are useful when community-level views and experiences rather than personal information is needed.

5.5.3 Observations

On site observations were of importance in hearing what was not said. A visit to a case study site creates an opportunity for direct observation of behaviors and relevant environmental or situational conditions. During data collection (especially for focus groups in the schools) informal observations were made in the schools. Some of the aspects that were observed using unobtrusive measures include school buildings, infrastructure, furnishing, learners and teachers language and behavior during school hours, and learners body language during discussions, to count a few.

Henning (2004) points to that observation help the researcher to see the setting in which phenomenon takes place. What is observed helps harness contextual analysis. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) suggest that observation in qualitative research is intentionally instructed and free-floating. This points to that the researcher shifts focus from one thing to another as new and potential objects and events present themselves. The advantage that observation had for this research is that the researcher had the opportunity to take advantage of unforeseen data sources. In making observations the researcher tried to maintain a level of objectivity by recording what is actually observed and then making sense or interpreting it in the context of other data. One cannot observe attitudes and experiences, so this method of data collection was used to gather data about the school setting. The data obtained was largely qualitative and the researcher did not look at each interviewee as an individual case but as part of the whole entity.

5.6 Data Treatment

During data collection all responses were audio recoded and transcribed. Since discussions were conducted in isiZulu transcriptions were then translated into English. This data was then coded using themes to facilitate analysis. The codes helped to organize description of responses. Direct quotes were used to emphasize important points.

5.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is aimed at faithfully reflecting in summary and in unorganized form what was collected. In this study qualitative method of analysis is used. The information from the interviews is analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is used to analyze results from interviews.

5.8 Methodological Reasoning

The qualitative approach was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to learn from the respondents as well as the environment. According to Scheyvens and Storey in a qualitative study the researchers seeks to understand the world through interacting with, emphasizing and interpreting the actions and perceptions of the participants (2003:57). Its advantage is that 'it provide richer and deeper understanding of the situation" (Chi, 1997: 6). This enabled the study to find out how participants view their local schools in order to provide an in-depth account of the schooling system. This is the essence of qualitative approach.

The interpretative framework suits this study as it allowed for the interpretation of participant's reality in their own words. The premise of the interpretative framework is that "knowledge is constructed not only by observable phenomena, but also by descriptions of people's intentions, believes, values and reasons, meaning making and self-understanding" (Henning, 2004: 20). Interpretative research attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings that people attach to them (Trauth, 2001:219 in Henning, 2004: 21). The interpretative framework rejects the positivist approach which views science being the way to get to the truth; to understand the world well enough to be able to control it. According to this framework there is no objective or absolute truth but there are multiple realities. Focus is on getting it right about reality or realities. This point out that understanding of a phenomenon cannot only be achieved only from observations and measurement. The interpretative tradition sees individuals as active agents who can make sense and create knowledge about their own lives. This means that they are active beings with the ability to have individual judgements and perceptions. This tradition fits this study since it requires the respondent's perceptions and full involvement in getting the truth about their lives.

5.9 Research Ethics

The study involved interviews with human subjects and therefore required to be ethically approved by the university before going to the field which was granted in due time. Before the start of data collection the sampled schools were visited to negotiate entry. All school principals were presented with a letter inviting their schools to participate in the research. This letter also explained the purpose of the study and kind of learners required (18 and above). These principals were then presented with a gatekeeper consent forms that they signed to give the researcher permission to come to the schools and conduct focus groups. On the day of the research participating learners were also presented with a consent form explaining the research to them in more details. These forms were written in their own language to ensure that they fully understand their terms of participation. The same consent form was also signed by former learners before the interview sessions. All participants were ensured confidentiality and anonymity and for that reason their names or any kind of descriptions are not provided in this report for their own protection. Even though participating schools are known but specific individuals who participated in the research are not revealed and their views are not presented as individuals but as a whole school community.

5.10 Limitations

This study is limited in that it is only a representation of one study area and cannot be used to generalize for other communities and the rest of South Africa. What is needed is a continuous assessment of schools to determine whether they continue to provide their mission of providing quality education. The study also focused on the views of the learners (both current and former) only without considering the teachers and officials. It is important to note that having the views of these parties might have led to different conclusions. Therefore the researcher recognizes this as a short coming of this paper that could be taken into consideration in future research.

5.11 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research methods that were used to collect and analyses data. The research approach was qualitative using a case study of Ndwedwe area. An interpretative research design was used to capture lived experiences and perceptions of the current and former learners on the quality of education offered to them. Data was collected using interviews, focus groups and observations. Three sampling techniques were used. In the first instance schools were sampled using simple random sampling, and purposive sampling was used to select current learners above the age of 18 for focus groups discussions. Lastly former learners were sampled using snowball sampling where one participant recommends another potential participant. Responses were then recorded, transcribed, translated and coded using themes. The themes used during coding were used for thematic analysis. The chapter has also discussed methodological reasoning, ethics and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 6: HAS THE QUALITY OF RURAL EDUCATION IMPROVED SINCE 1994

"Secondary, tertiary and further education is critical for addressing poverty and inequality"-NDP, 2011: 263

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from two samples; one with current learners and the other with former learners. At the end of this chapter key research questions pertaining availability of teachers, matric pass rate, culture of teaching and learning and factors facilitating and inhibiting quality education will be answered. Responses from current and former learners were recoded, transcribed and coded according to themes to enable the researcher to identify common issues. This data is then combined into a meaningful discussion. The same thing was done to responses from former learners and these are then presented in relation to what was said by current students using the same themes.

6.2 Perceptions about the Schools

In looking at current learners' subjective perspectives a number of issues seemed to concern learners across the schools. These issues are: variability of subjects to choose from, lack of teachers, lack of discipline, etc. Nonetheless some issues were specific to each school. Learners from Ngcongangconga and Sibonginhlanhla described their schools as bad schools. One from Ngcongangconga said "it's a bad school because it doesn't have things that make students see their future". On the other hand learners from Sibonginhlanhla had the following to say when describing their school: "There is no education in this school, coming here is like playing games". Another one compared it to a forest which basically means that it's useless. She went on to explain that they do not have enough classes, teachers and a variability of subjects to choose from. She described teachers as not caring about the well-being of the learners. The views of current students at Ngcongangconga differ from those of former students. One former student who matriculated in 2003 said the school used to be the best school. Another former student who matriculated in 2014 said it compared favorable against other schools as it had a library, computers and electricity.

6.3 Availability of Infrastructure, Facilities and Resources

The availability of infrastructure varies across schools with Indukwentsha being the only school that has proper infrastructure. This school has new buildings; working electricity; running water; flush toilets et cetera. On the other hand Khanyisa have the biggest lack of infrastructure as they have old buildings and none of the key resources and service.

6.3.1 Water and Sanitation

The common problem among schools is that they lack water and sanitation. Four out of the six schools expressed that they do not have running water. In these schools they drink rain water from the tanks. Students from Ngcongangconga said that they drink dirty water from the tank and that water has insects. When there is no water in the tank they bring their own drinking water from home and the cooking staff end up sending them to fetch water from the community stand pipes during lunch break time. All former learners from this school indicated that the school never had running water; they have always used water tanks. This was also raised by students from Khanyisa who pointed out that they drink rain water from the tank. They clarified that water used to be delivered by a water truck but that is no longer the case. When there is no water in the tank they fetch water from the river which is about 15 minutes' walk away from the school. They also mentioned that sometimes the principal uses her car to fetch water for cooking. They further clarified that water problem is not just a school thing but a community wide problem. They also pointed that some of the tanks no longer have taps because people from the community stole them which means that even when the tank have water, they still can't get it. Students from Isifisosethu said that they also drink tank water which is delivered buy water truck. They said that when they run out of water they bring their own water from home. At Ngungwini they also said that they drink dirty rain water from the tank. Indukwentsha and Sibonginhlanhla are the only schools that have running water. Indukwentsha uses flush toilets. On the other hand Ngcongangconga uses portable chemical toilets, while the rest of the schools use pit latrines. Students from Ngcongangconga voiced out that their portable chemical toilets are dirty and get drained during school hour which brings bad odor into the class rooms. Students from Isifisosethu complained that their toilets are old and overflowing. Similarly students from Sibonginhlanhla said that their pit latrine's walls are falling apart in a way that you can see a person in the toilet from the outside. They also pointed out that learners are the only ones who use pit latrines while teachers use flush toilets.

6.3.2 Buildings
Out of the six schools Indukwentsha and Sibonginhlanhla compare favorably against the other schools when it comes to buildings. These are the only schools with proper buildings while the other four schools have decaying buildings with broken doors and windows. In Ngcongangconga class-rooms have no doors and broken windows. Students complained that they suffer the cold and rain inside the class rooms. One learner from Ngcongangconga described her school by saying "it's a kind of school that makes one loose hope of getting where you want to be in life just from looking at its decaying buildings with no windows and no doors, we suffer the cold from inside the class rooms". They also said that dogs come in and mess up class-rooms such that they cannot leave their bags at school even if it rains. The issue of decaying buildings was also mentioned by students from Isifisosethu where one described the school as "a dead school with decaying buildings". A former student (2008) at Ngcongangconga said that the school is becoming worse as now it does not even have working electricity. He complained about buildings that are dilapidated.

At Khanyisa learners said that some of the class-rooms have broken doors and windows. Students complained that when it rains class rooms leak. The roof is folded in, in one of the blocks and can be observed from outside. As a result the principal dismisses the school early when it is very cold or raining heavily and they also have leaking roofs and when it rains the rain comes in. This problem of broken doors and windows was also prevalent in the other two schools Isifisosethu and Ngungwini. They also don't have tiled floor which was also the case at Sibonginhlanhla even though their concrete floor looks new while other schools have broken floors. At Ngcongangconga their floors used to be tiled but the tiles have come off and very few are left. Students from Ngcongangconga and Ngungwini also pointed out that they don't have enough classes. At Ngungwini they said that you would find commerce and science students in the same class and they move around and use different classes for different subjects. At Ngcongangconga they said that they also move between classes for different subjects. They went on to say that you sometimes find one class double booked and they end up learning on the veranda.

6.3.3 Electricity

It is common amongst all of the schools that there is no working electricity in the classrooms. It is worth noting that electricity was installed in all the schools but now it only works in the staff rooms and other offices.

For example learners from Ngungwini said that they do have electricity in their class-rooms but they can't use it because it is dangerous. At Sibonginhlanhla, learners said that one block never had electricity. They also clarified that electricity was vandalized by learners in the class rooms. Amongst the six schools, Indukwentsha is the only school where they have working electricity in the whole school. All former learners said electricity used to work even in the class rooms.

6.3.4 Libraries and Laboratories

Four of these schools with the exception of Ngcongangconga and Indukwentsha don't have libraries. Students from both schools that have libraries said that they don't use them. At Indukwentsha they have two libraries but they don't use either of them. Students said that the old one has few and outdated books for older curriculum while the new one have no books at all. At Ngcongangconga they said that their library is used as a physical science laboratory and they mentioned that some matric students whose homes are far away from the school sleep in the library during exams. A former student (2011) complained that the school had a shortage of books such that you would find five people sharing a textbook and had to take turns to take the book home after school. The rest of the schools have no libraries at all. Students from Khanyisa said that when they need to use a library they travel to town using their own money.

Moreover, none of these schools use computers and even those who have computer laboratories don't use them. Students from Indukwentsha said that they do have a computer room but it doesn't have computers. Former students also said that there were no computers whilst they were in the school. On the other hand at Ngcongangconga they have a room full of computers but those computers are not working. Former learners from the school indicated that they used to use the computers but the computers were not enough such that about ten students would work on one computer at the same time. Meanwhile at Isifisosethu they have a room full of computers that are working but learners don't use them. They said that even though they have computers in the school, they don't have computer studies and learners in the school cannot even open a computer. A former student (2014) from the school said that they used to use the computers although they were not

enough for everyone. At Khanyisa a former student (2012) said that the school had computers and they were all stolen in 2010. The participant recalled how that was a painful experience for the school, especially matriculants who were doing information technology (IT). Those learners had to change their subject choices since the school could not offer IT anymore. Lastly none of these schools have playing grounds and sport activities.

6.4 Availability of Teachers

Availability of teachers serves as an indicator of whether or not there are personnel to teach students throughout the day. It appears that shortage of teachers is so bad that in two of the schools Isifisosethu and Sibonginhlanhla students went on strike over this issue. When learners from all schools were asked about the availability of teachers they said that they have insufficient teachers. Students from Ngungwini expressed frustration that the school does not have a principal. Their concern was that the acting principal is not competent and is highly overworked. This comes as she still has her full load work as a normal teacher yet she also has to do the principal's duties. Students from Ngcongangconga said that in their school a teacher teaches a subject from grade 8 to grade 12. As a result students sometimes write exams without finishing the syllabus. The same issue was raised by learners from Indukwentsha as well who said that there are times when they also did not finish the syllabus. They explained that their school has few students and therefore not allowed to have more than 10 teachers while the few teachers they have are overworked. This has led to a situation where teachers do not have time to attend to each and every student. Learners from Isifisosethu said that in their school teacher's end up teaching subjects they are not qualified to teach and teachers are also overworked. They further pointed out that the reason for the shortage of teachers is that the school has few students. Learners indicated that the problem of shortage of teachers is what resulted in learners going on strike earlier at the beginning of 2016.

Similarly, strudents from Sibonginhlanhla said that "we have a serious problem with teachers, this year we even went on strike because we were given an IsiZulu teacher to teach us Business Studies and he knew nothing about it. They later changed him with another teacher who also knows nothing about Business Studies". Imagine a situation where learners can figure out that a teacher does not have command of the subject. This situation of teachers teaching subjects they do not know was also raised by learners in Ngungwini. The common thing among all six schools is that

they are small and the rations do not allow them to have more teachers while the teachers they have are not enough and they are overworked. This again is a policy issue.

6.4.1 Lack of Qualified Teachers

Furthermore learners from Sibonginhlanhla, Isifisosethu and Ngcongangconga were deeply aggrieved about that they are taught by unqualified or unexperienced teachers. Students from Ngcongangconga said that some teachers know what they are supposed to teach but they are not good with explaining in a way that learners will understand and other teachers repeat the text book as it is and students end up not gaining anything. These learners also said that" there are subjects that you understand while the teacher is in class but when you have to do it on your own it becomes difficult". Students from Isifisosethu and Sibonginhlanhla said that their teachers get changed every now and then and they keep getting unqualified/unexperienced teachers. At Isifisosethu students said that teachers change every now and then and the new teachers are underqualified, they are still students themselves but they teach grade 12. One learners said that "I am here to fight for my future so that my children can have food on the table but right now I'm being taught by someone who is still a student themselves who doesn't even speak good English". At Sibonginhlanhla they said that they are usually given temporary teachers who are inexperienced first time teachers. "These teachers have no experience and it seems like they haven't got proper training on how to teach and to deal with different learners". The learners also believe that they are given student teachers that are fresh from varsity who have not done the job before and they feel like the government use them as a training ground for teachers and once these teachers get used to the work they are taken to other schools and they are given fresh teachers again.

6.5 Culture of Teaching and Learning

On the issue of the culture of teaching and learning, the issue of lack of discipline in schools dominated discussions. Students also felt strongly against limited subject choices.

6.5.1 Subject Choice and Variability

Students from Sibonginhlanhla said that in their school they only have commercial subjects. They explained that the reason for this is because they are a small school so they had to settle for only one field. On the other hand students from Indukwentsha described their school as a science only school which also means that learners do not have a choice of subjects. This issue was also raised

by learners from Khanyisa who said that they don't have commercial subjects. Students from Ngcongangconga argued that they also have limited subjects therefore can't choose as they please. These learners mentioned that there is no Tourism, no Drama, no Consumer; no Drawing etc. Students from Isifisosethu also said that some subjects were removed at the beginning leading to students protesting. Students also complained that they don't get to choose the subjects they want to do when they get to FET phase but their teachers choose for them.

6.5.2 Learner Conduct and Issues of Discipline
Students from Ngcongangconga pointed out that the teachers are too strict and focus on things that have nothing to do with education such as hairstyles and school uniform. For instance, when not wearing proper uniform a teacher would send you home even if it means missing an exam. When wearing a jersey that is not part of the uniform, they would make you take it off even if it cold. This situation at Ngcongangconga is not a straight forward one, as the issue of lack of discipline is prevalent in all schools. The dilemma here is that when teachers 'get it right' to maintain discipline they appear to be insensitive to students' circumstance. Can poverty be used as an explanation for learners not wearing uniform? On the other hand can discipline be enforced without being insensitive to learners' circumstances? The issue of uniform that Ngcongangconga students were concerned about relates to students from poor families. It is clear that even though the government has tried to deal with poverty issues through the school feeding scheme, provision of stationary and other programs, the problem remains since it is not all matters that are covered. This is in line with Spreen and Vally's (2006) and Christie's (2010) arguments that poverty is still a major obstacle to accessing education as a result of other costs such as uniform, transport money and stationary.

A former student who matriculated from Ngcongangconga in 2002 expressed that when she was a learner the school was able to control and discipline learners. Students were taught respect and Ngcongangconga was the type of school the community needed. She alluded that it was easier to discipline learners then because corporal punishment was used. She was also critical of the extent to which children talk about their rights both at home and at school which makes them more ungovernable. Contrary to strict enforcement of discipline at Ngcongangconga, lack of discipline seems to be a concern across schools. Students from Isifisosethu described their school as a free-for-all school where they do whatever they want to do. They explained that the majority of the

teaching staff is female teachers with only two male teachers who are quiet people whom learners do not respect. One learner said "in my opinion this school is not fit for teaching these students as most learners are older and teachers fail to control them which shouldn't be the case". Students from Ngungwini strongly felt that they need teachers who can control and discipline learners.

In Ngungwini, learners expressed that students refuse to follow school rules; they do not even wear the right uniform. Furthermore they come to school late. At Khanyisa one learner said that "Sometimes students (especially boys) don't pay attention in class and you find them doing their own things and having their own discussions while the teacher is teaching and they end up distracting the class". At Isifisosethu one learner said "in this school if you don't want to learn you can easily stay outside the class room and enjoy the sun". Another one said "learners are always outside as if its break time". A similar situation was described by students from Sibonginhlanhla who said that you sometimes find learners not paying attention, doing their own things and making noise while the teacher is teaching. At Indukwentsha they said that learners disrespect some teachers while they are well behaved around others. So it depends on the teachers and their ability to control or discipline learners". Again Ngcongangconga learners also agreed with the other schools in saying that teachers try to do their work but it becomes a problem when learners don't play their part and its end up looking as if teachers are failing to do their jobs. This also highlights the issue of discipline. One from this school said that students do not listen in class.

> *"In my class learners really do not listen, a teacher recently gave us revision papers from 2014 and we revised the whole paper and she told us that those are the exact questions that will be in the test, I am telling you that not even a single person passed that test".*

Students seem to think that the principal is to blame for this lack of discipline. They believe that this is caused by the principals' failure to manage the schools. Students further said that other teachers even leave the school because learners do not respect them. Likewise one from Ngcongangconga said teachers are now losing interest in doing their work since learners do whatever they want and there is nothing teachers can do to stop students from misbehaving. In some instances teachers end up not coming to the classes where they know that they don't get respected. Students from Indukwentsha also alluded that some learners use alcohol and drugs in the school. Students felt that the abolition of corporal punishment is somehow responsible for the

lack of discipline in their school. At Isifisosethu and Khanyisa students said that their schools used to be better up until people from the department came and informed them that teachers are not allowed to use a cane.

The majority of current students said that if it was up to them corporal punishment would be reinvented as they believe that it is the only thing that can bring back respect among learners and also make them to take education serious. They argued that learners don't do their works because they know that teaches cannot do anything to them. On the other side few of the students said that it is a good thing that corporal punishment is no longer allowed. They mentioned a number of negative effects of corporal punishment such as facilitating drop out and teachers taking out their anger on the students. Former learners also pointed out that schools are no longer doing well because teachers can no longer discipline learners and they do as they please.

6.5.3 Learners not motivated

At Khanyisa students said that there is a lack of confidence among learners. They went on to say that there is a misconception among them that science and math are difficult and most likely to be failed. However one learner clarified that:

> "at the end of the day learners who do general subjects are the ones who fail more than the science class because general students believe that their work is easy and spend a lot of time playing while science students take their education serious. Since science classes are small the teachers also have time for each and every learner and it's unlikely for anyone to be left behind while general classes are bigger".

6.5.3.1 Use of English Language

At Ngcongangconga they also mentioned that teachers also do not encourage them to speak English, and when they teach they explain things in isiZulu whereas exams are in English where no one gets to explain anything. "Even after finishing school we will have interviews and those are in English and we will have problems". Others felt that the issue of speaking English needs to start from the primary school so that learners get used to it and by the time they reach high school they speak and understand it better. They also believe that their local primary school is the main problem because learners reach high school without the basic knowledge that should be acquired from the primary schools and by the time they reach high school it becomes difficult for the teachers to reach out to them and they can't cover all the work they missed. As a result "these are the learners that fail the most while learners that come from other schools pass". The issue of speaking English was also raised in the other five schools. All of the schools visited pointed out

that they speak their home language which is IsiZulu at school and teachers translate English words to them which become problematic during exams when they have no one to translate.

6.5.4 Teachers' Conduct

Students from Isifisosethu and Sibonginhlanhla expressed frustration that teachers are not doing their job. At Sibonginhlanhla they said that teachers do not motivate students and some of the teachers come to class only to do their own things instead of teaching them. They went on to say that there are cases when they write external exams while they haven't finished the syllabus. Similarly at Isifisosethu learners said that when it is cold teachers give them notes to write while they stay in a staff room where there is electricity while the students endure the cold in the class-rooms. In Ngungwini learners also expressed that teachers do not take their work serious. They alluded to an incident where a language teacher refused to help them prepare for oral assessments. Students from Ngcongangconga also pointed out that learners are not encouraged to study in the lower grades and they only get pressurized once they are in grade 12 and by that time it becomes difficult to adapt to the new pressure which was not there throughout the years. These students think that people from all grades should be given enough attention not that you start getting it once you are in grade 12. One learner said:

> *In this school it is only grade 12 that gets the full attention of teachers. For example in grade 11 we are supposed to be the matric class of next year but nobody is focusing on us and today we have had only one teacher coming to our class but the school is almost over now, all the teachers are focusing on matric.*

Students strongly felt that teachers neglect you your entire high school years and only focus on you once you are in grade 12, where you end up being overworked. None the less some learners also had positive things to say about their schools. For example learners from Khanyisa described their school as a school where teachers are patient with them and they encourage them to work hard on their school work. They also said that they are given enough time to do their work and the problem lies with the learners who do not work hard.

6.5.4 Communication between Teachers and Learners

Students had a lot to say when asked about the relationship between teachers and learners and their answers varied. Indukwentsha was the only school where learners felt that they have a good relationship with their teachers who mostly (even though not all teachers) understand them. They expressed that their teachers are well experienced and treat everyone equally.

On the other hand teachers' failure to accommodate all learners seemed to be a common problem. Students from Khanyisa, Isifisosethu, Sibonginhlanhla and Ngcongangconga believe that teachers use favoritism. This entails teachers concentrating more on certain people particularly clever students while the rest of the class feel excluded and is left behind. This gives the impression among learners that teachers only try to make sure that certain students pass and not focus on others. One student at Sibonginhlanhla went on to say that "clever people are always the priority and it's like the others are there to accompany the cleaver ones, they don't get the teacher's full attention. Even during assessments, teachers allocate marks based on who you are. When a not so cleaver learner gets a good mark they get accused of copying and have a certain percentage deducted from them". Khanyisa students also expressed that teachers are not fair especially when they mark their scripts they favor some people at the expense of the rest. As a result learners who are not the teacher's favorites end up despising those subjects. They also feel that there is a lack of trust between teachers and learners. They maintained that teachers are known for gossiping about students and it's not easy for learners to talk to them when they have problems because they are afraid that the entire staff will end up knowing. "If you happen to share your problem with one teacher you end up hearing other teachers and learners talking about it". They also said that teachers are not trained to communicate with learners.

On the other hand at Isifisosethu students said that in their school learners and teachers do not respect each other and that there is a lack of discipline. They said that "we don't respect each other, but students who respect teachers also get respected by the teachers and those who don't respect are also not respected by the teachers". They also pointed that ever since the strike, students now want to do things their own way and they undermine other teachers while they respect other. This was also pointed out by learners from Sibonginhlanhla who said that teachers and students do not respect each other and they all use abusive language. Sibonginhlanhla learners also said that none of the teachers are from the community and they feel like these teachers don't care about them because they have nothing in common. Students believe that these teachers think the worst of them just because they are rural children and that they don't give it their all to try to relate with them. Instead they look down on them and teaching for them is just a job but they don't really care about building the nation and creating future leaders out of these rural children. One from

Sibonginhlanhla also mentioned that teachers do not care about them because even when they see a learner not having school shoes they never bother to help you.

They generally feel that there is a bad relationship amongst teachers. They stated that the principal is not nice to other teachers in a way that she makes them cry in front of the learners. They also pointed out that teachers are not motivated as they don't do their work when the principal is not around.

6.6 Matric Pass Rate
Matric is the exit point and a school's matric pass rate is a proxy indicator of whether it is a good school or not.

Table 1: Matric results per school between 2011 and 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Khanyisa	69.7	91.7	78	52.4	53.3
Ngcongangconga	49.3	45.0	41.5	26.4	42.6
Sibonginhlanhla	75.0	92.3	90.9	33.3	44.4
Isifisosethu	76.0	33.9	66.7	51.9	30.4
Indukwentsha	86.2	61.5	72	100	5.6
Ngungwini	100	88.2	63.2	67.4	48.6

Source: DoBE, 2014, 2015

Table 1 above presents the schools matric results as published by the DoE in the past five years from 2011 to 2015. It is worth noting that the 100% pass rate at Indukwentsha in 2014 has no significance as only one wrote and passed the exam. The table gives an indication of how the schools perform at matric. However this does not give a complete picture as there is no breakdown on the quality of passes.

6.6.1 School Performance
When asked about their schools' matric pass rate, learners from all schools said that there is low pass rate. At Sibonginhlanhla, learners said that in a class of 20 you can expect only one or two students to pass. Meanwhile, at Indukwentsha the said that only one out of eighteen students passed in 2015. The same happened in 2014 when one passed when results were released and others had

73

their results withheld due to suspicions of cheating. When they were finally released more people passed. Indukwentsha also maintained that in previous years matric pass rate used to be good and things started changing about two years ago. This was after the school replaced other subjects and became a science only school and the class of 2014 being the first science only class. Furthermore, students from Isifisosethu stated that their school got approximately 33% in 2015. These learners postulated that the percentage is more likely to go down in 2016 because teachers always get changed. It is worth noting that the participants in this focus group was all matriculants. The tone of despair and the acceptance of defeat and failure among this group is telling. At Ngcongangconga learners said that their school's matric pass rate is usually low but last year there was a 15% improvement taking the school close to 48%. They also argued that this improvement was a first in a very long time and one learner said that "it's been a very long time since this school got a distinction in a subject, not even IsiZulu".

Learners from Khanyisa and Ngungwini also complained about the low matric pass rate in their schools. At Khanyisa learners said that those who work hard do pass while others waste time and fail in the end. At Ngungwini they also argued that their school's matric pass rate is low. These learners postulated that in 2015 the pass rate was about 43%. This group which was made up of grade eleven learners said that "Even though this year's matric class has not written but we already know that they are worse because they are not serious". They explained that this class is not serious because it has older people who are not supposed to be at school anymore.

6.6.2 Factors Contributing to Matric Performance

In explaining the low matric pass rate in their schools the majority of learners felt that the reason for this is because learners do not take their education seriously. This sentiment was expressed by students at Indukwentsha as they pointed out that learners don't seem to value education. Stundents seem to think that going through school and reaching matric is the ultimate goal. This makes them not work as hard as they are supposed to especially towards the end of the year. Students are also not motivated and lack confidence in themselves. They also said that "learners get to matric knowing that matric is difficult and don't believe in themselves". Similarly, students from Sibonginhlanhla said that in their school "matric learners do not act like matriculants from other schools. For them it seems like doing matric is all that matters and they pride themselves with the

fact that they are seniors but they don't work hard like people with big plans for life ahead. It is like finishing matric is the final destination and it doesn't matter whether you pass or not."

One said "learners don't take education serious and they have boyfriends and girlfriend in the school and that is what they focus on and neglect their studied up until the last minute when they have to write exams they start panicking when it's already late." Students from Isifisosethu also said that learners are not motivated and they don't take their education serious. At Ngcongangconga they said that the reason for low performance is because learners are not serious and those who do take education serious cannot study well because class rooms have no doors and it is cold in their area. They also argued that there was improvement in 2015 because the class of 2015 was serious and they worked hard. These learners were the first one to come to school and last ones to leave and they attended evening study sessions without the supervision of the teachers. Additionally, learners from Khanyisa also said that the reason for low pass rate is because students are not serious. These students also feel that the reason for failure is because learners are unruly because they know that they have rights.

On the other hand some learners feel that the teachers are the one who do not work hard enough. At Indukwentsha they said that matric fail because teachers change every now and then which is problematic for students that always have to adapt to the new teacher. They also mentioned that teachers sometimes don't come to class. Likewise, while the majority of learners from Sibonginhlanhla thought that the problem lies with the students, a few believes that the teachers are the ones who do not do enough. They argue that the most failed subjects are mathematics and accounting and they believe that the problem lies with the teachers of those subjects who fail to do their job. At Isifisosethu they pointed out that some teachers teach without a sense of purpose. Students from Ngungwini said that some teachers can't teach well. They made an example of their Math teacher and said that students from all grades don't understand when he/she is teaching. This means that the strategy that teachers use is sometimes problematic as learners from Ngcongangconga also mentioned that some teachers are not good with explaining things. These students also said that they sometimes understand when the teacher is in class but once they are alone they start getting confused. Students in Khanyisa also blame poor performance on the progression policy. One said that "When the teachers see that you are doom and keep failing they end up making you pass to the next grade even if you don't deserve and when you reach grade 12

you fail". They believe that the learners that are progressed are the ones who fail in the end because they reach matric without knowing the work they supposed to know and when exam comes they fail.

6.6.3. Towards Improving Performance

When asked to suggest changes that can be made to improve matric performance most students said that what needs to be done is to motivate learners and improve teacher relations. Students from Khanyisa said that teachers need to motivate learners to take their education serious. Students from Indukwentsha also said that learners need to be motivated so that they love and take their education serious. Indukwentsha students also said that teachers and learners need to be able to work together as a team. Similarly learners from Ngcongangconga said that students should be able to communicate with teacher, and teachers need to understand their students and pay more attention to those who seem to be left behind. Moreover learners from Isifisosethu said that teachers need to be patient with learners and that learners need to work hard and develop self-confidence.

Stundent from Isifisosethu and Indukwentsha also feel that their schools need to develop a stricter code of conduct. One said that "the school needs a strict code of conduct so that student don't do as they please". Similarly at Isifisosethu they said that both teachers and students need to take education serious and come to class on time. These learners also feel that matric performance will improve if they have qualified teachers and also have learning hours increased. One said that performance would improve if they "Make extra classes and weekend class compulsory for all matric". Another one said "There must be extra study sessions in the morning and afternoon where teachers and students come on time to do extra revision." Lastly others said that weekend classes should be introduced where students will meet with their counterparts from other schools and be taught by different teachers. They said this would help those who don't understand their own teachers. Additionally, students from Ngcongangconga also mentioned that in order to improve matric performance teachers need to be well trained.

6.6.4 Career Paths of Former Learners

When asked where students from these schools go after finishing matric, the common response was that they stay at home or get general jobs and it's very rare to find them at universities. At Indukwentsha learners expressed that the majority of former students stay at home while others go

look for jobs in the city and very few go to universities. At Isifisosethu they also said that majority stays at home while others do casual jobs in places such as the taxi industry. One said "Others stay at home and become parents". They made it clear that very few become successful. They only know of two successful former students from this school. The first one is studying to be a lawyer and the other one came to the school driving a car. This goes to suggest that there are no role models for these learners.

This serves as an explanation for assertions made by learners on how come their schools perform badly. Students kept on saying that learners are not serious about their own education. It appeared that "doing matric is the end goal".   This reminded me of a practice at a school I went to, Our Lady of the Rosary, also located in Ndwedwe. At the beginning of the year there would be a ceremony where all matriculants from the previous year who managed to get a distinction would come back to attend a result celebration ceremony. A former student who has achieved in life would be invited as a guest speaker on the day. And off course everyone would be motivated not just to pass matric, but get a distinction and go on to study at a university. At the end of each year learners were not concerned about whether they would pass, but the concern was how well they would pass. Off course it did happen that others failed but it was not as bad as is the case in the six schools researched. It is worth noting that in this school things have changed and results are no longer as good as they used to be.

At Sibonginhlanhla they said that learners from this school finish school and get general jobs such as packing things in stores, being cashiers. They also said that no one goes to university except for only one girl who finished years ago and is now a doctor, but the rest end up in low level positions. They also said that others finish in this school and go back to study in other schools/institution such as finishing schools, and then they become something. Ngcongangconga was the only school where learners said that people who finish here become successful in life. This school have produced doctors, accountants etc. This was also the only school where two of the teachers (also part of the research) are former students of the school.

6.6.5 Current Aspirations after Matric
When asked about the education they are getting and where they see themselves after finishing matric learners at Indukwentsha felt that their inability to speak English which is the language of communication will be a limitation for them. Students from Sibonginhlanhla generally said that

for them they are just at school for the sake of reaching grade 12. Others voiced that they don't even see themselves passing matric, going to universities or being what they would want to be in future.

One leaner said

> *"that question is going to make us cry because we don't get anything from this school, it's impossible for us to get to university like you, for us school is just something we do for the sake of doing it but we don't expect much from it, we don't even think the government know that our school exist."*

They went on to say that "we have heard that in other schools, poor learners get help from the government but in this school we are just abandoned". One said "our school is a place for hiding from our parents". Likewise, one from Khanyisa said "I don't see myself becoming successful in future because of the quality of education I'm getting, right now I am a science student but in this school we don't have a science lab and I am not learning what I'm supposed to be learning". However his colleague argued that "we do have a potential to pass matric with flying colors but, it all depend on the individuals. Those who take education serious will get somewhere in life while those who spend time playing will end up nowhere" Another said "After finishing matric the majority will stay at home or do casual jobs. Even those who will pass matric they won't get good result that will enable them to get bursaries". Similar sentiments were expressed at Isifisosethu where learners believe that it depends on the individual choices. They argued that those who work hard will make it, while those who don't take education serious wont. One said:

> *I think education is the same in all schools, the difference is between the teachers and learners, I as an individual know that I will get to university because what they teach us is exactly what comes out in the exam. Therefore if you give it your all and not just depend on what happens in class, then you can be what you want to be.*

Similarly students from Ngcongangconga believe that they do have opportunities to get where they want to be but they believe that getting where they want to be would be much easier if they can be provided with facilities they don't have. One said "opportunities are in our hands, even though teachers don't give it their all but if we do our work seriously we could get where we want to be" Another one said "When looking at the people that the school has produced we would say that there is a possibility for us to be successful like other former students of this school". Students felt that they do not fully capture some of the things being taught as they rely on their imagination.

One added:

The government still needs to support us, we can't put all the blame on the teachers. In our time learning is about visual things, maybe if we can be provided with computers and tablets like other schools, so that when we are taught about a certain mountain for example we can be able to see it and when we are taught about historical events we can be able to watch videos of that and not just imagine things.

One blamed limited subject variability for limiting their opportunities as she said: "the limited subjects also limit us in what we can do as adults, some of us want to act but here at school there is no dram and we end up doing subjects that we don't even know anything about and we can't go to other schools because we don't have money either to travel or pay school fees". At Indukwentsha, the majority said that they see themselves going to universities after finishing matric. These learners also said that they don't believe that the education they are getting is enough to get them where they want to be since they don't have other facilities such as computers. They said that they still need to do computer studies before they can be able to do what they want. They also said that after finishing matric they will have to do other things (such as going to finishing school) to improve on the education they have.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has found that these schools lack basic resources such as teachers, infrastructure and other facilities. Five of the six schools lack basic infrastructure such as class rooms, and water and sanitation. These schools have dilapidated buildings with broken doors and windows to the point that in one of the school the principal ends up sending children home during cold weathers. The issue of water is also prominent among schools. They drink old and dirty tank water and sometimes walk to the rivers to fetch water during school hours. They also have no libraries and computers and those that do have these facilities in their schools do not use them. It appears that most of these problems except for water are new to the schools as older former students expressed that they didn't have these issues when they were in the schools. Lack of teachers, lack of discipline and variability of subjects to choose from appear to be the main issues that cut across all school.

Students from all the six schools expressed that they have insufficient teachers to the point that teachers end up teaching subjects they are not qualitied for and they sometimes do not finish the syllabus because teachers cannot handle the work load. This problem led to two of the researched schools going on strike earlier in 2016 because learners wanted the government to provide them with teachers who will teach subjects they are qualified for. At Sibonginhlanhla the students went on strike after they were given an IsiZulu teacher to teach them business studies which was clear to the learners that he doesn't know. At Isifisosethu students also expressed that the shortage of teacher was huge and it was one of the reasons they went on strike. It also appear that these schools have a shortage of teachers because they are small schools with fewer learners and therefore cannot be given teachers above a certain number which is equivalent to the number of students in their schools. This fewer number of students is also the reason why these schools have fewer subject choices.

Moreover, it was made clear that matric pass rate in very low in all these schools. Lack of discipline and lack of motivation were described as some of the reasons for the low pass rate in addition to the teacher problem. It appears that students are not motivated and as a result they don't take education serious. These students are unruly and they seem to believe that reaching matric is the end goal. The reason for this is that most learners that finish matric in these schools do not go to universities but instead they stay at home or do general or blue collar jobs that do not require education. Students also believe that the use of English as the language of instruction is another reason for failure. It appears that these students write exams in English but they do not understand the language. They mentioned that in class their teachers help them with English terms they do not understand but cannot do that during tests and exams and that is why they end up failing because they don't have full command of the language.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

"There are a large number of ...schools that remain as a stark reminder of the apartheid architecture of the education landscape" – KZNDoE, 2012: 6

"to overcome our apartheid legacy it is essential that everybody has access to services of a consistently high standard regardless of who they are and where they live" - NDP, 2011: 264).

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research findings from both the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. This chapter seeks to make sense of the findings. This will mostly look at learners' perceptions of education policy in the country. Furthermore this chapter presents a detailed discussion and analysis of these findings in relation to the social justice theory and provisions of the capabilities approach. The discussion is conducted using the same themes used in the previous chapter. The aim is to unpack or make sense of the community's (former and current learners) perceptions of the education they are getting.

7.2 Perceptions about the School

It appears that learners feels that their schools are not in a position to give them the education they came for. A student saying that coming to the school is a waste of time and another saying a school is merely a place to hide from parents and dodge household chores raises concern. Participants felt strongly about issues of dilapidated buildings, limited diversity in curriculum, availability of teachers and lack of discipline in the schools. This thesis argues that a situation where others are consistently privileged whilst others are disadvantaged suggests a lack of social justice. This situation becomes social injustice if the privilege is not earned and the disadvantage is not deserved. The question arises whether learners in the studied schools have done anything to deserve the situation they find themselves in? The answer is NO and the only explanation is that their disadvantage emanate from the circumstances of their birth; their parents' class and the geographic area they were born into.

Social justice is opposed to a situation where one's circumstances at birth determine how far they will get in life. This approach to life would argue that government policy under apartheid that provided for job reservation and Bantu education is the reason why these learners were born into poverty. The premise of the social justice perspective has relevance in this case as it posits that if A suffers deprivation at the hands of B, it is B's responsibility to restore A to the condition they were in before the deprivation. Here the point is that the state was responsible for the deprivation of the entire black population through providing it with sub-standard education and reserving white collar jobs for whites. Now in a democracy, the responsibility of redress squarely lies with the state. In this dissertation the central argument is that education is the escape route out of poverty. Hence continued provision of sub-standard education is equivalent to perpetuating undeserved deprivation.

7.3 Availability of Infrastructure

In this thesis infrastructure is a theme used to refer to environmental factors both indoor and outdoor that affect the use of space, materials and resources in the school. This theme focuses on how the physical environment in the school facilitates or hinders teaching and learning. This dissertation argues that availability of infrastructure plays a significant role in creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

7.3.1 Water and Sanitation

The study found that schools generally lack running water and this has a bearing on teaching and learning. Lack of running water in the schools results in students running errands such as fetching water from outside the school during school hours. This is a deprivation or a burden that no child should bear. This highlights that whilst students in schools with proper infrastructure enjoy being children and concentrate on their studies, students in rural schools fend for water. It is also concerning that learners drink rain water stored in tanks. Although none of the participants alluded to incidents of sickness due to drinking dirty water, the vulnerability of these learners is obvious. Students also said that they fetch drinking water from the rivers and community stand pipes. UNICEF (2000) argues that when learners have to leave school and walk to fetch clean drinking water, they may not always return to class. These issues highlight that learners from these schools endure an environment that is unthinkable for their well off counterparts. These schools can be described as environments that violate the dignity of learners. This became apparent when learners described the ablution facilities in their schools. For instance, in Sibonginhlanhla one can literally

see a person inside the toilet as the walls are falling apart. In Isifisosethu the sight of overflowing pit latrines cannot be described in words. It makes you as an outsider wonder how they use them at all.

7.3.2 Buildings
The schools are generally old. How can one expect quality education from an environment where even class-rooms are without doors and windows? The school buildings tell a story of deep deprivation. A student describing her school as a place that makes one loss hope is telling. Another learners pointing out that dogs get in the class-rooms and mess up the class-rooms would sound like an exaggeration until you actually go to the school and see the dogs. At a school where roofs are leaking and learers suffer the cold and rain to the point where classes have to be suspended, the environment is obviously not conducive for proper teaching and learning. The unkempt buildings and facilities scream violation of the right to quality education. Another issue that makes one wonder if the gap between the haves and the non-haves can ever be closed is the revelation that there are instances where students learn in the veranda due to shortage of classes.

7.3.3 Electricity
Vandalism seems to be the main issue as electricity is not working in the class-rooms in almost all schools. Having no electricity means that learners are forced to read under poorly lit conditions.

7.3.4 Libraries and Laboratories
A library is not a luxury or a nice to have. A learner that does not have access to additional material over and above the prescribed text book gets the minimal output from the teaching. Education being a basic human right suggests that any omission amounts to violation of a human right. I argue that, opening the doors of education for all is a matter of ensuring that one's education is not determined by their social class. Research shows that learners from schools that lack classroom materials and have inadequate library facilities are more likely to get lower test scores and higher grade repetition than learners from well-equipped schools (UNICEF, 2000). Communities also play a part in setting back achievements as is evidenced by the case of Khanyisa Secondary school where all the computers were stolen. Given that other schools have never had a computer, how long is it going to take to replace stolen ones? I argue that quality education requires a partnership between the department of education and communities. Mayer, Mullen, Moor, and Ralph found that computers enhance learning (200). This means that students that leave school without knowing how to use a computer clearly have substandard education.

7.4 Availability of Teachers

The frustration of students over shortage of teachers spells out the paralysis in the system. Students feel that teachers are overworked. This directly affects learning as in some instances they don't finish the syllabus. The issue here emanates from low student enrolment. This affects the educator ratio. This basically means that schools with fewer learners will automatically have fewer teachers. In Indukwentsha Secondary School learners explained that they cannot have more than 10 teachers. In Sibonginhlanhla learners are very few that the school only has five teachers. This directly means that a teacher is in class teaching from morning until the school is over. As I conclude this research this school has notification that two of its teachers will be redeployed at the beginning of 2017. One would wonder how three teachers are going to teach five classes. This means that each period there would be two classes without a teacher. An alternative to this would be the adoption of multi-grade teaching which means that one teacher will teach two classes in one period and move between those classes. This is a classic example of what the Department of Basic Education calls a small and non-viable school problem. The program for small and non-viable schools needs to find a solution that will not end up disadvantaging small schools since it looks like this is common in Ndwedwe and probably other rural areas.

The problem of teachers is a serious problem that directly affects the quality of education as Kamlesh (2015) argues that teachers are the backbone of education. In order for a school to produce quality education it must have quality teachers. In this case we cannot even get to the point of quality teachers since the schools do not even have enough teachers let alone the quality of those teachers.

7.5 Undiversified Curriculum

The issue of limited subjects makes one to question these students' right to education. The fact that they are not free to do subjects they have reason to value means that they are not free to choose the career paths they want for themselves but instead the system automatically choose for them. The fact that s from all schools learners feel like they should be given more subject choice is an issue that can be clarified through capabilities approach. The capabilities approach is premised on that freedom to achieve well-being need to be understood in terms of people's real opportunities to do and be what they have reason to value. It is about realizing your full potential and in this case learners have no or limited potential of being what they want and their career choices are somehow predicted by the subjects offered at their schools.

To drive the point home and to illuminate what lack of variability subjects means, I maintain that Sibonginhlanhla Secondary School could never produce a doctor or an engineer because there is no physics. This means that career choices are limited by the available subjects and students do not have all the opportunities to realize their full potential. This is also a policy issue since the schools have limited subjects as a result of having fewer learners. The issue is about having policies that make sure that learners' future or dreams are not compromised. The issue of lack of subject choices is compounded by that there is no provision of transport. The provision of transport that I refer to deviates from the current provision where a school is allocated a bus to picks up learners from that community. This will be addressed in details in the recommendations section. Having said that, students felt that only those who can afford transport are able to choose not to go to a local school. This suggests that a learner whose parents cannot afford transport to go to a school that offers subjects that they like, is forced to do whatever is on offer in the nearby school. The issue of limited subjects is also a problem of small and non-viable schools that cannot have diversified curriculum since they have fewer teachers and students.

7.6 Small and Non-viable Schools

The major problem that appears to be the common thread that runs across of issues is the issue of low enrolment. This problem of low enrolment is what the Department of Basic Education calls the issue of small and non-viable schools. The Department of Education acknowledges that this category of schools serves as a barrier to the provision of quality education. Put simply, a school's budget is determined by the number of students enrolled. A school with an enrollment of under 200 or in worst cases under 100 would get a budget that makes it impossible to afford to improve infrastructure and facilities. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education's (KZNDoE) effort to improve and enhance the quality of education in rural areas entails a transformation program that focuses on small and non-viable schools and infrastructure. This program seeks to create mega schools where small schools will be merged together to form one school. The premise for this is the belief that larger and better resourced schools can contribute to improved performance and quality of education in general.

The department seeks to close and merger schools where enrollment has dropped significantly causing teaching and learning to be severely compromised. This process is expected to expedite resourcing of schools, promote access and retention of students and teachers in such schools. Creation of mega schools is expected to:

1) Increase access to quality education
2) Attract and retain educator
3) Provide access to diversified curriculum
4) Enhance quality of curriculum delivery and leaner performance
5) Improve learner retention
6) Eliminate multi-grade teaching

The department acknowledges that "the contrast between previously advantaged schools and those in townships and rural areas is stark and point to a two-tire unequal public schooling system" (KZN DoE, 2012:8).

7.6.1 Small schools

Small schools are usually established by communities due to long commuting distance to registered schools, "while urban schools benefit from a diversified curriculum where two or more streams are offered, rural schools are characterized by fewer teachers, multi-grade/phase classes, poor infrastructure and general underdevelopment" (KZN DoE, 2012:9). The transformation of schools program seeks to ensure that learners benefit equally from the education provided. "This will require the provision of quality education delivered by appropriately qualified educators in an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning" (ibid). Small and non-viable schools have a negative impact on the department's ability to achieve it visions of 'well educated', skilled and highly developed citizenry. Small and non-viable schools are disadvantaged in various ways which include:

1) Low allocation in terms of norms and standards for school funding;
2) Low PPN leading to multi-grade teaching;
3) Limited curriculum offering;
4) Poor or inadequate infrastructure;
5) No specialist teaching; and
6) Limited learning spaces and recreations spaces.

"in view of the negative effects of small and non-viable schools the department is proposing to close and merge such schools where learning and teaching is severely compromised" (KZN DoE, 2013:12). Multi-grade teaching result from low learner, teacher ratio and it serves as a further barrier to quality teaching and learning. Furthermore, it leads to high attrition rates among rural learners compared to their urban/semi-urban counterparts.

7.7 Discipline

The issue of discipline is a very difficult issue as students have made it clear that the schools are sometimes ungovernable. Lack of discipline manifests in learner's disrespectfulness to teachers, absenteeism, tardiness, use of alcohol and drugs, etc. This problem is so big such that some teachers end up not coming to the classes where there are disruptive and uncontrollable students. Other teachers even leave the schools as a result of the lack of discipline among students. Research have found that discipline plays a huge role in creating a good culture of teaching and learning which leads to the effectiveness of the school producing quality education. The country's policy on discipline (as outlined in the alternatives to corporal punishment) is based on the assumption that teachers have control over learners and learners are willing to cooperate. The problem with this strategy is that it does not specify how this should be achieved. The question is: what recourse do teachers have in cases where a learner refuses to heed instruction? The policy merely states that learners are expected to behave in a manner conducive for learning and expected to respect teachers. On the other hand teachers are given authority to make any reasonable rule for governing their classrooms as long as it is acceptable to the school management (Valley, 1998).

Off course corporal punishment is out of question. The thought that refuses to escape me is that if the teacher fails to take control of a classroom, no cane would assist. If they choose to disrespect the teacher in front of others, would a cane deter that? The answer is no. Researchers have found that "a positive disciplinary climate is directly linked to high achievement" (Mayer et al, 2000: 42). Mayer et al pointed out that quality schools usually have high levels of orderliness and discipline as students are actively engaged in educationally productive activities (2000:42). Porker and Smith posit that "a disciplined climate may be a necessary precondition that permits and perhaps enables good teaching and learning" (in Mayer et al, 2000: 42).

Mayer et al also found that minimizing discipline problems encourage academic excellence and clearly effects schools quality and learning and that teaching in high performing schools takes place without much effort by teachers (2000). Teaching and learning is subject to fewer intrusion and disruptions which leads to more time for academic activities.

7.8 Language

Qorro (2006) argued that the issue of language cannot be divorces to the discussion about quality of education since language is the Vehicle through which education is transported from teachers to students. It appears that the students are taught in their home language which is IsiZulu while test and exam questions are in English. The inability of these learners to understand English is an obvious barrier for them to get good results. Qorro (2006) suggested that both teachers and students need to use a language they fully understand and are able to discuss debate, ask and answer questions comfortably. If these learners cannot understand the questions let alone answering them, how are they expected to get good results and quality education?

The biggest problem when it comes to the language of instruction is that, it divides learners according to class as Babaci-Wilhite (2013) argues that children of wealthier parents are more likely to get exposure to English through watching films and travelling to different places which makes them more fluent/proficient than their counterpart from poor families. In the case of rural areas some students come from families where they have access to television while others do not. It is without doubt that students with televisions in their homes understands English better than those who do not while students from urban areas who have access to computers and libraries are even better than rural children. Others explained that they have no exposure to the English language outside the school and even the teaching of this language is ineffective inside the school. As a result of this disadvantage I agree with Babaci-Wilhite (2013) in saying that in such a situation low quality education is guaranteed as exam questions are asked and answered in English. These learners do not have the potential of becoming what they have reason to value as they cannot reach their full potential as they are limited by the language.

This is a policy issue; the government needs to come up with a language policy that prevents this deprivation. For instance, if these learners leave schools without understanding English which is a business language, where else are they expected to learn the language or how are they expected to be economically productive citizens.

Any student in grade 12 or anyone who has passed grade 12 but is unable to express themselves in English serves as an indictment to the education system. Mayer et al argues that "If students are not taught the value and social skills necessary to be good citizens and do not learn the academic skills necessary to be economically productive then the schools have not succeeded in their mission" (2000: 1).

7.9. Unqualified Teachers

Mckright (1987 in Mayer et al, 2000) clarifies that curriculum have three levels:

1) Intended curriculum- consists of topics the teacher is expected to teach. This is represented by the curriculum material provided to teachers "because the intended curriculum is at best a set of goals for what teachers and students address in the class-room, the intended curriculum has limited value to those interested in knowing how those goals are implemented and how they relate to student learning" (Mayer, 2000:19).

2) Implemented curriculum- is the part of the intended curriculum that is actually taught, the practice and tools employed as well as the conditions under which this happens. Implemented curriculum is affected by a number of factors such as pedagogy or instructional practices, materials and equipment (e.g. technology) and conditions (e.g. Number of students.

This address the issue of unqualified teachers as learners alluded that some teachers repeat the text book as it is. Mayer et al (2000) found that school quality is enhanced when teachers have high academic skills, teach in the field in which they are trained, have more than a few years of experience, and participate in high quality induction and professional development program. They also suggest that the students' complain about shortage of qualified teachers has credibility as they found that students learn more from teachers with strong academic skills and experience. Furthermore they argue that school quality (as indicated by training and talent of teaching force, what goes on in the class-rooms and the overall culture and atmosphere of the school) affect the ability of learners to learn. Students believe that some of the things that can be done to improve education can include regular school inspections where teaching and learning will be closely monitored. This is in line with Mayer et al (2000) who argue that the quality of schools needs to be assessed and monitored continuously.

This is essential to ensure that our schools are fulfilling their mission of providing quality education that produces a skilled …citizenry. Mayer et al (2000) suggest the following issues to be part of school assessment and monitoring: school quality outcomes, readiness for school, societal support for learning, education and economic productivity, and Equity.

7.10 Instructional Leadership

Participants blamed the principals for all the things that are not going well in their schools. It appears that these schools used to do better in the previous years until they changed principals. According to Kruger (2003), these participants are right in blaming the principals as they are the head of schools responsible for the success and failure of their schools. Kruger (2003) refers to them as leaders of instruction and inspiration who needs to make sure of effective teaching and learning. However it also came out from the participants and Kruger's research that principals are overworked and have to divide their time between the curriculum, administrative work and being instructional leaders. This raise a question about the actual role of principals as it seems like they get blamed for everything that goes wrong while at the same time they have a lot on their plates. Another thing that needs to be considered is principal's training. In South Africa there is no school management profession but instead people study to be teachers and they get promoted to being principals based on their experience in the teaching profession. I argue that this is one of the problems that need to be addressed since any teacher with experience can become a principal without actually studying to be a school principal. If we take Kruger's argument that principals are the one responsible for the success or failure of the school then they need to be well qualified for a school management position so that they know exactly how to control teachers, learners, and resources in making sure of a sound culture of teaching and learning and the provision of quality education.

7.11. Demotivated Learners.

Education is understood as the only way in which the previously disadvantaged people can escape poverty. However, some learners pointed out that they go to schools for the sake of reaching matric and they actually see matric as the end goal for them. These students clearly do not understand the value of education as they do not see themselves being really successful in life. The reason for this is because they do not have adult role models and they cannot even have big dreams and they don't see themselves reaching the sky. Listening to them talking about their aspirations and where they see themselves in future tells a story about their opportunity to reach their full potential.

Students for instance views success as equivalent to driving a car and studying at a university indicate the level of their imaginations and dreams. Such students do not have the opportunity to live the lives they have reason to value and they are not capable to reach their full potential as they do not even know or have option to choose what they really want.

7.12 Conclusion

This chapter analyzed data using themes. The chapter illuminates that the studied schools are not in a position to provide quality education. This comes as the schools lack basic infrastructure and other important facilities such as buildings, water, computers, libraries, and have shortage of teachers. This study argues that learners in these schools suffer undeserved disadvantage and this means a lack of social justice. This disadvantage is not their fault as it originates from the circumstances of their birth; their parents' class and the geographic area they were born into. The chapter also highlight that the government policies on discipline, language of instruction and teachers appointment are somehow problematic as students are uncontrollable, don't understand the language of instruction and suffer shortage of teachers. It also recognizes that students lack motivation and have no aspirations for the future and do not understand the value of education.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"We envisage Schools that provide all Learners with an excellent education" (NDP, 2011: 264)

8.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a synthesis of what the dissertation has covered in the various chapters. It engages with the manner in which access to education has emerged throughout the research including issues pertaining to the culture of teaching and learning in rural schools. Some of the challenges identified as factors that inhibit the quality of education are also summarized including the availability of resources, lack of adequate infrastructure in schools and availability of qualified teachers inter alia. The summary briefly engages with policy questions on how has the democratic government advances amidst identified challenges. Lastly, recommendations are provided on the basis of the results that were presented in chapter six and possible areas for further research in this are also pointed out.

8.2. Access

It is now evident that a lot has been done to improve the quality of education. Some of the achievements includes close to universal (95%) enrolment of children between the age of seven and fifteen for the first nine years of schooling, more accessible early childhood development, free education, school feeding program, provision of learner materials. This study concludes that there is an issue of residualization in the rural schools of Ndwedwe. This means that only those who can't go to better schools remain in these schools while learners from better off families travel to other schools. This became evident as when asked which school they would choose to go to, none of the students said they would choose to go to their respective schools. This means that the economic status continues to determine student's opportunities. From the social justice perspective it becomes clear that these learners could not have done anything to change their situation which means that they are unduly deprived. It is concerning that the issue of inequality still remains. According to the capabilities approach education is the fundamental entitlement. In looking at capabilities in relation to human rights Nussbaum (2003) argues that rights are secured to people only when they have the relevant capabilities.

Given that education is a human right and rights are important in the definition of social justice the human rights perspective is of relevance in this case. The point is that if the poor are to get out of the poverty situation, education is the instrument that imparts key capabilities that will alleviate poverty. A situation where access to quality education is determined by affordability imprisons the poor as they will continue to lag behind their wealthy counterparts, even in adulthood. Poverty is by its nature intergenerational and an education system that discriminates against the poor serves to perpetuate poverty.

8.2 Culture of teaching and learning

This study revealed that learners in these schools are disrespectful to teachers and ungovernable. This issue exceeds to the point where teachers choose not to go to class or leave the schools because of disruptive and uncontrollable learners. This is a policy issue as the current policy on discipline assumes that teachers have full control over students that are willing to corporate. Issues of discipline play a major role in affecting the culture of teaching and learning and determine the effectiveness and quality of the schools. The government still needs to come up with a clear strategy for teachers to deal with unruly learners.

The study also illuminated that language is another issue that perpetuate disadvantage. This is evident as students complained that they do not understand the English language as teachers teach them in isiZulu while exams are written in English. The issue of language will perpetuate disadvantage even beyond school. Learners understand this, as they pointed out that their inability to understand and speak English will be a problem for them when they look for employment. This suggests that these schools cannot produce a skilled work force if these students cannot even express themselves in the language of instruction. The National Development Plan says "language not only carry knowledge, but also create new and better knowledge. Language policy needs to be informed by a greater appreciation of labor market imperatives" (NDP, 2011: 266).

This research revealed that learners are demotivated as they appear to have accepted that they are not going to pass matric. An education that trains a child for 12 years and the child leaves the school without aspirations for a better life has failed in its purpose of creating a skilled and economically productive citizenry. If our schools are to teach for social justice, they would provide opportunities for social mobility for children born into poverty, thereby strengthening equity. The National Planning Commission also conceded that public education is sub-standard.

It also surfaced that the problem starts at primary schools where learners don't get proper education to enable them to succeed at high school level. What still needs to be done is to make sure that every level/grade prepares learners for the next level which is adulthood and the business world.

8.3 Availability of Resources

Over and above, this study shows that rural schools in Ndwedwe lack essential resources including teachers, basic infrastructure and other facilities. These schools suffer a shortage of teachers and teachers end up teaching subjects they are not qualified for. This is more likely to contribute to the low pass rate in these schools. The NDP acknowledges that teachers are central to education and that they must have sufficient knowledge of the subjects they teach. Two of the studied schools went on strike at the beginning of 2016 as a result of this issue. The schools also have a serious problem of water and students drink dirty tank water. There are cases when they walk to the rivers to fetch water during school hours. School buildings are also decaying and learners suffer the cold and rain while inside the class rooms. In terms of social justice these students are victims of underserved suffering and their right to quality education is violated.

Learners' dignity is also violated as they use pit latrines with decaying walls where you can actually see a person from the outside while others use overflowing pit latrines. Moreover, these schools have no libraries, no computers, and no playing grounds. These issues suggest that these schools do not have an environment that is conducive for teaching and learning let alone providing quality education. Students from these schools do not have the capacity to realize their full potential and compete with learners from schools that have all these resources. As I conclude this dissertation, there is unrest in the higher education sector where students feel that the country has failed to open the doors of education as they are limited by issues of funding. As a result the South African education system will never be the same.

8.4 Inhibiting Factors

Improving education has been the government's priority since the dawn of democracy and a number of reforms have been put in place to improve the quality of education. However, this study concludes that the issues of small and non-viable schools continue to be a backlog for rural schools of Ndwedwe and possibly other rural areas. These schools do not benefit much from the government as they have fewer learners and therefore receive smaller funding from the government which is not enough for them to get all the required facilities.

These schools cannot even employ teachers or have a variety of subject choices. This means that students and teachers have to make do with what is available for them since their schools are deprived of the same opportunities that some from other schools enjoy. As a result, they do not have the opportunity to live lives they have reasons to value as they have no choices but to settle for sub-standard education. These learners are also not motivated and have no aspirations for the future because very few people who finish matric from these schools become successful. For them reaching matric is the end goal and they do not have big dreams. As a result, these learners do not take education serious because they do not understand it value.

8.5 How has government advanced?

This dissertation concludes that the government's effort to make education more accessible for everyone has been a success as more children of school age enroll in schools. This has been made possible by policies that address issues poverty and inequality such as the fee exemptions policy, no fee policy, school feeding scheme, and school transport policy. The government has also addressed the issue of teachers through the redeployment and incentive policies that ensures the even redistribution of teachers. Even though the government has done so much in an attempt to improve the quality of education, it appears the backlogs still exit and there is still a long way to go to shred the phrase 'previously disadvantaged' as these communities continue to be disadvantaged. There is also so much that needs to be done for all learners to be able to realize their full potential as the schools still lack basic things such as water, computers, libraries and enough well trained teachers. From studying the six rural schools of Ndwedwe, this dissertation concludes that the playing field is not yet level as learners in these schools still suffer deprivation.

8.6 Recommendations

It appears that the main problems faced by rural schools in Ndwedwe derive from the issue of small and non-viable schools. This is an issue where schools suffer low enrolment resulting in a shortage of teachers (sometimes leading to multi grade teaching), lack of infrastructure, and lack of diversified curriculums. This problem needs to be addressed with agency as these schools seem to be failing young people as they are unable to provide them with quality education. The government needs to create mega schools as already proposed, and these schools should be big enough to have diversified curriculums. The strategy for this must include transport service where students will be provided with buses from different areas to this school.

At the moment students sometimes go to schools where the subjects they want are not offered because the current transport system works school by school. In the case of Ndwedwe school principals are the one who apply for school buses to pick up learners from around the community to that particular school. Since the issue of limited subjects seems to run across schools, I suggest that mega schools should be created according to their fields. For example, the government can create a few commerce only schools where learners who wish to do commercial studies will be transported from all surrounding areas. In this way a student would only choose a school based on the subjects offered and transport would not be an issue. Another issue that needs to be addressed is the issue of school management. I suggest that school management should be a profession on its own. Principals are the heads of the schools and responsible for their success and failure and they need to be properly trained for it. There must be a four year university program for people who want to be schools managers. In this way people who want to be teachers would not automatically become principals. This would solve the issue of quality as it seems that problems come from the top down as principals fail to manage their schools.

Furthermore, the government needs to deal with the issue of teacher redeployment especially in small schools. Teaching in a small school should not necessarily translate to being overworked as a result of a shortage of teachers. While the government works towards creating mega schools, it also need to find a strategy for teacher redeployment for such schools as it seems that the existing Post Provision Norm (PPN) cause a disadvantage for small schools. I suggest that PPN be revised or replaced by a more practical strategy that address this issue.

8.6 Identified Areas for Further Research

This research was limited in that that five of the six participating schools fall under quintile one while Khanyisa Secondary is the only quintile two school. Having one quintile two school out of five quintiles makes one wonder if these problems are quintile one problems or run across all schools. Further research can try to sample more rural schools from quintile two or three. Another shortcoming of this research is that it only focuses on perceptions of former and current learners without considering what the teachers and officials think. A study that looks at school teachers and head of the departments would serve a good cause in trying to understand policy reforms and the way in which they revolve over time.

8.7 Conclusion

This dissertation concludes that even though the government has succeeded in making education more accessible, children in rural schools of Ndwedwe receive low quality or sub-standard education. This comes as learners in these schools lack basic resources such as teachers, basic infrastructure and other resources. These students do not seem to be in a position to fully compete and stand a chance of passing above other learners that go to schools where these resources are available. This means that the playing field is not yet level as learners from these schools suffer deprivation that is unimaginable to their counterparts who go to better schools (schools with all the required basic resources).

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