

Investigating factors which influence parental school choice in post-Apartheid South Africa: A case study of Umlazi Township

by

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Table of contents

Abstract	iii
Preface	iv
Plagiarism declaration	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter One: Introduction	
1.1. School choice in post-apartheid South Africa.....	1
Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework	
2.1. Understanding school choice.....	4
2.2. International experience of school choice.....	6
2.3. How parents choose.....	7
2.4. Introduction of school choice in South Africa.....	10
2.5. Conclusion.....	14
Chapter Three: Background	
3.1. Location of study.....	16
3.2. Umlazi’s educational market.....	17
3.3. Conclusion.....	20
Chapter Four: Methodology	
4.1. Data collection.....	21
4.2. Data analysis.....	23
4.3. Conclusion.....	23
Chapter Five: Findings and Analysis	
5.1. Introduction.....	25
5.2. Money matters.....	26
5.3. Child safety.....	29
5.4. Discipline.....	30
5.5. Language.....	32
5.6. Child-school matching: The few skilled choosers.....	35
5.7. How schools choose.....	36
5.8. Conclusion.....	43
Chapter Six: Conclusion	
6.1. Introduction.....	45
6.2. Understanding S-section’s educational market.....	45
6.3. The social consequences of school choice policy.....	49
6.4. Concluding remarks.....	50
References	52
Tables	
Table 1: National allocations per quintile per child (2007-2009).....	59
Table 2: Household details as reported by interviewees (Informal settlements...)	60
Table 3: Household details as reported by interviewees (S-section).....	62
Figures	
Figure 1: Umlazi S-section in relation to Durban suburbs.....	64
Figure 2: Umlazi S-Section (in detail).....	65
Annexures	
Annexure A: Interview questionnaires	66

Abstract

While race played a dominant role in determining how South Africans accessed quality education during apartheid this study reveals that in post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in racially homogenous communities, class has come to play a greater role in securing quality education. The following case study provides a compelling vignette of how residents from the formal and informal settlements in Umlazi interact with schools in the local educational market. The study uses qualitative interviews with residents of Umlazi S-section who have chosen to have their children educated in Umlazi schools to extract narratives which expose how they have experienced the process of choosing schools in Umlazi. Choice theories are invoked in order to understand how parents perceive the value of education and how their own choices demonstrate their understanding of the educational market. In examining the factors governing school choice and its effects, the study employs a number of theories which add value to understanding this area of educational sociology including Pierre Bourdieu's 'theory of practice', which provides insight into how class positions influence individuals' perceptions of their own rightful place in society. Household narratives reveal that parental school choice is dominated by concerns with affordability, safety and preservation of culture. The study also reveals that schools themselves play an influential role in determining who is selected and excluded from schools in the community. The study reveals that societies perceive education as critical to the development of their children and most importantly, that their efforts and educational choices are geared towards providing opportunities that ensure their children have better opportunities in life. However, it is also revealed that school choice is a weak tool for redistributing educational equity in an educational system where access is largely determined by financial positioning. In the community under investigation the manner in which parents exercise choice has resulted in poorer children being pushed out of the local school market. Such movements, in pursuit of educational opportunities, have far-reaching consequences for funding models in the South African education system.

PREFACE

The research work described in this dissertation was carried out in the School of Built Environment and Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban, from January 2011 to October 2012, under the supervision of Ms Catherine Sutherland.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, **Thabisile Nothando Ntombela**, declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed



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¹ Research assistants were residents of S-section and performed the role of helping the researcher navigate the research area since they were familiar with the area. They introduced me to community members and enabled me to return to conduct interviews at a later date when necessary.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. School choice in post-apartheid South Africa

South Africa's democratic era resulted in a shift in education policy, one which enhanced rights and accountability in line with prevailing democratic principles. The apartheid regime had cultivated an excessively unequal society where education was utilised as a tool to propel the reproduction of future race-based South African societies in a direction which suited the narrow interests of the regime. This meant unequal access to quality schools and teaching for largely black² South African children. A series of laws made it possible for the apartheid government to act seemingly without respite. The Group Areas Act of 1950 limited citizens' access to residential areas and amenities based on racial classification. Areas reserved for white citizens received better serviced and well-equipped healthcare and education systems. It is recorded that in 1982, under the provisions of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 the government spent R1211 per white child as opposed to R771 per coloured child, R498 per Indian child and lastly, R146 per black child (Equal Education 2011). Education was a dominant aspect of the apartheid regime's social engineering project, where racialised management and resourcing of schools combined with laws like the Group Areas Act restricted citizens' mobility to the extent that black people's choices were often confined to under-resourced schools catering only to black learners in townships or Bantustans. In this way, the government of the apartheid regime demonstrated an understanding of education as a key component in the development or under-development of human capital and the subsequent development of future societies.

To apartheid it was imperative to repeal various acts which limited citizens' freedom of movement, access to public goods and harmed their sense of dignity. The end of apartheid necessitated that the new government make superior education previously reserved for white children available to all South African children. However, this could not to be achieved through the construction of a wholly new education system as this would have proved too expensive, since poor education in townships was not just a function of infrastructure but also low qualification levels among teachers. The repeal of the Group Areas Act in 1991 coincided with the goal to extend access to former exclusively-white schools to black parents in such a

² While not wishing to further entrench the racial categories of apartheid, reference to race groups is essential to the research conducted here because of the way in which apartheid impacted on education.

way that it resulted in South Africa's open school choice policy. Post-apartheid education policies in South Africa have demonstrated a concern for redress, equity, democracy and access. Woolman and Fleisch (2006) suggest that attempts to desegregate the country's schools resulted in "South Africa's unintended experiment in school choice" (Woolman and Fleisch 2006: 31) as the prevailing policies no longer limited children's educational opportunities based on race or residential area; parents were free to exercise choice based on their own preferences, needs and capabilities. This resulted in black children moving to schools in areas formerly designated for white, Indian and coloured people. A significant amount of attention has been given to the post-apartheid education of South African children. Particular interest has been given to understanding how transformation has affected movement of children across South African cities in search of education (Hoadley 1999; Soudien et al 2001; Fataar 2007 and 2009). This study aims to contribute to that body of work by exploring how choice operates in the South African education system in a township setting where parents have 'chosen' to have their children educated locally within the township. Furthermore, research has tended to frame parents who send their children to township schools in deficit terms because education received in township schools is largely perceived, or known, to be of a lower quality to that offered in schools in Indian and coloured townships and former white-only suburbs. To this end, this study attempts to make meaning of parents' choices within townships, to develop a full understanding as to why they choose to have their children educated in schools in Umlazi Township.

Lemon (2003: 2) suggests that "class, rather than race, is now the main determinant of educational opportunity" in South Africa. An exploration of school choice provides an opportunity to examine how issues concerning education and class collide. In order to develop a full understanding of school choice in South African townships this study explores how parents from different class backgrounds make choices with regard to their children's education. Furthermore, it attempts to understand the role played by schools in shaping these decisions. It is in this particular context that this research is positioned, with a special focus on residents in a community in Umlazi which enjoys shared educational resources. The study analyses how their different class backgrounds affect the ways in which they navigate school choice. The research focuses on how parents or guardians of children choose and are in effect, also chosen by schools with the critical questions being:

1. Which issues affect choice of schools in this area?
2. What factors do parents/guardians prioritise when choosing schools for their children in townships?
3. To what extent do schools shape this process of decision-making?
4. What are the spatial and social implications of these choices?

In order to fully explore the various themes suggested by these questions the dissertation is structured in the following way. Chapter Two presents an overview of the literature in this field by describing the different approaches to school choice and furthermore, the many perspectives that reveal the complexity of school choice. School choice is initially discussed in its international context, providing examples and experiences of school choice from other countries. Finally, the focus shifts to a literature review of school choice as experienced in South Africa. Chapter Three provides a brief background to the community in which the study was conducted. Chapter Four focuses on the explanation and justification of the research methods used in conducting the study. Chapter Five deals specifically with the findings related to this particular study while Chapter Six provides an opportunity for analysis of the research findings and as the conclusion to this study, it also provides a space to place these findings within the greater body of policy research concerned with school choice in South Africa and other countries.

Writing about poor parents and education, particularly in the Western context, has a tendency to undermine the value they place on choice, so that they are portrayed as a group which does not recognise the significance of education. This study explores the complexity associated with the process of choosing schools in Umlazi Township. Understanding the choices made by parents also serves to highlight the different challenges which families encounter when attempting to access quality schooling for their children and it reveals the exclusionary practices employed by schools. The research asserts that parental choices are a product of parents' own social positioning so the juxtaposition of two different residential groups in this study reveals much about the relationship between class and educational access in South Africa.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework

2.1. Understanding school choice

In many countries school choice simply describes “a situation in which parents can choose the schools their children attend regardless of where they live” (Lee et al 1994: 434). However, it is important that school choice be appreciated as more than mere choosing of schools – it goes far deeper than that. The practice of school choice has widely been accepted as a game changer in education systems as it has been rolled out as part of efforts to decentralise education systems all over the world. Sayed (1997) suggests that school choice is one of the mechanisms used by governments to entrench decentralised education systems where schools become somewhat autonomous from the governments under which they operate. He suggests that the decentralisation of education systems seems inevitable, particularly in democratic states since “the political rationale for educational decentralisation is to redistribute, share, and extend power as well as to enhance participation by removing centralised control over educational decision making” (Sayed 1997: 355). As such, school choice is often accompanied by parental participation on decision-making bodies within school governance structures like Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Governing Bodies (SGBs). Forsey et al (2008) suggest that school choice has captured the imaginations of education policy-makers and citizens because “the idea of choice offers alluring promises of equality, freedom, democracy and pleasure that traverses political and social boundaries. It reflects and evokes deep desires for autonomy, control and self-expression” (Forsey et al 2008: 10). Maile (2004: 95) suggests that school choice was “born out of a vision to provide quality education to children through shared governance and support for educational endeavours. It is a measure used to attain equality and to exercise rights” for scholars and their parents. In this way, school choice appears to align harmoniously with democratic principles which many countries hold dear.

For some analysts however, the introduction of choice, by its very nature, invites the notion of competition into education policy. Gintis (1995: 492) asserts that open school choice is, in fact, a “‘regulated competitive delivery’ of educational services” and should be understood as far more than just a policy which allows parents to choose their children’s school but rather, as a complex policy initiative which aims to stimulate the education sector in a way that makes people treat education like other products they would ordinarily purchase. While they

oppose school choice, Gerwitz et al (1995) agree with Gintis (1995) on this point as they too believe that school choice cannot be separated from economics in that the exercise of choice has a premium. Gerwitz et al (1995) suggest that school choice should be appreciated as a critical part of a process of the marketisation of education since school choice is often “presented as a mechanism which will extend personal freedom whilst making schools more responsive to their ‘consumers’” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 20). For this reason then, both supporters and critics of school choice often speak of school choice as a critical feature of the marketisation of education. The education market is often described as a quasi-market since it fails to embrace all the features of markets because of its primary role as a public good. In a quasi-market the classic supply-demand model is not strictly adhered to but “the generation of additional resources is based on the principle of self-interest” (Sayed 1997: 359). Sayed uses the example of parents’ willingness to pay additional user fees as an example of the operation of a quasi-educational market in South Africa. Nonetheless, critics of school choice suggest that through this process, education is transformed from a public good to a consumer good, where significant rules of ordinary markets come into play. Those that support school choice understand this to be a benefit to parents and their children. They argue that parents and learners “benefit from having the power, should they be dissatisfied with services delivered, to induce the school to change, using the threat of taking their business elsewhere” (Gintis 1995: 509).

However, many researchers argue that open school choice is not as neutral a process as the preceding definition suggests. Unfortunately, understanding school choice from this perspective alone gives the impression that it is empowering for all parents and scholars. Gerwitz et al (1995) emphasise that parents are not all equal in capabilities and social power; individuals’ capacities to make choices are dependent on their position within the social class strata. They argue that those situated towards the middle or top of the social class strata are better positioned to exercise choice in education markets; those with stable jobs and disposable incomes (the middle class choosers) have more power to vote with their feet (or wallets) than their working class counterparts. There are various reasons for this occurrence. One can assume that in many countries where school attendance is determined by area of residence it is more expensive, especially for working class parents, to move house so that their child is in a district with better performing schools; it would certainly be cheaper to have a child commute between home and school. In the United States it is particularly difficult for

working class or poor parents to walk away from badly performing schools because choice opportunities continue to be limited and determined through mechanisms parents may not have complete control over. Low education levels and the inaccessibility of the required social capital also make it difficult for working class and poor parents to remove their children from poorly performing schools. Forsey et al (2008) further suggest that “school choice reforms assume a wide variety of incarnations from country to country [since] the vocabulary of choice provides a loose and malleable language for a variety of actors to pursue widely ranging goals” (Forsey et al 2008: 15).

2.2. International experience of school choice

Countries pursue open school choice policies for different reasons. The consequences of open school choice policies and the marketisation of education phenomenon is that opponents of open school choice policies take issue with. Research shows that school choice is employed for different reasons taking on different forms with various consequences for countries. Most commonly open school choice policies are employed to address concerns with regards to quality and equity. In Chile, where a voucher system was introduced to incentivise parents to send their children to private schools, public schools were framed as reflecting “inefficient local municipalities” (Hsieh and Urquiola 2006: 1477). However, Hsieh and Urquiola also reveal that “school choice did not improve average schooling outcomes in Chile” (2006: 1478) thereby dispelling the myth that open school choice correlates directly with improved quality in schooling. In many countries the introduction of open school choice can offer opportunities that people were previously denied and for this reason, can be particularly freeing, as often argued by supporters of school choice. When privately-funded international schools were established in Singapore, “families were able to choose these fully privately-funded schools (provided they could afford the fees) rather than [rely on] the previous model of schools selecting students on the basis of merit” (Vidovich and Sheng 2008: 209). In this particular instance school choice had the positive benefit of allowing parents whose children may have been deemed undeserving of educational opportunities because of poor academic performance the chance to gain access to quality education. Opponents to school choice often suggest that the education system is not driven by market principles and attempting to frame it as such in the quest for quality and equity only has negative implications for the system as a whole.

Gerwitz et al (1995) have conducted extensive research on school choice in the United Kingdom. Their findings reveal that “choice is thoroughly social; it is a process powerfully informed by the lives people lead and their biographies – in short, their position within a social network” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 24). This statement supports their assertions in much of their research, whether individually or collectively, that school choice is not a neutral practice and stands to disadvantage the already disadvantaged of our societies. Gerwitz et al (1995) believe that research concerned with school choice can be separated into two types; “the first treats choice as a decontextualised, undifferentiated and neutral mechanism...[while the second type] takes matters of difference more seriously, indicating that choice systems discriminate against working-class families” (1995: 20). They further suggest that middle-class families stand to disproportionately benefit from open school choice policies because they are more likely to actually engage in the process of choosing. Borrowing from the work of French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, they further rationalise that middle class children are favoured by the system because of cultural resources which position them favourably within this particular social field – the education system. Bourdieu’s theory of practice holds that those possessing cultural and social capital congruent with those institutions which are being competed for are better able to manoeuvre the system where “focus is on the transformation of social position into social advantage, particularly by use of social networks” (Lareau 2001: 80). In earlier writing Gintis, alongside Samuel Bowles (1976), suggested that the schooling system in a capitalist context reproduces inequalities in societies rather than being a site of social redress. This fits in with a large body of research which sees education as having the potential to reproduce inequalities and social divisions (Gerwitz et al 1995 and Ball 2006). It is often asserted that in a marketised education system “well-resourced choosers now have free reign to guarantee and reproduce, as best they can, their existing cultural, social and economic advantages in the new complex in the new complex and blurred hierarchy of schools [where] class selection is revalorised by the market” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 23).

2.3. How parents choose

Supporters of school choice assume that in the event that parents are given the right to choose the schools which their children will go to, they will choose what they believe is the most effective school. The literature also often assumes that ‘effective’ in schooling refers only to the quality of education received – once schools recognise that parents are demanding

‘effective’ schools they will be induced to change how they operate in order to be responsive to their consumers. To this end, schools will compete to be better and more effective than their competitors in order to attract more customers. Much of these assumption carry within them the belief that all parents are ‘trained’ to think in this way about education. Maile (2004) distinguishes between procedural and expressive choices. He suggests that procedural choice making is when parents use ‘rule of thumb’ to make choices. So, a parent will send a child to school simply because it is the social norm that children go to school for a period of years. Such procedural choice making will not include much thinking with regard to which school a child ends up in which may result in choosing the closest school. On the other hand, expressive choice refers to the process where people become “capable of deliberating and choosing the ends they wish to pursue” (Maile 2004: 101). In this instance, an “individual choice is probably based on one’s overall assessment of a particular choice’s greater probability of fulfilling one’s choice” (Maile 2004: 102). Maile’s analysis suggests that expressive choice-making is where parents attempt to maximise utility as they acknowledge and recognise their status as clients or consumers; they see education as a product and educators or school managers as vendors (Maile 2004: 100).

Maile’s ideas provide an interesting vantage point to an argument tendered by Gerwitz et al (1995). They suggest that parents are not equally equipped to navigate the schools market and have identified three distinct categories of choice makers. Privileged or skilled choosers are described as a group which has an affinity for choice and possesses the skills to ‘decode’ school systems. Gerwitz et al (1995) further emphasise that this group tends to be “oriented to high status, elite ‘cosmopolitan’ schools, some of which have difficult or obscure systems of entry, which are ‘known’ to the privileged/skilled choosers” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 25). It goes without saying that this group has access to funds through which they provide mobility for their children should the schools they choose be far from home and require daily commuting or enrolment in boarding facilities. They are also involved in the practice of ‘child-matching’ (Gerwitz et al 1995: 26) showing a deep desire to match their children to appropriate schools which resonate with their children’s interests and capabilities.

Semi-skilled choosers are described as having a “strong inclination for but limited capacity to engage ‘effectively’ with the market: their cultural capital is in the wrong currency and they are less able to accumulate the right sort” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 40). They further suggest that

what distinguishes this group from the first is that they are less likely to contest decisions made by the schools they wanted their children to enter when access is denied. The third group is that of the disconnected choosers, those who choose out of necessity. For this group there is a degree of disconnection from the market. Gerwitz et al (1995) suggest that disconnected choosers begin the process of choosing having already limited their choice to two schools – “these would be schools in close physical proximity and part of their social community” (1995: 45). This is different to the privileged or skilled choosers who begin with a number of schools and eventually end up with two to choose from. For the detached chooser “choice seems more or less predetermined, often a process of confirmation rather than comparison” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 45).

Much of the school choice debate and empirical evidence emanates from the developed world context and these experiences do not always necessarily find expression in the developing world. Researchers in the global south have sought to demonstrate that working class choosers are able to employ nuanced understandings of their situations and use these to assess their children’s educational needs balanced with their own capabilities to provide for them. To this end, their choices are not only made out of necessity or “determined by considerations of distance, safety, convenience and locality” (Soudien et al 2001: 86). While it may be true that the working class and the poor face great constraints when making choices regarding schooling, researchers suggest that they do care and make carefully considered choices. In Chile, Hsieh and Urquiola (2006) make the point that while school choice assumes that when parents are free to choose they will choose the most effective school and schools will respond to this pressure, thereby improving quality, parents are not always guided by the market imperative to maximise output. Hsieh and Urquiola (2006) found that “when parents are allowed to freely choose between schools, they select those that provide ‘good’ peer groups for their children, which might not exactly be the most productive” (Hsieh and Urquiola 2006: 1479) in terms of market principles but may be the best decision for parents who consider their children’s development in holistic terms. Srivastava (2008) notes that in India poor parents who send their children to low-fee private schools “made active choices about their children’s schooling through a complex process that involved competing school sectors, incorporating their beliefs about education, analysing local school markets and managing particular constraints” (Srivastava 2008: 185).

Phillips and Stambach (2008) argue that the ability to exercise choice is influenced by the socio-economic context of a particular country. In Tanzania, they found that while open school choice policies existed, poor parents who had no financial means to fully participate in the educational market were effectively left out. So, while parents are free to choose the schools which their children go to, their situation is characterised by the absence of choice in an open school choice environment because they simply lack the means to exercise any meaningful choice. Instead, in the community featured in their research, people sought to “produce educational opportunities through social interaction” (Phillips and Stambach 2008: 145). They also found that these parents sought other means to facilitate their children’s entry into the educational market. Parents who could not afford to send their children to school sought to establish relationships with more influential community members to gain access to schooling for their children. Some would do this by performing menial tasks for their neighbours such as cleaning or collecting water. In the research depicted, the parents did not choose the schools but relied on their neighbours identifying schools for their children, through a variety of social networks, as a token of appreciation for all the work they had performed for them. In this case educational opportunities are accessed not through monetary buying power but through acts of social networking and support which buy favour and can be converted to many acts of kindness towards securing an education for a neighbour’s child. Evident in their case study is the tenacity of parents and their adaptability to their local educational context. Fataar (2009) suggests that it is no different in South African townships where “contrary to a perception of stasis, people are always on the move in interaction with the townships social contours” (Fataar 2009: 8) in search of educational opportunities for their children. To this end, those that may be perceived to be disconnected choosers according to the model set out by Gerwitz et al (1995), may actually present themselves as highly skilled when navigating the unfriendly terrain of township education with which they are familiar because school choice is localised and those most familiar with the terrain can gain the most benefit for their children.

2.4. Introduction of school choice in South Africa

Woolman and Fleisch (2006) assert that open school choice in South Africa is a product of its history and the early attempts to transform the education system when the end of apartheid became certain. Chisholm (2008) asserts that the so-called Clase models introduced to

desegregate white schools in 1990 foretold of the wave of marketisation that was to sweep the education system. The Clase models were introduced to allow schools to choose the funding models they preferred. Model A was introduced to deal with low enrolments and allowed white schools to privatise while Model B allowed schools to be wholly state funded. Model C offered a model which offered semi-privatisation where “the state paid teacher salaries and school communities the other costs” (Chisholm 2008: 233). The last option, Model D allowed schools to continue operating as they had been, as state-aided entities. It was however reiterated that “whatever the model chosen, schools had to remain 51 per cent white and the ‘cultural ethos’ of the school needed to remain intact” (Chisholm 2008: 233). So, before apartheid formally ended there was already some integration and freedom of movement enjoyed by South Africans with respect to educational choices. Once access was relatively open “a pattern emerged of [some] African children commuting to coloured and Indian schools, Indian and coloured children to white schools and white children to private schools” (Chisholm 2008: 234). Chisholm emphasises that while the South African Schools Act of 1996 came to supersede this legislation in later years, the funding and governance model established in Model C schools continues to set these schools apart from other public schools. Chisholm asserts that this is because

the funding model reinforced privilege, albeit on the basis not of race but of class. The shadow of privilege is reflected in the fact that former white schools are still euphemistically called ‘Model C schools’, the option that the majority of school governing bodies chose in 1990 (Chisholm 2008: 233).

Inequalities in South Africa’s education continue to be an issue which requires serious attention. Pampallis (2003) notes that most former Model C schools continue to “achieve better learning outcomes, have a better infrastructure and better learning and teaching outcomes, have better qualified teachers and school managers, and have an ethos that is more conducive to learning than that in most township schools” (Pampallis 2003: 154). On the contrary, township schools do not. A lasting legacy of apartheid has been that the majority of schools in townships are seen as unsuitable sites for the development of children. Pampallis (2003: 154) suggests that “a significant number of these schools are characterised by tardiness; poor discipline; absenteeism of both students and teachers; poor teaching and learning; poor management; and the prevalence of drugs, gangsterism and violence”. Because of these problems research often portrays parents who send their children to schools in townships as having failed to achieve their true ambitions (Soudien et al, 2001). South

Africa's post-apartheid education policies have been described by Woolman and Fleisch (2006) as South Africa's unintended experiment in school choice. Whatever the disadvantages of school choice, which have been discussed at length, most South Africans have limited choice when it comes to choosing quality schools. It would be difficult to reverse the policy largely because South Africa's open enrolment policy reflects "the new constitution's prohibition against unfair discrimination and its commitment to freedom of movement and residence" (Woolman and Fleisch 2006: 36).

Changes to the education system in terms of access also entrenched the practice of paying user fees in the South African education system. In this system the government would fund all state schools, funding students in a way that sought to benefit those from designated groups. This however, as with Model C schools, did not preclude schools from charging extra in order to recoup fees which would assist the schools achieve some of their goals which could not be covered financially by the government subsidy alone. Therefore, governing bodies of schools together with parents continued to decide what fees the school would charge. Monies which were charged over and above the nominal fees could go towards paying the salaries of additional teachers and resourcing schools, depending on where the need was. Mechanisms which determine funding of schools were introduced to ensure that educational funding was used as a mechanism for redress and equity. The National Norms and Standards of 2006 distributes schools across five quintiles³ in each province. Quintile one represents the poorest schools while quintile 5 represents the most privileged schools. Table 1 shows that 80% of South African schools fall within quintiles 1 to 3. Funding was adjusted so that schools in the lowest quintiles received a bigger share of educational funds and in 2007, "40% of schools in South Africa, namely the poorest two-fifths as determined by poverty indicators, were declared to be no fee schools" (CREATE 2009). Table 1 shows the targets for national school allocations across the quintiles. While SASA encourages schools to take charge of generating surplus income through fee collection the mechanism of cascaded funding ensures that poorer schools are adequately provided for by government. However, this mechanism also places pressure on schools falling in quintiles 4 and 5 to generate income through higher fees.

³ The Department of Basic Education announced in October 2012 (Politicsweb 2012) that it would abolish the quintile funding system by 2014. This is due to the recognition that the quintile funding system discriminates against schools that are in good areas but service students who come from poor areas and may require additional funding. The issue of quintile funding remains pertinent to this particular study as it was still the prevailing funding system at the time the research was conducted.

Woolman and Fleisch (2006) believe that it was at this point that attracting children whose parents would be able to pay fees became very important. For this reason schools became very discerning in terms of which children they accepted into their schools where fees became a “class-screening mechanism” (Sayed 1997: 359). In this way, market principles were also entrenched in South Africa’s education system since “user fees reflect the deregulation of the educational provision and ensure that the quality of a good education is correlative of the price or value that is paid” (Sayed 1997: 359). To this end too, schools were part of the school choice process making it apparent that parents or children were not the only or most important choosers but that schools too played an important role through their responsibility to grant or deny access to applicants. Gerwitz et al (1995) assert that this tension in the choice process leads to the commodification of learners where schools are motivated by their own needs to accept or deny learners access.

Many argue that school choice in South Africa has failed to deliver quality and equity in education for all its children. The differences between the education castes established by the apartheid governments remain largely unchanged. The majority of township schools continue to be of a low quality and subsequently, the exodus to former Model C, Indian and Coloured schools continues. The South African Schools Act of 1996 which guides the functioning of the South African education system was largely concerned with removing discrimination and introducing free access. To this end, the research reveals that schools employed different tactics with which to limit access for those wanting to change to new schools. The principle of soft-zoning was introduced in order to facilitate the preferential treatment of children who reside close to where the particular school is located. It is difficult then not to read this idea of soft-zoning and feeder zones as a legal strategy to limit black children’s access to predominantly white schools. Hsieh and Urquiola (2006) noted in Chile that one of the negative consequences of the voucher system was the ‘skimming’ which took place where the best performing learners were drawn away from neighbourhood schools to private schools. Skimming has also taken place in South African schools at the learner and parent level. At one end, parents who recognise their children to be performing well at school or to have the potential to do so remove them from township schools. These parents are usually from the newly formed middle-class or upwardly mobile working class groups in the township. When they remove their children from township schools the local educational market loses more than the potentially good students but also loses their parents who invest their capital and time

where their children now go to school, not in the communities in which they live. Lastly, the introduction of user fees also stratified the education system according to income by creating a “two-tier system of public schooling that is stratified into a thin layer of well-resourced schools and a wide band of marginalised, state-reliant schools” (Sayed 1997: 359).

2.5. Conclusion

School choice policies find different expressions globally. In the United States there is a focus on improving quality and output and similarly too in the United Kingdom. In the global South there is a concern with access and decentralisation of control. Because of South Africa’s unique history open school choice was introduced as a policy to facilitate racial integration in the education system and also allow ‘self-government’ in schools by local school communities, allowing parents to have more of a say in the day-to-day running of their children’s schools. There is evidence that suggests that open school choice grants historically disadvantaged families access to schooling and in some cases, access to superior quality schooling to the one they would have access to in their poor communities which eventually can lead to better careers and provide a passage out of poverty (Srivastava 2008, Vidovich and Sheng 2008 and van den Berg 2008). This is particularly the case in South Africa with specific reference to South African township schools which have a long history of providing low quality education sometimes in dangerous locations. Although school choice offers many benefits, the research also reflects on some of the problems which arise out of open school choice; these shortcomings became relevant across all classes within society.

Prominent among the negative consequences of open school choice is the role played by money in determining access, leading to segregation of schools along class lines. Secondly, researchers also believe that open school choice changes the focus of schools and leads to schools focusing on output (Gerwitz et al 1995 and Andre-Bechely 2007). This makes it necessary for schools to adopt screening tools for children to ensure that they allow only the ‘best’ children in to their schools to secure success for the school in terms of their academic or sporting goals. The reasons behind the choices made by parents remain difficult to decipher as they vary according to many considerations dependant on the household structure and history. Gerwitz et al (1995) assert that parental choices reflect their class backgrounds and go on to suggest that the middle class are effective choosers who are capable of engaging fully with the educational market and to get the best for their children. This is because the market is

structured in a similar way to markets they engage with on a daily basis which is responsive to their buying power. Much of the research reveals that class plays a role in how parents approach the area of school choice. Parental choice is, at once driven by concerns with safety, location, household beliefs about education, household income, school's prestige and family history, among other things.

Chapter Three: Background

3.1. Location of study

This study was conducted in the township of Umlazi, south of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. Umlazi was established in 1965 and is one of the biggest townships in South Africa. While it was initially established as accommodation for migrant labourers, in the late 1980s Umlazi experienced substantial informal housing expansion. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2007) 59% of Umlazi's households are considered formal houses while 38% are informal houses and 3% are traditional dwellings. It is largely homogenous in terms of race and ethnicity with residents being predominantly black and Zulu speaking. Umlazi is separated into sections differentiated by letters of the alphabet. Figure 1 provides a representation of S-section in relation to the other sections of Umlazi and its general positioning in the eThekweni Municipality. In the 2011 national census Umlazi was found to have an estimated population of 404 811 residents (StatsSA 2012). Umlazi has a high unemployment rate of approximately 57% which is not surprising as the United Nations also reports that "much of the development in the area is characteristic of townships in general with major deficiencies relating primarily to residential accommodation, provision of facilities and services, lack of urban and economic opportunities" (2007: 10).

This dissertation focuses on S-section in Umlazi because it provides a good case within which to explore the complex issues identified in this study. The communities of S-section provide a good opportunity for an analysis on school choice because of the apparent wealth/income disparities and the strong social difference that exists between formal and informal housing. Figure 2 shows the three communities which make up S-section in detail. The formal part of S-section which consists of formal housing was established in the late 1980s. But there are also two informal settlements referred to as Emhlabeni (translated, it means 'on earth') and Zakheleni (translated, it means 'build it yourself') which also form part of the section. S-section has an estimated population of 10 771 people (StatsSA 2012). It is surrounded by Umlazi's A, D, T and V sections. Isipingo, formerly an Indian-only township is located close to S-section. While these communities may not be completely different in terms of economic standing and life experience, their differences provide a relevant starting point to assess how differently-classed individuals make choices about their children's education. Research on school choice tends to distinguish between classes in the traditional western style – middle

class vs working class. While these distinctions do exist in South Africa localised complexities often present themselves. The end of apartheid has seen a shift in earning patterns across all race groups in South Africa that is not yet fully understood in terms of how income falls within these traditional descriptors of lower, middle and upper income.

3.2. Umlazi's educational market

Umlazi has 76 schools, 50 being primary schools and 26 high schools. There is also one technikon, the Mangosuthu University of Technology and two vocational colleges, known as Further Education and Training (FET) colleges. Umlazi is particularly interesting to study in terms of education. Since the late 1980s, as in the rest of South Africa, residents of Umlazi have been able to send their children out of the township for their education to escape the poor quality education offered by township schools, which were considered to teach according to the apartheid Bantu Education system offering lower quality than that offered by the Model-C schools. However there are a large number of parents who have chosen to have their children educated in local schools. At the same time a number of schools in Umlazi developed in terms of quality and student performance, to the extent that they are now recognised as 'premium' schools in the township. These schools are therefore highly sought after in Umlazi and KwaZulu-Natal as a whole with students coming from as far as northern KwaZulu-Natal to be educated in Umlazi. These schools are judged as top performers through their Grade 12 success rate and their historical success. Some of their matriculants may also progress on to tertiary education which is not common for many township-educated children.

Gintis (1995) suggests that merely having the freedom to choose does not in itself produce an educational market. He asserts that educational markets develop and flourish where there is a suitable environment. In utilising Gintis' (1995) rationalisation, Woolman and Fleisch (2006: 47) suggest that in South Africa educational...

[M]arket formation occurs most readily in those urban areas with large variation in wealth and large learner populations. These urban areas have the resources necessary to produce a sizeable number of schools in relatively close proximity. The majority of residents know about these schools, have the ability to make reasonably nuanced assessments of their relative quality and tend to act on this information".

While there is only one high school in S-section, there is a thriving educational market which lies in close proximity to residents of S-section. It is also important to note that S-section lies at the edge of Umlazi – Isipingo also has a number of schools available for use by residents of

S-section. Should they be able to afford it, residents of S-section are also able to access schools in the Durban city centre and its surrounding suburbs through a large and stable network of public transport which has direct routes to many of these areas.

Umlazi's educational market is not without its own history stemming from radical changes implemented by the then KwaZulu Government led by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Doug Tilton (1992) suggests that changes made to education in the late 1980s made a lasting impression on education in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly the role education has come to play in enhancing social stratification. As early as 1981 the apartheid government was aware that the education system of the time was unable to produce the necessary skills among blacks that would enhance the economy. The De Lange Commission established in 1981 recommended the "expansion of vocational/technical education and the introduction of an elaborate streaming process in schools" (Tilton 1992: 182) so that black people could be more productive in the economy, particularly its manufacturing sector. While this recommendation was initially not accepted by the presiding national government it later was articulated in the KwaZulu government's⁴ educational policy. The KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture engaged in a project that would overhaul the education system to "visibly distance the KwaZulu curriculum from the South African government's Bantu Education policies, which aimed to prepare pupils, psychologically and intellectually, for political marginalisation and proletarianisation" (Tilton 1992: 167). This policy led to the establishment of comprehensive high schools which would receive support from local business and also focus on high level academic output. However, Tilton (1992: 178) suggests that the IFP essentially articulated policies designed explicitly to accelerate elite accumulation in a quest to garner support for the political party. He states that

to create the social conditions conducive to the stability of this model, Inkatha needed to ensure that education did not raise mass expectations to levels which could not be realistically be accommodated. Thus, the KwaZulu policy sought to stratify education, employing ostensibly meritocratic principles to justify the assignment of students to the unequal social positions available...This strategy accelerated social differentiation, fostering an African elite with a stake in legitimating and perpetuating the social and economic relations responsible for its privileged position.

⁴ The apartheid government created tribal homeland authorities separated according to the different ethnic groups of South Africa. This was to support the objective of 'separate development' upon which apartheid was based. Tribal homelands were run as satellite states of Apartheid South Africa with their own leadership which was accountable to the apartheid government.

A number of schools were established with this objective in mind across KwaZulu with a few being in Umlazi; many were designated comprehensive high schools. Umlazi Comprehensive Technical High School (Comtech) which is S-section's only high school was one such school. Established in 1991, it was intended that Comtech would become leading school in the production of learners who would take up positions in university engineering and business science programmes. The school is largely successful having consistently produced a high matric (Grade 12). The school also has boarding facilities enabling it to enrol learners from all over KwaZulu-Natal without the problems of a daily commute. Comtech is also well-resourced as it has recreational facilities for learners in the form of a school hall, basketball, netball and tennis courts, a soccer field and a cricket pitch. Residents of S-section have access to many primary schools both in nearby D and V sections but also in nearby Isipingo. The only other school in S-Section, Thokozani Primary School is reserved for children who reside at the Umlazi Place of Safety, mostly orphans and vulnerable children. Therefore, parents must send their children out of S-Section for their primary school education. Figure 2 shows that S-Section is integrated into Umlazi so schools in nearby D and V sections and Isipingo are easily accessible to members of the community. They also have access to two high schools in close proximity and access to a number of other schools in the nearby sections, courtesy of a functional transport system. For both communities Comtech is the closest school while the other high schools are within walking distance from both communities. The primary schools are three to five kilometres away from both communities.

It is necessary to add that Comtech is oversubscribed. While the school was built to accommodate 1000 children, in 2011 there were 2600 children enrolled at the school. Comtech is a quintile 4 school and fees were set at R1100 per annum for day scholars and R11 000 for boarders in 2011. But because of S-section's proximity to schools in B, D and C section in Umlazi and Isipingo schools fees in S-section range from R350 to R1500 per annum at high school level due to the range of education opportunities available. At primary school level, the junior primary school was designated a no-fee school in 2009 which means that the learners' education is subsidised entirely by the state. The senior primary school's fees were set at R200 per annum for 2011. It is understood that an educational market exists once fees are considered and aligned to perceived quality of the education received at the school, which will be important to consider as the data in this study is analysed.

3.3. Conclusion

This study assumes that parents are aware of differences and similarities of schools because of their proximity to the schools in the area. In South Africa, the quality of high schools is often measured using the matric results which are widely published in the country's leading newspapers. It can be assumed that as well as being in close proximity to these schools, word-of-mouth also helps parents form opinions of the schools in their community, as does engaging with other parents whose children are enrolled in different schools. The community members of S-section also vary in terms of wealth based on an assessment of their employment and living conditions. The act of choosing a school when a wide variety is on offer assumes that the chooser has acted upon the information which they have gathered with regard to the different schools. The existence of so many schools in the area is reason enough to imagine the existence of a natural school market. The different pricing strategies of schools invoke parents to make serious and careful decisions about the schools their children will be schooled in.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1. Data collection

This research adopted the approach of a case study as it aims to provide a multi-faceted perspective of school choice in a South African Township through the lens of Umlazi Comtech School, in Umlazi. Semi-structured interviews were used in order to extract narratives from study participants about how they have navigated schooling in Umlazi Township (see Annexure A for interview questions). Yin (1981: 59) highlights that the “distinguishing characteristic of the case study is that it attempts to examine a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Flyvbjerg (2006) suggests that many researchers have found the case study to be problematic citing issues of generalizability and bias towards verification. He does assert however that the case study is critical to developing context-dependent knowledge. The knowledge produced for this study was compiled from 30 interviews with parents of children enrolled in schools in Umlazi who are residents of S-section and the Emhlabeni and Zakheleni Informal Settlements. Fifteen interviews were conducted in the formal residential area and another 15 in the informal residential area. The participants were selected randomly as the researcher approached houses by going door-to-door to identify families with school-going children enrolled in schools in Umlazi. The majority of interviewees from the 30 households covered in the study were women. This is largely due to the fact that of the 15 participating households in the informal settlements, the majority (13) were female-headed households. Most of these women made a living by renting out shacks on their property, casual domestic work or hawking fruits and vegetables in the city centre. These earnings were also supplemented by earnings from the government Child Support Grant (CSG) since all these households had a number of children who were eligible for the grant. Employment of women was precarious in both communities with many of the women involved in informal trade – selling refreshments from the home, hawking vegetables and seam stressing or being entirely reliant on a partner’s income. Literacy levels were also low among women who incidentally, also happened to do most of the leg-work in the search for schools. In the informal settlements only one of the women had attained a Grade 12 pass. In S-section there was a higher education attainment among the women and those women who had not reached Grade 12 were literate and also members of an active Adult Basic Education

and Training (ABET) group in S-section hosted at the local technikon. Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of the demographics of the research group. The research was explained to the participants before the interviews began and an informed consent form was signed to alert them of their rights and the researcher's responsibilities during the research process (see Annexure B).

In S-section there were a number of housewives who had husbands working in factories in and around Durban. Some of the women in the area were also professionals working as teachers and nurses in schools and hospitals across Durban. In S-section only one household reported that none of the adults were employed; the rest of the households reported having at least one adult, usually a male, in full-time formal employment. Research was conducted during the day making it difficult to access employed community members who were at work at the time. Returning in the evening was not possible due to safety concerns. From speaking to neighbours it was possible to learn that a number of community members in S-section were employed as teaching and health professionals. Because the study focused on households with children schooling in Umlazi, a number of these households with women employed in these professions were excluded since they sent their children to city or suburban schools or, since they were working, were not home when interviews were being conducted.

The principals of Enaleni High School (in V-section) and Umlazi Comprehensive Technical High School which formed the focus of this study were also interviewed. Principals were interviewed in order to develop a clearer picture of schooling in the community as evidence suggests that schools also exert influence on the process of school choice. Principal interviews were also critical in getting another perspective to the narratives which emanated from interviews with parents. In this way interviews with the principals were useful in determining validity of the parents' accounts and it also provide insight in to what the principals might have as their policy, but which plays out differently in practice.

Parents with children in Umlazi schools were interviewed in order to track how parents' choices change depending on their children's different stages of development. Ball (2006) suggests that middle class parents often treat their children's education as mini projects and lay out plans way ahead of time. Therefore, understanding decisions made with regard to primary level education as compared to high school level may reveal a lot about a person's attitude to education and their educational plans for their children. The South African

education system also emphasises the final phase of secondary education with strong attention paid to matric results so this research aimed at exploring how parental choice adjusted at different stages of their children's schooling. The study is premised on two things – choices made by parents who choose to educate their children in townships are not made merely out of necessity, but are considered and complex; and secondly, that schools influence the 'choosing process'. School representatives therefore need to be interviewed along with parents to get a complete perspective on how choice plays out in this residential area. When it came to interviewing school principals the sample was narrowed to high school principals because it became apparent during the initial stages of the research that high schools were highly contested for and it was at this stage that parents made dramatic switches or found they were unable to access their school of choice.

4.2. Data analysis

Interviews were conducted in isiZulu. Notes were made during the interview and these notes were then analysed for any thematic patterns which were identified as being critical to choice making when it comes to schooling in Umlazi Township. The data was analysed by exploring the narratives given by interviewees during the interviews and grouping data under the theme headings. Key aspects of each account are interpreted using the various theories discussed in Chapter 2. Most significantly though, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and taste was used to place the interviewees' accounts firmly in the arena of choice, as an expression of particular class position. Experiences described by interviewees are further read in the context defined by similar research conducted on school choice. It has already been noted that Flyvbjerg (2006) was wary of the case study method because many critics had found it to be biased towards verifying the biased views of the researcher. Flyvbjerg asserts that the case study method is valuable in that it can be used to test theory against lived reality. The case study method "can 'close in' on real life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice" (Flyvbjerg 2006: 235).

4.3. Conclusion

While the utmost effort was taken to ensure the integrity of the research, the research methodology is not without its flaws. Firstly, with the research having been conducted during the day it was difficult to secure interviews with employed household members. Therefore, a

large number of interviews were conducted by people who may not have had the most control over the household finances. Similarly, speaking to only one adult or guardian led to the researcher capturing a one-dimensional opinion of how a family chose a school for a particular child. Secondly, since many of the unemployed were women, the majority of interviews feature women's perspectives and to a large extent, fails to represent how men have experienced or indeed, influenced school choice. However, the work of choosing schools has been revealed to be women's work in the household. Andre-Bechely's (2005) research reveals that women take on a disproportionately large role in searching for schools in the household. Lastly, with a sample of only 30 households, the research is not large enough to represent national experience. But it is worth suggesting that the stories are compelling in such a way that the research succeeds in presenting a different reality of school choice in South Africa's townships.

Chapter Five: Findings and analysis

5.1. Introduction

This research reveals that parents from both communities have strong opinions about schools and schooling in Umlazi. However, for all parents, having their children educated in Umlazi poses a number of challenges with regard to finances, security and social mobility for their children. The social mobility of residents in S-section lay in stark contrast to that of residents in the informal settlements. At the primary school level there were parents who sent their children to local schools where informal settlement residents also sent their children, while others sent them to primary schools in Isipingo. What is interesting is that in these same households where there were children who were attending schools outside the township, there were siblings in Umlazi schools. While this approach to household education may appear haphazard, parents in S-section demonstrated that they employed varied strategies during different stages of their children's schooling careers. Parents employed various strategies that suited the different stages of their children's lives and their concerns for their children at those stages. In S-section this education pattern is different in that some parents begin by sending their children to schools outside the township and then reroute their children back to the township for their high school education. This is perhaps possible because there are no prestigious primary schools in the S-section or in Umlazi as a whole, Comtech has become the magnet school that draws children back into the township for their high school education, in the same way that former Model C schools have drawn children away from township schools.

Learning to speak the 'right' kind of English early on in life was very important to many parents in S-section. While parents had children in high school they admitted to having sent their children to former White, Indian and Coloured only schools for their foundation phase education. These parents associated quality of education with the use of English as the language of instruction. Many of the parents sent their children to Gokul Primary School, a former Indian only primary school in the nearby 'Indian' township of Isipingo. Many parents felt that this school was closer for them than Umgijimi Junior Primary School and Zwelesithembiso Senior Primary School, the schools favoured by Emhlabeni residents for proximity. So, many of the children had grown up transported by *omalume* (uncles), who transport township children to city schools in mini-buses and vans. Yet when they reached

high school going age their parents' search for quality education brought them back to their neighbourhood school which is a mere ten minute walk away for most of them. Much like the parents of children living in the informal settlements, Comtech is the school of choice for S-section residents. However, these parents have made attempts to get their children into Comtech, though some have failed. The fact that the majority of parents interviewed had at least attempted to gain entry for their children into Comtech suggests that the residents of S-section and Emhlabeni have different understandings of their social entitlements, particularly entitlements to the area's educational resources.

The varied responses of parents shared common features with research of others in this field. As the literature suggests, defining class differences in this context proved very difficult and was expressed most effectively through the range of cultural capital possessed by either communities. Money emerged as a common thread in the narratives in as far as it determined the school chosen by parents. Parents also expressed concerns about safety for their children, quality of education which they desired for their children and lastly, discipline. It also became important to note not only what drew parents to certain schools, but also what deterred them from sending their children to particular schools. Conversations with parents also revealed that the role played by schools in mediating school access is not equally distributed. While all schools have admissions processes, they are not administered in the same way or with the same level of severity. Furthermore, in observing the 'behaviour' of schools, it became apparent that the policies which define the decentralisation of education in South Africa have created a gap between policy intentions and practise. While many parents took care to consider their children's educational futures and navigate the open choice system it was clear that some of the constraints to their desires originated from the education system itself. Parents from both communities had access to the same educational resources yet, inspired by different ambitions, their choices differed in interesting ways. The following section presents the main themes or factors that emerged from the research in terms of how and why parents choose schools for their children and how schools influence this process.

5.2. Money matters

Affordability emerged as a critical consideration for many households, particularly those in the informal settlements. This was not surprising since this group was most obviously

vulnerable to financial constraints because of their precarious existence in Umlazi. An unmarried single mother who lives with her boyfriend with whom she has a child stated that

We don't pay fees at Umgijimi. You have to pay at the other schools. For us, the rent money [income generated from renting out a part of their property] is not enough to pay for food, and on top of that, school fees. The money is just too little. He started at Mgiijimi last year because we needed to move him. He was in Ixopo before but there weren't any adults so I had to move him closer to me. They also didn't charge school fees at that school. There isn't much else that I liked about the school. Just that we don't have to pay fees. I would have actually liked to send him somewhere like Isipingo. Those schools are better. They teach in English. Mgiijimi teaches only in Zulu. (Interviewee 1; 17.02.2011)

Concerns with school fees dominated conversations with residents of Emhlabeni and Zakheleni. The residents however, are close to Umgijimi Junior Primary School. For this reason, this primary school became the school of first preference for residents of Emhlabeni and Zakheleni who have children still in the lower school grades since it offers free education. However, once children move to Grade Four the near-by school does charge fees. Interviewee 2, who shares a shack with her two school-going teenage daughters, is separated from Comtech by a mere fence but her children walk three kilometres every day to get to Zwelethu High School, a school in V-section of Umlazi. As a single parent surviving on the Child Support Grants (CSG) which she uses to support her children in Durban and those she left behind at their rural home in Port Shepstone, she could not afford the school fees. She explains that while Comtech was her first choice for her daughters, she knew she could not afford the fees so she did not even attempt to enquire about the application process or the possibility of being exempted from paying school fees. So she sought out a school she had heard from neighbours allowed you to not pay fees as long as you made an application stating your case. At Zwelethu High School she was able to enrol both her children and have them both exempted from paying fees. What is striking is this family's reliance on hearsay to the extent that she would not explore opportunities at the school which she shares a fence with. Ball (2006) also notes the importance of the 'grapevine' as a source of information for parents. While the grapevine is not always reliable, for parents who are uneducated or lack social networks which link them directly with formal institutions it becomes critical to their search for schools as it provides information she otherwise would not be able to gather herself.

Interviewee 6 shares a similar story of avoiding direct interaction with the school closest to her home. Her daughter is in Grade 12 at Enaleni High School in V-section, which is also three kilometres away from Emhlabeni Informal Settlement. Every morning she walks past Comtech, which her mother believes to be a better quality school than the one that she currently sends her daughter to.

The school that I really liked for her was Comtech but I knew that I just could not afford it. So she had to go further to Enaleni because I just do not have the money. I don't know how much school fees is at Comtech. I've never even been there before. I've heard that you can pay in instalments though but I just wouldn't be able to. Even if I had wanted to, they are strict there. A child must have everything. If you do not have certain things the teachers are patient with you at Enaleni. At Comtech my child would have been different from the others, not having what other children have, and maybe drop out. You have to know how you are going to support your child. I would have had to buy this, then that, then another thing. I just knew I wouldn't be able to handle that (Interviewee 6; 17.02.2011).

These experiences confirmed that affordability is critical among the considerations which help parents decide on schools. Fees are not the only constraints experienced by parents; uniform costs and in some cases, participation in extra-curricular activities can be prohibitive for many parents. Her concerns with extra purchases illustrate that financial concerns of the poor are not dominated primarily by school fees but also purchasing other items which would ensure that the child's experience at this school would have been affirming and not one which constantly reminded her of all the material things she lacked and which marginalised her.

Sayed (1997) suggests that the introduction of user-fees in South Africa's public education system ensures that quality is closely correlated with fees and that, in discussions on how to improve quality, user-fees are implicit. Comtech fees stand at R1100 per annum for day scholars while the fees at the other high schools in the area are between R320 and R450 per annum. So while parents would like to send their children to Comtech the fees act as a deterrent for some. Many of the parents in Emhlabeni did not even know how much the fees at Comtech were. But their proximity to the school enabled them to 'read' the quality of the school and make a judgement on the fee structure. Comtech has a cricket pitch, soccer field, netball and basketball courts which is highly uncommon for township schools. This infrastructure speaks to the quality of Comtech and the education one can get there. Most importantly, parents are able to 'read' that these amenities are only possible because Comtech has access to funds which other schools in the area do not have. They were therefore able to

deduce, without actually making an enquiry at Comtech, that Comtech charges higher fees than other high schools in the area. Comtech was the school of first choice which suggests that this pricing structure has been correlated with quality making the price 'fair' in the market. The findings in S-section suggest that fees, even perceived fees, have an impact on patterns of enrolment. School fees therefore "constitute a social class benchmark by which parents sort themselves in terms of their willingness [and indeed, ability] to pay" (CREATE 2009).

5.3. Child safety

Linked to issues of affordability were concerns about risk to children's safety. To this end, child safety was considered to be of critical importance to parents in Emhlabeni, particularly for parents with children still in primary school. Interviewee 5 expressed concern with sending her children far away for their schooling while they are so young because she feared that should something happen at school she may not be able to reach her child if she does not have money for transport on a particular day. But since Umgijimi is merely over the train track she can easily walk to the school to fetch him.

There is plenty of danger in taking a young child to a school which is far away. There are accidents. These uncles who fetch them sometimes leave them behind and the child is brought home by police. If he is here, I know that if something goes wrong I can walk to the school and find him myself. But if he goes to Merebank or Isipingo I would have to take public transport and maybe on that day I would not have money. It is much better to wait for him to grow up, get a bit smarter before sending him far away for school (Interviewee 5; 18.02.2011).

Again, the significant role played by financial security in Umlazi's educational market is brought to the fore. Parents' decision-making in this area is dominated by financial concerns. However, since school fees are actually low or not charged at all other interests begin to dominate their choices. While many of the parents from Emhlabeni preferred to send their children to a local primary school due to financial limitations intertwined with safety concerns, some parents opted out of the local educational market. Parents in S-section approached the issue quite differently. While they cited safety as a concern they sent their children to schools in Isipingo and further afield. The rationale here was that they did not walk and were not in danger of being hit by a car since *omalume* drove them to and from school and they could be certain children were safe in that way. It is clear here that because

these parents have access to money they mobilised different resources in order to address the same issue faced by parents living in Emhlabeni.

5.4.Discipline

There were some instances where parents cast their education search wider. In this area, intra-township movement in search of schooling was uncommon at primary school level as it required the deployment of resources of the same nature and level as those deployed to send children to schools outside the township. However, some residents did seek primary schools which required that children travel long distances within the township. This subverts the notion that township schooling is merely a function of finding the cheapest option for the poor since it can be as expensive (once you consider transport costs) as sending children to schools outside the township. Interviewee 9's search for the right school for her daughter led her to a school in R-section of Umlazi. She grew up in D-section and when she was younger she went to Zwelesithembiso Senior Primary School which is also in D-section. She was pleased with the quality of education her child received at Umgijimi Junior Primary School and she decided against sending her daughter to the near-by school which she attended as a child. Being in close proximity to the school and having herself been a part of the school, she is able to construct a careful reading of Zwelesithembiso Senior Primary School.

You find that the school day ends sooner than the junior primary's school day. If you ask why, the children tell you that the teacher never arrived for work, there's no water. You see the year end and they've been coming home early the whole year. I wasn't about to send my child there (Interviewee 9; 18.02.2011).

Having such access to the school allows a thorough 'reading' of the school and the prospects which it may offer her daughter. Interviewee 9 therefore sent her child to a school in R-section which is 15 minutes away by car. While the school fees at this school are only R350 per year, the transport cost involved is R200 per month. It is worth mentioning that while Interviewee 9 is unemployed, she has a husband who is employed at a factory just outside Durban which facilitates this mobility across the township. She also has older children who have also navigated the township in search for schools. Her older child attended a high school in K-section where he matriculated. She is a native of Umlazi who herself was educated first in D-section but eventually matriculated from a school in G-section. She also has children who have finished school. So, this mother is used to this school navigation across the township school landscape and is in a position to make considered decisions as she has much

experience navigating the educational space in the township of Umlazi. She also relies heavily on what she sees in her neighbourhood. While she has a desire to have her children taught in English, a desire shared by many parents in Umlazi, she is putting that off for later.

At Indian schools they learn all sorts of mischief. Children, who go to Indian schools smoke, use foul language and then come back and teach that mischief to other children in the area. One child was teaching other children how to write 'sex' but he can't even write his own name yet. That's why I want them to start school here – so that they can first learn Zulu and how to behave properly. (Interviewee 9; 18.02.2011)

This was not the first instance of parents expressing an aversion to predominantly Indian schools. While parents wanted their children to learn to speak English at first language level and in an English medium environment, there was a desire for this to be from a 'white influence'. Another parent, for instance, lives within walking distance to Gokul Primary School but insists that she "does not want Indian English" (Interviewee 26, 12.07.2011). Predominantly Indian schools appear to have a bad image among parents with respect to discipline and future opportunities. Turning once again to Interviewee 9, it appears that in this instance she uses fragmented pieces of information to make sense of an education world outside the township in the same way she decodes local township schools – there is no attempt to engage with the educational issue, she identifies an escape route for her children. Firstly she sent her child to a school further away and when drawing on this example, she decided to put off sending her child to these sorts of schools until she was ready. There is also a sense of disapproval here of schools outside of Umlazi.

Of the many issues which emerged as a priority for parents was discipline. Discipline combined with quality education was linked to their children's potential to succeed later in life. Discipline is seen as important particularly for schools in Umlazi because many people believe that the dire socio-economic conditions in Umlazi can negatively affect their children's behaviour. Because these parents live so close to Comtech and the other school in the area, Umlazi Commercial High School, they saw the children who went there before their own children, were able to judge the appropriateness of their behaviour, were able to see that teachers arrive on time and overall, make a number of judgments of the school without ever entering the school premises. All these things played a significant role in shaping their perception of the school as a school which is capable of providing a stable environment and instilling discipline in children. Comtech is seen as a jewel in the community with one parent even describing it as "our own Model-C school". On the contrary Interviewee 6 was able to

judge Zwelesithembiso Senior Primary as unsuitable as she saw teachers arrive late and children leave early but also judged Indian schools poorly based on the behaviour exhibited by a child who went to an Indian school. Interviewee 6 demonstrates a concern with children being taught Zulu forms of discipline and respect under which conversations about sex are not undertaken by children. She believes that by sending her children to these schools at a later stage they will have acquired the correct manners while still in the local schools. Another parent explained that she does not want 'Indian English' so she preferred to have her children educated in the township as opposed to the nearby Indian schools.

5.5. Language

Much like Interviewee 9, many parents found a link between discipline and language. One of the benefits of having children taught in the township that was highlighted by parents is that they learn proper Zulu and are given discipline which is in line with their cultural values. Many parents, while desiring suburban education for their children because of its promised quality, were also sceptical of such education because of its potential to teach children the wrong things in terms of discipline and language. Parents approached this issue differently. Some parents kept their children in township schools in order to ensure that they were exposed to values which were very much like their own and were taught 'proper' Zulu and 'Zulu ways' throughout their schooling. Other parents, mainly in S-section sent their children to English-medium schools at the primary level and later moved them to township schools for their high school education. Many parents argued that this ensured that they had a good foundation in English but could then at a later stage be taught 'proper' isiZulu.

Fataar (2009) suggests that multiracial schools often struggle to deal adequately with their diversity in a way that treats all races and cultures equally. Dolby (2001) suggests that when schools are integrated they tend to undergo a cultural project of assimilation where the hegemonic culture exerts dominance over minorities. For the incoming group, "there is very little recognition of their cultural and social backgrounds" (Fataar 2009: 13). To this end, these children have to learn to "navigate the culturally incongruent discursive environment of...schools which tend to ignore their cultural identities" (Fataar 2009: 6). Comtech offers a different opportunity for parents altogether in terms of cultural congruency. When I visited Comtech for the first time I arrived in the morning at 6:30. From the hall I could hear loud gospel music and singing. When I eventually sat down with the principal we hurried through

the interview because he was supposed to lead Morning Prayer as he normally does. The Morning Prayer would last until 8:00 when the school day officially begins. This is not common in South African schools as it is not prescribed by the Department of Basic Education. The principal was described by one of the parents as “a great principal, father, a Christian and very understanding”. Interviewee 28, who had sent his daughter to Van Riebeeck Primary School in the Bluff enrolled his daughter into Comtech for many reasons, one of which being to enable her to participate fully in church-related activities. What became clear from my interactions with parents and Mr Luthuli is that Comtech’s values resonated with the parents’ aspirations for their children while also being matched to their own family and cultural values. Mr Luthuli was also concerned, as the parents were; that children be brought up through the education system with the right sense of morals that would instil in them *inhlonipho* (respect) which he believed would help them later in life. It is important to note that this type of respect is vastly different from that which black children may learn from culturally ‘white’ institutions since perceptions of what is polite and respectful vary from one culture to another.

Parents suggested on many occasions that children in white or Indian schools “*azinayo inhlonipho*” (have no respect). Rudwick and Shange (2006: 474) suggest that “among Zulu speakers *inhlonipho* (to respect), as a social custom, entails an entire value system based on specific social variables”. They go further and say that the custom of *ukuhlonipha* “is a spiritual conviction and an essential ingredient in the life philosophy of ‘traditional’ Zulu people. In this context, adherence to the custom is part and parcel of the propriety of Zulu life and ‘Zuluness’” (Rudwick and Shange, 2006: 474). The use of *isihlonipho* in some instances holds that women may not pronounce certain words, such as words which contain their in-laws names. This may sound rather old fashioned and might suggest that the tradition has no place in urban settings like townships. However it is important to note that for parents the teaching of *inhlonipho* in the context of Zulu culture is important for raising their children accordingly in a manner which will allow them to perform their future responsibilities adequately. Rudwick (2009: 168) suggests that there also “appears to be an opposing dynamic at work which reemphasises the value of isiZulu”. By removing their children from Indian schools and placing them in Comtech and other schools in townships, parents demonstrate a desire to re-emphasise their children’s cultural belonging. While parents openly speak about their desire to have their children learn proper Zulu, implicit in that is also a desire for their

children to be in a space where Zuluness enjoys dominance. At Comtech, there are many features which resonate with the parents' values but the most important of which is definitely that the principal presents a Zulu father figure for their children who then guides them through their high school years in a way which does not subvert the teachings learnt at home. Parents of S-section acknowledge English as primarily a language of upward mobility where "English acquisition is clearly based on instrumental and communicative purposes" (Rudwick 2009: 165). In ensuring that their children are directed back to the township for their final years of schooling where they will be taught 'proper' Zulu, parents recognise isiZulu as a symbol for their children's Zulu identity but also recognise Zulu (linguistic and cultural) as a weapon to protect this identity (Rudwick 2009: 160).

The residents of S-section provided contradicting narratives once they began detailing how they chose their children's high schools. While many parents said they sent their children to English-medium schools in Isipingo so that they could benefit from being taught in English and thereby attain quality education, they brought their children back to the township to be taught Zulu of a good quality, in an environment where Zulu culture has dominance and at the same time, attain a quality education. While Comtech is an English-medium school it remains a highly valued school. It is important to note that parents are aware that children are taught in English at Comtech but they send their children there as they are more concerned that their children are taught proper Zulu. Comtech offers Zulu lessons at first language level whereas in Indian schools Zulu is often taught at a second or third language level. It is clear that some parents were dissatisfied that their children were taught Zulu by second language speakers of the language who were also not African and in their opinions, also taught second-rate Zulu. What transpired is that it is more than a desire to have their children taught proper Zulu but also a need to have their children educated in a 'Zulu environment'. In speaking to the parents it became clear that they believe that a 'Zulu environment' would also foster appropriate forms of discipline. To this end, the research suggests that some of these parents moved their children to township schools so that they could learn appropriate forms of discipline according to Zulu culture which holds hegemonic dominance at these schools. The parents' concerns led to the intertwining of quality, language and discipline. These parents expect education to deliver a variety of outcomes not just a matric certificate and find Comtech best suited to do that in their neighbourhood. These parents also face financial

constraints as most of them aspire to give their children former Model C education. Comtech to them is appropriately priced and able to give them something similar.

5.6. Child-school matching: The few skilled choosers

Ball (2006) suggests that sophisticated choice making may also involve child-to-school matching. This process may result in parents sending their children to different schools depending on the children's capabilities and needs. One such instance was revealed in the family experience of school choice of Interviewee 28. This family has two children; both children began their schooling in a former Model C school based on the Bluff. At the end of the Grade Seven year the boy was awarded a scholarship to Grosvenor Boys High School, also on the Bluff due to excellent academic performance. His sister however enrolled at Comtech for her high school education. Interviewee 28 believes that both his children receive the same education and that both schools are of equal standing. While his son lost his scholarship on his second year at Grosvenor Boys High School and with fees more than ten times those of Comtech, Interviewee 28 did not withdraw his son from Grosvenor Boys High.

My son is fine at that school. It suits him better. He is into things like history, English and Drama. Just not technically minded... But my daughter, she is totally at home at Comtech. She has the brains for the science and technical drawing. Being at Comtech also suits her life since she can be close to home while she attends to her church commitments at the school (Interviewee 28, 28.07.2011).

Interviewee 9's attempt at child-to-school matching was not as impactful as that of Interviewee 28's, but it was still remarkable as it showed that the process of matching children to particular schools through recognition of their capabilities and a parent's particular ambition for their child does not require high levels of education or access to huge amounts of money. Interviewee 9's choice to send her child to a school further than the one in her area highlights her need to have her children educated in a school that will cater adequately for her child and also be a match for her daughter's skills which she has identified.

Nokwanda is very smart. I could tell when I helped her with homework and also from the comments from her teachers at the junior phase. So I wanted her to be surrounded by good teachers who could help her be the best student. She wasn't going to get that at Zwelesithembiso. Teachers there are not dedicated to their work. My child is dedicated to her school work and I wanted a school that would be good for her (Interviewee 9, 21.02.2011).

It is important to note that both parents were able to make these decisions because of access to money other neighbours did not have.

5.7. How schools choose

The study's findings detailed above show how parents came to make sense of their choices. However all schools in the area have application processes which need to be followed so that children can gain access to the desired school. The South African Department of Education, through the South African Schools Act of 1996, prohibits any form of admissions test in the public school system which generally suggests that anyone should get into the school of their desire. Parents who enrol their children at primary schools seemed to have few problems since they all reported that they approached the schools a few months before their children were due to begin their schooling, completed forms and awaited feedback from the schools. None of their applications were denied. It became apparent that it was high schools that were hotly contested over and it was these that exhibited exclusionary practices and seemed to do choosing of their own, particularly those which were over-subscribed.

Gintis (1995) believes that the traditional capitalist market falls short in explaining how the market operates in the education system. What is most likely to develop is a quasi-market where "the generation of additional resources is based on the principle of self-interest" (Sayed 2007: 359). This self-interest is most often spoken of as emanating from parents but can emanate from schools too. In South Africa, fees are determined together with parents through the school governing bodies. While this body aims to enhance democratic principles in schools they also cement the position of parents as consumers in education. Sayed (2007: 361) further suggests that governing bodies and the extension of school choice succeed in making parents citizens of schooling communities where "parents' school citizenship is constituted on the basis of their efforts to make their children's and their own lives better so that they will not be dependent on the state". Pampallis (2003) suggests that intra-township commuting is heightened by the presence of 'territorial schools', now known as comprehensives which were established by the former KwaZulu homeland government. Umlazi has six such schools. These were elite black state schools which were better resourced materially and in terms of teaching staff, than others. Mr Luthuli has served as Comtech's

principal since the school's opening in 1991. He believes that over the years Comtech has developed to a point where they produce matriculants who are comparable to learners from the traditional Model C high schools. He also emphasised that a number of his matriculants have gone on to study at top universities in South Africa and he is often complimented by university representatives on the children's behaviour, work ethic and academic performance and discipline. He highlighted that during the school's prospective admissions process, students were given an admissions test which tested their numeracy and language skills. This is not allowed in terms of the National Education Policy Act, 1996. NEPA clearly states that while the admissions policy of a school is determined by the school's governing body, "the governing body of a public school may not administer any test relating to the admission of a learner" (NEPA 1996). The school was developed with the intention of educating academically 'talented' black children and priming them for university entry and therefore sought to attract children who demonstrated the potential to succeed academically. Mr Luthuli takes a lot of pride in Comtech's reputation and claims that the children are the custodians of Comtech's reputation. Comtech is one of very few Umlazi schools which compete in sport or cultural events with former Model C schools. It also follows a strict uniform code with full uniform (blazer and tie) worn throughout the year much like the more traditional former Model C schools in Durban. Many times he compared his learners to learners in Glenwood High School and Durban High School, both prestigious boys' high schools in Durban. He also spoke highly of the children's behaviour outside school saying that his children can walk around shopping malls with pride and behave with great discipline like children from Glenwood High School. Mr Luthuli claimed to want to admit as many children from the surrounding community as possible but that it was equally important to draw children who would be 'suitable' for the type of education offered by Comtech. He also admitted that school fee collection was difficult at times and placed the school's capability to provide services at the desired quality at risk. He also emphasised that the school is over-subscribed and receives so many applications every year that they cannot grant everyone space. To this end, it became clear that Comtech's selectivity was linked to its need to maintain its standards of quality. To do this Comtech employed a number of strategies, including a stringent admissions policy which held at its core the importance of an admissions test.

Interviewee 22 reports that when she tried to get her twin children admitted to Comtech they requested a number of documents. When she failed to produce an immunisation card for one

of twin children her twins were separated – the one still in possession of an immunisation card was admitted to Comtech while the other had to find an alternative school. According to the Department of Basic Education, parents must produce a birth certificate and immunisation card as part of the application process. Failure to produce these documents does not serve as adequate grounds for exclusion under NEPA as it is incumbent on the school principal to give a parent the opportunity to acquire a birth certificate and to get their child immunised at a health facility. For some parents, the reason for their child's exclusion remains a mystery. Interviewee 25 has a daughter who applied to Comtech at the end of 2010. One of her sister's daughters currently lives with her family in S-section and she too applied to Comtech. While her daughter was given a place in Comtech her sister received a text message on her mobile phone to let her know that her daughter's application had been denied. When she enquired as to why her child was denied a place in Comtech she did not receive a response and eventually enrolled her child at Umlazi Commercial High School which is a few minutes away from Comtech. Comtech's most exclusionary practice is that of the 'interview' against which children are measured and then gain entry into the school. Interviewee 25's daughter was invited to an interview at Comtech. She recounted her child's experience with the 'interview' process.

It's not really an interview. They don't sit with anyone for what we know to be an interview. They write a test – a few subjects in one sitting. My child didn't pass the test last year. So I went to the principal and spoke to him about it. He heard me and he let her in (Interviewee 25; 16.04.2011).

Limiting access is part of ensuring that the school does not accept too many children into the school in any particular year but admissions tests are sinister in that they are essentially a tool to sort the best learners from the weak learners. An adverse effect of admissions tests is that weaker learners become concentrated in weaker schools. Interviewee 25 indicated that parents are not satisfied with the interview process as children think that teachers who mark the papers adjust the results to suit their own purposes. There were rumours of parents bribing teachers leading to the exclusion of children who had in actual fact passed the admission test. It is worth noting that the admissions process occurs independently of the principal and is managed instead by subject departmental heads and administration staff.

Mr Luthuli reported that the admissions test was done away with at the end of 2009 due to pressure from the teachers' trade union but parents still reported that their children had written

an admissions test at the end of 2010 for admission in 2011. The admissions test is due to be replaced by an interview for the 2012 enrolment cycle where children along with their parents will meet representatives of the school and given an opportunity for a verbal assessment of their suitability to join the Comtech. Needless to say, this manner of approving or denying applications is also prohibited by the SASA.

It is common to assume that barriers of entry are created only by former Model C schools. The idea of township schools employing exclusionary practices is rather uncommon because township schools have been framed as schools of last resort that have no choice but to accept any learners they are approached by. When exclusionary practices are employed by township schools it is usually in the interests of keeping poorly disciplined children out of the schools (Pampallis, 2003) and not as a means of safeguarding academic excellence. However, the research did reveal that schools are differentially capable of choosing the learners that they allow to be enrolled. Comtech appears to employ more exclusionary practices than other schools in the area. Barriers to entry which are put up by schools stand to have a serious impact on the profiles of learners eventually enrolled in terms of race (in multi-racial schools), class and academic performance. There is also a significant body of work which proposes that skimming across all these areas has serious implications for the reproduction of social inequalities since the middle class continues to be preferred by schools and are concentrated in better performing and resourced schools while the poor and working class are clustered in poorly resourced and performing schools (Hsieh and Urquiola 2006 and Andre-Bechely 2007).

Comtech employs one particular strategy which is intended to perform a skimming function. The intention of the admissions test is to identify strong learners with the potential to succeed in technical subjects. The test appears to be the most equitable way to do this since it does not give administrators the opportunity to choose learners based on personality and ideally, personal relationships. However, there is evidence that admission tests do not result in equitable access in the education system. Bourdieu (1984) offers an explanation on how class differences are often not ameliorated through the education system. He suggests that the middle-class employs a number of strategies, perhaps even subconsciously, to maintain their existing social advantage. He suggests that

...when class fractions who previously made little use of the school system enter the race for academic qualifications, the effect is to force the groups whose reproduction was mainly or exclusively achieved through education to step up their investments so as to maintain the relative scarcity of their qualifications and, consequently, their position in the class structure (Bourdieu 1984: 133).

Mr Luthuli mentioned that when Comtech attempted to do away with the admissions test, their plans were resisted by parents whose children were already enrolled at the school. Bourdieu (1984) suggests that this is typical of the privileged classes and how they manipulate the education system to their advantage. Many parents recognise and associate Comtech's quality with its practice in selecting children and therefore do not want to see this disappear. It is important to only accept certain types of children into Comtech in order to ensure that the standards which have been achieved over the years are maintained. In fact, many parents did not contest decisions which denied their children access to Comtech for this very reason. The admissions test achieves this because it appears to be a neutral system for the selection of students. Bourdieu and Passeron (1987: 167) believes that selection tests can be prejudicial in themselves since

In ever more completely delegating the power of selection to the academic institution, the privileged classes are able to appear to be surrendering to a perfectly neutral authority the power of transmitting power from one generation to another, and thus to be renouncing the arbitrary privilege of the hereditary transmission of privileges. But through its formally irreproachable verdicts, which always objectively serve the dominant classes since they never sacrifice the technical interests of those classes except to the advantage of their social interests, the School is better able than ever, at all events in the only way conceivable in a society wedded to democratic ideologies, to contribute to the reproduction of the established order, since it succeeds better than ever in concealing the function it performs (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977: 167).

It is often suggested that academic admission tests prejudice poor students who often perform poorly academically because their social background has not provided a suitable environment for that sort of development. In this way admission tests not only separate the strong from the weak academic performers but also succeed in skimming the socio-economically privileged from the poor. Although admission tests are prohibited in South African public schools it is seen as a means to safeguard Comtech's academic standing and it is believed that tampering with it may harm Comtech's reputation and future sustainability. While a proper interview with parents and prospective learners will be introduced once the admissions tests are finally stopped, an actual interview offers a real opportunity for school representatives to choose people they find suitable based on how they speak, dress and behave – when all of these

characteristics can be so heavily influenced by class according to Bourdieu (1984), it is clear that Comtech's learner enrolment may still privilege those the school is readily drawn to, the middle class. Comtech is particularly special in how it prevents learners from enrolling in terms of township schooling. The previous section reflected on Interviewee 22 who could not enrol her son at Comtech because of a missing immunisation card and others whose children had failed the admission test. When former Model C schools exclude prospective learners the exclusion is usually supported by the argument of the need to prioritise children who live within the feeder zone over children from other areas (Sayed 1998). SASA does allow for this exclusion. In Comtech's case S-section parents are excluded although they are part of Comtech's feeder zone. However, very few of these parents contested their children's exclusion because of how Comtech has been positioned in the community – a place in Comtech must be earned; only hard workers are entitled to a place at Comtech. Interviewee 30 has two children currently in high school. She sought Comtech for one of her children after she was advised by his teacher that he was academically gifted and she should seek a good school for him. At the time he was at Gokul Primary School in Isipingo. Her son was admitted to Comtech after he received positive results in his entrance exam. Asked what she would have done had he not gotten in she responded as follows:

I would never beg for my child to get into Comtech. My neighbour's child failed the interview. Luckily for me my son passed without any problems, When some people's children failed they tried to force their way into the school. They'd just say that we shouldn't struggle for schools when there is one so close by. So they would force the principal to take the children in. Usually they go on a waiting list to fill spaces left by children who choose to go elsewhere. So they just wait to fill spaces. I would never do that. If my child had not passed the interview I would have sent him somewhere else. Luckily for me, he is focused, and passed the interview (Interviewee 30; 23.08.2011).

Her other son was not 'focused' and so he was sent away to Umgababa, a semi-rural town further south of Durban, for his schooling. It was evident that the child at Comtech was a great source of pride for this mother because Comtech to her represented much more than just a high school but was a testament to her child's intelligence and potential to succeed. To a certain extent parents have also become accomplices in Comtech's exclusionary policy by not questioning and indeed exalting its exclusionary policies.

The research also reveals that schools shape choice in different and complex ways. The previous anecdotes from parents detailed how school administrative processes can pose a

barrier to access. Similarly, academic performance can also be used to prevent children from accessing some schools. However, schools may also adopt covert mechanisms to shape parental choice. Gerwitz et al point to how schools employ a number of semiotic systems to communicate to the outside world (1995: 121). They provide evidence that schools embark on image production in order to communicate “messages about the ethos, culture, values, priorities and ‘quality’ of educational provision” (Gerwitz et al 1995: 122) at the school. Various components can be used to communicate these aspects of educational provision including infrastructure quality of the school, school designation, school policies and the nature of the school’s student composition. A number of parents, especially those in Emhlabeni and Ezakheleni, spoke of how they would have liked to send their children to Comtech but instinctively knew they could not afford that quality of schooling. One such parent, Interviewee 6, came to the decision that Comtech was better and more expensive than Enaleni, the school she eventually sent her child to. However, an assessment of performance in the Grade 12 national examination suggests that Enaleni has fared better over the past three years than Comtech. The Department of Basic Education (2012) revealed that in 2010 Enaleni achieved an overall 54.9% pass rate for the Grade 12 Senior Certificate examination. This increased to 64.7% and 65.7% in 2011 and 2012, respectively. Comtech achieved a 61.4% pass rate in 2010 and 53% in 2011 and 56% in 2012. It is important to note that Enaleni had less Grade 12 students than Comtech in all these years. In 2012 Enaleni had 99 learners sit for the Grade 12 examination while Comtech had 460 learners. It may be that the large enrolment is burdensome to maintaining quality of teaching. Yet with all these changes in Comtech’s performance, the symbols of Comtech’s premier status are so powerful that not even such a decline in Grade 12 national examination results can harm its prestigious reputation within the community.

Enaleni High School, in contrast, is not a prestigious school. It does not have the amenities that Comtech has. By contrast, when I visited the school to speak with the principal, there were computers in his office which had been donated by a private company. The computers had not been removed from their packaging as he worried that with the poor security in his school, they would surely be stolen. He also shared his frustration with the quintile funding system. *My school is a quintile 4 school. I don’t even know how they measure these things sometimes. Sometimes I think the problem is being in an urban area. They see the tar*

roads, shopping centres, hospitals and think your school is in a good area with working people. The people who live in this community are poor and more than that, I get a lot of learners travelling from informal settlements in Malukazi and Luganda which are not part of my feeder zone. I can't claim for those learners because the department asks me why they aren't in their own zone. I don't know...

Essentially all the children from S-section attending Enaleni should be at Comtech. For the principal of Enaleni, the additional learners from outside his geographical feeder area has proved burdensome on the school budget. The children at Comtech wear blazers as part of their uniform throughout the year, something which is not common among Umlazi schools. Comtech also has pristine lawns and facilities. The school grounds are well-maintained with a security guard posted at the entrance to control access to the school. Furthermore, the school has security cameras installed throughout the school, an alarm system and is fully-fenced. Gerwitz et al suggest that such symbols conspire together to act as “explicit indicators of ‘quality’” (1995: 127). With most schools in the township not having access to sports facilities, Comtech on the other hand offers a number of sports, including cricket which is traditionally seen as a ‘white’ sport in South Africa. This ensures that the school also employs middle-class symbolism and continues to signpost prestige to the outside community. As with regards to Interviewee 6, these symbols have the effect of deterring some parents in the catchment area of the school. Those whose interest in the school is piqued by these symbols are those for whom the symbols resonate with their own values. Therefore, it is clear that even without explicitly trying to do so Comtech is able to shape parental choice as the outward features of the school communicate to invite or disinvite certain groups to and from the school.

5.8. Conclusion

Research in this small community reveals a lot about the strategies employed by parents when navigating school choice in Umlazi. School choice has come to be widely accepted in Umlazi. The case study provides evidence of how income disparities have come to indicate where children are likely to end up being schooled. The adoption of user fees and its salience in the community provides compelling evidence that Umlazi has established an educational market, albeit not as sophisticated as other educational markets. Many parents have come to believe that there is a correlation between fees paid and the quality of education received. However

school choice in this community is not determined primarily by price. The research revealed that parents from S-section possess different forms of power in the educational market and the determined use of their respective social power plays a major role in determining which schools their children are eventually enrolled in. Further complications are brought to the process through the influential role played by schools in determining who is allowed to enrol at the respective schools. The research findings in this community of S-section suggests that social class, insofar as it informs people's cultural capital, play a great role in determining the schools to which parents decide to send their children and the schools to which their children are eventually admitted. It is also clear from the experiences cited above that schools play an important role in determining if children are allowed to enrol into certain schools. Because of changing dynamics in the education system schools are compelled to enrol children whose parents are most likely to pay the school fees and, of equal importance, children who will perform well academically. Most importantly the research does reveal township schools as possible first choice schools for parents, even for those who are not constrained by finances. For a number of parents, having their children educated in the township secures many cultural goals which hegemonically white or Indian schools could not secure. Most significantly though, the experiences of parents in S-Section raise a number of questions about access to township schools and the social implications of open school choice for this small community.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

This research presents a number of scenarios which help build a story about school choice in the small community of S-section in Umlazi. The study presented evidence that the poor are choosing as well as they can within the constraints that they experience while the more financially secure residents in the community fair better in the educational market. This is due to a number of reasons but mostly that they have a higher level of comfort navigating the educational system; they navigate the school network well and are better able to overcome obstacles that appear to oppose their choices. The nature of the educational market in this community also has far-reaching consequences for the community and is telling of a few components of the South African educational system that is not responsive to citizens. In the concluding section of this research attention now turns to firstly providing an overview of the results by detailing the issues which affect parental choice. These findings will be related to theory in order to establish this research as a credible addition to the overall body of research on school choice. Secondly, the consequences of school choice in this community will also be examined. Finally, the paper concludes with an overview of the critical thinking points regarding school choice in South Africa.

6.2. Understanding S-section's educational market

Much of the movement in S section's educational market is done out of necessity, especially at the junior phase. The movement is predominated by concerns with safety, affordability, discipline and language and is shaped by the schools' own selection processes. What raises concern in the analysis of this movement in S section is that such movement is dictated by access to income resulting in a situation where the more financially secure members of the S-section community send their children to schools in Isipingo and other suburbs where their children are able to access schooling of a superior quality to that found in township schools. In this way, their class positioning begins to be a source of privilege for their children in the educational market. While buying power, or lack thereof, was a significant factor in the strategies employed by parents in choosing schools, the research provides compelling evidence to support the notion that class is a critical factor in the school choice process. Bourdieu (1987) suggests that when people make choices in day to day lived experiences,

those choices are reflections of tastes which they have acquired because of their social position. Bourdieu's theory of distinction holds that in our different class positions we are imbued with power or forms of capital which in the right field can be "efficient like aces in a game of cards" (Bourdieu 1987: 4). With this understanding, different forms of capital or power can be called upon in the quest to secure advantage when competing for particular resources. In the education system, when the right forms of capital are deployed, economic advantage can be turned into social advantage.

Informal settlement residents demonstrated that they did not possess the 'right sort' of social capital to navigate school choice to the advantage of their children. While financial constraints were proffered as the main reason for sending their children to the closest school, sending their children to further schools for high school suggested a high level of insecurity in the social capital which they possess. All parents whose children were eligible to enter Comtech based on their proximity to the school and their level of study did not make an attempt to get their children into this school. This subverts the common understanding that poor parents will always choose the school closest to their homes. It also somewhat contradicts some research in South Africa which asserts that parents choose further schools for their children because those provide better quality (Fataar, 2009). Bourdieu (1984) suggests that in the same way that our different social positions in society are critical to the 'tastes' which we acquire, certain dynamics need to be upheld so as to ensure that class differences are upheld. Poverty has imbued residents of the informal settlement with low forms of social capital and limited access to suitable social networks which leaves them with little sense of entitlement to the public goods in the community. The position they occupy in society has given them a sense of their entitlements and in this educational market, they believe that they are not entitled to make demands or make trouble for administrators at the local high school. These actions suggest that residents of the informal settlements have in Bourdieurian terms come to 'live out' their social positioning by keeping their station in life (Bourdieu 1987: 5). Therefore, over time, people come to behave in a certain way which ensures that social positions remain uncontested because people have a strong sense of their place in society. This is not to suggest that individuals have no sense of self-worth in their own social and cultural capital. The residents value education in a hegemonically Zulu environment and how this ensures continuity in discipline and safeguards language and traditional practices.

Also worthy of consideration is that the school market in S-section does not operate in a manner that is true to the schooling legislation as laid out in the SASA. Because of that failure S-section residents do not have first preference when negotiating access to the local high school, Comtech. A majority of the parents spoken to in the study, especially parents from the informal settlements were unaware of the legislation that governs education and access in South Africa so they do not realise that their children are entitled to a space at Comtech by virtue of their proximity to the school. The school administrators understand the legislation governing education in South Africa but do not act honestly or inform parents of their rights. Lastly, they are also unaware of the illegal nature of the entrance exam – Comtech’s primary selection tool. At the high school level, entry is not readily guaranteed as schools have an interest, as admitted by Comtech, to attract only the most academically talented students so as to maintain the prestigious reputation established over its history. This aspect reveals that schools are as involved in the school choice process as parents are. Parents operate within an issue-laden context and also have to consider their own beliefs and needs when it comes to choosing the right school to send their child.

On the contrary, all S-section residents with children of high school-going age attempted to get their children into what is considered to be the ‘best’ school in the area showing that they felt entitled to access public goods in the area. If their children were denied entry some parents negotiated with the school and eventually had their children enrolled in the school. While S-section residents also had limited knowledge of legislation governing education access their attempts to access Comtech for their children shows that they felt a greater sense of entitlement to educational resources in the area. This clearly demonstrates that S-section residents saw themselves as being entitled to Comtech and where they found barriers were created to prevent their entry they pushed forward to reassert their position as part of Umlazi’s privileged education sector. These parents recognise that Comtech is special and that their entry should be guaranteed by their residential status – being so close to Comtech should facilitate and in fact, guarantee their children’s entry into the school. Social networks are a critical component of Bourdieu’s social capital nexus and many of these parents told of stories where they had had personal interactions with the principal of Comtech while informal settlement residents only had contact with administrative staff of the schools they eventually sent their children to. It appears then that the residents of S-section are advantaged in that they are able to access social networks which are reliant on historical access to these schools.

Residents of Emhlabeni and Zakheleni are often unable to access these sorts of social networks and when they can, the social network does not grant them access to privileged spaces. It is also relevant to consider that residency in Emhlabeni and Zakheleni is transient. Many parents moved between Umlazi and various rural settings making these parents incapable of developing the kinds of relationships S-section parents have been able to develop with local school representatives. With the importance of social networks in gaining access to schools it is clear that Emhlabeni and Zakheleni residents are disadvantaged in this regard.

Fataar (2007: 14) suggests that many children living in cities go to schools in remote areas (relative to where they live) because “they have come to understand that the school close-by has to be avoided, trapped as it is and devoid of aspirational capital”. Good schools further from home are regarded as “crucial for cultivating the necessary aspirant dispositions that will allow entry into formal middle class employment and lifestyles” (Fataar 2007: 9). This is not true in S-section’s case. Parents believe that Comtech gives children the best quality education which is best able to guarantee the achievement of the aspirations they have for their children and facilitate middle class aspirations. Comtech’s aspirational capital is demonstrated in the principal’s beliefs that Comtech produces matriculants that eventually go on to tertiary education, something which is very uncommon for matriculants from township schools. Furthermore, Comtech children can hold their own against children from former Model C schools since they behave like they do, speak English well and most importantly, can aspire towards the same life goals as children in former Model C schools because Comtech ensures those aspirations are achievable. Many parents did not feel that this was the closest they could get to a Model C school but in fact, expressed that what they were getting in Comtech was as good as a Model C school. From speaking to S-section residents it is clear that the closest school is not perceived negatively by all residents in townships. Where a good school exists it is acknowledged and appreciated but what is of most significance is that parents, of working class background are able to ‘read’ the many different signs which define a good quality school.

Concerns with costs and safety were primarily expressed by poorer members of S-section. These concerns seem to confirm the well-established research trend evolved by many researchers when speaking about poor parents’ school choices. At the outset it was established that school choice in South Africa is likely to be dominated by the question of school fees.

While parents attempt to secure the best possible educational opportunities for their children they do so with limited financial resources. Therefore, for this community considerations of fees should not be seen as a limitation but a practical evaluation of a household's desires and means to achieve those desires, in the same way a wealthy couple may weigh up their private school options. Many parents in S-section's poorer community chose to send their children to Umgijimi Primary School which is a designated no-fee school and which they felt was close enough to home. The same group of parents chose to send their children to high schools outside of S-section because they felt they could not afford the fees at the local high school. It is worth noting that none of the parents with high school going children actually knew how much the fees were at the local high school though they opted out of the local high school market. They engaged with the school from afar to evaluate its value and determine their suitability for successful enrolment. The research also suggests that parents from the formal settlement of S-section also used similar forms of self-selection but determined their children to be suitable for entry into the local high school.

6.3. The social consequences of school choice

There are many consequences to school choice in this community. Firstly, the research clearly confirms that at the secondary school level, poorer children are forced out of local educational market where there happens to be a good quality school and into schools of lower quality. Linked to this is the exclusion of those children with poor academic performance; they too are excluded from the local educational market. Gerwitz et al (1995) highlight this as a lead consequence of school choice as it changes the manner in which schools function and are administered. Education is no longer seen as a public good, a resource for all but as a commodity that can be 'sold' to the highest bidder. They emphasise that "not only schools or school services but also children themselves are coming to be viewed as commodities, some of whom are more valuable than others" (Gerwitz et al 1995: 175-176). In highlighting the importance of academic performance and attracting parents capable of paying fees "the emphasis seems increasingly to be not on what the school can do for the child but on what the child can do for the school" (Gerwitz et al 1995: 176). This also goes a long way in explaining how schools become oversubscribed as school administrators recognise that an additional child necessitates an additional subsidy from government. The commodification of children in the education system either through the quintile system where schools gain

funding from government or to generate income from user fees paid by parents is inevitable since school administrators are made responsible for the financial viability of the school. The above is clear indication that the most dire consequence of school choice is marketization of education. It makes funding in areas where parents are not readily able to pay user-fees and educational quality that much more tenuous. While the abolishment of the quintile funding system may bring welcome relief to schools which find themselves serving poor children, it remains to be seen if it will affect the well-established notion in South Africa that educational quality is determined by the user fees.

The consequence of performance-based access also leads to skimming as was established by Hsieh and Urquiola (2006). By allowing selection tests to take place “the market is encouraging schools to pass the buck of responsibility for the most socially and educationally vulnerable students and that this appears to be leading to an intensification of segregation across local school systems” (Gerwitz 1995: 156). In many respects this ensures that the most poorly equipped schools carry the burden of socially and educationally vulnerable students even if they lack the resources to assist them adequately. This establishes an unfortunate cycle where the poor go to poor schools and experience low levels of attainment and success which do not bode well for securing future employment. Invariably the poor stay poor and the children’s poverty is reproduced or not wholly escaped reproduction of poverty to put it bluntly. This assessment provides further emphasis of why schools with aspirational capital as identified by Fataar (2007; 2009) are critical to the poor.

6.4. Concluding remarks

South Africa’s so-called unintended experiment with school choice has come to embody people’s interaction with the education system without knowing how highly contested such policy is. This is no different in S-section where Comtech’s exclusionary practices are not contested but have been accepted as the ‘only’ means with which to ‘maintain’ its so-called excellence. But, school choice opponents argue strongly that within a social space, particularly with regard to access to social institutions like schools, access and fair chance cannot be meted out according to merit – citizenship should be the only prerequisite to guarantee access. Research lays bare that not all choosers are equal. There are various obstacles which make it difficult for parents to participate capably in the school choice process. Where some research is at fault is with the suggestion that poorer parents are

inherently less interested in the education of their children. The research in this study is clear evidence that poor parents are interested in their children's education; this interest is demonstrated by the many processes they engage in order to make a decision about the schools they choose for their children. But the research also suggests that for their efforts to truly have an impact on their children's lives, school choice in South Africa requires monitoring to ensure that the poor are not unfairly prejudiced when they try to access public goods.

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Table 1: National allocations per quintile per child (2007 – 2009)

	2007	2008	2009
NQ1 (30.0%)	R738	R775	R807
NQ2 (27.5%)	R677	R711	R740
NQ3 (22.5%)	R554	R581	R605
NQ4 (15.0%)	R369	R388	R404
NQ5 (5.0%)	R123	R129	R134
Average (100%)	R492	R517	R538

Adapted from CREATE, 2009

Table 2: Details of household as reported by interviewee (Informal Settlements)

No.	Relationship to child/children	Marital status	Occupation	Education attainment	Interview date
1.	Mother	Unmarried, living together	Unemployed, rent out parts of property	Could not recall	17.02.2011
2.	Mother	Husband deceased	Unemployed, relies on CSG for 2 children	No schooling, illiterate	17.02.2011
3.	Mother	Unmarried	Part time as domestic worker	Grade 6	17.02.2011
4.	Father	Unmarried, living together	Father – runs spaza shop from home Mother – casual worker at retail store	High school, no matric	17.02.2011
5.	Mother	Unmarried	Unemployed, relies on CSG	No matric, could not recall when schooling stopped	18.02.2011
6.	Mother to eldest, Grandmother to the 2 younger children	Husband deceased	Unemployed, rents out part of property	Grade 8	18.02.2011
7.	Grandmother	Never married	Unemployed, occasional street trader, relies on CSG for 5 children	Grade 9	20.02.2011
8.	Grandmother	Unmarried	Domestic worker (part time), living with son who works as gardener, income supplemented by CSG	Could not recall	20.02.2011
9.	Mother	Unmarried, living together	Mother – unemployed Father – factory floor operator,	Matric	21.02.2011

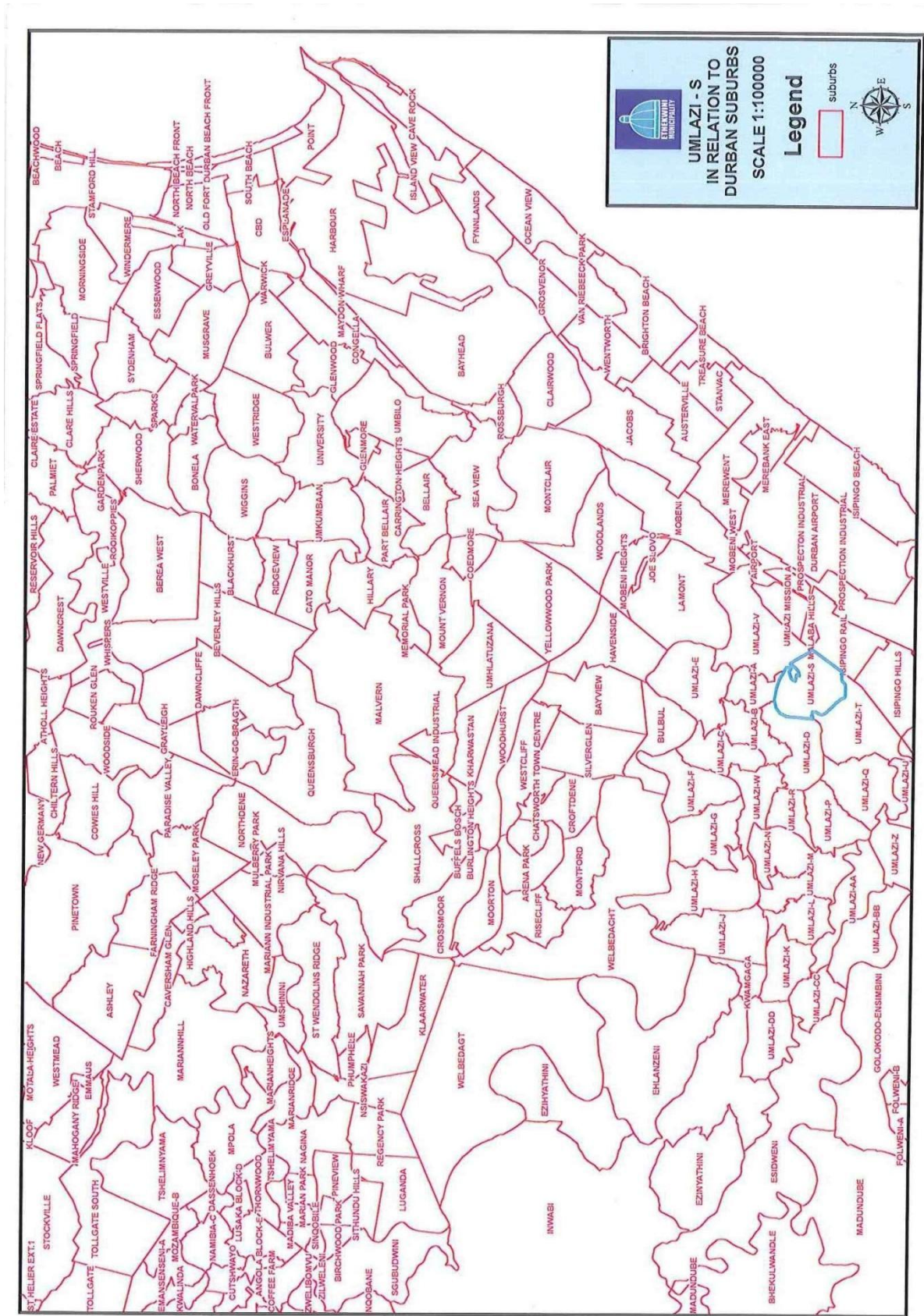
			supplemented by CSG for 4 children		
10.	Mother	Unmarried	Unemployed, informal trader, supplemented by 2 CSGs	Grade 11	08.03.2011
11.	Mother	Unmarried, living with partner	Mother employed as cashier Father is unemployed	Matric	16.03.2011
12.	Grandmother	Unmarried	Unemployed, state pension	Grade 6	18.03.2011
13.	Grandmother	Unmarried, living with daughter	Unemployed, state pension and CSGs	No schooling	18.03.2011
14.	Mother	Unmarried	Employed as server at fast food restaurant	Grade 11	18.03.2011
15.	Grandmother	Unmarried	Unemployed, receives state pension	Grade 6	18.03.2011

Table 3: Details of households as reported by interviewees (S-section)

No.	Relationship to child/children	Marital status	Occupation	Education attainment	Interview date
16.	Mother/aunt	Married	Father employed by automobile manufacturer, supplement income with foster care grants for 2 children	Mother – matric Father – tertiary	10.03.2011
17.	Mother	Married	Mother – unemployed Father – employed in transport industry (driver)	Mother – did not finish matric Father – post matric qualification	10.03.2011
18.	Mother	Unmarried	Unemployed, tuck shop owner	Matric	16.03.2011
19.	Mother	Married	Mother is unemployed Father is employed as assistant manager at Toyota	Matric (both parents)	16.03.2011
20.	Mother	Married	Mother is unemployed Father employed – security guard	Matric (both parents)	16.03.2011
21.	Father	Married	Mother is unemployed Father is employed as crane driver	Matric (both parents)	19.03.2011
22.	Mother/aunt	Married	Mother – community volunteer Father – employed in transport industry	No matric	11.04.2011
23.	Mother	Married	Mother – unemployed Father – employed in transport industry	Mother – Grade 9, could not recall husband's educational details	16.04.2011

24.	Mother	Married	Mother – unemployed Father – employed in transport industry	Mother – Grade 7 Father – interview could not recall	16.04.2011
25.	Mother/aunt (sister's child living with them)	Married	Mother – tea lady at local bank Father – employed in transport industry	Mother – Grade 11 Father – Matric	16.04.2011
26.	Mother	Married	Both parents employed by municipal government	Declined to respond	12.07.2011
27.	Mother	Married	Father – retired Mother – unemployed	Declined to respond	14.07.2011
28.	Father	Married	Mother – machinist in factory Father – Human officer in transport industry	Mother – matric Father – Postgraduate qualification	28.07.2011
29.	Father/Grandfather	Married, wife living in Empangeni, north KZN	Father – employed in transport industry as operator Mother – unemployed		19.08.2011
30.	Mother	Husband deceased	Unemployed	Grade 6	23.08.2011

Figure 1: Umlazi S-section in relation to Durban suburbs



Annexure A

Interview questions (Parents/Guardians)

While the interviews will be semi-structured in nature I need the outcomes of the interviews to have provided me with answers to the following questions.

Background of parents/household

1. How many adults live in this household?
2. How many are employed and how many are unemployed?
3. What do they do for a living?
4. Besides the salaries of the employed, what are the other sources of income for the household?
5. How many school-going children are there in the household?
6. Are their parents also currently living in the household?
7. What is your relationship to the children in the household?

School choice

1. Of the school-going children in the household, how many go to school in Umlazi?
2. What are the names of the schools attended by the children?
3. Who chose the school your child/children are attending?
4. For each of the children, please explain why these schools were chosen?
5. Was this school your first choice? If yes, why was this your first choice?
6. If not, what was your first choice? Why was that particular school your first choice?
7. Are there any other schools that you considered before choosing this one?
8. What factors did you consider when choosing a school for your child?
9. Does the school your child attends charge fees?
10. How much are the fees?
11. What process did you follow to get the child into this school?
(Probe: Did you speak to teachers or friends with children in that school, etc...)
12. When did they start at the school?
13. Which school did they go to before then?

14. Which school did or do their siblings go to?
15. How do they travel to school? Do they walk, take public transport, etc?

Interview questions (Principal/school representative)

Interviews with principals will be conducted based on whether I have interviewed parents/guardians who have children attending those schools. Therefore, the questions below are merely a guideline and will not address all the issues that may be covered in an interview.

1. Please explain the selection/enrolment procedure employed by the school
2. Does your school employ selection criteria?
3. What role does academic ability play in these selection criteria?
4. What role does the parents' ability to pay fees play in these selection criteria?
5. How much do you charge in school fees per year?
6. How successful is the school in collecting fees from parents?
7. Do you have a policy in place for learners whose parents are unable to pay fees?
8. Is this policy communicated to parents during the application process?
9. Why do you think parents choose your school for their children?

Annexure B

Letter of informed consent

Dear Parents/Guardians

I am currently engaged in a Master's degree in Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu Natal. My research area focuses on how school choice operates in post Apartheid South Africa. I would like to interview parents or guardians of children who are being educated in Umlazi to learn more about their choices. I will also be interviewing representatives of schools to learn more about their own selection criteria.

Recordings from the interviews will be used only for this research and will be discarded within a year of the finalisation of the research paper.

Participation is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason. Lastly, should the participants wish to remain anonymous, I am able to guarantee anonymity.

Should you need further information regarding my research project please contact my supervisor at the University, Ms Catherine Sutherland via email on SutherlandC@ukzn.ac.za or via telephone on 031 260 3274.

Yours faithfully

Thabisile Ntombela

.....

073 222 1690

tntombela@gmail.com

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

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