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How do the values in new South African policy manifest in a disadvantaged school setting?

Melanie Lee Drake

Abstract

South Africa has faced many challenges and difficulties since the change to democracy in 1994. At the heart of this ordeal is a striving towards access, quality and equity as key goals for the education system.

This research presents the tensions between two crucial elements in post 1994 education. A renewed emphasis on values, evident in many policy documents, provides a ‘beacon of hope’ as to how South Africans may find common ground and become a united, multicultural society through education. Yet, these ideals are contradicted in South African school life. Functioning in difficult circumstances, disadvantaged (township) schools continually struggle against the odds. The lack of sanitation, textbooks, desks and running water, as well as teacher absenteeism, provides little support or structure for quality teaching and learning.

In this thesis, a township school community in the Eastern Cape Province shares day-to-day experiences through interviews, focus groups, observations and document analysis. Using qualitative research methods based in the interpretive paradigm, the theoretical and historical framework of values policy documents is related to the environment in which these participants live.

My findings indicate that without targeted interventions and research to address these problems, the legacy from decades of historical apartheid may diminish, but is unlikely to disappear of its own accord. Policy documents will remain an idealistic rhetoric until real life solutions are found. Finally, I propose that further research is crucial in understanding the unique role of values in South African education.
Dedication

To my late grandmother, Ruby Mabel Webb Ferreira, who grew up during South African apartheid, yet taught me to value and appreciate all people, and, to my baby daughter, Cadence Ruby Vaudrey, who was the greatest blessing during my doctoral journey.
Acknowledgements

There were many people who contributed to the completion of my doctoral thesis.

Sincere thanks go to...

My husband, Dr Tobi Vaudrey, for his never-ending love and support.

All my New Zealand friends, particularly Frauke, Fred, Kirsten, Ilze, Candice, Paul, Nick, Lisa, Claire, Matt, May, Jesse, Jen, An, Pete, Mandy, Jacques, Stacey, Josh and my S202 CRSTIE colleagues, whose kind words of encouragement, baby-sitting skills and provision of meals proved to be essential ingredients in the completion of my thesis.

All my South African friends, particularly Trish and Jen, who provided emotional support while I adapted to living in a foreign country, and whose prayers provided strength and encouragement.

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My family in New Zealand, particularly Helen, Garg, Shelley and Che, for believing in me and providing support.

My Masters degree supervisor, Professor Hennie van der Mescht, who instilled a love for educational inquiry and research.

My supervisors, Professor Robin Small and Professor Viviane Robinson, for their guidance and direction.

John, for valued editing contributions.

The research school and participants who warmly welcomed me into their lives.

Friends from St Albans church in East London.

The School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, University of Auckland.

NZAID, for my International Commonwealth Doctoral Scholarship.
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### Glossary

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<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>the year in which the first democratic election took place in South Africa. The African National Party (ANC, a predominantly black political party) won over sixty percent of the votes and became the ruling government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apartheid</td>
<td>the legal system of racial segregation in South Africa, between 1948 and 1994. This system saw ‘white’ South Africans as the privileged race and ‘coloured’ South Africans as the lesser race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciskei</td>
<td>a Bantustan, or black African homeland during apartheid, situated in the south east of South Africa, for Xhosa speaking black Africans. Ciskei means ‘on this side of the Kei [river]’ (see Figure 11 for map).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disadvantaged school</td>
<td>a general, international term used to signal township (poor) schools in South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educator/s</td>
<td>the term educator is used to refer to teacher. This term is used in all new education policy since 1994 to signal a move from the controlling, dominant and authoritative role of teachers during apartheid. Their role is now described as a facilitator of learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>farm school</td>
<td>schools located within poor farming communities in poverty-stricken areas in South Africa, sometimes described as rural schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fibbing</td>
<td>a term that resulted from the fieldwork, in which participants would ‘cover up’ details about an event or procedure in order to make it appear as if all was in order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homelands</td>
<td>a territory set aside for black South Africans during apartheid. Also called a Bantustan (Bantu – meaning people, stan – meaning land). Ten Bantustans were established in South African under apartheid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learner/s</td>
<td>the term learner is used to refer to student or pupil. This term was used in all new education policy since 1994 to signal a move from the previously compliant and submissive role of students under the apartheid regime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>magical thinking</td>
<td>a term that arose from the evaluation of the fieldwork evidence. Magical thinking is the process of placing faith in the power of verbal formulae that will ‘make things happen’, without causal theory on how it will happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mdantsane</td>
<td>the second largest township in South Africa, situated in the Eastern Cape province between the cities of East London and King Williams Town (see Figure 11).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>referred to by South Africans as something that occurred within the time from 1994, in the democratic South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new talk</td>
<td>used in this thesis to refer to any new ways of thinking in education, founded in new policy documents which were formulated after 1994. For example, new rights talk refers to human rights which are incorporated into most new education policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>referred to by South Africans as something that occurred during apartheid, under the racially segregated South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old talk</td>
<td>used in this thesis to refer to the way things were done (or how things were described) during apartheid. For example, old talk can be linked to discipline and this refers to physical corporal punishment used during apartheid schooling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organisational culture</td>
<td>the embedded values, traditions and norms that are shared by people in organisations or groups, and controls their interactions and behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy-practice gap</td>
<td>the distance between policy stated aims and what happens in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy values</td>
<td>this term is used to signal all the values that are referred to in the variety of documents describing South African values, particularly values in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post 1994</td>
<td>a term used by South Africans to signal the democratic, apartheid-free South Africa, also referred to as the new South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre 1994</td>
<td>a term used by South Africans to signal the period before the democratic election, still governed by apartheid, also referred to as the old South Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redress</td>
<td>compensation for the uneven distribution of social, economic and other opportunities in an attempt to restore the balance in South African society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rights talk</td>
<td>a term that arose from the fieldwork evidence, in which participants would refer to any talk that related to human rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>town schools</td>
<td>urban schools in suburban areas of towns and cities. These were traditionally (pre 1994) white-only schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>township/rural schools</td>
<td>rural schools represent schools within rural areas in South Africa that are often part of township communities. Township school/s and rural school/s are sometimes used interchangeably.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>townships</td>
<td>synonymous with ‘location’ or ‘shanty town’ (‘slums’, as used internationally), townships refer to underdeveloped urban areas which were reserved for non-whites during apartheid. They are usually situated on the periphery of a town or city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transkei</td>
<td>a Bantustan, or black African homeland during apartheid, situated in the south east of South Africa, for Xhosa speaking black Africans. Transkei means ‘the area beyond the Kei [river] (see Figure 11 for map).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xhosa</td>
<td>Xhosa is an official language of South Africa. Xhosa is spoken by several million South Africans and is the second most spoken language in South Africa. Xhosa is spoken by several South African traditional tribes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key for fieldwork evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FG</th>
<th>Focus Group/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Individual Interview/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Learner/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>School Management Team, consisting of the principal and two heads of department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Teacher/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1. Introduction

I have been privileged to grow up in a politically and historically transformative time. I was a young adolescent in the early 1990s, when the end of apartheid and the beginning of the new democratic South Africa shook the South African nation. In 1992, as a twelve year old girl, I vividly remember the occasion that first brought this white-black reality to my life at school. At that time, I attended a middle-to-upper class, all girls, Christian, primary school in my hometown of East London. Being ‘the norm’ at the time, I never considered why there were only white girls at the school. It never crossed my mind what other twelve year old girls, who were black, coloured or Indian, did at school, or even how they were schooled. The only time I was ever brought into the ‘conversation’ of black-and-white or apartheid, was when I was at my grandmother’s house after school, and during school holidays. My grandmother spoke fluent Xhosa, as she was born and raised in Cofimvaba, in the black homeland of the Transkei. Her intimate knowledge of the Xhosa people was always apparent. She had a fulltime domestic ‘maid’, a black African Xhosa-speaking woman from the Ciskei homeland, whom we called Margaret.\(^1\) I would overhear hours of Xhosa conversations in my grandmother’s kitchen. I also met Margaret’s four children, her one daughter being my age. I remember playing with Lulama\(^2\) in the garden. Although we never communicated verbally, we had fun nonetheless, and these interactions were shielded from the South African reality at the time, by the naivety and simplicity of two children playing together. There were times when the reality would affect me. When the white police would come to my grandmother’s neighbourhood to check black workers had ‘permits’ to work in the white cities, I was told how my grandmother would ‘hide’ Margaret in the bushes behind the house, to avoid her getting ‘sjambokked’ (or whipped with a heavy leather whip), or going to jail for not having the right documentation. I felt fearful when I heard this story. I also have vivid memories of the Xhosa culture becoming part of my grandmother’s home. For example, an African Pied Starling flew into the house once, and Margaret went into a frenzied trance. According to African folklore, these black birds were a sign of bad omens, and Margaret insisted a sangoma (practitioner of herbal medicines, divination, ancestral spirits and counselling in traditional tribes), expel the spirits from the house that this bird had brought in.

Hence, in 1992, when my class teacher asked me if I would show two new girls around my school, and these girls were black, I felt extremely proud to be chosen. I immediately took Thembi and Vuyolwethu\(^3\) around the school, boasting of all the white-only privileges I had grown up with. I was completely unaware of their pasts, experiences and histories. As I moved to high school, and witnessed

---

1 Name changed.
2 Name changed.
3 Names changed.
the first 1994 democratic election in South Africa, my peer group was seen as the ‘first generation’ of
the new South Africa. My teachers tried to teach in ways that evoked enthusiasm for this new
dispensation, while at the same time, every month another white family was leaving the country for
Australia, New Zealand or other international shores. I remember packing up all the old history books.
I remember doing a history project on Nelson Mandela. I remember watching the news on television,
and reading newspapers where ‘civil war’ was foreshadowed and anticipated. I remember my mother
‘stocking up’ the pantry cupboards in case of rioting and violence. Throughout my years as a teenager
and young adult in South Africa, I have continually faced the dilemmas that this transformation has
created for its people. I have also experienced first-hand the benefits of the transformation, none more
apparent than this opportunity to undertake my doctoral studies in New Zealand, on an International
Commonwealth Scholarship. At the very heart of my doctoral studies, lie these experiences and
memories that have shaped me as a researcher, and invoked my passion for education research.

1.1. Personal motivation

I have been a teacher for many years. One outcome of being a passionate educator is the belief that
learning is an on-going, ever-changing necessity, and this drive is what brought me to postgraduate
studies. After my undergraduate degree and numerous certificate courses, I embarked on my Masters
degree. This was my first attempt at research and I was ‘hooked’ by the time I submitted my thesis in
2007. My Masters research was fundamental in how this PhD study developed. My Masters research
investigated the role of values in educational leadership and management. Through this experience, I
understood just how important values were. The literature and studies I familiarised myself with
stressed values as the crucial ingredient for organisational success. Beyond this, I became more
familiar and intrigued with the role of values in South African schools. This brought me to the
numerous new South African policy documents about values and the importance of values in the new
South Africa. These ideals and hopes provided the primary motivation for my inquiry.

Charity work had always been a part of my upbringing, as a South African from a ‘privileged’
background. The giving of food items, clothing, books, toys and money was part of my ‘norm’.
However, it was my giving of time that sparked an interest in the different communities of South
Africans. Through a community church project, a group of young adults went out into the township
communities to be of service to the people. It was here that I became interested in how, or if, life had
changed for these South Africans since the election in 1994. I was forced to see the extreme poverty
and unsatisfactory living conditions that were reality for these South Africans. It was at this point that I
noticed the ‘gap’ between the ideals and intentions of policy, and the life for South Africans living in
township communities. I address my understanding of the ‘gap’ further in this chapter.
The core motivation for this research has been personal, to better understand the lives of the South African people who live ‘up the road’ from me, particularly the lives of South African township children. I was interested in investigating and understanding the life reality of Mdantsane (township) residents, whom I knew very little about, yet who lived so close to me. I was aware when I embarked on this doctoral study, that there would be very challenging issues that I would need to deal with, and I dedicate a chapter to these challenges in this thesis. My intention in conducting this research was to add to the conversation amongst South African researchers about the best ways in which to support those who have the least, particularly in school environments. My intentions were to highlight these participants’ lives in a way which would shed light on the reality for people living in similar conditions. This was the primary motivation for this study.

1.2. Research focus

The focus of this study evolved from three specific areas of interest (as seen in Figure 1).

Firstly, values have been described in South African policy as the ‘beacon of hope’ that would see the unification of the diverse and multicultural society. In the early 2000s, the focus on values in education was emphasised, with numerous policy documents addressing what these values were, and the way in which these values were to be incorporated in school life. These documents described the future South African society, and as an educator who is interested in the role schools play in shaping children’s moral development, I used these documents as the first part of the research process. I present these documents and a critical perspective on the values initiative in this thesis.

Secondly, many authors and researchers have commented on the importance of these values in school life. Schools are perceived to be the ‘nurseries’ of values. Hence, the roles of school stakeholders, namely principals, teachers, parents and learners, are vital in the realisation, enactment and understanding of these values. I am interested in how these school stakeholders perceive their roles in the process of values education. I dedicate part of the literature review and context chapters of this
study to analysing the relationships between schools, school stakeholders, and values realisation and enactment.

Thirdly, the location of schools and the communities that surround them are also important. Township communities are generally situated in the poorest areas because of their role in apartheid South Africa. In Chapter Five, I explore township schooling in South Africa, and begin to set the context for my study. At this point, I do need to emphasise that there are many extremely successful educational institutions in South Africa. Many schools across South Africa produce outstanding educational results, and compete internationally when it comes to quality teaching and learning. My study looks specifically at township schools, and the context in which township learners are raised and educated. This can be perceived as presenting a gloomy picture of South African schooling, and hence it is important to emphasise that there are successful schools and effective teaching and learning environments. My study aims specifically at revealing the reality of township school communities.

I should also emphasise that not only were black people differentiated against during apartheid, but so were Indian, coloured and others. ‘People-of-colour’ was a term used during apartheid that referred to any one who was not white, and was therefore subject to discrimination. I focus particularly on African (black) people and children in this study, as the township community and school where I conducted my study was made up entirely of black, African participants. There are also equally poor and impoverished communities across South Africa that include different racial and ethnic groups.

1.2.1. Significance of research

There have been many studies, both in South Africa and internationally, that investigate ‘the gap’ between policy and implementation in education. The policy-practice gap, as described by Jansen (2002), is nothing new in educational literature. Much of this literature attempts to explain how difficult it is to implement idealistic policy that is intended to change the practice of education ‘on the ground’ (Jansen, 2002, p. 200). On a very basic level, my study aimed to investigate this problem in a specific context. However, it was not the overarching aim of my study. As my Masters study revealed (Drake, 2007), values appeared to be intrinsically taught and learnt in school, regardless of the conscious awareness of this process by stakeholders. Therefore, instead of framing my research question around the issues of implementation, I intentionally use the word ‘manifest’ in order to reveal new information on the process of values realisation and enactment in schools. ‘Manifest’ as used in this context, simply means how these values are made evident, how they are displayed and understood, how they are shown and revealed, and how they are passed on and enacted in the specific context of a township school. The method I use to explain and interpret this process is an analysis of the policy
documents and policy framing of values education in South African schools, but it is not limited to these. Other values, ethical decisions and moral behaviours may be informing practice at this school, and my study aimed to investigate all these avenues.

In this way, not only would the ‘gap’ be investigated, but reasons why this gap occurred, and explanations from the end users of policy, would shed valuable insight. It is my intention to reveal the voices of the participants in this study, who teach, learn and live in this specific context daily.

1.2.2. Factors influencing my study

Two occurrences in 2011 added to my interpretation and development regarding the findings and significance of this study. As an emerging researcher, conversations with my colleagues, and comments and feelings described by the public on social and other media sites, caused me to reflect significantly on the importance and significance of this type of research. These two events occurred during the final year of my PhD study.

2011 Riots in England

Widespread rioting, looting and arson, predominantly perpetrated by youth, occurred across cities and towns in England at the beginning of August 2011 (Belle, 2011, August 26). The underlying cause and reasons behind these behaviours are complex and profound on many levels, but comments such as “moral decline”, “moral collapse” and “broken society” flashed over all forms of media. The riots also provoked intense discussions amongst my emerging researcher colleagues about the role and importance of values in schools. What immediately sprung to my mind was the idea that perhaps the South African values education initiative was not isolated in its ineffectiveness, and that values education globally resulted in challenges and complexities for both the policy-makers and the end users of these policies. An international exploration into values education is briefly addressed in this thesis, highlighting the difficulties that arise from incorporating values or character education in curricula. More significantly, however, I pondered over the usefulness of such an initiative in a developing country such as South Africa, when a more traditional, first-world country such as England, appeared to have not ‘got it right’ yet, according to public opinion. Daniels, writing an opinion piece for the New York Daily News, commented that he saw British youth today as "the most unpleasant and violent in the world", and he blamed this on their "sense of entitlement" (Daniels, 2011, August 10). This opinion correlated considerably with the opinions and expectations of the participants in my study, and I questioned the usefulness of a values initiative as an ‘engine of change’ in a newly formed democratic, developing country. It also signalled an interesting point regarding entitlements in
that, in this case, it was the youth that were described as being ‘entitlements-driven’. In my study, a sense of entitlement lay with the participants, and the riots in England provided an interesting lens through which to investigate my findings, considering the substantial ‘gap’ between English and South African township youth. I have highlighted the English riots, because they emphasise broad issues that link to my study, and this grounds my findings in a period where society appears to be looking for answers about moral, ethical, character and values development. Chapters Eight and Nine detail the analysis and evaluation of my findings in the South African context.

2011 ‘Secrecy Bill’ passed in South Africa

Another important event that took place only a few months before this thesis was submitted, was the ‘secrecy bill’ or Protection of Information Bill which was initially passed in South Africa on 22 November 2011. This bill contains legislation that could be used to outlaw whistle-blowing and investigative journalism, with a penalty of up to twenty-five years imprisonment. Simply put, it would stop the media from exposing public corruption. This bill has been most controversial, and it has caused public outrage and protest. This outrage from the South African public was premised on the fundamental denial of the human right to freedom of speech, which Nelson Mandela himself stated would never again (after apartheid) be breached.

The bill is officially aimed at protecting state information, and the classification and declassification of state information. This has been perceived by the majority of South African society as a way for corrupt politicians to continue getting away with their corrupt behaviours. This has been interpreted as the ‘death of democracy’. Images such as these below (Figure 2) were splashed all over social and other media sites, and resulted in mass protest, including a ‘Black Tuesday’, where all those in protest wore black. Even the top university in South Africa, the University of Cape Town, protested by ‘censoring’ their home page, and blacking out text.

The debate and analysis of conflicting issues around this bill is of vital importance in South African politics and society, but for my study, it has highlighted one crucial issue. This bill primarily undermines the value of an open society, described in values policies, and more fundamentally contradicts the human rights expressed in the Bill of Rights and Constitution. It has been received by the South African public as a ‘betrayal’, and this further promotes the uneasiness and anxiety that South African people feel towards policy and parliamentary initiatives. Many organisations and opposing parties have assured the South African people that they will take this opposition to the highest judicial body, the Constitutional Court. However, it is these decisions taken by the political leaders of South Africa that have a direct impact on how South Africans feel towards their government.
and the future. These types of occurrences, which negatively influence people’s sense of confidence, affect moral and ethical interpretations for all South Africans. My findings reveal evidence that adds to these mixed political signals being sent and received in South Africa.

![Figure 2. Example ‘Secrecy Bill’ images from Zapiro Cartoons (Zapiro, 2011)](image)

1.3. Structure of thesis

This thesis is divided into ten chapters, and these chapters inform the reader of all the aspects of this study. The map below (Figure 3) presents a visual overview of the development of the thesis.

1.3.1. Thesis map

The layout of this thesis is displayed in the thesis map (Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Structure of thesis map](image)
1.3.2. Structure of thesis

This chapter (Chapter One) intends to inform the reader of the motivation and background to this study. Social science researchers acknowledge that they can be part of the research process, and detailing my background and incentive to do this study is a vital part of understanding how this study developed. My positioning when undertaking the fieldwork was a crucial part of this study, and this is further explained in the methodology chapter.

Chapter Two is the first chapter that reviews the literature relevant to my study, and sets the context for this inquiry. I dedicate this chapter to informing the reader of the major movements that resulted in the transformed state of South Africa. The South African Constitution and Bill of Rights are described, as they form the foundations of the new democratic South Africa. I briefly analyse the apartheid educational legacy, with a particular focus on Bantu education (education for black South Africans), and teacher training for black teachers. The new educational policies that framed education in the new political dispensation are revealed, and I describe how the schooling system has changed from apartheid times to the current structure. I conclude this chapter by addressing the drivers of educational change, namely equality, redress and human rights, as these three issues significantly influence my investigation.

Chapter Three takes an in-depth look at values and values education, which are described as the instrument of change in the South African context. The first section in this chapter investigates the theoretical underpinnings of values education, and asks the question: What are values? I briefly address the different approaches to values education, and also look at the relationship between values formation and schools. This is informed by suggestions in literature of how children learn values at school. I conclude this chapter by giving a brief overview of values education internationally, and show through this exploration, that values education is rife with contestations and dilemmas.

Chapter Four brings the investigation of values and values education into the South African context. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part details the values education movement in South Africa. Beginning with a detailed timeline, the reader is informed of all the relevant policy documents and events that took place and shaped the values education development in South Africa. The second part of this chapter is a critique of these policy documents, and discussions around the problems with the values initiative in South Africa.
The focus of Chapter Five is detailing the specific context in which my investigation took place. I present the reality for schools in South Africa and specifically the schools that form part of township communities. Facts, figures and statistics are presented to aid the reader in understanding the unique context in which my study took place, and I give a brief overview of broader contextual information, such as provincial data and provincial education department realities. I also reveal the situation for school stakeholders, beginning with school leadership and moving to the role of educators and learners. I conclude by presenting my research question and the intentions which framed this study.

Chapter Six describes the ways in which I went about answering my research question. I explore the decisions I made about the approaches and tools I used to collect and analyse evidence. I detail information about the sample school, and how I went about collecting evidence through observations, focus groups and interviews. A unique feature of this chapter is that I present two methodological processes. The reality of my study is that the process I had initially planned to undertake during fieldwork did not match the context and reality of the school. Early in the fieldwork, I had to adapt my methodological approach and find another way of analysing the evidence. This classic tension between a deductive methodology (taking your categories to the data) and an inductive methodology (allowing your categories to emerge from the data) is briefly described in this chapter. I also explore the data analysis process and ethical considerations which were unique to my study. Finally, I explain the techniques employed to ensure the evidence collected was accurate and fair to the participants who were studied.

Chapter Seven is a unique and significant chapter. This chapter is what I call ‘the story’ behind the fieldwork. In light of the surprising context I faced at the start of my fieldwork experience, and the surprising results that the fieldwork evidence presented, I felt this chapter was crucial in relaying my findings and evaluation in a fair way. I explore challenges such as resources, support and language barriers, as well as entrenched organisational habits, such as impression management and ‘perceived fibs’, which made cross-checking and member-checks difficult. In addition to this, outside factors also affected the fieldwork phase. Strike action was a challenge that presented itself throughout the fieldwork period of six months, and there were times when access into the township community proved too difficult, and I needed to reschedule data collection. An important component of this chapter is also the ‘Standing out’ sections, which presents the events and behaviours that ‘stood out’ from the majority of fieldwork evidence. I also detail the school layout and schedule to inform the reader about the participating school.
Both Chapters Eight and Nine are dedicated to presenting and discussing the findings from this study. To avoid examining the findings at this early point in this thesis, I describe the layout of these chapters only briefly. These two chapters are presented similarly, based on how the methodological process progressed. Firstly, the description of events highlights the observed behaviours and events that occurred during the fieldwork. Next, explanations from participants explore the participants’ justifications for these behaviours and events, which were explained during focus groups and interviews. Thereafter, I evaluate these findings in light of the policy values and documentation that were presented in Chapter Four. I also weave in empirical studies and other literature relating to my findings that shed further light on the topics being explored. I conclude these chapters by drawing together all the evidence, and proposing ideas that need consideration if these types of behaviours and events are to align with, or better suit, policy ideals. Chapter Eight explores the theme of teachers’ practice and accountability. Within the values policies, the role of the educator is emphasised. However, the observations made at this school showed that teachers’ behaviours and attitudes differed significantly from these policy descriptions. Through the evaluation of observations and the teachers’ explanations, conclusions are presented. Chapter Nine presents the second theme, entitled ‘new talk and old habits’. This chapter presents evidence that shows the conflict between the old and the new at this school. Evidence from observations, focus groups and interviews are presented and evaluated in light of values policies. I conclude by drawing together these two conflicting issues.

Chapter Ten, finally, concludes the thesis by drawing together all the big ideas. I also challenge future thinking about values education in South Africa and I suggest that before any further progress can occur in school values, there are core, fundamental issues that need to be addressed. These issues arise from the apartheid legacy, and to some degree, should be expected in a very young, newly transformed country. Nonetheless, they need serious consideration should educationalists and policy makers wish to see the policy-practice gap diminish, and quality teaching and learning become part of every South African school.

I have presented the motivation for this study, the research focus, and the significance of this type of research in South Africa. This chapter also informs the reader of the layout and structure of this thesis. Next, I present a review of the literature that informed my study. Chapter Two explores the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ in South Africa, and provides a brief summary of the transformation process.
Chapter 2. The transformed state of South Africa

After centuries of apartheid and colonialism, South Africa finally made the transition to democracy in 1994. Nelson Mandela, formerly a political prisoner and leader of the African National Congress (ANC) party, became president of the new democratic South Africa. The electoral mandate of the ANC was to redress the inherited inequities and inequalities of the apartheid regime. This change transformed all spheres of life for South Africans, the most challenging being the educational context. Education in South Africa was previously shaped and modelled on the principle of separation and division along racial lines. Policy development and articulation during the ANC’s push for democracy in the 1990s were founded on values that would inform all future transformations in South African education.

My interest lies in the fundamental importance of values in the new South Africa. The emphasis on values begins with the new Constitution and Bill of Rights. My study involves how these values influence post-apartheid education. New policies address values as the ‘instrument of change’ and a vital part of transformation in the new South Africa, particularly the Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a). I investigate how values are implemented and enacted in environments that are particularly challenging; township schools (or disadvantaged schools). This chapter presents an overview of:

- the political (Section 2.1) and educational (Section 2.2) contexts in South Africa, from apartheid to the current democratic period.
- the current schooling system and what happened to apartheid schools (Section 2.3).
- the drivers that inform educational change, namely equality, redress and human rights.

Commonly, South Africans refer to the ‘old South Africa’ as the apartheid period where segregation and separation dominated South African society. The ‘new South Africa’ refers to the period from 1994 onwards; the new democratic South Africa beginning with the first free and fair election in April 1994. I use the terms ‘old’ and ‘new’ throughout this thesis to refer to these periods of time.

2.1. Political overview: Pre and post 1994

Apartheid is generally said to have started after the 1948 election victory of the National Party (NP). Yet segregated policies and attempts to classify the South African population were noticeable decades
before. Apartheid can be characterised by its central policy of ‘divide and rule’ (racial), which was aimed at ensuring white survival and hegemony by dividing non-whites along racial and ethnic lines (Henrard, 2002, p. 19). Apartheid became a means of disempowering the non-white population, while giving privileges to the white, especially white Afrikaans, population.

In the 1980s, as international pressure and sanctions became more powerful and apartheid resistance parties became stronger and more rebellious, there were increasingly intense negotiations between the National Party (NP) government, the African National Congress (ANC), and other parties from the resistance movements. Eventually, this led to President F.W. de Klerk’s speech in 1990 at the annual opening of parliament, which set in motion the protracted constitutional negotiation process leading up to the first multi-racial election in April 1994 and the first democratic Constitution for South Africa (De Klerk, 1994, pp. 4-6). Since then, South Africa has been facing the challenges of being a young democratic republic.

2.1.1. The new South African Constitution

The South African Constitution, which provided the foundations for the birth of the new democracy in 1994, encapsulated foundational values, ideals and hopes for South African society. The Interim Constitution was passed in 1993, and in 1996, the official Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was adopted. For those South Africans living in poverty, the Constitution expressed a set of material rights that are protected by the state with laws, policies and programmes. The Constitution acknowledges the social, political and economic consequences of the country’s brutal history (Magasela, 2006, p. 58). It was essential that the new constitutional order should derive legitimacy from a free and fair election; this was achieved in April 1994. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is a detailed and complex document (Hatchard & Slinn, 1995) consisting of a preamble and 14 chapters containing 244 sections and eight schedules. The Constitutional principles encompass the values which are to represent South African society, and are to be nurtured, protected and emphasised in the educational sphere.

These principles were the outcome of the negotiating process to form the framework for the new Constitution. The first principle proclaims that the Constitution shall provide for the establishment of one sovereign state, a common South African citizenry, and a democratic government committed to achieving equality between men and women and people of all races. The other constitutional principles (Kotze, 1996, pp. 138-139) are:
• Universally accepted fundamental rights, freedoms and civil liberties that must be entrenched and justiciable [capable of being determined or settled by a court of law].
• Prohibition of discrimination, and the protection of racial and gender equality and national unity.
• Freedom of information to ensure open and accountable government and administration.
• Diversity of languages and culture that should be acknowledged, protected and promoted.
• Recognition and protection of collective rights regarding organs of civil society on the basis of non-discrimination and free association.
• The right of employees and employers to form and join employer organisations and trade unions, and the right to bargain collectively, as well as the right to fair labour practices.

Ten fundamental values are embedded in the Constitution to enable transformation in South Africa. These are Democracy, Social Justice and Equity, Equality, Non-racism and Non-sexism, Ubuntu (Human Dignity), an Open Society, Accountability, the Rule of Law, Respect and Reconciliation. “These constitutional imperatives bind all South Africans and all schools to the establishment of a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights” (Vandeya, 2003, p. 194).

Due to the supremacy of the Constitution in South Africa, it is crucial that education law be subjected to all the provisions of the Constitution. The most important of these provisions is the guarantee that all South Africans are able to receive a primary level of education (de Groof & Malherbe, 1997). In order to facilitate and advance the realisation of the rights detailed in the new Constitution, The Bill of Rights was established and officially enacted in 1996 (Pillay, 2007).

2.1.2. The new Bill of Rights

The ANC saw a ‘Bill of Rights’ as central to the new Constitution. The Bill of Rights is based on the notion of fundamental equality of all women and men, irrespective of race or colour. These were the principles the ANC had fought for over many decades. The Bill of Rights protects a range of civil, political, economic and social rights, which were denied to the majority of South Africans during apartheid years (Hatchard & Slinn, 1995):

Civil rights include the right to life (not defined), human dignity, privacy and freedom and security of the person and the prohibition of torture of any kind or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Hatchard & Slinn, 1995, p. 19).
The Bill provides South African society with a citizenship that promotes civil, political, social and economic rights. There is an inextricable link between socio-economic rights and quality of life, as well as socio-economic rights and poverty (Magasela, 2006, p. 58). However, “ … experience in Africa has taught the lesson that to provide a bill of rights is one thing, but to make it work is another” (Dlamini, 1997, p. 41). The rights (Seleoane, 2001, p. 40) that encompass the socio-economic dimensions of the new South Africa include the following provisions:

- No one may be subjected to slavery, servitude or forced labour.
- Everyone has the right to fair labour practices – workers are guaranteed the right to form and join trade unions, to participate in the activities and programmes of their unions, and to go on strike.
- Everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to his/her health or wellbeing.
- Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing. The state must take reasonable measures to achieve the progressive realisation of this right within available resources. It is contingent upon the state’s available resources.
- Everyone has the right to have access to health care services (including reproductive health care) and sufficient food, water and social security. Again, this right (besides emergency medical treatment) is under progressive realisation.
- Everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education. Everyone also has the right to further education, which the state must take reasonable measures to make progressively available and accessible.
- Provided they do not breach any provision of the Bill of Rights, persons who belong to cultural, religious and linguistic communities have the right to enjoy their culture, religion and language. They may form, join or maintain organisations associated with these rights.

The formation of a human rights culture, founded on specific values reflected in these documents, is the basis of state transformation in South Africa. Socio-economic rights are vital to an integrated, holistic Bill of Rights, reflecting the needs and aspirations of all South Africans. These rights were intended to enrich participatory democracy and enable people marginalised by poverty to have a voice. The socio-economic rights were regarded as crucial to facilitating the fundamental change of South African society (Liebenberg, 2010, p. 27). Together with the Constitution, the Bill of Rights directly impacts on policy formation in the education sphere.
2.2. Education overview: Pre and post 1994

During apartheid, the racially segregated structure of education in South Africa resulted in marked differences in state funding, which affected teacher/pupil ratios, qualifications of teachers and other features. Thirteen percent of the land, subdivided into geographical and ethnic areas (‘homelands’), was set aside for people of colour (Weber, 2002, p. 618), and they were educated only in these areas. The curriculum was also differentiated on racial lines so that the distinctive groups could be prepared for the jobs they were meant to take up. Education was assigned crude and explicit functions. The Minister for the then Native Affairs declared in the House of Assembly on September 17, 1953: “I will reform it [African education] so that the Natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them.” One year later, this was reiterated in the political arena: “There is no place for him [the African] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour … it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community …” (Hepple, 1967, p. 53).

Education was offered in an unequal manner, and ‘Bantu Education’ in particular was meant to further entrench this separation. The new Bill of Rights and other policies for the new South Africa were intended to reverse the apartheid history (Dlamini, 1997, p. 47). This contextual education overview is presented next.

2.2.1. The old Bantu education system

1948 was a significant year for non-white South Africans; apartheid became the keystone of the political agenda. The Bantu Education Act, passed in 1953, came about as a planned policy to segregate the socio-economic development of black people. It emphasised the functional value of schooling to transmit and develop black cultural heritage. “Black education was to be directed to black – not white – needs” (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 59). Black students would learn not only to value their own tribal culture, but also that they were inferior to whites, and should prepare themselves for their realistic place in a white-dominated society. Although resisted by white, English-speaking missionaries, Bantu education signified subservience and cultural domination, and was brought under state control. This gave power to the state in any matters relating to teachers, the syllabus, and to the establishment, maintenance and management of black schools. Bantu education provided for lower (Grades 1-4) and higher (Grades 5-8) primary education, and a series of post-primary schools. After an initial four year education, a test would be used to determine continuation, and at this point many black students would leave school (Christie & Collins, 1982).
Tertiary education was segregated as well, with most faculties in the open universities being closed to African, Indian and Coloured students. Separate ethnic institutions set up as ‘agencies of academic apartheid’ (Davenport, 1991, p. 535). Black tertiary institutions (tribal colleges) encouraged students to use their skills in the homelands (separate black provinces), to enable these areas to function administratively and economically (Christie & Collins, 1982). This would remove black students from the urban areas, to the areas where the state wished them to focus.

Within the apartheid legacy, the right to a certain type of education was reserved for the racially white. Both the indigenous and racially non-white people and their cultures were condemned as backward, primitive and irrelevant and were therefore not permitted to enter the privileged spaces of mainstream life. Education played the role of gate-keeper, ensuring the denial of these basic rights to South Africans (Vandeya, 2003).

2.2.2. The old Bantu teacher training

During the initial planning of Bantu Education in the 1940s, the state would phase out white teachers in black schools (missionaries). Male teachers would be replaced with women to save costs for the state. Additional provisions were made to educate black teachers. Teachers without school leaving qualifications were allowed to teach, and the reduction of professionally qualified educators (with university degrees) was significant. “This would no doubt affect the quality of education offered, especially when compared with whites (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 71)”. By the 1960s, teacher education colleges were segregated. The Bantu Education Extension Act of 1959 also allowed for the formation of racially segregated universities with their ‘own affairs’ Faculties of Education. Sayed describes key features of teacher training under Bantu Education (2002, p. 382):

- The physical location of teacher training institutions was based on the fragmented racial geography which socially engineered ‘life spaces’ of South Africans (homelands). Hence, there were different education systems for different groups.
- The supply and demand of teachers was maintained by racial groupings which determined where an individual was trained and posted. Teachers acquired their training through socialisation in racialised groups.
- There were restrictions on curricula and qualifications. Training in black colleges and universities was mainly limited to humanities and arts. Most black graduates were trained in subjects such as religious studies and history. There were too few teachers in maths, science and technology, resulting in poor education in these subjects.
These features illustrate how black teachers received inferior, poor quality teacher training, specifically designed for the Bantu education system. There were consequences for where black teachers were trained, how they were trained, and where they ended up teaching. “Its [teacher training] rationale can only be understood in the context of the social and political logic of the apartheid education” (Sayed, 2002, p. 383).

2.2.3. New policies that informed education change: Post 1994

The new government committed itself to providing and making available the necessary resources and facilities to give everyone a fair chance to succeed at school. This initiative was premised on the official South African discourse about equality, opportunity and redress. These policy documents form the basis of the new structure in education, which saw nineteen different education systems move to one education system based on multicultural schooling and outcomes-based education (as opposed to content-driven education) in the new curriculum (Van der Linde, 2002, p. 513).

In order to redress white-black educational inequality and the growing need for educational access for all South Africans, the new government’s first White Paper on Education and Training presented in 1995 became the primary education policy document for both the government and society. It is the source for authority on all education programmes, initiatives and action (Benghu, 1997, p. 22). It was the government’s attempt to endorse a principled and realistic vision of what education and training would be for all South Africans, first and foremost favouring and expanding access to education:

The system must increasingly open access to education and training opportunity of good quality, to all children, youths and adults, and provide means for learners to move easily from one learning context to another, so that the possibilities of lifelong learning are enhanced (Department of Education, 1995).

The major change in policy, as shown in this statement, is accessibility of education for all South Africans regardless of colour. The word ‘increasingly’ suggests awareness that this process may be long and challenging. In order for South Africa to promote opportunity, the redressing of educational policy was placed at the top of the priority list for the new government. The first White Paper sets up this framework, emphasising the need for participation by civil society (involvement of all members of society) in the education sphere. Parents are viewed as both citizens of the new South Africa, and consumers in education (parents with an invested interest in the happenings of school life and education policy for their children) in a constitutional democracy.
The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 commits to a country and an educational system that will not only redress the injustices of the apartheid past, but also commit to eradicating poverty and ensuring the economic well-being of society. It acknowledges that the transformation of society, through overcoming racism, sexism and all other discriminations and intolerances, will be achieved (Vandeya, 2003, p. 194). The Act focuses on the decentralising of educational control and decision making. Emphasis was placed on greater community and parental participation in schooling (Sayed, 1999, p. 141). This Act lays the foundations for the development of all South Africans’ talents and capabilities, and upholds the rights of all learners, parents and teachers (Benghu, 1997, p. 23). The fundamental values and rights of the Constitution and Bill of Rights remain at the forefront of new educational policies.

A deliberate focus was placed on redistribution of resources for those who had been previously disadvantaged. As citizens, parents are granted the right to participate in the determination of key areas of school policy. This right manifests in their representation on school governing bodies. The second White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, 1996) focused more deliberately on organisation, governance and funding of schools. This decentralizing element is constituted in the context of a strong commitment to equity and redress of past grievances. Parents are framed as assisting with the professional work and functioning of the school (Sayed, 1999, p. 146). This focus was underpinned by the understanding that no school exists in isolation. Schools are functional only when interacting with their environment. Hence new policy documents indicate that educational change in South Africa is grounded in the following values and principles (Van der Linde, 2002, p. 513):

- Education and training should be regarded as human rights and the state has the obligation to protect and advance these rights.
- The education of children is the primary responsibility of parents and guardians (as opposed to state control, as in the previous regime) and they have the right to be consulted by the state with regard to the form of education.
- They (parents) have a crucial role to play in the governance of schools.
- The state has an obligation to provide parents with advice and counselling, for informed participation on educational services, and to render appropriate care and educational services to young children in the community.
- The goals of policy should be to enable all individuals to value, have access to, and succeed in lifelong education and training of good quality.
• Because of the inequalities of the past, there should be an emphasis on redress for those people who are disadvantaged or who are vulnerable.
• The principle of equity should be adhered to in order to ensure that all citizens receive the same quality of learning opportunities.

A common theme and key feature of my study is new policy’s focus on redress (particularly in township communities which suffered severely during apartheid), and on providing an education system that is based on fundamental human rights and values. Values are of particular importance in my study.

Next, teacher education policy also changed. I present examples of these changes below. The position of the South African educator will be further discussed in Chapter Five. The framework for post-apartheid teacher education embraces the following (Sayed, 2002, p. 383):

1. The Curriculum 2005 framework commits to an outcomes-based approach (as opposed to content teaching), with emphasis on learning areas rather than subjects. This has implications for teacher’s training and provisions.
2. The Norms and Standards for teachers also use an outcomes-based approach [meaning outcomes that teachers are to strive towards and achieve, similar to student outcomes], listing competencies that educators should demonstrate. Examples include learning mediator, interpreter and designer of learning programmes, leader, citizen and pastoral role, researcher and lifelong learner.
3. Teacher qualifications now fall under a national qualifications framework (NQF) and are governed by a number of professional bodies and committees.
4. Policies for teacher professional development and career pathing and grading are considered.
5. Teacher unions and civil participation are provided for in policy formulation.

2.3. Schooling system: Pre and post 1994

This section explores the schooling system in South Africa by presenting the changes that occurred during the transformation process. I begin by investigating how apartheid schooling changed.

4 ‘The Norms and Standards for teachers’ was replaced in 2011 by the ‘Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications’, a similar document elaborating on the need for effective teacher education.
2.3.1. What happened to the old ‘white’ schools?

In preparation for political change in the early 1990s, the old government announced three new models for white education, a mere thirteen percent of South African schools. Parents could vote for one of three alternative models of integration and school funding:

- Model A: school privatisation (school reopens as a private school).
- Model B: schools would remain state schools, but would admit black students up to fifty percent of its enrolment (open admissions).
- Model C: schools would receive a small state subsidy (to cover teachers’ salaries), but would need to raise additional funds through fees and donations (semi-private, semi-state). They could admit up to fifty percent of black students.

A fourth option was later added, Model D, which allowed for unlimited enrolment of black students where there were declining enrolments of white students. In 1993 however, the government changed its new dispensation, and all subsidies to all-white schools were cut (forcing admission of black students, with the exception of Model D schools, which basically became all-black schools). 96 percent of previously white schools were then classified as Model C schools (Weber, 2002, p. 624) at the beginning of the new democracy. The others became private or ‘black’ schools.

Current categorisation of schooling is different, but ‘former Model C schools’ is still used as a term to distinguish the schools that have better facilities (due to the previous apartheid government) from other government schools today (which are predominantly all-black schools). Today, ‘former Model C’ is shorthand for well-resourced, suburban schools with the payment of compulsory school fees. Although many of these former Model C schools generally accommodate more black students than white students, this has generated a new type of equality problem: that of class. These parents, both white and black, are professional/middle-class parents who can afford additional school fees, and who have the resources to contribute to the betterment of school life for their children. Many of these former Model C schools are presently very ‘wealthy’, compared to normal state schools. This change, in the historically white schools, embraced a business-like system of operation, and gave control to governing bodies (including physical assets and maintenance costs) (Lemon, 2004, p. 270). The decentralised management and decision-making movement have seen business skills of parents being the reason for these schools being effective and efficient (Apelt & Lingard, 1993).
2.3.2. What happened to the old ‘black’ schools?

Most black townships are located in the outlying areas of the cities. For many black students, the distance and transport to previously white schools make access not only difficult and expensive, but practically impossible. Except for the small number of the black elite, the country’s history has narrowed the choice for many black individuals (Weber, 2002, p. 623). Even if the opportunity to get to the town schools was an option, school fees resulted in an even bigger problem for these individuals.

Increasing school fees would limit the number of blacks able to afford to send their children to these (white) schools. White schools would be separated from the wider reality of black education. The inherited inequities and inequalities of the apartheid system would remain (Weber, 2002, p. 624).

The black students’ hope was that the emphasis on redress and focus on equality would see their schools in the township areas become more like the previously white schools in the towns and cities. This would be entirely reliant on the government (promises of redress and equality) as these communities are generally poverty-stricken.

2.3.3. The current schooling system

The current state schooling classifications in South Africa are divided as follows:

*Section 20 schools* receive allocations of textbooks and stationery directly from government. They also have their electricity and water accounts paid directly by government. When something is broken at the school, the education department must send someone from Public Works to do the repairs. The department manages all school funds.

*Section 21 schools* are allocated finances by the department and are responsible for ordering their own stationery, textbooks, paying water and lights accounts, and undertaking their own maintenance. They can also decide on what subjects the school can offer, and what sports and other after school activities the learners can take. Parents manage school finances and school organisation.

“Given the spatial distributions of schools and the communities they serve, it is extremely difficult to equalise resources and reduce inequality” (Hall & Giese, 2008, p. 35). Therefore, schools are also divided into quintile rankings; quintile 1 being the poorest schools (forty percent of South African schools) and quintile 5 being the least poor schools. This is based on a poverty ranking of the area
informed by the national census. In 2007, quintile 1 and 2 schools were classified as non-fee schools (Hall & Giese, 2008, p. 36): “No-fee schools may not charge fees; instead, funding allocations are skewed to ensure that the poorest schools receive the largest per-learner allocations [from the government]”. Hence, there are currently two classifications for school funding; fee-paying schools and non fee-paying schools. Depending on the school’s national quintile ranking, section 21 schools, which are generally former Model C schools with effective governing bodies, are paid directly an amount per learner into their school account. Section 20 schools, generally township, farm and rural schools, do not receive their funding directly, but have it distributed by the provincial department of education.

Problems with this complex system of school funding include (Hall & Giese, 2008, p. 38) outdated source data, ranking errors, failure to consider learner demographics, masking of inequality and poor communication, with some principals not even realising or understanding the consequences of the quintile system, or that they could apply to be reclassified (Ngwenya, Gullapalli, & Veriava, 2006).

2.4. The drivers of education change

There were three crucial drivers of education change that determined the education policies formulated for the new South African society. These drivers addressed apartheid history in an attempt to achieve a promising future for all South Africans.

2.4.1. Equality

In view of the legacy of the apartheid regime, it is understandable that there was, throughout the negotiation process, extensive emphasis on equality and the need to redress previous disadvantages. There is no doubt that the Constitution emphasises equality as the heart of the new South Africa. The Constitution subscribes to a particular vision of equality, one which is usually called substantive equality (Henrard, 2002, p. 24):

Substantive equality demands a contextual approach, which takes into account differences in circumstances. In this regard, substantive equality allows and even requires remedial measures geared to redressing both individual and group disadvantages created by a history of oppression and apartheid.

Therefore, the principle of affirmative action (given different names over the past sixteen years for example, BEE – Black Economic Empowerment) to address disadvantages from past discriminations was agreed upon as a redress measure in the South African Constitution (Henrard, 2002, p. 25):
Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken (cited in Constitution draft, 1993, Section 9/2).

Affirmative action is a technique implemented to reach equality ideals in the new South Africa. This movement influences all spheres of life in South Africa, perhaps none more so than education. Reconciliation and redress involves not only telling the truth about the past and forgiveness, but also requires reparation for material and other forms of deprivation, and the restoration of a human community in a spirit of respect for democracy and human rights (Henrard, 2002, p. 18). Educators in school-based research have emphasised the need for redress in education, as illustrated in the examples below, in order to reach a state of equality (Department of Education, 2001c, p. 26):

… most schools were affected by apartheid in a sense that most black schools don’t have enough resources, so the government should concentrate on black schools so as to have equal resources …

… the government has a responsibility of the distribution of resources to address the legacy of apartheid …

… all schools should have developed school grounds, fencing, school buildings and toilets, electricity, computers and a staff room (Research Participants, Department of Education, 2002b, p. 24) …

2.4.2. Redress

Agreement on equal access to educational institutions was reached with relative ease in the negotiation rounds undertaken before the adoption of the 1996 Constitution. The inferior education for the African population, and the concomitant under-qualification of this population group, was the result of apartheid’s policy of separate, unequal education. Redress is about compensating for the uneven distribution of social, economic, and other opportunities during the apartheid era. Redress aims to restore the balance between those who were discriminated against, and those who were privileged. However, elements of redress were not so easily negotiated at parliamentary level and proved to be great stumbling blocks. These sensitive matters in post-apartheid South Africa are revealed by numerous teacher strikes and instances of student unrest, the lack of financial aid for most students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, the lack of racial transformation at schools and tertiary institutions, the decisions regarding choice of medium of instruction (language), and the overall restructuring of the curriculum (Henrard, 2002, p. 35).
The average white pupil at the end of apartheid benefited from educational expenditure that was nearly four times that for the average African pupil (Lemon, 2004). Business-like systems were introduced in the 1990s which saw control of schools taken over by parents (governing bodies). The physical assets and maintenance costs were transferred to the school leaders (governing body). A small number of black pupils, whose middle-class parents could afford fee costs, were admitted to ‘white’ schools. Nothing was done to address either the accumulated inequality of generations of unequal funding, or the demand of black South Africans for a unitary educational system for all (Lemon, 2004, p. 270). In addition to this, educational performance varied widely, with the lowest scores belonging to ‘coloured’ groups. Former black schools are generally located in communities with difficult socio-economic conditions. “The lowest performance is in the African schools and this forms the majority of South African schools” (Reddy, 2006, p. 411).

The conditions of deprivation and neglect in which the majority of children continue to be educated undermine the redress principle. Redistribution within the system seems crucial in an attempt to implement the principles of equality and redress. Initially, the ANC’s Reconstruction and Development Programme did infuse significant new money into education, but since the introduction of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) in 1996 (a new strategy to address South African economic funding), the macroeconomic environment has inhibited the kinds of redistributive educational policies that the government still claims to promote (Lemon, 2004, p. 270). Education as a whole receives roughly twenty percent of all national budgetary expenditure (see Figure 4). This is a proportion that could not realistically be expected to rise significantly.

The theme of equal access and integration of educational institutions is vitally important and is highlighted against a backdrop of apartheid education. Redress exposes itself in the forms of non-discriminatory access to all levels of schooling, support and access to education for students from previously disadvantaged communities and curriculum choices in a mother tongue language. The South African education context does not seem to be in a position to truly ‘redress’ these issues.

2.4.3. Human rights

“Human rights has become an elaborate international practice” (Beitz, 2009, p. 1). Since the end of World War II, many international communities have adopted the human rights framework, and it has expanded the way humans think about the human rights doctrine. Human rights developed in three generations or major stages. First generation rights represent civil and political rights; for example, that all people are born equal, regardless of race, gender, language, religion and social origin. Second generation rights include social, economic and cultural rights. These include things like a right to
work, the right to a standard of living adequate for health, and the right to education. The third generation rights support solidarity rights, like the rights to a clean environment, the rights to have governments cooperate with each other, and the right to self-determination. These are considered collective rights, supporting autonomy as well as social responsibility (Rude, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Comerford, 2005, p. 27).

Naturally, with this growth in the idea of human rights comes scepticism. Mutua (2002, p. 15) cautions that the human rights movement is a bundle of contradictions, founded in the impulse to universalise Eurocentric values and norms, and “othering” that which is different and non-European:

The human rights corpus, taken as a whole, as a document of ideals and values, particularly the positive law of human rights, requires the reconstruction of states to reflect the structures and values of governance that derive from Western liberalism, especially the contemporary variations of liberal democracy practiced in Western democracies. While these democracies differ in the context of the rights they guarantee and the organizational structures they take, they are nevertheless based on the idea of constitutionalism (Mutua, 2002, p. 41).
South Africa’s focus on building a culture of human rights for transformation is not unique. Many African and other countries have adopted a human rights culture in an attempt to democratise their states in light of Western society’s values and norms. These values and norms are interpreted by ‘other’, non-Western countries as the ideal, ‘the dream’, in light of their often traumatic and cruel histories. Because apartheid denied this culture in South Africa, the emphasis on realising and making effective the new human rights culture (proposed in new policy) requires a lot of effort in the education of the public (Dlamini, 1997, p. 41). Dlamini stresses that the Constitution and the Bill of Rights has to occupy a central position in the hearts of the people for transformation to occur, and it does not happen automatically. It follows a deliberate process of educating the youth on the values stated in these new policies. “Education has direct relevance to democracy” (1997, p. 43). In order for South Africa to have a participatory democracy, all people, including the weak, poor and illiterate, need to be involved. Informed participation depends on education (a second generation right in the Bill of Rights). Dlamini argues that in order for any country to take the issue of human rights seriously, they have to place top priority on education (p. 44):

There should be massive education of the people in this country [South Africa] in the bill of rights. The bill of rights has to be made accessible to the people. People should be educated on the bill of rights and its provisions. The right place to start is at school … (Dlamini, 1997, p. 45).

This is what South Africa has attempted to do, as is evident in the expenditure graph of Figure 4. The largest portion of the expenditure budget is dedicated to education. However, a crucial aspect is raised: How are these financial resources allocated? Where do they end up? Corruption is rife in all public service areas in South Africa, particularly education. Without resources, any attempts at educating South Africans and realising human rights are ineffective and futile. Williams (2011, September 7) reports on corruption in the Eastern Cape Department of Education. An investigation by the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) of South Africa resulted in 40 senior officials being suspended. Some of the cases include one official being charged for various counts of financial misconduct, including transferring R1.3 million into her brother’s bank account. Another official was charged and convicted for submitting double subsistence and travel claims; he was dismissed. Another official, who has been subsequently dismissed, had captured and authorised payment to the amount of R1.4 million to a company which was in her sister’s name. Two officials were dismissed for using fraudulent information for promotion purposes. These officials applied for promotion, without stating that they had previous convictions (Williams, 2011, September 7). Instances such as these prevent resources and money from reaching South African schools and therefore influence quality education and the realisation of human rights.
Another way in which human rights have guided education since 1994 has been discipline (corporal punishment) and religion in schools. The maintenance of school discipline before 1994 relied heavily on corporal punishment, and discipline was taken as synonymous with punishment (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). With the introduction of apartheid and Bantu education in the 1950s, schools became highly authoritarian, and corporal punishment was a result of this environment. Corporal punishment is generally understood as a discipline method in which a supervising adult would deliberately inflict pain to a student in response to a bad behaviour. Hitting, slapping, spanking, beating, shaking, choking and painful body postures are a few examples. In education, the educator usually hits various parts of the learner’s body to cause pain and fear (Naong, 2007, p. 285). The new South African Constitution protects the rights of people against being treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way (South African Constitution, Liebenberg, 2010, p. 494), and further it states that no person shall administer corporal punishment or subject any student to physical or psychological abuse at educational institutions (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010).

This form of discipline is historically linked to religion. Religion and discipline went hand-in-hand under the apartheid legislated ‘Christian Nationalist system’ in education, which involved the Afrikaans nationalist ideology (white people were superior, Afrikaners were “chosen people”, apartheid values) and the Dutch Reformed Churches of South Africa. These ideologies became part of the apartheid education curriculum. Discipline in religion manifested itself in the notion that teachers (authority figures) would guide students away from sin by implementing corporal punishment. This reasoning is still used to justify corporal punishment, or instil a particular values system in religious school contexts. Such contexts, which base values or discipline on a particular religion, jeopardise the realisation of the new South African ideals, and revert back to the highly contested Christian Nationalist Education system, also referred to as indoctrination (Chidester, 2008), which founded the apartheid era (du Preez & Roux, 2010, p. 15). Hence, human rights in the new South Africa prescribed freedom to express and practice personal religious preference, and schools had to accept all religious affiliations and be sure to be representative of all students in their school practices and teaching:

Breaking with the confessional religious instruction of the past … policy established a new educational agenda for teaching and learning about religion, religions, and religious diversity in South African schools (Chidester, 2008, p. 272).

The shift from apartheid to democracy was significant in all areas of South African life, particularly education. School communities were challenged with the task of incorporating all the new initiatives and programmes that the transformation from apartheid to democracy brought about. Values were described as the instrument of change. Values form part of the foundations of the Constitution and Bill
of Rights, and since then, values have filtered into all new education policy. In the next chapter, I explore the theoretical underpinnings of values education and the implications of values education in schools.
Chapter 3. Values: The instrument of change

The interest in values education, especially in teaching and learning environments, involves the ethical and moral implications of educating young people. In South Africa, the Report of the working group on values in education (Department of Education, 2000b), and the Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a) are the foundations of the values education initiative. These documents express the values that the working group of this initiative (consisting of various stakeholders whose task it was to develop, discuss and debate values in 2000/2001) felt were important to education. “The definition we give to values today is an avenue to imagining the future character of the South African people” (Department of Education, 2000b, p. 13). The choice of values, intended to inform and shape the character of future South Africans, is framed by three considerations of educational philosophy:

Firstly, it is to develop the intellectual abilities and critical faculties of learners in our schools. Secondly, the approach is to include the rich variety and diversity in culture, language and mores of our citizenry. Thirdly, it should equip learners with the skills to deal with the many challenges of the cycle of life (Department of Education, 2000b, p. 14).

The idea of education as character formation is established within current educational discourse. These philosophies all contribute to shaping the character of young South Africans. However, the difficulties of implementing the programmes, curricula, training and syllabi needed to meet these philosophies appear to not yet be realised. This is based on current education results described in Chapter Five. How intellectual capabilities and critical abilities can be developed needs consideration, particularly in the difficult circumstances of South Africa’s poor schools. It seems a more focused shift towards education in practice or ‘real life’, as opposed to highly espoused philosophies and policy ideals, would better suit the South African environment. This is described as the policy-practice gap (Jansen, 2002). Yet, values are emphasised as the means of attaining these ideals in educational philosophy and new educational policy. I address these tensions in the following chapters. Firstly, I discuss the theoretical framework of values education.

3.1. Theoretical underpinnings: Values education

This section explores values education discourse, and investigates values education in a practical sense through contextual approaches and school life.
3.1.1. Prelude

Values are foundational to both the theory of education and the practical activities of schools. Schools and teachers within schools play a major role, alongside family, media and the peer group, in shaping the values of children and teenagers. Schools also reflect and embody the values of society (Halstead, 1996). Teachers have been dealing with values in quite different ways over the second half of the twentieth century; from the conformity, adaptation to society approach of the 1950s, to the 1990s where there seemed to be a decline of formerly coherent values systems, as well as an ongoing process of emancipation for developing personal values orientations (Veugelers & Vedder, 2003, p. 377). Different countries and curricula have different ways of describing the process by which we teach or educate people in virtues, or the development of attitudes and personal qualities. The term ‘values education’ is associated with other expressions such as virtues education, moral development, citizenship education, democratic education and character education. For the purpose of this research I use ‘values education’ as a broad term encompassing all these descriptions. Each of these terms used in literature can be interpreted slightly differently, but ‘values education’ seems to be widely accepted (Solomons & Fataar, 2011).

Values have been a complex issue for centuries. In Plato’s dialogues, the question whether or not values can be taught or learned is raised, but seemingly unanswered. Socrates contended that if virtues could be taught, there would exist professional teachers, as for subjects like arithmetic, astronomy and medicine (Ryle, 1972). But for a person to become a good person, as distinct from a good engineer or carpenter, there does not seem to be the need for expert coaches. Other ideas included being born ‘good’ (as associated with being born blue-eyed), or that a person’s virtues formation is a result of upbringing (Ryle, 1972), but no one method is agreed upon. How, then, do children learn values? Another perspective was presented by psychologists like Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1981), who proposed a developmental understanding of values as how we go about making decisions which are moral and then acting in accordance to them, also termed in an educational application as ‘values clarification’. They stress the link between the decision and agency or moral behaviour, a natural developmental process similar to cognitive development. More recently, Noddings (2005) proposed a ‘caring’ approach which focuses on relationship development. I briefly explore these approaches further in this chapter.

For the sake of this South African research, I align my definition of values education with Solomons and Fataar (2011, p. 226), who explain values education as “a collective, inclusive pedagogic endeavour in which formal and informal knowledges are important for successful values formation”.

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Hence, schools, teachers, parents and the broader community play a role in the way values are realised by children, and this realisation process is well placed in South African values education discourse.

Naturally, these approaches to values education determine how schools and teachers go about planning for the teaching and learning of values. The relationship between schools and values education is indeed a complex one, and schools can be described as the ‘nurseries’ of values learning and teaching:

I contend that values matters and concerns are now so important for our community’s life that schools and the community’s learning and teaching institutions of all kinds have a responsibility to undertake and provide for the education of the community’s young and all its members…(Aspin, 2007, p. 29).

Aspin’s comment links to the awareness that values are of critical importance to us as a community, as modern society appears increasingly more lawless, violent, undisciplined and permissive (Straughan, 1982), as was illustrated in the English riots (Chapter One). Statistics regarding South African crime, HIV/AIDS, theft, vandalism, drug-taking and murders, have increased society’s need to address these concerns. Society has become more attentive to the teaching, learning and acquisition of values (as is evident in new policy). South Africa has a large stake in the ground on what values ought to be. Emphasis has been placed on values as the beacon of hope in achieving the ideals of a transformed society. The result is a solid values framework, founded in the country’s constitutional order. However, the whirlpool of contributors to values education (schools, parents, society, teachers, peers, media) are challenged by a seemingly general decline in such things as respect for authority, politeness and good manners, and this has resulted in children being rude, using bad language, and caring less about their appearance and dress (Straughan, 1982).

Many of the problems faced by schools and young people in today’s world are attributed to a ‘lack’ of character or values realisation. What begins to emerge is the tension between highly espoused values, such as South Africa’s policies, and the implementation and ‘buy-in’ of those contributors to the enactment of values. Jarrett (1991, p. 83) explains that a major problem with a values education system is that values vary according to a person’s gender, social class, nationality, ethnicity, family affiliation, schooling, adult occupation, circle of friends and acquaintances, individual temperament and time of life. Yet South Africa, regardless of potential clashes between traditional, religious or constitutional values, has adopted an elaborate values framework. South Africa appears to know what its values are, and what values are best for its people. I contend that the realisation, enactment and implementation of this values framework is a major tension, investigated in my study.
It seems that the outcome desired in schools is an improvement in the quality of the lives of students. For this to occur, it will require attention to various kinds of values (Jarrett, 1991, p. 233) in a pluralistic and multicultural society. My intention is to investigate how the highly espoused South African values and values strategies impact on the quality of life for the students on the ground level in township schools. Straughan notes that schools are often held to blame for this state of affairs, for it is their products which are failing to come up to the desired standard; “Teachers are not doing enough to impart the right values to children and to ensure that their behaviour is socially acceptable” (Straughan, 1982, p. 2) appears to be the assumption made by society. How these values are realised in South African schools and promoted by school stakeholders is a vital component to how ideal values become enacted and realised.

3.1.2. What are values?

“Values are judgements based on a notion of what is good and what is bad; they refer to concepts of a ‘just life’” (Veugelers & Vedder, 2003, p. 379). These judgements are based on systematic ideas about people in their environments. The term ‘values’ has been the centre of disagreement for many years, but it is generally understood as things which are considered good in themselves (such as beauty, truth, love, honesty and loyalty), and as personal or social preferences (Halstead, 1996, p. 5). Hill’s (2000) stance on values includes an individual’s beliefs to which he or she attach priority or worth. Halstead (1996) elaborates on this idea by defining values as the:

Principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or actions and which are closely connected to personal integrity and personal identity (Halstead, 1996, p. 5).

Halstead and Pike (2006, p. 24) provide some examples of values including justice, equality, freedom, fairness and truth. They describe how values can be distinguished from related and sometimes overlapping terms like ‘virtues’, which they explain as personal qualities or dispositions like generosity and kindness, and ‘attitudes’, which they define as acquired tendencies or predispositions to behave in a predictable manner, such as openness, tolerance and respect.

Any attempt at defining an abstract term such as ‘values’ is open to criticism and debate, and my research does not attempt to define this terminology. Literature indicates that values are a fluid concept, subject to different interpretations (Solomons & Fataar, 2011, p. 225). Green (2004) concurs that literature does not provide a common understanding of what values are. Hence, for the purpose of my research, the definition of values will be framed in reference to the Manifesto on values, education
and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a) where Barney Pityana, chair of the South African Human Rights Commission, said:

Values … are more than desirable characteristics. They are essential for life, the normative principles that ensure ease of life lived in common (p. 10).

In summary, South Africa’s view on the teaching and learning of values is one that aims to produce a particular kind of student who will live in a democratic, multicultural, yet unified society. This is described by Pendlebury and Enslin (2007, p. 240) as a character-focussed values education system.

3.1.3. Approaches to values education

Pendlebury and Enslin (2007, p. 240) explain how character education is the broad term for any systematic attempt to shape particular kinds of people through teaching and learning and it involves the development of values. There appear to be three general approaches to character or values education.

Traditional approach

Winton (2010, p. 221) describes the traditional approach. This approach affirms that there are universal values that should be clearly taught to students. The way they are taught is through direct instruction, role modelling, highlighting heroes in literature and history, and repeated practice of behaviour deemed to reflect these values. This traditional approach has its roots in the Aristotelian tradition, seeing action and habit as vital over knowing and desiring (Howard, Berkowitz, & Schaeffer, 2004).

Arthur (2008, p. 80) explains how the traditional approach emphasises the role of habit, imitation, modelling, instruction, punishments and rewards and authority in the formation of character, and this approach is generally interpreted as coercive and teacher-centred, which is a contrast to advocates of child-centered pedagogy. Critics of this approach have highlighted an important critique of values education; that it assumes there is one best system of values and those who challenge those values are morally underdeveloped or ignorant (Winton, 2010). Furthermore, the link between the traditional approach to values formation and religious affiliations, and instruction in schools, is explained by Howard et al., and this aligns with previous apartheid education ideas in South Africa.
In public schools, the traditional character education approach and the religious approach have largely become one and the same and embrace the traditional character education approach (Howard et al., 2004, p. 193).

In summary, this approach is seen as dogmatic and top-down. Kirschenbaum (1992) explains how traditional methods involve inculcating and modelling values. “Children were exhorted to be prompt, neat, and polite; to work hard and succeed; to respect others’ property – in short, to behave themselves” (1992, p. 771).

**Developmental approach**

The second approach to values education includes ideas promoted by educational theorists like Piaget (1932), Dewey (1961) and Kohlberg (1981). This process-orientated pedagogy stresses critical thinking, not necessarily right and wrong. Instead of simply inculcating and modelling values, educators were now expected to help students clarify their own values (also known as the values clarification approach), learn higher levels of moral reasoning, and learn the skills of values analysis. Kohlberg was considered one of the most influential development theorists, and he believed that knowledge of the good was constructed by the individual in a logical-cognitive progress through six developmental stages. Each stage represented a different mode of moral thinking, and development could stall at any stage. The focus was on the cognitive structural dimension of the person’s character development (Arthur, 2008, p. 87).

In essence, the developmental or values clarification approach was seen to encourage children to acquire the skills of moral reasoning and responsible decision making that would enable them to lead more personally satisfying and socially constructive lives (Kirschenbaum, 1992). Students were encouraged to engage in making decisions, debating and taking action:

> Given the interest in public behaviour and political movements to better society, progressives emphasized democratic participation in social groups, not to instil and reinforce specific virtues but to engage in the skills of democratic citizenship: deliberation, problem solving and participation in governance of the group (Howard et al., 2004, p. 192).

This approach emphasises the developmental process, critical thinking, and the experiencing of these values through thought, action and reflection. An example of how this manifests in practice is through class discussions.
Critics of this movement argue that this approach erodes the authority of adults in the community (teachers were regarded as being ‘slack’ and not taking enough control), and placed too much emphasis on context (Winton, 2010, p. 222). It also promoted “subjecting students to the tyranny of the majority” and “substituting one form of conventional morality with one indistinguishable from it” (Howard et al., 2004, p. 193). Kirschenbaum describes a cartoon which aptly illustrates this point: “A long-haired, short-skirted mother standing over her teenage daughter saying, “Why should you grow up to be independent and think for yourself? Well … because I say so!”” (1992, p. 772).

Caring approach

Like the developmental approach, the caring approach emphasises context when considering ethical behaviour. The caring approach argues that character and morality are developed through caring relationships. It requires two people, one caring for another, and the person receiving the care (Winton, 2010). Howard et al., (2004, p. 195) describes how this approach is different from others. Firstly, the morality of care is relational, not individualistic. Secondly, the caring approach emphasises the primary role of moral emotions and sentiment, claiming that these are the motivators for moral action and reasoning. Thirdly, care does not require that moral decisions need to be ‘universalised’ to be justified.

The caring relation requires that the person being cared for recognises and responds to the care being given. Therefore, schools should be organised in ways that emphasise and promote these relationships, and should establish an environment in which being good is desired. Winton (2010) adds that moral education in these climates include educators who unconsciously model caring, engage students in dialogues, confirm students’ best selves, and encourage students to care and be cared for (Noddings, 2005).

Traces of all three of these approaches to values education can be identified in the South African policy values. Kirschenbaum (1992) suggests that there is worth in both the traditional and the new approaches to values and moral education (p. 775), and he calls this ‘comprehensive values education’. This will be revealed throughout the following sections where I describe South African values and educational strategies. Next, I discuss the relationship between schools and values education and what schools can do in order to achieve an effective environment for values education.
3.1.4. Schools and values education: A vital relationship

The relationship between values and schools is important. How schools go about achieving an environment conducive to the teaching and learning of values is a key feature of any school. Constructive strategies (Hill, 2000) to assist school stakeholders create an environment for effective values education are presented next, and this more contextual information provides a practical element to the discourse.

Firstly, critical pedagogy is crucial to validate the context in which values are enacted. There is a need to know what values are, and how to go about justifying them (Hill, 2000). The ability to think critically is crucial in arriving at a level of understanding of both values clarification and values justification. Moral educators know too well the gap between knowing the good, and doing it. Recognising that values without actions are impotent, teachers must continually strive for opportunities of participation, drawing students into decision-making, and acting upon the values that hold the classroom and school together as moral and learning communities. The need to appeal to a critical pedagogy is crucial, to help students reach a position where they themselves can become part of the on-going process of cultural construction and reconstruction. This crucial ability for reflection and critique is vital for the teaching and learning of values. All aspects of school life need to reflect these ideas, in order to create a legitimate context in which values education takes place. South Africa has addressed this issue in their values framework by making the first of the educational philosophies about developing the critical faculties of learners in South African schools. Thinking critically and validating the school context, as one which enacts South African values, is professed in the Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a).

Secondly, the development of a moral character is also vital. Hill (2000) suggests a process called values-transmission, which affirms one’s personal values heritage, and includes both multi-faith and multi-cultural content. It has become more and more evident over time that schools are populated not just by learners and teachers, but by persons. For example, in Western Australia in 1994, an “Agreed Minimum Values Framework” consisting of sixty robust values statements, ranging from ultimate values, through democratic values, to educational values, was the starting point for realising the importance of the person in character development. Teachers worked with these values until they were in a form that could be implemented into the classroom. The project was described as arousing considerable teacher enthusiasm, which led to a compilation of a teachers’ kit and a schools administrators’ kit (Hill, 2000, p. 39). This strategy assumes that teachers have a more ‘hands-on’ knowledge of the complexities of implementing values in schools, and that their role is vital. Realising
the importance of the people involved in values transmission on the ground level is essential for implementing theoretical values in real life contexts.

Snook (2000b, p. 51) argues that values education is inevitably political, and many of the current proposals are emphasised by the current political motivation and political content; most apt in the South African setting. South Africa’s engine for the values framework is political, based on the development of a future citizen. However, virtues such as truth-telling, freedom, justice and kindness are also described as general moral principles, and they cannot be taught in isolation from their application in daily life. Individual and personal values are also crucial to ensuring effective values education. However, it would appear that the South African framework assumes that if the social, political and economic structures are right and in place, then values realisation will be achieved. It appears that the importance of individuals being honest and developing integrity within themselves, for example, is a secondary element. These tensions and interdependencies between the policy values and their functions will be further discussed in the following chapters.

Snook facilitates understanding of my research topic by showing how values education is generally evident in schools, and these points provide a starting point for what I hoped to observe during the fieldwork period (2000b, p. 51):

1. The decisions of the school governing body and board of trustees reflect powerful moral lessons. For example, if a school chooses bulk funding because “they could not turn the money down”, they are announcing their moral stance. If a principal promotes their school on the basis of exam results, they are being dishonest; as professionals they should have read the literature which shows that almost all the variance between schools on public exams is explained by the kind of students who go there. When schools poach teachers or students from other schools, they are shouting their values to their community. A school interested in values should start at the top.

2. The power relations at a school, and the way these are handled, constitute daily lessons in values. They show how a principal handles their staff, how teachers view each other, how students view each other, and how the school views parents.

3. The rules of the school are themselves models of what the school values. Rational rules necessary for the smooth running of the school have to be distinguished from those which violate the students’ civil rights, and those that merely reflect the narrow mindedness of the community (example: rules regarding hair length and jewellery). Rules which affect students every day are teaching powerful lessons about morality.
4. There are some moral rules which must be accepted and unchallenged in the school, for they safeguard persons as moral agents. Thus, no school can tolerate racism, sexism, ‘hate speech’, violent behaviour, harassment, bullying or theft. These could be debated at a higher philosophical level, but in practice these have to be stressed due to each child being seen as a person with equal rights, and the school being seen as a moral community which acknowledges these rights.

5. Snook feels that the role of the school is to promote critical reflection on morality. Programmes of values education, linked to classroom subjects or assemblies, should not be forms of indoctrination into one set of values, since we live in a democratic and pluralistic society. To indoctrinate is to try to by-pass rational acceptance and thus to violate human dignity.

Hill and Snook have provided ways of thinking about how schools, principals, school governing bodies and teachers can achieve an environment effective for values education. The next question I pose is how do children actually learn or acquire values in schools? What do educators need to do in the classrooms? Halstead and Pike (2006) offer suggestions and I place these approaches in context by highlighting tensions I intended to investigate during fieldwork.

**Direct instruction**

Two beliefs are embraced in this approach. Firstly, it is assumed that there is a shared, objective list of ethical values that form the basis of a good character. Secondly, it is the teacher’s job to present these values to children directly and unambiguously. It is about right and wrong. It is systematic and explicit, and many parents support this form of instruction. The instructional process can include visual displays about moral dilemmas, national heroes, formal teaching, stories drawn from past history and literature, and thematic, integrated learning.

Critics of this approach, such as Ryle (1972), argue that virtue is neither a matter of information and knowledge, nor skill and proficiency. He states that virtue needs to be learnt in a different way. Ryle draws attention to the process of role modelling, and also compares moral sense to how we develop a sense of humour or learn a mother tongue. Staughan (1982) also argues that no teaching method can guarantee to produce motivation and subsequent action, because children can either accept or reject what they are taught. These tensions are important in light of South African values, as the values framework makes reference to values as information, knowledge, skills and proficiency that can be taught and learnt. The values framework indicates that values are open to instruction. Certain values strategies in the Manifesto make reference to instructional processes (regarding the processing of information, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills and proficiencies) as the
procedures schools need to adopt to realise and enact these values. Ryle’s and Straughan’s comments highlight potential tensions and contradictions with the way values discourse in South Africa has been conceptualised and formulated. Examining these dilemmas during fieldwork will shed light on the effectiveness of the South African values framework and strategies.

**Observation**

Children observe many things at school. All of them contribute to their development of understanding the world, what it is to be human, and the nature of good and bad. Learning values through observation involves observing teachers, observing school traditions and rituals, observing the school environment, observing the ethos of the school and observing democracy in action at school (Halstead & Pike, 2006, p. 142). Much of the moral influence teachers have on their students occurs without the students being aware of it, perhaps even without the teacher being aware of the moral consequences of what they are doing. This is emphasised in the South African context by the second of the educational strategies: ‘Role modelling’. The physical environment of the school is something that students observe every day of their school life, but the moral messages that the environment sends may be subtle and covert (Halstead & Pike, 2006, p. 144). School ethos includes leadership style, sense of community, dominant forms of social interaction, teacher morale and ways of conflict resolution. All these factors shape school children’s understandings of values, morality and virtues. I will investigate whether school stakeholders acknowledge these organisational culture practices as ‘values transmission’ processes, and whether there is any recognition of these practices and interactions being important in how values are enacted and realised in the school community.

**Participation and guided action**

Involvement for students in aspects of school life is important. The best way to learn to behave morally is to be given opportunities to behave morally. Mock elections, or voting for class captains and student representatives, increases students’ awareness of democratic procedures, and provide civic opportunities for values acquisition. Forums to discuss rules in school councils and debating teams establish this understanding. Community service projects outside schools are equally likely to help children to become more caring and responsible, by encouraging the internalization of social norms and values (Halstead & Pike, 2006, p. 148). Other examples include the sharing of toys, taking turns, and being open to listening and responding to others. But is there a commitment from staff to initiate such endeavours? Are teachers motivated to go this “extra mile”? Is there support for these participatory activities in different educational contexts, such as township schools?
Reflection

There is widespread agreement that learning through participation and action is most effective when it is combined with critical reflection and discussion. Reflective journals, discussion of moral dilemmas arising from these activities (as discussed above), and opportunities to reflect on the personal meaning and relevance of these experiences and activities, can help to contribute to the development of moral and civic values among students. Is this encouraged in South African schools? What type of teaching and learning fosters reflective practice? Do teachers model reflective behaviours?

These questions provide the starting point for my investigation into values education in a real life school context. Snook (2000b) argues that values education has changed over the years, and he stresses that for progress to be made, adults need to take a stronger stand on values that are advocated. There is now more than ever a need for robust debate in schools and communities. He also stresses that traditions are more important than we recognise. It is realised now that morality is embedded in traditions, secular or religious. A pluralistic society is not one which ignores traditions, but one which recognises them, respects them, moves forward with them in light of our changing world:

> The demand for moral education is not a plea for a few talks on drugs, sex and respect for authority. It is a revolutionary demand that cannot be met without the transformation of the school … and the society which it serves (Snook, 2000b, p. 55).

These approaches have highlighted connections and ambiguities in the South African values education initiative. I intend to investigate these crucial aspects in the values realisation and enactment process in a South African township school community.

### 3.1.5. International perspectives

Before I present an in-depth analysis of the values initiatives in South Africa, it is helpful to place this study in a global context. I briefly explore other values initiatives in countries around the world.

In 1995, the Values Education Council, established in the United Kingdom, proved an important turning point in bringing together all organisations who shared an interest in values education to promote and develop values in educational contexts. Halstead (1996) explains the main difference between the British and American approach to values education. The former is founded on organised traditions of religious or social authority in public institutions, unlike the American approach, which places stronger emphasis on democratic education, teaching the child about how society works, and preparing the child for citizenship. This religion-led, more traditional approach to values education is
common throughout the world (Halstead, 1996), and there are traces of this type of approach in the South African values initiative. However, emphasis on democratic participation is seen as more important, with South Africa attempting to generate a type or kind of student built on the ideals of a national character, premised on the Constitution. The engine driving South Africa’s values framework is primarily political.

Snook (2007) describes how general qualities of life which qualify as moral or ethical are often lumped together under the title of values education. In New Zealand, the Ministry of Education produced a set of values including diversity, community, excellence and respect and caring (2007, p. 82). Snook comments that these values appear to be a mixed bag. In his opinion, diversity, for example, is not a moral value, but a moral issue, and is just a fact of contemporary life. Similarly, community is not a value at all, though some values may be involved, for example, hospitality. Snook also comments that ‘doing your best’ would require ingenuity to identify. In his keynote address at the National Values Education Forum (Snook, 2005, May), he cautions that agreement on values is true only at an abstract level. When it comes to the values being made concrete, this is where contestation arises, a key issue for investigation in my study.

Hill (2000) describes how in both New Zealand and Australia, there are critics who consider that the state school cannot hope to satisfy all its diverse clients in a value-pluralistic society: “All they have is an internally contradictory shopping list of the outcomes demanded by competing power blocs in the wider society” (Hill, 2000, p. 27). In his keynote address at the National Values Education Forum (Hill, 2004, April), he describes how the Federal Government in Australia launched a values education study in 2002 which encouraged school sampling from across boundaries, state and non-state sectors. These schools exhibited an evolving appreciation for firstly, the interpretation of values across the curriculum, infusing the teaching of every subject. Secondly, they provided a place in the curriculum for specifically studying values, such as the nature of values, the significance of life choices, and how to go about justifying them or negotiating them with others. Hill (2004, April) encourages on-going professional development for both these strategies, as “there are still many teachers who think their subject area has little to do with values education, and that anyway it’s the responsibility of some other specialist” (p. 7).

Commenting further on the Australian approach to values education, Mawdsley, Cumming and de Waal (2008) describe how the Australian government has been actively promoting values and moral and civic behaviour, both in the general population, and through schools. In schools, the federal government has been promoting a ‘Civics and Citizenship education’ curriculum for implementation
across Australia. It also stipulates nine national values for Australian schooling, intended to build character in the ‘National framework for values education in Australian schools’ presented in 2005 (Mawdsley et al., 2008, p. 93).

Winton (2010) comments on character development in Ontario, Canada. The government of Ontario introduced character development initiatives in 2006, and emphasised importance in school-wide implementation. This responsibility lay with school leaders in identifying their school values, and promoting these in the schools. Winton comments that this policy is interpreted in different ways. In some instances, it can be seen to support a critical democratic notion of citizenship (through critical conversations about values and the frequency and depth of these conversations), but also can seem to undermine critical democratic education and instead promote conformity, compliance and the status quo (by counting the number of suspensions, expulsions or trips to the principal’s office) (p. 234). Winton argues that many popular approaches to character education do just this, and interpretation of policy is an important factor because, if interpreted incorrectly, what is emphasised goes against the very intention of the initiative. Commenting on the Dutch approach, Veugelers and Vedder (2003) argue that the government, schools and teachers want students to develop certain values, but neither the government nor school want to assess the individual student on this. Teachers in The Netherlands do not assess students with regard to the values they formulate in the school subject matters. This is because in The Netherlands, a contradiction stems from a tension between cultural policy of education, and the human right of freedom of expressing one’s own values.

What these international cases show us is that within any values education initiative, there lie contradictions and interdependencies and these dilemmas need consideration and discussion. Within any list of values to be taught and learnt, there will lie trade-offs and relationships between the values. There will never only be one value at play. One value is in relationship to other values, and hence there is a need for values to be analysed as a whole. Creating a discourse around how values work together and how educators weave their way through these tensions in a practical context, needs consideration if values initiatives are to be successful. Another question raised by the issues posed in this international perspective is: How do we assess success or failure of these values initiatives if needed? It appears educators have not negotiated their way around the practical implications of teaching and learning values, and a discourse is not always created for educators to experiment with the relationships and tensions around values. Internationally, the complex nature of values education is realised. If the South African values initiative is to be real, educators and school stakeholders need to understand these values, their trade-offs and the dilemmas they pose.
Next, I present the South African values education initiative. I explore all the relevant documents, conferences and papers that shaped the values education framework. I also critique the overall formation of this programme, relying on literature and empirical research to support my argument.
Chapter 4. Values education in South Africa

Timeline

1995 / 1996 → The South African Constitution and Bill of Rights are produced
Feb 2000 → A working group committee is established on ‘Values in Education’
May 2000 → First report from the working group is produced
Oct 2000 → Official report from the working group is produced and disseminated
Response is invited from the public
Schools-based research begins as part of the initiative
Feb 2001 → Saamtrek Conference – a National Conference is held on ‘Values in Education’
July 2001 → Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy is produced
Nov 2001 → Report from Schools-based research, Part I & II are produced
Dec 2001 → Saamtrek Conference Report is produced and disseminated
Apr 2002 → Revised national curriculum statement for Grades R-9 is produced including values
June 2002 → Values in Education: Programme of Action draft document is produced
July 2005 → Values and Human Rights in the Curriculum: A guide and tool box are produced and disseminated

Figure 5. Timeline showing the development of the values initiative in South Africa
Adapted from Swart (2002), the Manifesto (Department of Education, 2001a) and the Values Report (Department of Education, 2000b)

Kader Asmal, the Minister of Education in 2000, is the name associated with the values framework that evolved in South Africa. Although the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights were enacted a few years prior to 2000, the push for values education was first initiated in 2000 with the formation of the ‘working group on values in education’. The working group on the initial Values Report in 2000, consisting of ten professional people (members of parliament, professors, national authors, and educationalists), proposed that a successful nation is more than likely an educated one. The first Report produced from this working group was the starting point for the discernment of the values for South African education. Since then, a variety of other documents, conferences and reports have been produced, and I describe and summarise these movements in this chapter (see Figure 5). To begin, I present a timeline of how this values initiative developed. These important steps in the values initiative are described below.

The official report was issued in October 2000, and it was made available to all key role-players and social institutions within the education sector to debate. These six values were to start the process of defining and establishing the South African values that were to become entrenched in education. The report promoted values as important, not only for the sake of personal development, but also for the evolution of a South African national character. It was noted, however, that the ‘values-in-schools-initiative’ occurs in a political and social context. “Our educational institutions must reflect these rights (of the Constitution and Bill of Rights) for they provide the frame of reference for an educational philosophy of a democracy” (Department of Education, 2000b, p. 17). These values embrace and provide further relevance to the philosophies of the Constitution and Bill of Rights:

To reach that state of human consciousness requires not only a truthfulness about the failures and successes of the human past but the active and deliberate incorporation of differences in traditions, arts, culture, religions and sporting activity in the ethos of the school (Department of Education, 2000b, p. 25).

These six key values (Figure 6) were presented by the working group as a starting point for the broad shaping of the quality of national character to which South Africans as a people in a democracy wish to aspire.

4.2. Schools-based research: Empirical evidence

Research was commissioned from the steering committee of the values, democracy and education working group for the national department of education in 2000. The intention was to identify the values that educators, parents and learners considered most important with reference to education. This two part report was produced in 2001 (Department of Education, 2001c). This research shows the ambiguities and contradictions that lay deeply embedded in South African education at the time. These findings are the best evidence of ground level reality at the time of the values initiative. I anticipate that almost a decade since this research, my study will shed light on a different situation; a situation that has moved forward from this schools-based research. The methods used for this study included self administered questionnaires, participatory workshops and involved a sample group of ninety-seven schools across five provinces (Department of Education, 2001c). This was (and still is) the most extensive sample used for values education research.
Several intersecting themes emerged from this research. Firstly, the most pronounced theme was the relationship between values and lack of communication at schools. Learners emphasised a lack of communication between learners and educators. Approximately fifteen percent of learners identified ‘disrespect’ as the most important value operating in schools. An additional sixty percent identified other values associated with poor communication (humiliation, lack of kindness) as the most important values operating in schools during 2001. Learners felt they were not listened to, but silenced through insult, humiliation, physical assault and sexual harassment. Parents emphasised the lack of communication between educators, learners, parents and the broader community. They identified the failure of educators to communicate clearly with them. Parents articulated an unwritten but rigid ‘code’ guiding how parents were supposed to communicate in the school context. Parents who communicated outside these codes, were either silenced or self-silenced (Department of Education, 2001c).
Parents linked the lack of communication with the absence of an inclusive sense of respect between educators and both parents and learners. While parents strongly believed that learners should respect educators, they were also concerned that educators should communicate with learners on the basis of respect. There was a sense among parents that schools deliberately shut the parents out. Interestingly, educators less frequently identified communication as a ‘value’ (like parents and learners), and focused less on the issues of communication with learners and parents. Rather, their focus was on communication between educators, school management, and levels of the department of education.

The absence of dialogue (an educational strategy in the Manifesto) between school stakeholders is evident by the striking divergence between the perspectives of learners, educators and parents in this study. This absence led to a rapid instinct to blame the other, with little understanding of the other. The idea that values should be negotiated through dialogue, rather than being forced and prescribed, became critically important, but it was not suggested where or how this dialogue should take place.

The values discourse among educators revealed a complicated relationship between educators, and the concepts of democracy and human rights. Almost half the educators in the 2001 sample questioned whether or not the human rights values in the Constitution and Bill of Rights were practical in the school context, while 78 percent believed that over-emphasis on children’s rights undermined classroom functioning. This underscores tensions with the Constitution and Bill of Rights. There appeared to be a growing perception among adults (both educators and parents) that human rights were undermining power structures that previously maintained order at the levels of family, community and organisations. Children’s rights were perceived to undermine adult authority over child-rearing, leaving adults feeling powerless to guide children in a world characterised by high levels of change.

This discourse was closely associated with both parents’ and educators’ critique of the end of corporal punishment. The department of education did away with corporal punishment in 1992, initiated by the South African Schools Act. However, there was a lot of nostalgia about the past, remembered as a time of order and obedience, while the present (2001) was associated with a lack of discipline and chaos (Department of Education, 2001c, p. 22). Educators made a similar association between values and discipline, but as perceived by the disciplinarian. A ‘lack of discipline’ was the second most common value cited by educators as operational in schools in 2001. Almost half the educators negatively associated the end of corporal punishment with their ability to effectively teach learners ‘good values’. There was a sense of powerlessness with respect to inculcating values in young people in the absence of physical punishment. Therefore, it seems that the elimination of corporal punishment without the parallel introduction of effective alternatives had profoundly shaken educators’ sense of control in their classrooms and schools, particularly in the areas of teaching and promoting values (Department
of Education, 2001c). Unfortunately, it seems this lack of effective alternatives resonates with many of the changes in South African educational policy since 1994.

Another issue that surfaced from workshops was the emphasis placed on the link between values formation and the material world. Parents, educators and learners questioned the promotion of human-centred values in a context of great inequities in society, and within the school environment particularly. The parents even suggested that allocating time to the values debate was diverting the government from its core purpose. They suggested that if the government were achieving its basic mandate of provisions of housing, jobs and a quality education for all, the values could be more successfully navigated. This is a crucial critique of these policy initiatives in South Africa. Together with parents, educators emphasised the relationship between values in young people and equal access to high quality education. They emphasised the relationship between the material provisioning of schools (class size, textbooks, creative programming) and the ability to achieve the high quality educational aims. They suggested that the practicalities of many of the proposed strategies in the Manifesto (sports, drama, debating clubs, artist in residence) were almost impossible when schools were still under resourced and dysfunctional. Educators and parents also criticised the tendency to blame disadvantaged schools for ‘bad values’, when the underlying problem may be more accurately ascribed to inequity on the lack of basic social and educational resources (Department of Education, 2001c).

In relation to resources, more recently, Van der Berg’s (2008) research on poverty and educational outcomes in South Africa highlights interesting findings regarding these resourcing issues. He found that the socio-economic differentials observed in 2000 still played a major role in educational outcomes at primary school level in South Africa. The findings on school-leaving examination data revealed that policy interventions were required much earlier in the education process. Improved overall functioning of teaching and learning in poor schools was evident as being crucial in addressing the consequences of educational backlogs in the labour market. This study showed that more resources did not necessarily improve school performance. The message appeared to be not that resources did not matter, but rather that resources mattered only conditionally. “The large divergence in the ability of schools to convert resources into outcomes is the issue that requires policy attention” (van der Berg, 2008, p. 153). Van der Berg highlights yet another consideration for values education policy formulators.

It seems that although South Africa had set the ‘ideals’ within new policy formulation, research at the time showed that the realities of schooling in South Africa could undermine the efforts to support such
ventures. The policy-practice gap is once again revealed in South African education. A decade on, my study will look at how and whether these new values are realised and enacted in school life, particularly township schools which should have benefited from redress and inequality programmes.

4.3. Saamtrek conference & conference report

The notion behind this conference was to bring together South Africa’s most creative minds at a significant national gathering. Politicians, academics, intellectuals, department officials, researchers, educators and members of non-governmental organisations were brought together to discuss values (Department of Education, 2001b). The proceedings from this conference and other documents (such as the report and schools-based research) generated the Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a).

Themes from this conference and report included discussions on the role of teachers, the question of equity, the value of history and the role of the media. The report was written around these themes, with attendees’ comments transcribed and referenced. The six initial Report values were considered, debated and negotiated. The report begins with a section on ‘framing dilemmas’, which highlights tensions that emerged at the Conference, and then presents the themes that emerged from the tape-recorded conference sessions (Department of Education, 2001b). These discussions, together with the initial Report from the working group, produced the comprehensive Manifesto.

4.4. The Manifesto on values, education and democracy (2001)

The Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a), presented in July 2001, combined the six initial values with the principles of the Constitution. The members of the values working group, together with other “diverse thinkers”, fleshed out this document, and proposed the following values, described in Figure 7. Further to merely identifying South African educational values, the Manifesto takes the next step in providing ways in which these values are to be realised and enacted in schools. Since my research focus is on the implications of these values in practice (in school life), these sixteen educational strategies for values education are vitally important and are presented in detail.

4.4.1. Values strategies

All stakeholders in the values initiative acknowledged that values cannot be legislated. If they were imposed, they would remain rootless and lifeless. For this reason, it would be inappropriate and
counterproductive to set out policies to be carried out by authorities on behalf of the people. Hence, certain educational strategies were put in place to allow for partnerships between government and civil society. The strategies or approaches are intended to seed the values of the Constitution in young South Africans, through the education system, allowing them to grow in time, become established and flourish. These strategies are intended to be committed to by all stakeholders, whether politicians, educators, department officials, community members, business-people or learners. These strategies present how and what South African values are, and how they should be communicated, realised and enacted in school life (Department of Education, 2001a):

1. Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools

Dialogue has been described as one of the most desired and most lacking values in South African schools as per schools-based research. Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools is described as opening up channels of dialogue between school leaders, parents, students and educators in such a way that mutual respect develops between them.

2. Role modelling: Promoting commitment as well as competence among educators

One of the most powerful ways children and young adults acquire values is to see individuals they admire and respect exemplify those values in their own being and conduct. The question of leadership generally, and in the educational sphere particularly, is therefore of vital importance (Nelson Mandela in Department of Education, 2001a, p. 19). The members of this initiative emphasised that teachers and administrators must be leaders, and set the example since children learn by example, consciously and unconsciously.

3. Ensuring that every South African is able to read, write, count and think

Jacob Zuma argued that knowledge and literacy mean power – but to be wise or ethical comes from experience, being in touch with one’s community, kinship and solidarity (Department of Education, 2001a). It has been stated that South Africa’s educational performance is in a critical state and this must be addressed. Every South African must be able to read, write, count and think.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANIFESTO VALUES</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEMOCRACY</td>
<td>Democracy is described as society’s means to engage critically with itself. Education equips citizens with the abilities and skills to engage critically and act responsibly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY</td>
<td>This involves true freedom from the material straits of poverty. Access to education is described as the single most important resource in addressing poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQUALITY</td>
<td>Access to education must be equal. No one may be discriminated against. It is acknowledging that everyone has rights and there is a difference between treating everyone as equals, and their being equal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-RACISM AND NON-SEXISM</td>
<td>Described plainly in the Manifesto as black students and female students being afforded the same opportunities to free their potential as white students and male students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBUNTU (HUMAN DIGNITY)</td>
<td>Ubuntu embodies the concept of mutual understanding and active appreciation of human difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN OPEN SOCIETY</td>
<td>The virtue of debate, discussion and critical thought is said to rest on the understanding of a society that knows how to talk and how to listen and does not resort to violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOUNTABILITY (RESPONSIBILITY)</td>
<td>This is described as the essential democratic responsibility of holding the powerful to account. It is also a reminder that there can be no rights without responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RULE OF LAW</td>
<td>Commonly accepted codes and the notion of accountability lose meaning if the rule of law is not fundamental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPECT</td>
<td>Respect is an essential precondition for teamwork, communication and productivity in schools as much as anywhere else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECONCILIATION</td>
<td>Healing and reconciling the past is a challenge but addressed as a value vital for South Africa. It is described as more than just saying sorry, but requiring redress in other and material ways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. The Manifesto values, adapted from the Manifesto on values, education and democracy (Department of Education, 2001a)
4. Infusing the classroom with a culture of human rights

The importance of human rights in South African education has already been emphasised and again we see the important link between rights and values. Research in schools (Department of Education, 2001c) showed that 78 percent of educators believed that the government put too much emphasis on human rights (also described as children’s rights), which leads to problems in the classroom. Values discourse among educators reveals a complicated relationship between educators and the concepts of democracy and human rights. South African educationalists have observed that respect is something desired in the school environment, but the way people define respect is different. If the Constitution is to be realised, then this educational strategy is of vital importance in South African schools.

5. Making arts and culture part of the curriculum

“Empowerment comes through the emancipation of the imagination and acquisition of skills to refine our various forms of expression” (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 27). Previously, a large majority of learners were excluded from arts and culture education, and learning about culture was mainly limited to exposure through institutions of family and religion. South Africa recognises that arts and culture education can be used to liberate the potential of students and give them a model for non-coercive teamwork, through the constitutional values of equality, non-racism, non-sexism, Ubuntu (human dignity), openness, reconciliation and respect.

6. Putting history back into the curriculum

History has been described as the bedrock of education, as it is value-laden, and is said to provide opportunities to interrogate certainty, and examine the values and morality that produced past political expedience, habit and convention (Department of Education, 2001a). The teaching of history is considered as central to the promotion of all human values, including that of tolerance.

7. Introducing religion education into schools

In South African public education, the school is not responsible for nurturing the religious development of the scholars, but for providing learners with the knowledge about religion, morality, values and the diversity of religions. Religion education is not engaged in the promotion of a religion, but is a programme for studying religion, in all its many forms, as an important dimension of human experience and a significant subject field in the school curriculum.
8. Making multilingualism happen

To the majority of South Africans, multilingualism recalls the separatist language policy of the past where Afrikaans and English were elevated, and the African languages were regarded as homeland languages. The major challenge of this strategy is to shift the debate to a post-struggle era, without ignoring the past (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 34). Constitutionally, South Africa’s eleven official languages recognise the sanctity of its people’s histories, and assert this by affirming no discrimination based on language.

9. Using sport to shape social bonds and nurture nation building at schools

The intrinsic benefit of sport in education is described as self-evident; healthier, happier individuals are inclined to optimism, and optimism is the “wellspring of industriousness and dynamism” (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 37). Sport is seen as a demanding, exciting and healthy alternative to forms of anti-social behaviour. Sport enables people who cannot communicate in other ways to understand each other. It creates an area of common interest and goodwill between men and women, and boys and girls, of different communities, different racial groups and different continents.

10. Ensuring equal access to education

These values will not amount to much if the allocation of resources remains as skewed as it is. If the situation is not turned around as a matter of national urgency, South Africa’s freedom will continue to be a mirage for the majority of people who are described as the poorest of poor. Asmal (Department of Education, 2001a) acknowledges that there is rampant inequality of access to educational opportunities of satisfactory standard.

11. Promoting anti-racism in schools

The vast majority of black South African children still go to schools in the townships and in the former homelands that remain wholly segregated and under-resourced. These children tend to be the poorest. The fact that ‘all-black’ schools are systematically less resourced than integrated schools means that those students are being discriminated against primarily on the basis of their race. While this happens, it is imperative that racism is unacceptable at the integrated schools, for these schools have come to be seen as the models for our new society, and the reality is that the majority of the next generation of leaders, black and white, will emerge from them.
12. Freeing the potential of girls as well as boys

When men and women look back on their lives, they see all the more clearly the paths they chose, and the paths that were, in different ways, chosen for them. Probably the single most powerful agent in this latter group of choices is gender. Convention, custom and prejudice contrive to decide what it is boys and girls do and don’t do, reinforcing a pattern that favours boys and men (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 44).

13. Dealing with HIV/AIDS and nurturing a culture of sexual and social responsibility

The working group has recommended that certain qualities of character are essential for HIV/AIDS prevention and management. They describe these qualities as values. Their submission, therefore, is that values such as respect, responsibility, the ability to think, say and act the same thing (integrity) are essential for the prevention and management of HIV/AIDS.

14. Making schools safe to learn and teach in and ensuring the rule of law

It is understood that no real learning can take place in an environment of fear and illegality. Neither can the values of the Constitution be nurtured in young South Africans in an environment where they are being flouted daily. Hence, it is recommended that the rule of law and ensuring safety in schools be a top educational strategy in the Manifesto. On a basic level, this means physical safety of learners and educators, that material resources are secure, and that infrastructure is not degraded.

15. Ethics and the environment

Just as South Africans share a responsibility to sustain democracy in order to enjoy the benefits of it, and to uphold the Constitution in order to secure their rights, so they have a responsibility to conserve and respect the environment in order to affirm a healthy quality of life and ensure development that is sustainable (Department of Education, 2001a). When the Constitution was adopted, it linked environmental issues to values underpinned by human rights and social responsibilities. It is therefore recognised that environmental education is crucial.

16. Nurturing the new patriotism, or affirming our common citizenship

The new patriotism requires us to proceed from common positions about the nature of the problems our country faces. South Africans must share a common recognition that all stand to gain from the transformation of South Africa into a non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous country… “our neighbours
whether black or white are as human as we all are and as South African as we all are” (Thabo Mbeki, Department of Education, 2001a, p. 56).

These sixteen strategies are the tools for values education. These strategies describe to educators what these values are, and how they are to become enacted in the school environment. The intended audience for this Manifesto are principals, deputy principals, teachers, department officials, parents and learners. All schools are meant to adopt these strategies and embrace the highly espoused values described in this document. There is reference made to the approaches to values education in Chapter Three, such as direct instruction, observation, participation, guided action and reflection. But these strategies do treat the values in a rather one-dimensional way. What are the tensions and interdependencies between the values? How do they hang together? What are the trade-offs between the values? On a more concrete dimension, of the thirty thousand schools in South Africa, how many are able to realise these values strategies in current teaching conditions? Do educators understand the pedagogies and teaching methods behind these types of activities? These questions will be interrogated during the critique of the South African values education initiative.

4.5. The revised national curriculum statement

All educators are expected to teach human rights and values in the revised national curriculum statement for Grades R-9 (5 to 14 year olds) (Department of Education, 2002a). This revised curriculum statement is not a new curriculum, but a streamlining and strengthening of Curriculum 2005, published in 1997. A substantial part of this statement is dedicated to highlighting the values entrenched in the Manifesto, as well as the sixteen educational strategies, which are stated as “finding expression” in the revised curriculum statement (Department of Education, 2002a, p. 7). The Constitution is also addressed as a founding document for curriculum transformation and development.

In particular, social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity are stated as the additional principles built on the vision and values of the Constitution and Curriculum (Department of Education, 2002a, p. 10). Whether or not this is meant to be interpreted as more important than the Manifesto values and strategies, or merely in addition to these original values and strategies, is not clear.

4.6. Values and human rights in the curriculum: A guide and toolbox

More recently, a publication entitled ‘Values and human rights in the curriculum: A guide’ presented in 2005 proposed even more ‘hands on’ ways for the teaching and learning of values and human rights
particularly for educators. This comprehensive curriculum guide was developed for primary and secondary teachers and youth workers to incorporate values and human rights in the curriculum across all learning areas. It explains principles for including values and human rights in the curriculum and methodology for practicing these principles. The 188 page guide also includes lesson plans in different learning programmes (for example, literacy and numeracy, history, geography, social sciences, technology and environment studies). The guide is developed for four phases of education: Foundation Phase for ages 5-8, Intermediate Phase for ages 9-11, Senior Phase for ages 12-14, and Further Education and Training Phase for adolescents.

This guide is an important document in light of the values initiative in South Africa, as it provides exemplars, illustrations, tools and models of how policy makers and government want teachers to teach values and human rights. It tells educators what these values are. This guide is founded on the Manifesto and Constitution. It provides advice, indicators of good practice, hints and examples. It is intended to support the National Curriculum which “sets clear guidelines for the inclusion of values and human rights across all learning areas” (Department of Education, 2005, p. 2). This guide also presents some of the dilemmas posed by values education and considers pedagogic issues faced by classroom teachers, which is a considerable move forward in light of values education challenges. This guide is intended to be used in conjunction with a resource box, filled with the tools educators need to achieve these goals.

The guide itself uses illustrations to show educators and learners how to use the resources in the tool box in addition to the guide. It should be noted, however, that I was unable to secure a tool box for further analyses and investigation. Numerous emails were sent to the department, and my educator contacts were asked about how I could locate a resource box. It appeared that no one whom I contacted had received a resource box. One principal informed me that she had received a pack of posters in 2007, which made reference to the values guide. There appeared to be a problem with schools receiving the necessary resources needed to implement these values. Details and discussion on the lack of resources and corruption in the public sector will be explored in further chapters. The guide is available online (Department of Education, 2005) but many schools do not have computers or internet access. Two examples from the guide are presented in Figure 8. These examples make reference to a book and cards that are available in the tool box.
Figure 8. Examples of the resources in the toolbox  
(copied from Department of Education, 2005)

Example one, based on a story book, encourages learners to be reflective in how they see other people. The questions that accompany this story allow children, through role-play and discussion, to understand prejudice and discrimination towards other people. This addresses many of the values in the Manifesto, through participation (making up different endings, role-play), observation (watching other children’s role-play activities) and reflection (discussion and thinking about the way we treat people and see people). However, this would require a level of sophisticated teaching pedagogy in order for this lesson to be effective. It would also need a reasonable class size or learning space, so that all learners could participate and be heard. Most importantly, it would require educators to be confident within their own understanding of the values initiative (what these values are, how they depend on one another, what the tensions are between them, what ambiguities lie in their relationships) in order for the links to be made and for learners to realise, communicate and enact these values for
themselves. These exercises and role-plays would need to be linked to the values, in a facilitated learning environment that allows learners to discover them. Example two is similar in that it would require a learner-centred, facilitator role for the educator. Again, class size and learning space would need to be reasonable for the values to be explored and discovered. In summary, these activities and tools would prove most helpful in the realisation, communication and enactment of values, but much of the success hangs on educators’ pedagogic and critical abilities and skills, as well as external resources (such as class size, venue, available resources and so forth).

4.7. Overall development of values

In summary, the journey the values initiative has taken in South Africa is illustrated in the map below (Figure 9). This map highlights how the values have been developed and elaborated, and finally presented in a ‘hands on’ way for teachers in South Africa. The guide is an extensive document describing many ways for educators to incorporate values into their teaching. Yet, already the challenge of these resources not reaching schools and teachers has presented itself as a barrier to the effective enactment of values education. Why do these resources not reach the end users? Do educators have the skills and time to adapt lesson plans to meet the exemplars and illustrations used in the guide? In practice, do teachers use these resources? Do they agree with and are they aware of the founding Manifesto which forms part of curriculum streamlining and learning outcomes? My study will look at how teachers make sense of the values in these documents, reports and guides. I investigate the influence these documents have on the enactment and realisation of values in South African schools.

4.8. Critique of the values initiative in South Africa

The values policies described in this chapter are extensive. Yet, they also highlight tensions, problems and issues that would need to be addressed before successful implementation can occur.

South Africa’s formal transition to democracy in 1994 was an inspiring moment. However, it would be naïve to assume that the task of transforming so evil a social order as apartheid can be accomplished in a moment (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 238).

Pendlebury and Enslin (2007) provide an extensive critique of the values documents in South Africa and I discuss this in detail as it proves invaluable to my study. South Africa’s effort at prescribing a set of values to be fostered in schools is an attempt to shape particular kinds of people through education. This involves the teaching and learning of values.
Although particular values are clarified (teaching about values, articulating values, understanding values) in some of the policies and teachers’ guides, the values framework is founded on the kind of person or student the curriculum aims to produce; character-focussed (p. 240). Interesting questions are raised by Pendlebury & Enslin (p. 242) regarding the evaluation of policy for character-focussed values education and these highlight important aspects for my research:

- Is the policy conceptually coherent?
- Does it express theoretical assumptions as practical principles … accessible to teachers, principals … Is it appropriate for its intended audience?
- Is it appropriate to context?
- How does it justify the need for values education?
- How, if at all, does it justify the selection of values?
Does it espouse values likely to be shared by a significant portion of the population?

Does it offer possible strategies for how to get from where we are to where we might be?

These questions do highlight ‘gaps’ (such as its true accessibility to teachers and school leaders) in the South African values initiative, but overall, policies do meet these criteria (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007). By taking the Constitution as its framework, the Manifesto appears conceptually coherent and allows for justification on the chosen values and the need for values education. “The kind of people it aims to develop are those who live by the values enshrined in the Constitution” (p. 252). My research specifically involves two of the questions posed above. The appropriateness of context (disadvantaged school settings), and audience (teachers, learners, parents in these township schools), are crucial to my ground level research. Are these values and educational strategies appropriate to this typical South African environment (township schools)?

The development of personal values is problematical in the values initiative. Pendlebury and Enslin contend that the values initiative marginalises the personal and I argue this point extensively. The Manifesto is considerably more comprehensive than the Values Report of 2000 in its conception of values education, and it works explicitly with the values enshrined in the Constitution to suggest how these can be taught and learned (strategies). Swart (2002) explains how concerns over practical theoretical frameworks, implementation, the involvement and training of educators and understanding of the current reality on the ground have received attention, but does not result in the Manifesto being flawless (p. 3). The critique of the Manifesto values is that, based on the Constitution, the Manifesto’s ten fundamental values favour the public political sphere over the personal or the private:

Indeed, it is possible to read the Manifesto as implying that the Constitution is an epiphanous source … even respect is cast as a constitutional value (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 244).

Perhaps with a diverse culture such as South Africa’s multicultural society, this is to be expected, but it does highlight that the equally important personal values are not emphasised in these documents. South Africa placed the source and heart of the values initiative in the political arena (shaping a national character), and this could be the only viable option when moving from the difficult legacy of apartheid. The assumption this creates is that if South Africa gets the social, economic and political structures right, then these values will in essence ‘just happen’. With the lack of recognition of personal values and their importance, it almost appears as if individual South Africans need not be honest or develop integrity as part of their personal character and personal development. It appears that once everything around the South African people is right, then the values will be automatically
adopted. Swart (2002) concurs by explaining how many people felt that no distinction was being made between personal values (taught at home, or in religious institutions) and democratic values, which should fall, in their opinion, under citizenship education. This creates a strong tension in the overall values initiative. Politics as the engine driving the values framework is limited and this ‘thinness’ occurs because all the new South African values are founded on the Constitution. Nowhere are personal values addressed or how these values become internalised by individuals; “ … the distinction between personal (moral values) and public virtues (citizenship or democratic values) remains unclear to many (Swart, 2002, p. 7)”. Other ideas such as development of values for self interest or evolution of a moral and ethical sense in individuals and society are not considered in the development of South Africa’s values system.

This gap exerts pressure on the government’s agenda. When ‘politics’ do not deliver on promises, this results in the South African people receiving mixed messages on an ethical level (such as promising housing or medical assistance, founded on human rights, and then not delivering or not being able to deliver), and the outcome is people feeling resentment and bitterness. The context for values enactment and realisation is not legitimate. They also feel anger and envy towards those who do have. A sense of entitlement is what slowly begins to emerge in these situations, and by all accounts, this goes against the very nature of the South African values drive. “Democratic values do not necessarily result in moral people but moral (and spiritual) people may (not always, but often) be better prepared to be democratic citizens” (Swart, 2002, p. 8). As Swart suggests, democratically framed values education will not produce the kind of people that policy makers and government desire South Africans to be and to become. Personal moral education needs to be considered.

The next issue I contend is the interpretation of these values and strategies. Although the practical educational strategies are clear, it may not be interpreted as such by the intended audience, as in the Canadian study (Winton, 2010) described previously.

The practical principles of the Manifesto may be elusive for the many teachers trained in an authoritarian and non-expansive tradition, and under severe pressure from constant demands of ever-changing policy (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 252).

I discuss the impact on educators further in this section when analysing the guide and toolbox. Moving to the educational strategies of the Manifesto, the focus is on making these values real in education contexts, but it appears that these strategies tend to treat both the values, and the ways they are supposed to be achieved, in quite simplistic ways. For example, there is no strategy for developing higher levels of moral judgement (the main focus in the executive summary of the Manifesto), besides
a brief reference to Kohlberg’s stages of moral development, which are argued by some as ‘controversial’ (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 248). The Manifesto does not detail how the connections between knowledge, understanding and discernment, necessary for moral judgement, should be made. Again, the ‘thinness’ in theoretical understanding, as well as the pedagogical methods, is a concern for educators and end users of these values documents.

A large proportion of the criticism surrounding the values initiative in South Africa has been centered around the theoretical construction of the term ‘values’, the problems of nation-building in a global society, and the lack of consultation with educators (Swart, 2002). These issues have been contested from the initial Report. Pendlebury and Enslin (2007, p. 243) raise questions such as: Why these values rather than others? How are the listed values supposed to hang together and what vices and common practices are they standing up against? Further to this, there is little recognition of the tensions and interdependencies between the values. What are the trade-offs between the values? For example, how do the many different cultural and religious groups that make up the South African society negotiate their way around these values? It appears that the links and tensions are not addressed, and the provision for a discourse and debate ‘space’ is not provided. Further to this, the Report (Department of Education, 2000b) highlights equity, tolerance and openness as appropriate values in the context of post-apartheid South Africa. However, equity is interpreted only in relation to an unequal system founded in apartheid history. What about equity as a value? How is equity taught? Is equity founded only on redress, opportunity and access (as per values details in the Report)?

Tolerance is expected to be promoted through sports and performing arts, but little is said about the nature of tolerance and its complexities. How is tolerance developed and enacted? “Accountability in the absence of such essential everyday virtues as honesty and integrity is bizarre” (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 244). The Report is unclear on the distinction between educator and learner accountability and what this means in practice. Social honour is problematic, for instance “learners are to be proud of national sports teams or say the vow or allegiance to the country at every weekly assembly” is “too close to blind patriotism for comfort” (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007, p. 244). Swart (2002) concurs with this overarching tension by commenting that a remaining weakness of the Manifesto is the omission of an expanded debate of the danger of nation building, that does not allay fears of potential totalitarianisms and increased xenophobia.
Additional issues linked to my study are highlighted by Pendlebury and Enslin (2007, p. 244) as problem areas with the Values Report:

- While it is appropriate to context as the beginning of a national debate and discussion on values, the Report lacks conceptual coherence because its preoccupation with context deflects attention from the more demanding and more crucial work of giving an account of what each value entails.
- Although it cites characteristics most likely to be endorsed by a significant proportion of the population, the Report fails to justify its selection of the six proposed values.

The challenge that faces policy users is how to integrate these values as a whole, while understanding the pressures and bonds between them. It is not about maximising any one value, but seeing them as a whole, with a discourse that challenges the ambiguities. The more extensive and hands-on guide published in 2005 appears to recognise the difficulty teachers face with values and human rights education. It provides a detailed interpretation of how to use these principles. Yet, it also adds to the intensification of teachers’ work. With the already considerable demands from educational policy, it simply is not reasonable to expect engagement with the Manifesto strategies or extensive guide (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007). Addressing the role of the educator, how much participation did teachers have in the design of these documents that were formulated for them? How were teachers, if at all, consulted on the means and ways of achieving an education system founded on values and human rights? Jansen (2002, p. 206) explains that during the production of the different policy initiatives in South Africa, there was a significant attempt at representivity and inclusivity of all stakeholders. But whether or not their perspectives were particularly considered and their actual power of influence in the consultation process remains uncertain. Swart (2002) reports on the objections made by the SADTU teachers union on the values initiative and other policy reforms. Firstly, they objected to the notion that educators were included in the process of consultations. Secondly, they expressed disbelief that already overworked educators were expected to incorporate another transformation to their already policy-laden rucksacks. “… Educators in South Africa are already overburdened … and adding yet another weight will result in further de-motivation and policy fatigue (Swart, 2002, p. 12).”

The guide is an important document as it explains how policy makers and government think teachers should teach values and, more importantly, it tells teachers what these values are, in a very practical sense. It is clear that the ideal shaping these South African values is the new Constitution, human rights and equity. It is clear that the instruments intended to make these values realised and enacted are critical thought, debate and reflection. This has been communicated through the policies and can be
seen in the two examples discussed from the toolbox and guide. Examples of participation, direct instruction, Ryle’s (1972) role modelling and observing, guided action and reflection can all be found in the numerous and extensive examples of lesson plans given in the guide. However, two problems are evident. Firstly, teachers receiving these goods, investing the time into learning how to teach values, and adapting lesson plans to meet these outcomes, does not always happen. Secondly, do teachers have the skills themselves to incorporate these pedagogical skills in their classrooms? Teacher training and development before 1994 was vastly different from the teaching methods required for the values initiative. These tensions will be focussed on during my research. As Swart (2002) describes, retraining teachers is a time consuming and expensive process, but it is a necessity if teachers are to become citizenship educators. Educator training is a fundamental condition for success of this values initiative, but has it occurred? If so, has it been effective?

Another critic of the values initiative, Green (2004, p. 112), also addresses the lack of acknowledgement regarding the influence of context and the personal positions of educators themselves. This may be influenced by the different modes of educator training or levels of educator’s confidence which need to be considered in values education initiatives. Green argues that if educators are to take on the responsibility of values education, they need to be encouraged to engage in a form of conversation about values and associated virtues in their school or community. Teachers need to address their own deeper understanding of their personal values and the processes and relationships between them. Assumptions that educators understand, appreciate or realise values personally or within their teaching practice cannot be made.

Another issue for concern is the support of this values initiative from the communities outside the school environment. Teacher participants in a South African values study by du Preez and Roux (2010) showed that there are discrepancies between values taught at schools, and those which are nurtured at home and in the community. These teachers felt that learners were taught human rights values in schools, but when they were outside of school, they faced a very different set of values. This creates a complex scenario for teachers. “ … there is a need to have dialogues on values in our different contexts as a way of assisting us to transcend our comfort zones” (du Preez & Roux, 2010, p. 24). Values occur in a political and social context, but where are the dimensions of these contexts addressed?

More recently, Solomons and Fataar (2011) raised important aspects for critique. They described how the national curriculum is preoccupied with procedural knowledge, and how this is incongruent with the Constitution’s expectations. It is not merely about knowing politics or the Constitution, it is about
how we think and behave towards others. Solomons and Fataar recommended that South Africans “open up conceptual space for a critical and active citizenship orientation to values education in our county’s schools”. Furthermore:

We advance the view that a commitment to values education in schools, alert to the requirements for building a shared understanding about which values might be best fostered in classrooms, informed by an appreciation of how values may be properly taught at the different levels of the schools system, remains the key to generating a questioning and productive citizenry in South Africa (p. 231).

Solomons and Fataar acknowledged that the government falls short in providing a basis for productive values education, and further to this they describe the gaps and unresolved issues between these expectations from policy and the lived experience in the context of South African schools. My research intends to build upon this critique by addressing exactly how values education is interpreted in these contexts; how these values manifest in township schools.

In conclusion, the Report, Manifesto and supporting documents provide the foundation of the values education initiative in South Africa. Compared to other international programmes that did not have the challenges South Africa faced in 1994, South Africa’s attempts could be described as admirable and extensive amidst argument and critique. Yet, the audience of these policy values needs a deep understanding of the nature of the values, how to integrate them, how to negotiate their way around the inevitable tensions and ambiguities and ultimately, a sophisticated set of conceptual resources to see their way through. My study will investigate these stakeholder issues in the context of a South African township school. With the diverse and multicultural society facing South African policy-makers, these attempts may not be ideal but could be the best for now.

The next chapter explores the specific context relevant to my study. I present the reader with a detailed description of all the contextual and environmental issues that face the case study school. I also present my research aims and intentions.
Chapter 5. South African school reality

Schooling in South Africa was a significant site for the apartheid struggle, and the post 1994 government has attached considerable importance to schooling and reform in education.

… schools in post-apartheid South Africa … have two faces. On the one hand they are capable of helping individuals gain knowledge and develop skills and values which can be of great benefit to both the individual and the wider society. On the other hand they reproduce existing inequalities, do not necessarily present a coherent and effective model of ‘modern’ professional and moral behaviour, reinforce authoritarian attitudes and, worse of all, actively perpetrate violence (Harber & Mncube, 2011, p. 241).

Schooling is often assumed to be of political and socio-economic benefit in society, but at times can end up reproducing existing inequalities and contribute to violence in society (Harber & Mncube, 2011, p. 234). Since 1994, South Africa has had a strong performance in terms of economic growth, but there is still considerable inequality, with 45-55 percent of the population being categorised as poor. Of this group, 20-25 percent are described as living in ‘extreme poverty’ (Harber & Mncube, 2011, p. 235). In South Africa, standards of living are closely associated with race (Woolard, 2002), and poverty is predominantly concentrated among black people (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). Hence, schools serving well-off communities can charge high school fees in order to maintain excellent facilities and employ more teachers, while schools in poor communities are not able to do so. “Admission on the ground of race may now be illegal but high fees may well have the same net effect” (Harber & Mncube, 2011, p. 236).

In 2009, there were 32,103 South African schools. Of these, 25,906 were ordinary state schools. In total South Africa serves 14,122,305 learners in the education system with 469,963 teachers (Department of Education, 2010). The breakdown of the education system in 2009 can be seen in Figure 10 below.

The Delta Foundation (Delta Foundation South Africa, 2004), which supports educational research conducted by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and disseminated to universities and schools, showed that of the thirty thousand schools in South Africa, three thousand are deemed dysfunctional (Delta Foundation South Africa, 2004). These schools are unable to produce an environment for effective teaching and learning. These schools are generally black schools.
Ten percent of schools, apart from physical and resourcing deficiencies, do not even have a timetable. The schools that are functional still seem to perform poorly, particularly at secondary school level. Davidoff & Lazarus (2002, p. 3) describe how schools have been faced with many changes since 1994, particularly with the large amount of new policies introduced to address the imbalances of the past. This has resulted in redeployment and retrenchment of teachers. In many schools, it is not unusual to find up to seventy learners in one class.

Of the total consolidated expenditure by the general government sector, education receives roughly twenty percent, the biggest component in the community and social services bracket. Fiske and Ladd (2004) give an international perspective by explaining that in the late 1990s, South Africa’s commitment to the budget for education (22 percent) exceeded the average sixteen percent of 78 other countries, according to United Nations data. This high percentage of government expenditure on education has continued, as shown in Figure 4. Yet, there was a decline in the percentage of learners aged 7 to 24 years who were not attending educational institutions because of a lack of money for fees; from 39.6 percent in 2002 to 37.4 percent in 2005, and in 2006 there was a small increase to 38.6 percent. (Statistics South Africa, 2007, p. 14). Legally, no child can be excluded from a state school because his or her parents are unable to pay school fees. Parents, in theory, qualify for fees reduction if
the household income is less than thirty times the annual school fee. However, this creates tensions in practice. Most parents do not want to ‘subsidise’ children of poorer families, and schools themselves are inclined to minimise the number of families paying reduced or no fees. This is achieved by delineating geographical feeder areas to the school and controlling the admission process:

Whilst there is an obligation to admit children for whom the school is closest to their home, the widening of feeder areas tends to increase the number of applicants from whom it can choose (Lemon, 2004, p. 272).

Language or other admission tests are prohibited in terms of the Schools Act. But the parents who are exempt from paying fees are decided by the governing body. Schools tend to ‘screen out’ those who are unable to pay by requiring proof of living in an area, electricity bills or rent statements. Also, they could insist on dealing with the biological parents, which excludes many African students who are cared for by relatives or grandparents (Lemon, 2004).

Although there is a big percentage of government expenditure on education, this does not equate to quality teaching and learning. Literature on what happens to resources in practice in the South African public service proved difficult to find. However, according to publications on government expenditure, such as the Human Resource Development Review 2008, the majority of the education budget is spent on salaries and wages. For the period of 2001-2005, much of the budget was spent on restructuring and amalgamating educational institutions. Also, many of the new policies imposed financial obligations on the national and provincial governments (Wildeman, 2008). Corruption is also a fundamental issue. Rabin (2011, October 2) explains how transparency and accountability are not always evident in the public school system. When school supplies go missing, and when parents face fees for services that are supposed to be free, it is the poor people who suffer most. It would seem that the decentralisation of the education system has only increased the avenues in which corruption can occur. There is a need for government to strengthen controls at a provincial and school level, so that education budgets are used correctly (Rabin, 2011, October 2). In a study of 1500 participants across 45 schools, 27 percent of principals stated that they did not receive their budget on time. They also felt that they did not have required funds and facilities to run their schools. Respondents reported that the risk of embezzlement was the largest component to corruption in the education sphere (Rabin, 2011, October 2).

The physical working environment and infrastructure of some schools is very challenging. The National Education Infrastructure Management System (Development Bank of South Africa, 2008) described the context that daily teaching and learning occurs in the majority of South African schools; 42 percent of schools are overcrowded, 3152 are without water, 1532 are without toilets, 4297 are
without electricity, 79 percent have no libraries, 68 percent have no computers and 60 percent are without laboratories. On a so-called normal day, as many as 30 percent of teachers and 50 percent of students will be absent and blame it on poor physical facilities and intimidation (Mitchell, 2005).

Van der Berg (2008) describes how educational quality in historically black schools, constituting 80 percent of enrolment, has not improved since political transition, despite apparent resource transfers to such schools. Based on the country’s participation in international evaluation studies since the political transition, South Africa’s educational performance is extremely weak, and systemic differences lie between schools accommodating different racial and socio-cultural groups (van der Berg, 2008, p. 146). These studies,

… suggest that learners’ scores are far below what is expected at all levels of the schooling system, both in relation to other countries (including other developing countries) and in relation to the expectations of the South African curriculum (Taylor, Muller, & Vinjevold, 2003, p. 41).

Regardless of support by government and budgets granted for education purposes, schools in South Africa are facing extreme pressures. The question this poses is how the expectation of values implementation, realisation and enactment is possible under such difficult conditions. I investigate this issue in my study. The information presented in this section also raises the question whether or not ‘redress’ efforts, described in policy, have been effective on any level. Also, if equality and equity are to be embraced as values, are they reflected in the context in which values education is to take place?

… in a country with great expectations of equity, education is failing in a way that particularly impacts on poor, rural and township schools (Bloch, 2008, p. 127).

Schooling can reproduce social inequality and negative attitudes, and one cannot assume that schooling is automatically a good thing. It is as important to think about what happens to a child in school, as it is to get them into school in the first place (Harber & Mncube, 2011).

5.1. Township schools

Township residential areas in South Africa were established during apartheid as racially segregated, low-cost housing developments for black labourers (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). This allowed black (as well as coloured and Indian) people to be separate from whites, but to still access cities and towns for employment. For security reasons, townships were separated by rivers, roads or railroads, which made it difficult for social unrest to move to other areas (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). Blacks were allowed to
enter into the city during the day, but a strict curfew ensured that they returned to the township at night, and whites were restricted from entering the townships. The housing quality in these townships was generally very poor, consisting of block-like units and makeshift shelters built by residents out of whatever material they could find. This system of herding people of colour into their own geographic areas left seventy percent of the South African population being able to access only thirteen percent of the land (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 26).

Today, aspects of poverty, crime, violence, abuse and unsafe environments have become associated with township communities, at times described as ‘war zones’ (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011, p. 114). Most cities and towns in South Africa have a township community that borders, and is associated with, it. Schools in these black settlement areas are generally attended by black students and taught by black teachers (Moloi, 2010). The township involved in my research is Mdantsane. Mdantsane is located between East London and King William’s Town, in the previous apartheid region of the Ciskei (see Figure 11). It is known as the second largest township in South Africa, after Soweto in the Gauteng province.

The demographic and socioeconomic distribution of townships further continues the racial segregation and lack of resources in township school communities (Bush & Heystek, 2003). Most township schools are characterised by elements of violence, crime, unemployed parents, a severe lack of resources, dilapidated buildings and overcrowding. Parents of these school communities are generally unable to afford school fees because of unemployment and their low socioeconomic status, and therefore most township schools are at a disadvantage. Moloi (2010) describes context-specific challenges in school environments, like increasing levels of poverty among school communities, high levels of illiteracy and unemployment, high parent mortality rates that link to the number of child-headed families that are disadvantaged, and ill-resourced schools. These schools operate without libraries, computers, electricity and running water. Moloi describes schools that are situated in black settlement areas, attended by black learners who are taught by black teachers, as “difficult schooling context[s]” (2010, p. 623).

There is considerable variation in the qualifications of teaching staff between historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). Many township schools have a significant number of under-qualified staff. School leaders in these schools have to deal with a breakdown in teaching and learning, which manifests in poor teacher and student attendance and punctuality. There are also stark contrasts in material provisions and buildings in these schools when compared to historically white schools. Many of the township schools Ngcobo and Tikly (2010, p. 209) encountered suffered from
acute shortages of textbooks and learning materials. The school buildings and grounds needed serious attention with holes in the walls and ceilings at times. There was a lack of sports facilities, sanitary facilities, furniture and equipment. Many of the schools were overcrowded. Hence, township schooling in South Africa is extremely challenging. Other South African researchers have recorded similar evidence when researching township schools and rural communities. Bantwini (2010) commented that most rural and township schools are characterised by a lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, which is aggravated by limited district support for schools and teachers. Bloch (2008) explained how many rural and township schools are described as ‘sinkholes’, where learners end up being ‘warehoused’ rather than being educated. Van der Berg (2008) concurred by highlighting that the schooling system has yet to overcome socio-economic disadvantage at a foundational level.

5.2. Eastern Cape province

My research was conducted at a school in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Therefore, although my sample is discussed in detail in the methodology chapter, a brief overview of the province sets the context for this study.

![Figure 11. Apartheid political divisions in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa Adapted from Lemon (2004)](image)

South Africa has nine provinces, each with its own legislature, premier and executive council, as well as distinctive landscapes, population, economy and climates. Before 1994, South Africa had four provinces: Transvaal and Orange Free State (known as Boer republics – Afrikaans-speaking regions);
and Natal and the Cape (British colonies – English-speaking regions). Scattered between these were the apartheid ‘homelands’, which were states in which black South Africans were forced to have residency. Figure 11 shows the post 1994 Eastern Cape (168,966 square kilometres), with the previous homelands in black (Transkei) and grey (Ciskei). The city of East London and the Mdantsane township are displayed in colour. These homeland regions are important, as the school where I conduct my research was located in the old Ciskei homeland.

The Eastern Cape province has a population that is predominantly black and poor, because it encompasses the two apartheid homelands; Transkei and Ciskei. These two former homelands have a rich political history. Nelson Mandela’s birth place was in the Transkei. Mandela and other political leaders were educated at Fort Hare University situated in the Ciskei. The Eastern Cape has faced greater challenges than other provinces since 1994. Extreme poverty, and the challenging task of merging homeland governments which had been administratively weak and corrupt during apartheid (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 79) were major issues. Fiske and Ladd (2004) comment that this province continues to suffer tremendously from unemployment, illiteracy and poverty.

With a population of 6,648,600 in 2009, the Eastern Cape held 13.5 percent of South Africa’s population. Figure 12 shows the unemployment and poverty rate as percentages over a fifteen year period. As is clearly evident, no improvement in either unemployment or poverty rates in the province has occurred since the new democracy. In 2009, the Eastern Cape had the highest unemployment rate of 27.9 percent, compared to 23.6 percent nationally (Statistics South Africa, 2009a). Figure 13 highlights the provincial GDP growth rate in South Africa for 2009. The Eastern Cape continues to perform poorly against other provinces economically and socially. This provides many challenges for the people and provincial government of the Eastern Cape.

The 2007 community survey showed that the highest percentage of households living in informal settlements (townships) were recorded in Eastern Cape districts (Statistics South Africa, 2009a). The poverty of the Eastern Cape seems statistically linked to the low proportion of whites in the population, which is under the national average (Statistics South Africa, 2009b). Three quarters of children (more than two million) in the Eastern Cape are poor (Woolard, 2002). Hence, the conditions under which teaching and learning take place in this province are even more difficult than that of other South African provinces. These statistics have been highlighted to aid understanding of the unique and difficult conditions facing educators and learners in Eastern Cape township schools.
Figure 12. Poverty and unemployment graph in the Eastern Cape: 1995 – 2010
(ECSECC, 2010, p. 3)

Figure 13. Gross domestic product growth rate by province 2009
(ECSECC, 2010, p. 4)
5.2.1. Eastern Cape schools

In the Eastern Cape province, education is characterised by challenges that include low educational standards, lack of infrastructure to support teaching and learning, large numbers of learners, and teachers who do not have adequate subject knowledge (Bantwini, 2010). Until 1994, the pre-democracy provincial government was spending R5403 a year on every white school learner in contrast to R1043 on every black school learner in the homelands. This stark contrast resulted in the post-apartheid Eastern Cape having the worst matriculation (school leaving) results in the late 1990s; 46 percent passed school leaving examinations, compared with 62 percent nationally. Only seven percent qualified for exemption (university entrance); the lowest figure in South Africa, well below the national average of fifteen percent (Lemon, 2004, p. 274). “Although Eastern Cape boasts several universities and a number of technical colleges, its education system reflects years of neglect under apartheid” (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 79). More current results are presented in Figure 14. As is evident, results have not improved significantly over the past decade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Candidates Who Passed/Achieved</th>
<th>No Admisison to Higher Education with NSC</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
<td>38 119</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>19 096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20 080</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>10 094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18 039</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>9 002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 11: National Senior Certificate examination results, by province and gender, in 2009**

Figure 14. National senior certificate examination results by province and gender in 2009 (adapted from Department of Education, 2010)
The actual number of schools in the Eastern Cape province is displayed in Figure 15. Full service schools are schools that cater for special needs and learners with barriers to learning and, as is evident, most schools are public or state schools. This means that each of these state schools is allocated a poverty quintile score. Schools in the poorer quintiles (1, 2 and 3) are no-fee schools (hence completely state-subsidised) and better-off quintiles receive smaller state allocations. The Eastern Cape is identified by the National Department of Basic Education as the poorest province (according to schools in high poverty areas), with 34.8 percent of schools being the poorest (quintile 1) schools. The Western Cape, which is the least poor province, has only 6.5 percent quintile 1 schools (Bantwini, 2010). Therefore, the challenges Eastern Cape province schools face due to poverty are considerable when compared to other schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions Statistics</th>
<th>Actual Numbers as at 4 May 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Schools in the province (including Public Ordinary, Special Schools and Independent Schools)</td>
<td>5 778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Public Schools (ordinary and Special Schools)</td>
<td>5 655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Special Schools</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Independent Schools</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Primary Schools</td>
<td>2 278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Secondary Schools</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Combined Schools</td>
<td>2 495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Adult Basic Education Training centres</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Early Childhood Development centres</td>
<td>891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools with Grade R classes</td>
<td>4 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of full-service schools in the province</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15. Schools in the Eastern Cape 2009/2010
(adapted from Province of the Eastern Cape education, 2010)

Next, statistics regarding learners, educators and infrastructure in the Eastern Cape Department of Education are illustrated in Figure 16 (SA-SAMS is an integrated software programme for schools). This figure highlights important facts about the lack of infrastructure and support for teaching and learning. This emphasises the apparent lack of redress and equitable resources that were assured in 1994. I also include these statistics to show that although some schools receive allocations for municipal services, these go to waste when schools have no piped water or electricity, and schools are unable to allocate these funds to other items (Hall & Giese, 2008). The schools that have the poorest infrastructure and high learner/educator ratios are generally found in the township and rural areas. These schools generally cater for black students and black educators.

This contextual information provides a platform for further understanding of my research context. Next, I investigate school realities by addressing school leadership, teachers and learners. I conclude these context chapters and literature review by presenting my research questions.
## Learner Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual Numbers as at 4 May 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in the province (including Public Ordinary, Special and Independent, and Grade R schools)</td>
<td>2 080 978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment at Grade R</td>
<td>161 859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Public Ordinary Schools (Programme 2)</td>
<td>2 034 902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Public Primary Schools (Sub-Programme 2.1)</td>
<td>586 344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Public Secondary Schools (Sub-Programme 2.2)</td>
<td>414 223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Public Combined Schools</td>
<td>414 223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Independent Schools</td>
<td>43 079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Special Schools</td>
<td>8 973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners Adult Basic Education Training centres</td>
<td>35 691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Further Education Training Colleges</td>
<td>11 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of learners in Public Ordinary Schools with special needs</td>
<td>17 614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please note this is not the number of learners in Special Schools)

## Educators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of educators in Primary Schools</td>
<td>19 484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of educators in Secondary Schools</td>
<td>16 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of educators in Combined Schools</td>
<td>33 335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of educators</td>
<td>69 233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Educator Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1 : 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1 : 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>1 : 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1 : 29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools using SA-SAMS</td>
<td>873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools trained on SA-SAMS</td>
<td>2 541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools with email</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools without water supply</td>
<td>1 073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools without functional toilets</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools without electricity</td>
<td>1 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of primary public ordinary schools with an average of more than 40 learners per class unit</td>
<td>638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of secondary public ordinary schools with an average of more than 35 learners per class unit</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of combined public ordinary schools with an average of more than 37 learners per class unit</td>
<td>1 425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16. Eastern Cape school statistics 2009/2010
(adapted from Province of the Eastern Cape education, 2010)

### 5.3. School leadership

There is a growing worldwide awareness that effective leadership and management are vital for successful schools and learning opportunities. High quality school leadership is vital for school improvement and the meeting of learning outcomes (Bush, Kiggundu, & Moorosi, 2011). This section reveals school leadership and management stakeholders and their relationships in post 1994 South Africa.
5.3.1. School principal

For people to cope in a world where change is part of life, they need to be able to adjust to and manage change (Swanepoel, 2008). Change is a crucial part of new education initiatives, and nowhere is that ability to adjust and manage change more important than in school leadership. Botha (2007) describes how during the past twenty to thirty years, a shift towards greater self-management and self-governance in educational institutions throughout the world has been noted. South Africa has also become part of this trend. Therefore, principals are consequently empowered as they get more authority over what happens in schools, from on-site decisions, to what is taught in the classrooms. Swanepoel (2008) explains that the school principal is responsible for creating a collegial environment, and that the principal can influence an educator’s sense of job satisfaction, morale, loyalty and level of motivation. The principal is also pivotal in creating a culture conducive to change.

South African principals are not appropriately trained and skilled for school leadership and management positions (Mathibe, 2007). There are a variety of reasons why school headship is a specialist occupation; the increased complexities of school contexts, the need for school leaders to engage with their communities, the preparation that there is a moral obligation, and the need for training, induction and development of specific skills (Bush et al., 2011). The role of the principal, even amongst decentralization movements and distributed leadership approaches, still remains central to school leadership practice (Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley, & Somaroo, 2010).

The principal can be seen as the custodian and curator of a school’s vision, mission and values, and should provide the inspiration for these to be achieved through collaboration with different interest groups. The principal should provide guidance to learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders, in order to maximise the attainment of the school’s goals (Mathibe, 2007). Mathibe further cautions that school principals should be appointed on merit, not because of luck or connections. Principalship requires trained professionals who can “do the job right the first time round, and not suitors or pretenders who feel threatened at every corner in the school” (Mathibe, 2007, p. 538).

The principal is not the only pathway for school leadership in the post 1994 school environment. The school governing body, department of education and unions all affect the way in which effective leadership manifests itself in schools.
5.3.2. Parental involvement (school governing body)

The opportunity for parents, educators and learners to be a part of school governance occurred during the shift from authoritarian rule, racial division and an uneven socio-economic backdrop (Brown & Duku, 2008). These changes embraced a democratic atmosphere:

It meant that the broad masses of people, regardless of socio-economic standing, or racial divide, are now able to have a ‘voice’ in the decisions that directly or indirectly impact on them in the school communities. For many parents, this opportunity signals a new dawn of empowerment (Brown & Duku, 2008, p. 432).

School governing bodies (SGBs) are expected to have responsibility for admissions policies, language policies, making recommendations on teaching and non-teaching appointments at schools, financial management, determination of school fees and engaging in fundraising (Brown & Duku, 2008). Integrating the school with its community is seen as a way of redressing past apartheid practices. This means that the main responsibility for developing, planning, managing and sustaining the school rests with the school community (Botha, 2007).

However, the different social contexts of South Africa have proved problematic in allowing this sense of empowerment to be felt by all South African parents. Researchers have commented that participation on school governing bodies is seen as a middle-class activity. Parents who have the resources and time to spend on school activities are involved. Also, particularly in black communities, African parents are not vocal, and often defer decisions to teachers because of the teachers’ class position and identity (Brown & Duku, 2008). Many South African schools, particularly disadvantaged ‘black’ schools, are too traditional in their thinking about school-based management, and also too bureaucratic as participating stakeholders. Reasons for this include a lack of accountability and weak leadership, specifically from the school principal due to a lack of training, lack of leadership skills and insufficient motivation (Botha, 2007). Also, in African customs and traditions, there are tensions between the values of the ‘old’ (culture and tradition) and the ‘new’ (equity and equality emphasis in new policies). For example, younger men and females are treated differently by elder men (who should be ‘automatic’ leaders in African custom). These traditional values change governing body practice and juxtapose the policies that shape SGB practice. “There seems to be a metaphoric collision between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’” (Brown & Duku, 2008, p. 447).

There are a number of factors that contribute to a lack of parental participation in South African schools, and these include unequal power relations, socio-economic status, lack of confidence and expertise, poor communication and information, the rural-urban divide, language barriers, poor
organisation, and a high turnover rate of SGB governors (Harber & Mncube, 2011). Also, the dominant role of the principal and some educators produce a culture where participation is not necessarily valued in itself, which aligns with comments above (Botha, 2007; Brown & Duku, 2008).

5.3.3. Department of education

In education, policy development and coordination remain the central government’s task, but when it comes to the financing and managing of schools, the provincial departments are in charge. This leads to problems with government and policy aspirations not being realised on the ground level, as these ideals come into conflict with resourcing issues and administration problems at a provincial level, especially in the Eastern Cape (Lemon, 2004). For example, national legislation which focuses on the reduction of learner-teacher ratios in schools cannot be realised when provincial departments do not have the funding or resources to pay teachers’ salaries. The situation in the Eastern Cape province is particularly complicated, because in 1994, two former homelands (with separate administrations) and the national (white) education system had to combine and integrate (Lemon, 2004). Problems with Eastern Cape provincial departments include grossly inadequate financial, information and human resource management systems, chronic shortages of skilled staff, lack of discipline, and fraud and theft in departments (Lemon, 2004, p. 273). Particularly in the Eastern Cape education department:

The department is aware that internal communication is slow, and there is often no clarity on the procedures to be followed … In part, these problems appear to derive from the frustration of pursuing idealistic aims, often based on what is regarded as good practice in the most developed countries, without the human or financial capacity to achieve them (Lemon, 2004, pp. 289-290).

5.3.4. Unionism

Unionism is usually associated with industry and workers. Unionism was incorporated in South African education under the Constitution, and it is a human right for teachers to belong to a union. Union characteristics include industrial action, collective bargaining and lobbying (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001).

Heystek and Lethoko (2001) describe and explain the three prominent teacher unions in South Africa; SATU (South African Teacher unions), SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers Union and NAPTOSA (the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa). According to their research, SATU is a predominantly white teachers’ union dominated by Afrikaans-speaking membership in mostly former white, Indian and coloured schools. At the time of their research, they
reported that membership was ninety percent white, seven percent black, two percent coloured, and one percent Indian. Its aims include empowering educators, assisting educators in guiding their pupils to their maximum potential, protecting educator rights, and to further the use of mother tongue instruction. NAPTOSA was described as having 75 percent black, twenty percent white, three percent Indian, and two percent coloured membership. NAPTOSA’s slogan is ‘teach with dignity’, and some of their aims include a non-discriminatory system of education, equity, professional responsibility and serving the interests of the child. SADTU is the largest teacher union in South Africa. Its membership is 75 percent black, fifteen Indian, six percent coloured and four percent white. SADTU is a union which is seen as synonymous with teacher militancy, and this has led to a negative attitude of the public towards unions in general. SADTU describes itself as ‘a union of professionals’. All the union representatives in this research confirmed that they participated in the formulation of policies with both the department of education and the Minister of Education. These policies included working conditions of teachers, benefits, salaries, workload resolution and the establishment of the South African Council for Educators (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001, pp. 224-225).

Teacher unions continually appear in the media, and they are frequently portrayed in a bad light. For example, “Teacher Unions slated” (Monama, 2011, August 9) describes how teacher unions are hampering schooling reforms in the country. This was in a report released by the Centre for Development and Enterprise. The centre's executive director, Ann Bernstein, is reported to have said: "SADTU is behaving as if the interests of teachers are more important than those of pupils. That is the reason why South Africa always comes last in all the international assessments” (Monama, 2011, August 9).

5.4. School educators

Responsibility for change and transformation in the education sphere lies primarily with the teacher. Jansen (2001) describes powerful images of teachers after apartheid, including the teacher as ‘liberator’, ‘facilitator’, and ‘performer’. Together with these images, education policy reform that encourages more active, reflective and participant classrooms places much emphasis on the role of the teacher in post-apartheid South Africa. However, for many teachers, their training and experience lies within the country’s apartheid history, where educators were described as “obedient civil servant[s] that executed the well-defined instructional tasks per an official syllabus and a “moderated” examination” (Jansen, 2001, p. 243). This mismatch in history, training and new policy expectations creates a tense and demanding environment for educators. Teachers are key to the success of curriculum reform (Bantwini, 2010). However, these policy reforms have only been partially successful in schools, because issues like traditional, teacher-dominated classrooms, authoritarian head
teachers, and the use of corporal punishment and sexual harassment make achieving quality education challenging (Mncube & Harber, 2010). These inhibitors are related to the role of the teacher.

The role of the teacher has been described in policy, but the practical reality that teachers face needs attention. I use other empirical evidence from literature to provide a context from which to understand the life of a South African teacher. Eastern Cape teachers explain their feelings towards curriculum reform (Bantwini, 2010). Firstly, these teachers felt that curriculum reform overloaded them with too much paperwork. For example, these teachers explained how the new curriculum was viewed as a burden, rather than a simplified curriculum intended to support the goals of outcomes-based education. These teachers further detailed how they struggle with large numbers of learners in their classes, sometimes one teacher to eighty learners. This was despite policy that recommended no more than forty learners in a class. Educators stressed a shortage of teachers, especially in rural schools. “Rural schools were said to be struggling to attract teachers, due to unfavourable conditions, which are also experienced by those already working there” (Bantwini, 2010, p. 86). Some teachers in this study also blamed the principal for large classes, as principals would be awarded money for high learner enrolments. Bantwini’s findings also showed that teachers were expected to change from their past teaching practice to new approaches and methods that they were not familiar with. Teachers still used traditional methods.

Given these limitations [schools in rural/township areas who have few/no resources and facilities], teachers were required to put in a great deal of extra effort and teach their learners the basics of research; this takes time and is considered as extra work. Aggravating the situation was the fact that most of these teachers were themselves not familiar with the research projects they were expected to assist the learners with (Bantwini, 2010, p. 86).

Teachers felt that the lack of parental support left them having to deal with the basics that they felt parents should be inculcating. Teachers in this study also related the issue of salaries to the question of work overload. Teachers articulated that their remuneration was not in line with the expected and required changes. They also compared their remuneration with other fields of work and felt unfairly remunerated. According the NAPTOSA website (NAPTOSA, 2011), the lowest educator’s annual salary as of May 2011 is R 71 664. A beginning teacher with a four year tertiary qualification would be at a higher level of around R 150 000 (Barnard, personal communication, September 12, 2011). State paid teachers are also liable for mortgage assistance, medical insurance assistance and a pension fund. To highlight the comparison with other fields of work, I draw attention to a few examples of other professions (Drake family, personal communication, September 12, 2011):
• Artisan (with 30 years experience): R 200 000
• Store manager: R 210 000
• Draftsman (with tertiary education): R 250 000
• Pharmacist assistant: R 156 000
  (amounts before deductions)

Teachers thought that it was the department’s responsibility to help explain the new policy documents, but this did not always occur. They also felt aggravated by the lack of ongoing professional development that would ensure teachers understood what is required from them. Teachers noted that curriculum statements, that are devised and delivered to schools with no in-service training, are expected to be implemented by teachers who hardly took part in the development process (Bantwini, 2010). It is crucial that teachers are seen as not only implementers, but also as shared decision-makers during the initiating, planning and management phases of educational change. Teachers have a perception that they are being excluded from decision and management processes (Swanepoel, 2009):

… the initiators of change, whether politicians or bureaucrats, do not bear in mind the crucial role that teachers play as implementers of change. It seems they fail to appreciate that involvement of teachers, in decision-making and responsibility-taking processes relates very closely to successful implementation of education change (p. 462).

When reflecting on the values policies, it becomes clear that although phrases such as a “national debate” were used, the involvement of the teachers in schools is not made clear. It appears that departments of education think they are aware of teachers’ needs (Swanepoel, 2009). However, empirical data from teachers does not support this. For example, working groups of the values initiatives appeared to only consist of higher level professionals, such as university professors, authors, and educational leaders (Department of Education, 2001a). Although participation was sought (according to values policy), what voice and how much power did that voice have on behalf of township school educators? Bantwini’s (2010) research also shows that teachers do not feel part of the curriculum reform process, and this links to their low levels of motivation and commitment. This is an important issue in the South African context.

5.5. Learners

In 2008, the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) published the Education Roadmap of South Africa. This publication presents documents and results which are pertinent to the context of this research. Firstly, approximately one out of forty learners who started school in 1995 passed mathematics on the higher grade at school-leaving level. 93 percent of mathematics passes came from
only 21 percent of schools. This results in a skills shortage which adds to the constraints on economic growth and employment creation. Concerns are raised about teaching and learning (and outcomes-based education), because in 2007, the average score of Grade 3 (8 year old) learners in literacy was 36 percent and only fifteen percent of children passed both numeracy and literacy (Development Bank of South Africa, 2008).

The Education Roadmap: Focus on schooling system, also presents social disadvantage as an issue which significantly impacts on learners. Parent education and socio-economic status are strong predictors of educational outcomes, thus limiting inter-generational social mobility. There are power differentials between poor parents and teachers which effect the functioning of school governing bodies. Also, a significant number of learners in South Africa are single or double orphans, victims of violence, living in families suffering from HIV/AIDS, or facing other traumas that affect their learning (Development Bank of South Africa, 2008). For example, the total number of new HIV infections was estimated at 413,000 in 2009. Of these, 59,000 are expected to be among children. The overall estimated number of people living in South Africa with HIV is 5.21 million (Statistics South Africa, 2009b).

The Roadmap explains how teachers in township schools spend 3.5 hours per day teaching learners, compared to six hours per day for teachers in suburban schools. In 2007, 77 percent of learners did not feel safe in classrooms. In addition to learners facing these complexities, the poor infrastructure and facilities at schools (described earlier) dramatically influence how effectively students are able to learn in school. The problems experienced by those learners attending educational institutions are presented in Figure 17. Once again, this highlights the lack of resources and support given by the government, and the frustrations students in school experience (Statistics South Africa, 2007). This figure shows that the most commonly experienced problems for learners are the payment of school fees and the lack of books. This figure illustrates national findings over a five year span, and although there is improvement in some areas, generally this five year graph highlights little improvement. These data raise important questions regarding South African education. How are students to be entitled to education when resourcing and lack of school fees are so clearly problematic? How is the national budget for education being utilised when the data below clearly show a lack of provisions for the support of effective teaching and learning?

Hence, poor educational outcomes for learners are of no surprise. Learners face great difficulties in South African school environments.
5.6. Research questions and summary

I have presented information about South African education in light of the ‘new’ democracy. I have analysed in detail the values education policies pertinent to my study. I have also critically reviewed the South African context and highlighted the ambiguities and tensions. This has revealed the demanding conditions in which these values policies are to be realised, implemented and enacted.

My study investigates the values education policies and implementation strategies put in place to accommodate these values, in a specific township school in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Through interpretive methods (which will be discussed in detail) I present findings that add to the small field of research already generated regarding values education in South Africa. The research question for this study is:

- How do the values in new South African policy manifest in a disadvantaged (township) school setting?
The intentions of this study are to find out:

- How the values stated in these new policies are taught, learnt, communicated, adopted, enacted and realised in a township school setting.
- How values become or form part of school life in practice in a disadvantaged township school environment in South Africa.
- How effective, desirable and plausible these values are in the specific context of a township school community.

This chapter presented the final component of the literature review and context description for my research. At the heart of this review lies the research question. In the next chapter, I describe the methodology that informed my study. I detail how I went about collecting the evidence needed to investigate values education in the sample school. I reveal my methodological process next.
Chapter 6. Research methodology

My methodological development took a surprising turn during the fieldwork (see Figure 18). My anticipated and planned methodological process, that was proposed and arranged prior to the collection of the evidence, bore little relevance on the actual research context. One of the primary reasons why this methodological plan and process needed to change was the interpretive nature of this study. This study is set within the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm is a network of coherent ideas about the nature of the world, and how researchers condition their patterns of thinking that underpin their research actions (Bassey, 1999, p. 42). Interpretivists explain action by interpreting what they observe and collect, retrieving the meanings embedded within the evidence (Robinson, 1993). Understanding the place and role of values in a school, and how and if those values related to the values policy framework, required me to understand reality as perceived and acted by the various members of this school community. Interpretive researchers acknowledge that they are part of the research by researching subjects to explore meanings of events and phenomena from the subjects’ perspectives (Morrison, 2002). Naturally, the researchers themselves will also have ideas, perspectives and opinions on what is being explored, and within my research, I continually needed to be aware of my positioning, my perspectives and the manner in which this influenced the research process. I address these limitations further in this chapter.

In this orientation, any attempt to understand social reality must proceed from, but not be confined to, people’s understanding of their own reality. I had to understand how the individuals in my study made sense of their reality, and what motivated them to take these actions (Strelitz, 2005, p. 63). Values would be better understood in this school community by the personal ‘human’ factor of researching the participants of a township school, and understanding if and how the values policies were recognised, articulated and enacted. I was interested not only in the physical events and behaviours that took place at the school, but also in how the principal, parents, teachers and learners at this school made sense of these, and how or whether their understanding of the specific South African values influenced their behaviour (Maxwell, 2005, p. 22).
**Methodological Development and Process**

**PLANNED**

Pre-determined codes/themes derived from policy

VALUES

- Manifesto (2001)

Awareness

Understanding

Agreement

Presence

Effectiveness

Lead questions

Theoretically driven analytic categories

Discussion/Presentation of Categories

**ACTUAL**

Participants had minimal knowledge of policies, policy values & educational strategies

No evidence of awareness (nil case)

Could not evaluate understanding as participants did not know

Did not make sense to proceed with agreement

Values were present, but not linked to policy

Could not examine effectiveness

What is going on?

(Observation)

Description of Events

Why?

(Interviews & Focus Groups)

Explanations from participants

Raw fieldwork evidence

Open-ended thematic categories

2 overall themes

EVALUATION

values

- tensions

- consequences

policies

- sufficient

- desirable

- plausible

Hence, my methodological process was...

1. DESCRIPTION of events
2. EXPLANATION from participants
3. EVALUATION “researcher’s voice”

Figure 18. The ‘Planned’ and ‘Actual’ research methods
In order for me to accurately interpret, retrieve and examine the way in which values manifested in this school environment, my plans needed change due to the context reality. Understanding the context was crucial to collecting evidence that adequately reflected and represented this school community. Hence, during the collection of evidence and during analysis (before and after fieldwork), I had to be flexible in how, when and where I collected the fieldwork material, and how I reorganised my thoughts about analysis. My methodological approach is situated in a generic qualitative study (Merriam, 1988). The essential characteristics of this approach include the goal of eliciting understanding and meaning, the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the use of fieldwork, inductive orientation to analysis and findings that are richly descriptive (Merriam, 1988). The surprising findings had to shape how I approached analysis, and this changed my previous analysis strategies. Based on the assumption that on a basic level, my research does involve ‘implementation of policy’ to a degree, I initially planned to use deductive analysis, based on theoretical categories framed around policy values, as shown in Figure 18. However, I did not plan for my research to involve purely implementation issues. Otherwise, my research question would have read: How are the values in the new South African policy ‘implemented’ in disadvantaged schools? I deliberately framed my question so that my study was not only about implementation. Based on my comprehensive review of past and current literature, I intentionally used the word ‘manifest’ to enable a more broad area for analysis and investigation, as described in Chapter One. Therefore, ‘all was not lost’ when I realised the school did not implement the policy and that my methodological development and process had to change.

I adopted general inductive analysis to evaluate my findings. The general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006) is a straightforward set of procedures that does not require an extensive knowledge of underlying philosophical and technical language associated with other qualitative analysis approaches (such as “axial coding” or “open coding” in grounded theory (Bryman & Burgess, 1994)). Thomas (2006, p. 238) provides a useful definition:

… inductive analysis refers to approaches that primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher.

Next, I describe the challenges that provoked the changes in my methodological processes and I present the planned and actual research methods (Figure 18).
6.1. The fieldwork changes and methodological developments

The reality that faced me when I got to the school in July 2009 made my planned methodology irrelevant. The real life issues and township school environment did not allow for my structured research plan, and I had to restructure how I would collect and analyse the evidence. My prior categories, shown in the ‘planned’ column of Figure 18, were based on the values declared in South African policy, most importantly the Manifesto (Department of Education, 2001a), the Values Report (Department of Education, 2000b), and the Guide (Department of Education, 2005). No one in this school community even knew what the Manifesto or other policy documents were. Hence, my theoretically driven categories bore little relevance for this school, and they were abandoned. However, values were being communicated and realised through daily school life, and the evidence that I did collect through observations, focus groups and interviews proved crucial in investigating the real life story behind these participants, and the values that were being enacted. I had to be more open in how I collected the evidence, and how I arrived at ‘where I was at’ throughout the different phases of data collection. I could not predict what would happen. The plans for observations, interviews and focus groups were still useful, but the initial coding and analysis framework was not. I allowed my new approach to analysis to be driven by induction, namely allowing the themes and categories to emerge from the data (Thomas, 2006).

6.1.1. The ‘Planned’ process

The initial plan (see Figure 18) was premised on the assumption that the school would know what the policy values were, they would be directly or indirectly ‘enacted’ (form part of school life), and that these values would be ‘visible’ in some way. Hence, my initial categories were based on the policy values. These pre-determined codes (policy values) would form my deductive categories that would be used for analysis. Five elements would be investigated in order to produce data for these pre-determined codes. Through Phase One of data collection (observation and document analysis), I would see if these values were present (presence) and if they were effective. Through focus groups and interviews, I would inquire about agreement, understanding and awareness of these values from a variety of school stakeholders. These findings would be entered electronically (using the NVivo qualitative software programme) into the pre-determined codes. This information would also highlight lead questions that would be used during interviews to interrogate previous data and anything that ‘did not make sense’ or ‘stood out’. These data would be analysed using theoretically driven categories, and from this I would be able to evaluate and discuss how the values in new South African policy manifested in a township school. However, because the participants had no knowledge of the policy values, this initial plan was abandoned.
6.1.2. The ‘Actual’ process

Before I describe this process, I signal that I use the word ‘themes’ for the emergence of codes or categories in my fieldwork evidence and analysis (see Figure 18). Social scientists use different terms for the ‘labels’ that arise from their findings and become part of the analysis process. For example, grounded theorists talk about ‘categories’ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Other terms include ‘codes’ or ‘chunks’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994), ‘labels’ or ‘data bits’ (Dey, 1993) and ‘units’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I use the word ‘theme’, described by Bernard and Ryan (2010) as more naturally indicating the fundamental concepts trying to be described.

Values were an important part of this school community, but not in the ways that were determined or encouraged by policy. At times, behaviours, attitudes and incidents directly opposed the new values. When I realised that my pre-determined codes were irrelevant, I relied heavily on observation to try and decipher what was going on at this school. Initially, I only intended to observe for the period of a month, but extended it to three months because of the need to find out what was going on. Intensive observations threw light on this question. I refer to this part of the methodology as the Description of Events. This process is described by Huberman and Miles (1998) as the first level of case analysis. It involves asking what is going on and proceeding to move towards a reasonable account of the phenomena observed. This process was best described as to “make complicated things understandable by reducing them to their component parts” (Bernard, 1988, p. 317). It is also described as a detailed rendering of participants and scenes in order to depict what is going on in the group (Creswell, 2002).

Overall, through the process of describing “what was going on” at this school, I recorded causal accounts of the values that were being taught, communicated and enacted in this school community.

Following this, I needed to explore why these things were going on. This could only sometimes be answered by observation, but focus group and individual interviews proved vital in addressing this question. During focus groups, participants described how they understood aspects of school life, why they behaved the way they did, and what effect they thought their attitudes, behaviours and actions had on how values were realised and enacted. This process is about providing an account for why these incidents and behaviours occurred. This process called for an explanatory search for the understanding of school stakeholders’ actions, from their perspective. Explanations are also conditional, partial, inconclusive and indeterminately applicable (Huberman & Miles, 1998). As part of data analysis, researchers need to distil how things work, to understand patterns of thinking and talking (Creswell, 2002). The way I approached this part of my methodological process was by relying on what participants explained (Explanations from participants). I allowed the participants to clarify the events, behaviours and incidents that came about during the description of events. By inductively analysing
this evidence, themes became clear, and I could interpret and be reflexive (Creswell, 2002) through this process. “What you cannot explain to others, you do not understand yourself. Producing an account of our analysis is not just something we do for an audience. It is also something we do for ourselves” (Dey, 1993, p. 237). There were major challenges throughout this process, described in Chapter Seven. This evidence proved crucial in understanding the values in this school. In an attempt to probe deeper, as well as to confirm (and disprove) my findings (addressing trustworthiness and credibility), the individual interviews were vital.

The fieldwork resulted in many transcripts and observation notes which were my raw evidence. Through inductive analysis, themes emerged. Towards the end of the analysis process, two major themes were the result of this fieldwork experience. Thereafter, I evaluated (Evaluation) these findings by using the values policy-driven framework and certain tensions and issues that arose directly from the evidence. I used the detailed values policy documents as a lens. The researcher draws inferences and forms conclusions about what was learned (Creswell, 2002). Creswell calls this interpretation, and it is mainly subjective, the voice of the researcher. It may involve addressing problems that arose during the fieldwork, returning to the literature on a theme being explored, and raising further questions (Creswell, 2002). I utilised all of these interpretive techniques during the evaluation process. Overall, I needed to explore the tensions between participants’ practice and their espoused theory (people’s explanations for the way they act, or have acted in the past). This required me to ask questions and critique the tensions that “stood out” in the evidence. Evaluation involves the author reflecting on and addressing the evidence to gain a larger portrait of what was learnt (Creswell, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe this process as making sense of the data, or interpreting the ‘lessons learned’. For example, if I witnessed and recorded participants talking about or enacting tolerance, I evaluated that information through the lens of how tolerance is described in policy. Was what was happening with tolerance desirable or not, based on policy directions? I also evaluated evidence by looking at the consequences of these behaviours. Were they morally defensible in light of the values detailed in policy, or were they achieving the exact/partly the opposite? Beyond this, I investigated and evaluated whether participant’s explanations were plausible and sufficient. Overall, evaluation was premised on the extent to which these practices that I observed, and the understanding I gained through participants’ responses, were conforming to or advancing the new policy values of South African education.

My methodological development from the planned to the actual describes a classic methodological tension in qualitative research; do I bring my categories to the fieldwork evidence, or do I allow my categories to emerge from the fieldwork evidence? This tension is explored below.
6.2. Inductive or deductive: A classic tension

A common question that social science researchers ask themselves at the start of a research project is whether to take a set of pre-determined categories to the fieldwork evidence during analysis, or whether to allow the categories to emerge from the research. My study is an example of this classic tension in methodology. Miles and Huberman (1998, p. 185) suggest that there is merit in both “loose”, inductively orientated designs, and “tight”, more deductively approached designs. They propose that inductive approaches are more suited towards a terrain which is unfamiliar or complex, and where the case is exploratory and descriptive. Deductive designs are good if the researcher is acquainted with the setting, and there are well-delineated concepts in the case. I had taught for many years in South African schools, and I had worked in a township community. Therefore, I felt familiar with the context and with the values policies that would inform how I collected the evidence and what evidence I needed to answer my research question. With the policy values and educational strategies as the base, deductive analysis would have worked effectively in the case of the ‘planned’ methodological development. Deduction involves reasoning from general rules to infer what should be out there and available for observation (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). However, once I arrived at the school, it became clear that participants were unaware of policies, and therefore the research became unfamiliar and complex. Although many of the pre-determined codes, questions and plans arranged prior to the fieldwork still proved useful, I had to change to suit the ‘actual’ research terrain during data collection. As Dey (1993) cautions, categories which seem fine in theory, are not valid if they do not fit the data. Categories need to relate to a wider conceptual context (in my case, how values were realised, enacted and communicated in this school environment).

My intention in this research was to describe and explain a phenomenon or pattern of relationships, and starting with pre-determined categories or themes (deductively) or allowing these to emerge gradually from the evidence (inductively), are both legitimate, and useful pathways in qualitative research (Huberman & Miles, 1998). Dey (1993, p. 104) describes that perhaps the most flexible approach is to devise “middle-order” categories, and once the data have been organised, analysis can either move towards more refined distinctions or towards a more integrated approach of linking and integrating these “middle-order” categories. Induction and deduction are used by empiricists in qualitative and quantitative fields, and it is impossible to decide whether deduction or induction is better (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).
6.3. The case study sample

I described my methodological approach as a generic qualitative study, but there are distinctive elements of case study that aptly describe my study. Merriam (1988) depicts how qualitative research is often seen as an umbrella term, covering several forms of inquiry that help us to understand social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural setting as possible. Case studies are differentiated from other qualitative study types (such as phenomenology (Merriam, 1998) and ethnography (Creswell, 2002)), because they involve intensive descriptions and analyses of a single system or unit (Merriam, 1998). The description of case study below is useful (Merriam, 1998, p. 19):

... A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved ... Case studies are distinguished from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, a program, event, group, intervention or community.

Because of my research intention to gain an in-depth, intimate knowledge of one school community, a case study seemed an appropriate design to adopt. Yin (2003, p. 13) describes case study research as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” The phenomenon in my case is the teaching, learning, realisation and enactment of values in a school. Case study research also copes with distinctive situations in which there will be many variables of interest that rely on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2003). These sources in my research were to include a range of research participants’ perspectives, namely school leaders, staff, parents and students, as well as document analysis (school mission statements, codes of conduct, disciplinary documents, school newsletters, school reports, letters to parents/students) and observations (messages portrayed during assemblies, school songs, mottos, relations between staff, teachers and students, bullying or harassment incidents). “Case studies strive to portray ‘what it is like’ to be in a particular situation, [and] to catch the close-up reality and ‘thick descriptions’ of participants” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 182). It was my intention, through these multiple sources of information, to gain ideas and knowledge of what it was like for the members of this school community to manage, share, articulate, teach and learn values.

Although my research is about understanding the reality of a single township school community, there is also an element that this information will be valuable in understanding other township schools in disadvantaged communities in South Africa. Stake (1995, p. 3) identifies this as an instrumental case study. This type of study examines a specific case mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw
a generalisation. The case itself is of secondary interest. It plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else. Stake explains how the case is still looked at in detail, its contents scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, but all because this helps the researcher to pursue the external interest. Here the choice of case is made to advance understanding of that other interest. This definition of case study describes an important aspect of my research, as investigating the role of values in this township school will generate a level of general understanding of values in South African township schools. It is my aim that the findings generated from this study will inform future decisions and practices in township school communities across South Africa.

The selection of the sample school was a crucial element in light of my research question. The school used in this study was chosen for a specific reason; purposeful selection (Maxwell, 2005), in an attempt to maximise quality evidence and investigate my research intentions and questions.

The reason for choosing this school was because of its sound reputation among teachers in the community. It would have been difficult to investigate how new South African values manifested in a school that was totally dysfunctional. I needed a school where teaching and learning was effective and where there were teachers and learners who attended daily. I relied on word of mouth and suggestions from other educators in the Eastern Cape province for my choice of school. Maxwell (2005) identifies purposeful selection as a good option for sampling in qualitative studies. He describes this as a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that cannot be received as well from any other choices.

My fieldwork began in July of 2009. I spent six months in this school community collecting the evidence that informed my findings chapters. The school is situated on the edge of an informal settlement (township) in East London, South Africa (see Figure 19 and Figure 20). This is in the Eastern Cape province, which was described in Chapter Five as the poorest South African province. This school is considered to be a functional educational institution (one of the best schools in the Mdantsane township, according to Xhosa-speaking, black education colleagues in East London), educating over 990 learners from the Mdantsane township. Classes vary from sixty to seventy learners in a single classroom.
This school is a section 20, quintile 4 school, as described in Chapter Two. The school is dual medium (Xhosa, first language and English, second language) and educates learners from Grade Five to Grade Seven (11-13 years). However, the lack of resources and funding, and poorly trained educators, create a most challenging environment in which teaching and learning take place.

School fees per annum are R200 (NZD 40), but half the parents are unable to afford this cost (Individual Interview, Principal). There are currently 26 educators at the school, making the teacher-learner ratio well over 1:40. The school agreed to participate in this research, with both the department officials and the school principal being involved in this process. My fieldwork extended over a six month period (July – December 2009).

6.3.1. History of the school

Because of the unique South African political history, it is useful to paint a picture of the school’s history. Previously, this school was situated in the black homeland of the Ciskei, educating learners under the Bantu Education system. The timeline below shows the school’s history and leadership development. This sheds light on current practices and organisational culture [II, P].

- 1977 School opened under Bantu education, in the Ciskei homeland. Current principal was employed as one of the first educators at the school. School built a reputation for excellence amidst difficult apartheid circumstances.
- 1990 New principal, fundraising for extra classrooms, dynamic staff, current principal was HOD, then a few years on, she became the deputy principal.
- 2002 School is awarded a prestigious prize, school fundraising for twenty-five computers from parent body and a further donation for more computers. Extra school block (four classrooms) completed from funds raised by parents, staff and the department.
- 2003 The current principal becomes the ‘acting principal’, as the previous school leader left suddenly.
2005 Current principal officially appointed, changes in staff due to redeployment, unhappy staff, and changes in organisational culture of the school.

2009 Time of the research.

Next, I describe how I went about collecting the evidence I needed to investigate my research question.

6.4. Collecting the evidence

My fieldwork was divided into three phases (Figure 21).

6.4.1. Phase One: Observation

Phase One involved observation of the school community. The traditions and rituals I wanted to observe included assemblies (value-laden messages relayed); special occasions (appreciation of special days or ceremonies); events in the school calendar (Sports Days – teamwork/competitiveness); parent-teacher evenings (involvement of parents); staff meetings; photographs and pictures displayed around the school (values evident); and relationships among school leaders, staff and between the learners (participatory, authoritative or other types of relationships). The main purpose for observation was to provide myself with a perspective on how to continue structuring and planning an effective research process, as well as to identify key elements relating to my research questions that would equip me for further investigation at the school (in practice).

Observation avoids relying on what participants may say about their school, on questionnaires and in written accounts. Researchers may also be able to ‘see’ what participants cannot (Foster, 1996). For example, if communication between the principal and teachers was volatile and not based on mutual respect (such as shouting, verbal abuse, verbal bullying or negative remarks), this type of relationship may have become part of the norm in the organisational culture of the school. Participants may not be aware of the ‘negativity’ or the lack of mutual respect; it had just become the way things were (as
opposed to the educational strategy of ‘nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools’). This would relay important information about values. Observation also gives the researcher information on those members of the school community who are unable or unwilling to take part in interviews. For example, the young learners at the school can be observed, but may find questionnaires or interviews difficult. Observation lets one draw inferences about perspectives that one could not obtain by relying exclusively on interview data (Maxwell, 2005, p. 94). Also, observation may highlight aspects of participants’ perspectives that they are reluctant to state directly in an interview. Observation notes were written up daily in thick text formats and entered into MS word documents, filed under date. Specific detail of observation events are detailed in Appendix B. Overall, I wanted to see whether these values were coherent with those in policy and how they were being communicated or dealt with. During fieldwork, as I became more familiar with the school reality, observation became one of the most important tools for collecting evidence.

Document analysis of school documents, such as school reports, letters, artifacts, pictures, textbooks, school vision and mission statements, was also intended to form part of Phase One. Documents, according to Merriam (1998), refer to a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand. One key advantage that document analysis offers is that, “they do not intrude upon or alter the setting in ways that the investigator might” (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 13). All texts embody a number of purposeful choices about how reality is to be displayed, and these choices have consequences for what it is that a text can tell me about that reality (Freebody, 2003, p. 175). For example, one document that I intended to analyse was the learners’ school reports. I intended to look for references or comments made about the learners’ development of values, character, morals or ethics. I wanted to analyse these in light of South African policy values (Do they match up? Is there agreement on these values? Are teachers aware of these values?). I proposed to try and observe how these ‘espoused, document values’ aligned with school life and school stakeholders’ views on values. I sought to see how these values were manifested in learning outcomes, and how they were communicated to the parents through the school report. The detailed plan for document analysis can be seen in Appendix A. However, documents were not available to me as I had hoped. Many of the documents that were said to be available never came to light. I describe the reasons behind these occurrences in Chapter Seven.

6.4.2. Phase Two: Focus groups

Phase Two involved focus groups with various stakeholders of the school. Focus group interviews are defined in many ways; organised discussion (Kitzinger, 1994), collective activity (Powell, Single, &
Lloyd, 1996) and interaction (Kitzinger, 1994). Powell and Single (1996, p. 499) define focus groups in the following way:

a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research.

This quote is useful because I wanted my participants to explore the questions and topics together, feeding off one another and reflecting on one another’s responses and feelings. I wanted to rely on the interaction within the group. A key characteristic of focus groups is that the data produced reflect insights shared amongst a group of research participants. I adopted an informal approach to these focus groups, and allowed the questions to emerge from the immediate context. This increased the salience and relevance of the questions, and matched the specific circumstances observed in Phase One. It highlighted areas of conflict or ‘things that didn’t make sense’. It also provided preparation material so that focus groups generated valid data to carry through to the next phase. Cohen and Manion (2000, p. 288) regard focus groups as useful for developing themes, topics and schedules for subsequent interviews and/or questionnaires. Hence, the transcribed text from these focus groups was investigated for individual interviews as well as to validate and interrogate the evidence from Phase One.

For example, ‘respect’ and ‘tolerance’ were described as values in a vision and mission statement at the school, but I observed that there was a culture of bullying amongst the learners on the playground. These incidents were analysed and discussed during focus groups and interviews for clarification and deeper understanding. Through this joint exploration, I investigated if these participants were aware of values, if they felt values were important, how they responded to values teaching and learning, if they thought values were important, and how they rated policy values and allowed for group discussions to develop from these questions. However, it proved impossible to gain access to all the participant groups that I initially planned for, and this required me to be flexible within the evidence collection process. I discuss the reasons for this in the next chapter. Focus groups that did progress were audio-recorded using a digital dictaphone. I transcribed these interviews immediately after each focus group. This information was inserted into Microsoft (MS) Word files, stored under participant groups. Transcripts were made available to participants for confirmation. Detailed questions for this phase of data collection can be found in Appendix C.

6.4.3. Phase Three: Individual interviews

Phase Three was in-depth, individual interviews with school stakeholders. I intended to interview the principal, deputy principal, school governing body chairperson, a few teachers, a few parents and other
Yin (2003) explains how interviews can take several forms, but most commonly in qualitative research case studies they are open-ended in nature. I was able to ask participants to propose their own insights, feelings and perceptions, and I was not limited by a rigid, structured question and answer format. For example, what do particular participants think about the values in South African policy? Do they agree with them? Are there other values that they think are more important? What do they understand by the values and strategies proposed in policy? How do they feel they teach or model these values? This allowed for even further investigation and inquiry and took participants ‘out of their comfort zone’. It also avoided reiterated, espoused, rehearsed or practised responses to questions, as questions were open-ended and evidence from previous stages of the fieldwork was used to inquire about values-related incidents. For example, if I observed behaviours in the classroom that highlighted values enactments, such as stealing or bullying, as the researcher I was able to avoid prepared responses by presenting the principal or teachers with a directly observed incident. Interviews proved most helpful in gaining the participant’s voice and their accounts of the incidents and occasions that were observed. The main objective in this phase was to obtain in-depth information about how values manifested in this school community. Individual interview questions can be found in Appendix D. Together, these three phases allowed for extensive fieldwork evidence that related to values, and resulted in surprising findings. In the next section, I discuss how I analysed the fieldwork evidence.

6.5. Analysing the evidence

The analysis process began informally after the first day of fieldwork. In light of the surprising context, I had to be continually ‘analysing’ to try and make sense of the context in which my research was taking place. Creswell (2002) calls this ‘preliminary exploratory analysis’, which means that the researcher obtains a general sense of the data, makes notes of ideas, thinks about the organisation of the data and considers whether more data are needed in particular areas of interest. “Breaking down the data and organizing it … allows researchers to retrieve and examine all the data on particular topics, themes and categories” (Foster, 1996, p. 64). This process of breaking down and organising the data aligns with other qualitative frameworks (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Birley and Moreland (1998) describe coding as rendering the data into a form in which they can be analysed. This is consistent with “pattern coding” (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data analysis under general inductive analysis is carried out through multiple readings and interpretations of the raw data, the inductive component. The findings arise directly from the analysis of the raw data, not from prior expectations or models. Multiple readings of my observation notes, focus group transcripts and interview transcripts allowed several themes to emerge. These themes presented themselves consistently throughout the analysis of the raw data and appeared to significantly determine the role and place of values in the school.
Once I had all my transcripts in front of me, I followed a general inductive approach to analysis, for the following purposes (Thomas, 2006, p. 238):

1. To condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format. This was established through many readings of the evidence. Themes emerged and this allowed the evidence to be condensed into a summary format, under nine initial themes.
2. To establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure that these links are both transparent and defensible. This was achieved by addressing my research question and intentions in light of the initial themes. Links and tensions became evident. The result from this process was two overarching themes.
3. To develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the text data. These overarching themes revealed a model or theory on the most prominent ways in which values were being communicated and enacted in this school.

For example, one of these initial nine themes was ‘Religion’. Religion arose directly from the fieldwork evidence, as participants in the focus groups and interviews, as well as observation notes, referenced ‘Religion’ as a prominent force in the school’s organisational culture and values teaching and learning. Religion was given a brief description, to aid the process of breaking up the raw text into this category. Religion was described as any event that related to or made reference to God, prayer or the Bible in conjunction with moral behaviour. Text that related to class prayers, religious messages in assembly, class behaviours and the singing of hymns, was added to this category and evaluated in light of values realisation and enactment. At times, I needed to draw inferences beyond the raw evidence (Punch, 2005). Slowly, through this process of re-reading, re-analysing and drawing inferences from the evidence, it became clear that religion was also linked to other behaviours and incidents that occurred during the fieldwork period (for example, classroom discipline). Comparisons and further development of the initial themes allowed for links and new understandings to emerge. For example, I further concluded that both religion and discipline produced a new understanding; that they were both popular aspects of school life under apartheid and were considered as the ‘old way of doing things’. This created a much broader and more complex platform from which to interpret my findings. This process of interpretation means the researcher takes a step back and forms some larger meaning about the phenomena based on either personal views or other literature (Creswell, 2002). I utilised this technique in my evaluation of the evidence.

No hierarchy or sequence was evident in the evolution of the system used to analyse and present my findings. Overall, two key themes evolved that encompassed all nine ‘initial’ themes, which in some
cases became sub themes. These two themes are used to present the discussion and evaluation of my findings.

6.5.1. Why not use qualitative data analysis software?

Initially, with my pre-determined theoretically categories, I had planned to use the NVivo qualitative data analysis software to enhance the analysis process. Immediately after my evidence was recorded, it was typed and stored under ‘date and label’ in MS Word files. A common format for all data and transcripts was achieved (Thomas, 2006). The evidence was printed off and read many times by myself as the evaluator. Because I had no idea how many themes there would be, or how these themes were linked and connected, I decided against using the NVivo programme, which suits a more deductive analysis technique. As Creswell (2002) describes, researchers can decide between hand-analysis or computer-analysis with qualitative data. With hand-analysis, the researcher reads the data, marks it by hand, and divides it into parts. It can involve colour-coding, and cutting and pasting text. Computer-analysis is used to store, analyse and make sense of the data using a computer program (Creswell, 2002). I found that through my process of data analysis, had I chosen to use a computer program, I would have ended up doing twice the work. This is because of the process of iteration. Iteration is described as the cycle back and forth between different parts of evidence. It involves returning to previous evidence in order to ‘fill the gaps’ and to proceed with understanding. This is precisely how my themes came about. Initially, I needed to note patterns in the evidence. I needed to cluster and shuffle ‘bits’ of text. At times I needed to tally and compare, place ‘bits’ next to another and move them apart. This process of cycling through the fieldwork evidence is a common practice in qualitative research (Creswell, 2002). The exploring, reading and re-reading was done manually, so that I could shuffle and mix different sets of evidence and have a large amount of text available to see at one time, as opposed to a screen. Bernard and Ryan (2010) refer to ‘cutting and sorting’ as a successful way in which to process and analyse text. Once my themes had finally emerged, it seemed pointless to then go over the text again electronically and enter the already coded ‘bits’ of evidence into parent-nodes and child-nodes in the NVivo programme. This sorting and analysis had already been done, and data were safely stored in manually accessible paper files for retrieval and evaluation.

6.6. Ethical considerations

Research of this nature has an ethical facet due to human participants, human behaviours and human attitudes, and the processes that contribute to these things (Crano & Brever, 2002). Therefore, the rights of participants were a key feature in ethical considerations. Ethical issues, which arose from this project and were considered, included:
• Participants’ rights.
• Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy.
• Voluntary participation.
• Informed consent.
• Participants being able to stop the interview and/or the tape-recoding at any point throughout the interview process.
• Participants being given the opportunity to review, add or delete information from transcripts.
• Participants having the right to withdraw from the research at any point until the stage of data analysis.

A major aspect in qualitative research involving humans is that involvement must be voluntary and participants should be informed truthfully of the nature of the research (Snook, 2000a). These points were explicitly explained in the information sheets, detailed in Appendix E, F, G and H, for each participant. Other ethical considerations included:

• Consent being sought from the school principal, the education department official, and the school management team. Site access was obtained from the school principal.
• Teachers’, learners’ and parents’ participation in this study being entirely voluntary, even though the school principal and provincial education department gave consent to the research being undertaken at the school.
• Parents/Guardians giving consent for children directly involved in the interview process. Parents and guardians were requested to discuss the research with the learners involved in the interviews. Children had the opportunity to ask questions and they decided whether or not they wanted to be involved. Verbal assent was obtained from the learners directly involved.
• A general letter being sent to all parents of the school informing them of this research. Consent was not required from them for observation (the school principal agreed to this).
• The researcher showing an awareness of linguistic, political, cultural and social sensitivity regarding the background of these participants (Being an Eastern Cape South African, I was aware of the implications of working with the Xhosa culture). Although the school is a dual medium school (English/Xhosa), an interpreter was made available if participants required this.
• The researcher showing an awareness of the possible power relationship between the researcher and participants, and being sensitive to this fact when conducting the research. Therefore, a local contact (Mrs Zondeki\(^5\)) was incorporated in this research design as a point of reference for the school, should they require this. Mrs Zondeki, a Xhosa school teacher in East London,

\(^5\) Name changed.
agreed to be this point of reference. This contact was approached as a culturally and socially relevant point of reference should the school have any concerns. I also used her as a point of ‘neutrality’ to ensure that I was recording the information fairly and that I placed this school community in a position that was fair to them in my observation notes. She read and commented on all my observation notes. Mrs Zondeki signed a contract, and agreed to keep any information shared by both the participants and the researcher confidential.

Due to the social and economic background of these parents and learners, compensation for travel and time, and the providing of food during interviews, were offered in a culturally appropriate manner.

6.7. Limitations

The validity of research is not guaranteed by following some prescribed procedure. Maxwell (2005, p. 105) explains that the viewpoint that methods could guarantee validity was characteristic of early forms of positivism which held that scientific knowledge could ultimately be reduced to logic that was securely grounded in ‘real’ data. Trustworthiness and credibility are seen as relevant standards of rigour to be used in studies conducted in a qualitative framework (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The most applicable trustworthiness technique I employed in my research was to conduct stakeholder checks or member-checks, and a research audit, (comparing the data with other research findings and interpretations, which are presented in my discussion chapters). This research audit addresses dependability (Thomas, 2006). Another crucial technique utilised in my research was disconfirmation (Robinson & Lai, 2006). I describe these important considerations below.

6.7.1. Member-checks

Member-checking (Cohen, et al, 2000) by the participants involved in the different phases of my study, enhanced the rigour and trustworthiness and ensured that findings were presented accurately. By accuracy, I mean that I attempted to detect and correct errors that would affect the evaluation of the evidence. I wanted to ensure that I had recorded appropriate causal accounts of the incidents, behaviours and events that influenced how values were realised, communicated and enacted. Stakeholder checks were utilised by giving participants the opportunity to comment on themes and interpretations made in the focus groups. This occurred by conversation with participants at the end of all focus groups and interviews. I used member-checks at multiple levels, considering the challenges I faced in this school context. I wanted to ensure three things:
1. Did I accurately record observed phenomena? This was achieved by asking participants about the incidents and behaviours in the evidence and asking them to comment on them. For example, during assemblies I recorded that values were being ‘taught’ through the messages and prayers being relayed during these events. Participants confirmed that it was their intention to ‘teach’ values through these messages and prayers. They believed religion was the way they ‘taught’ values.

2. Did I accurately record and interpret the participants’ account? After all focus groups and interviews, I wanted to ensure that I had accurately recorded the participants’ explanations. For example, teachers articulated that they did not incorporate physical punishment in their classes. But, they thought that corporal punishment should be brought back to schools, as they did not agree with the abolition of corporal punishment. I had to ensure that I had interpreted their perspectives correctly. In this case, although they believed in corporal punishment, they did not use it.

3. Does the participant’s account match up with other evidence? This also proved difficult, but it was necessary in order to ensure I had accurate evidence. This cross-checking difficulty is described in Chapter Seven. Continuing with the example above, there were occasions when physicality was observed in the classroom, such as pinching, hitting, and slapping. But educators denied being physical with the learners. When this mismatch occurred after the educators’ focus groups, I investigated other avenues and different member-checks to ensure I had accurate observation evidence. The learners’ focus groups shed light on this matter. I used member-checks at this level to also ensure accurate findings.

Robinson (1993) signals that the process of gaining agreement may not always bear any relationship to the accuracy of the participants’ perceptions. This proved most applicable to my research context, as participants, at times, covered up certain incidents and behaviours in the school environment. Although they confirmed and agreed that transcriptions were correct (their espoused theory), the member-check process did not always ensure accuracy and reflect practice. It ensured that participants were happy with what they had communicated about the issue, not the reality of the issue.

When subject matter comprises attributions about the members’ understandings, motives and desires, such checks seem particularly apposite, since actors have a privileged, though not necessarily infallible, access to this type of knowledge. One source of fallibility is people’s blindness to possible incongruence between their espoused theory, which is typically the source of their judgements about themselves, and their theory-in-use (Robinson, 1993, p. 118).
It is important to be clear about what the researcher wants to check with member-checks (Robinson, 1993). In my case, I utilised member checks for different levels of accuracy. Although these checks did not always reflect reality, they ensured that the participants’ perspectives were accurately recorded. In the case of a mismatch in the evidence (as with the physical discipline example), I investigated other options in an attempt to diagnose and survey the mismatch. The next chapter will detail why this was a very important part of my fieldwork. Because of the ‘going-ons’ at the school, I knew the member-checks were not always ‘accurate’. But, what I would be interpreting and evaluating on the positioning and response of the participants, was accurately captured in the evidence (through participants’ explanations). “At the level of observed phenomena, the researcher needs to check that he or she is working with data that are reliable” (Robinson, 1993, p. 118). Clarification from the members was sought to ensure that the findings were reliable and accurately reflected, either by observation, or participants’ explanations.

### 6.7.2. Disconfirmation

Yin (2003, p. 10) encourages every case study investigator to work hard to report all evidence fairly. One of the most important ways that I addressed this was through the process of disconfirmation. Robinson and Lai (2006) explain how acknowledging you are wrong, when assumptions and conclusions are mistaken, is a vital step in improving validity. They also emphasise that findings should be expressed with tentativeness and open-mindedness, since the possibility for mistakes is always present. A bias that limits validity is confirmation bias. This is described as the tendency to give more weight to data and data sources that confirm rather than disconfirm your prior assumptions and hypothesis (Robinson & Lai, 2006, p. 59). Three strategies were used to assist with this process.

Firstly, make emerging conclusions very explicit by writing them down or communicating them to others, was incorporated in my study (Robinson & Lai, 2006). Throughout data collection, conclusions were recorded and communicated to members of the school community as well as the local, cultural contact. For example, one issue that kept surfacing throughout the stages of fieldwork was the topic of human rights. Human rights presented itself as a potential barrier to values education. I concluded that this was an important aspect in values enactment and realisation, and confirmed it with participants during interviews and informal discussions with the cultural contact. The contact also shared valuable insight into ‘going-ons’ in the community, and better ways to record information that was more fair and accurate in this context. For example, physical discipline in the classroom was first recorded by me as ‘abuse’, because of the social and cultural context from which I was analysing. But, the cultural contact established that it was exactly how corporal punishment was administered in this type of school, years ago. I then recorded it as ‘physical discipline’ in my initial observation notes, in order to
be more sensitive to the participants involved and the environment I was in. I also noted that this type of behaviour was established in past practice during apartheid.

Next, describing what I would expect to see or hear if my tentative interpretation was incorrect or oversimplified, proved a useful technique. During my fieldwork, I attempted to find instances when human rights were used as a beneficial tool for values education. I questioned participants about the other ways in which human rights were understood and utilised in this school environment. I attempted to find information or comments that would prove my initial findings incorrect. Thereafter, I reviewed the information obtained to make sure appropriate weight had been given to both confirming and disconfirming evidence (Robinson & Lai, 2006). This involved reviewing the raw evidence to ensure that both supporting and disconfirming evidence had been taken into account. I analysed my raw evidence intensively, to try and distinguish between incidents, events and comments that contributed to human rights being used as a positive tool for values teaching and learning, and instances where they prevented effective values education. This process resulted in the ‘Standing out’ sections presented in the findings and discussion chapters.

Another aspect I needed to be extremely aware of was researcher ‘bias’ (Maxwell, 2005). I had initial ideas about what townships were like and what township schools were like. I had read many articles in newspapers and reports of the behaviours and events that occurred in these environments. I needed to be aware of my existing preconceptions and the selection of evidence that ‘stood out’ to me as a researcher. This also created an awareness of the second threat Maxwell cautions researchers to be aware of - the threat he expressed as ‘reactivity’. This is generally understood as the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied. Hammersley and Atkinson (in Maxwell, 2005, p. 106) describe how eliminating the actual influence of the researcher is impossible, and the goal of qualitative research is not to eliminate this influence, but to understand it and to use it productively. The power relationship between me and the participants was a limitation I needed to be aware of. As a white researcher in a black school environment, every measure was taken to ensure that I was aware of the assumptions I took for granted or made throughout the fieldwork process. Hence, the use of a local, cultural contact was crucial. This contact understood the community, the culture and the environment in which my research took place. Continual informal discussions and advice from her was crucial in allowing for elimination of my direct influence on the setting and my preconceptions of the evidence collected. The local contact established stronger accuracy and objectivity during the data collection and analysis stages. For example, the physicality used for discipline by the educators in the classroom was something I did not understand. Initially, I interpreted this as evidence of physical abuse. The cultural contact described how corporal punishment in township school environments was common,
and within the African culture it is still used. She explained that many of these learners came from home lives where domestic violence was an everyday occurrence. She also revealed information about African culture and traditions that shaped the authoritative nature of the relationships between teachers and students.

These limitations provided a systematic way to ensure the evidence I collected best reflected the true context of this township school community, and that the evidence gave an accurate picture of the values enactments and communication involving school stakeholders.

In summary, this chapter described the design, methods and processes followed to investigate the questions that guided my fieldwork. I explored the methodological rationale, explained the specific research phases, and outlined how I went about collecting and analysing the fieldwork evidence. Next, I reveal a narrative chapter which describes the challenges of the fieldwork reality and how I addressed these throughout my study.
Chapter 7. The story behind the fieldwork

I have taught for many years in South African schools. My previous teaching experience, however, did not prepare me for the fieldwork. I had little knowledge or true sense of what went on in township schools. I discuss this unique experience with the reader to share relevant and useful information before presenting my findings. ‘The story’ is the prelude to the more structured and formal findings chapters.

The fieldwork period encouraged me to go beyond the comfort zones of my privileged South African life. The township school where I collected my findings was only fifty kilometres from my home. Township life is in the newspaper and media daily. Townships are areas where white South Africans do not go, because of their fear of violence and crime. Many people thought this research endeavour was risky, but a desire to uncover and experience the true South African education reality was the motivation. With that in mind, the observation stage began on 20 July 2009.

7.1. The research reality

No matter how many times ethical considerations and fieldwork stages were studied, revised and memorised, the reality is that I could not completely plan for the data collection process. The good evidence was uncovered and explored beyond just material collected from interviews, focus groups and document analysis. Observation became one of the most useful tools for collecting meaningful evidence. As the researcher, I tried to be everywhere; in the classroom, on the playground, in the staffroom and in the principal’s office. Through this process, I uncovered much more than had been planned. The unknown void – a township school – soon became a place where the theory, studied prior to the fieldwork, and ground-level practice began interacting. As Yin (2003, p. 58) describes, the demands of a case study on your intellect, ego and emotions can be far greater than those of any other research strategies. These difficulties are largely due to the fact that data collection procedures are not automatic. The investigator needs to take advantage of unexpected opportunities rather than being trapped by them, and also exercise sufficient care against potentially biased procedures.

Flexibility was vital, and original plans needed to be changed regularly. This was a school trying to do the job of providing an environment of teaching and learning in demanding circumstances. These participants could not adjust their daily routines for a data collection structure. Flexibility, patience and adaptability were the foundations for this stage in my study. The majority of my time at the school was
spent observing, making connections, and slowly planning how rich and valid evidence could be recorded.

Other difficulties included having the research vehicle broken into, which delayed previous plans and arrangements made for interviews and observations. Electronic devices (dictaphone and hard drive) were taken, and these had to be replaced, which took time. Yet, being adaptable and flexible with the research structure allowed for rethinking, restructuring and a more real, meaningful fieldwork experience.

7.2. The participants

I was at the school most days during my six month fieldwork period. I waited for opportunities to discuss interviews, to plan focus groups, and to describe what these processes would require from participants. From the beginning, the staff and principal dealt with my requests with ease and friendliness. Nothing was impossible, and although many plans to interview and run focus groups fell through, the principal and staff were always accommodating. They were exceptionally helpful in rearranging times and places for the data collection to happen.

The one hurdle that was not overcome was gaining access to parents. No matter how much contact I tried to initiate through letters and telephone calls, it proved impossible to include them in the data collection phase as originally planned. Many parents had no interest in involving themselves in any aspect of their children’s schooling. Others worked in the city (East London) and were too tired to meet before or after work. Parents were allegedly sick, absent or drunk, according to educator reports [FG, T]. Telephone calls and letters received no replies. At one stage, I waited at the school gate in the mornings to try and approach parents who were dropping off their children at school, but this proved futile. Children generally walked or caught a taxi (small bus) to school. Towards the end of the fieldwork period, I managed to arrange to meet one parent at their workplace in the city during their forty-five minute lunch break. It was most beneficial to get at least one parent’s perspective, and this material guided further understanding of the contextual reality for these participants.

7.3. Resources and support

The first reality check I encountered at the school was the considerable lack of resources. For the first three months, every other day the school had the problem of no running water. Hence, ablution facilities did not work. At the same time, there were extensive electricity shortages, which meant that the few electronic resources the school had were not functional. The school educated about nine
hundred learners (the principal could not give me an exact number due to a lack of updated documentation), and these learners all shared a small ablution area of around fifteen toilets. The classrooms were very small, considering each class consisted of sixty-four learners on average. Each learner was able to sit at a desk, often sharing desks. They were unable to move around the class during teaching time. If the teacher required a student to come to the front of the class, the student had to climb up on to his or her desk, and hop over the other desks to get the chalkboard or the teacher’s desk. Teachers could not walk around to monitor the learners’ work. There were few textbooks available, and these were shared amongst the entire grade. For example, sixty-four textbooks would be shared by three hundred learners. Textbooks would be passed from class to class during lessons. The library was non-existent. Only a few tattered books on a shelf resembled any type of library environment. There was a functional computer laboratory, but on further investigation, it seemed only half of the computers worked. Many of the students and teachers did not know how to operate a computer. The computer teacher had extremely basic skills himself, and was therefore unable to fix or repair the broken computers.

Teachers explained how they were promised many educational and material resources for their school, but promises were hardly kept by the department. I also barely encountered a parent at the school, and only a few classrooms displayed posters, notices or learners’ work. There were a few broken windows in some classrooms, and almost every classroom had broken desks or chairs. Initially, it seemed remarkable that teaching and learning could occur in such a challenging environment.

7.4. Impression management

The participants at this school incorporated impression management techniques in their daily lives. Managing impressions involves the conscious or unconscious process whereby people influence the impressions or perceptions other people make during interactions. There is a level of regulation or control of the information communicated between the parties, either directly or indirectly. Everyone at one time or another has used impression management in their daily lives, and at this school it was not a technique adopted purely for this study. This was a trusted means of behaving to give the impression to outsiders of this school being an effective teaching and learning organisation. This behaviour was monitored from the first day of observation. Teachers gave the impression of being in class, attentive to learners’ teaching and learning needs (as indicated in interview evidence, and when I asked for permission to observe specific classes during the observation stage of the research). The school management team gave the impression that they held regular meetings, that parents were supportive and that a functional governing body was in place (as recorded in participant comments). During the focus groups, participants used impression management as a technique to assure observers that
everyone was doing their job to create an effective school. Even the learners felt the need to assure me that the correct impression was given, initially declaring that teachers were in class and attending to their needs. These behaviours all reflect how things should be. Yet, the reality slowly emerged as the days passed. My observation notes clearly depicted a different account.

The technique of impression management provides the basis for the other challenges faced during data collection. In the beginning, the participants tried to control the impression that was gained by me of school life. Teachers seemed to make a special effort to teach, and the principal would be reassuring of certain requirements pertaining to my research needs (namely, the school governing body, the extra-curricular timetable and activities, parent-teacher meeting dates and times). The principal initially gave the impression that she was in control as the leader of an effective school. Reflecting on the evidence collected, the most impression-conscious person was the principal. Gaining information on her reality, as experienced on a daily basis at the school, was a challenging task. Throughout the fieldwork period, she was aware of her role and the importance of her position. Impression management was the first challenge confronted during the fieldwork experience.

7.5. Deciphering the truth from the perceived ‘fibs’

The next difficulty faced after impression management was the manner in which this manifested; a more in-depth layer involving pretence or denial with fibs. It was difficult to uncover the truth while trying to gain acceptance into this school community, and organise and collect valid evidence needed for my research. Although these fibs were a tool used by all members of this school community to try and cope with their reality (such as ‘white lies’ to cover up what was happening behind the scenes), it made data collection awkward, and recording accurate evidence was complicated. Participants were so submerged in this reality, that fibs became a routine practice in school life, used at every level in a system that does not work well. I briefly describe a few examples.

Part of the new educational strategy for South African schools is the involvement of an effective school governing body. The primary aim of school governance reforms in South Africa was the democratisation of schooling by electing representatives of the governing body, including parents, educators, non-educator staff and in secondary schools only, learners (Karlsson, 2002). Regardless of school size, parents always held a majority through a fifty percent plus one member representation, and the chairperson had to be a parent (Karlsson, 2002, p. 329). As part of the research plan, interactions of the school governing body (SGB) would reveal valuable information for this research. Material was to be collected during SGB meetings, and interviews were to be held with parents who
served on this committee. The school leadership team would hold key information regarding the values
initiatives in South Africa. How they perceived their role in ensuring values education was happening
in the school was important. It took months to realise that there was no functional governing body at
this school (confirmed after several observation notes and comments were presented to participants
during interviews and focus groups). Although the principal assured me several times that I would be
informed of school governing body meetings, when the minutes were written up and when these
parents were at the school, this never occurred. The two members of the school management team,
namely two heads of department, continued to suggest that the principal be asked to address these
concerns. They were reluctant to give their opinion or advice.

The principal’s intention with these fibs was not malicious. These were her survival techniques and
coping mechanisms. She used this technique with teachers, parents and department of education
officials, as many of these groups used the same technique with her (as recorded in my observations,
and participants’ comments). Parents would invent reasons as to why they could not come to the
school. Teachers covered up their whereabouts when absent or missing from class. Department
officials would fabricate stories about resources being delivered to the school, or that funding or
training would be made available. Fibbing is what she had to do in order to make sense of the reality
that faced her on a daily basis, as with all other stakeholders. Parents did not come to the school when
asked several times by their children’s educators to discuss important issues, such as learning
difficulties and behavioural problems. Why would parents be committed to be a representative on the
governing body, when this would take further time from their already busy lives? Why would they
support the school, when they (according to the teacher, staff and principal interview responses) had
no interest or commitment in anything to do with the school or their children’s education?

The technique of fibbing is used to describe the manner in which the principal and teachers survived
from day to day. The principal would falsify events to make it appear she was accountable for the
many structures and frameworks that needed to be in place. There seemed to be initial effort on her
part to get a governing body up and running, but she had since given up. Her individual interview
resulted in interesting findings. For her (and other stakeholders), it was easier to misrepresent
proceedings than to face reality and her superiors in the department of education, who would judge her
leadership capabilities. One would think that the department would eventually find out, but it seemed
that the principal got away with this sort of behaviour— for how long, one cannot say. It seemed,
according to the members of this school community, that the department officials utilised similar
techniques of fabricating promises regarding funding, resources and pay increases. Questions about the
effectiveness and efficiency of the department of education remain at the forefront of this context, but
this would be an entirely different study. Further evidence and findings will be presented regarding the role of the department of education in daily school life. Hence, this technique further complicated an already challenging environment.

The fibbing technique was witnessed first hand during my first two days at the school, when the department of education sent a panel of eight officials to do a school review. The experience was valuable for this research, and allowed for the recording of useful information at the onset of my fieldwork. There were many aspects of this school reality that became evident over these two days, especially the fact that the life for these teachers and principal was one of pretence. The principal would assure department officials that registers, log books and timetables were up-to-date. Yet, when officials asked for evidence, the book would have gone missing or another teacher would have ‘taken it’ or be ‘using it’ (fieldwork notes show that specific documentation needed for document analysis was never available over the entire fieldwork period). Department officials accepted this, and moved on to the next agenda item. Fibbing was used in this environment in an attempt to misguide superiors and avoid being actively accountable. No consequences followed (as recorded in observation notes and interview material). I had to plan how to work around this organisational habit to ensure I collected rigorous research evidence.

The efforts in trying to get hold of parents for focus groups and interviews were again met with misrepresentation. Teachers stated on several occasions that there were parent-teacher evenings held at the school, and that these meetings could be used for data collection. But there was no evidence of this over the six-month fieldwork period. The same was said about extra-curricular timetables and the learners participating in sports and debating teams. There were only a few observations that suggested these activities took place, and it raised suspicion about whether this was part of school life or part of a cover-up tactic for officials and researchers. My learning and judgement at this stage was that there was a considerable gap between what the system required of schools, how schools actually operated, and a cover-up of the difference between what was supposed to be happening and what was actually happening.

### 7.6. Cross-checking difficulties

Further to the difficulties discussed above, cross-checking also proved to be a complicated task. This is because deception was so entrenched in the organisational culture of the school. For example, when certain observed behaviours or events in the classroom were mentioned, the teachers would use denial, diversion or no response during focus groups to avoid commenting. All school stakeholder groups
were interviewed; hence ambiguities and disconfirmations were highlighted. There were several instances when one group of participants would assure me of the way things were done, yet another would prove the initial response wrong. Therefore, factual observation notes were primarily relied on during these focus groups and interviews. Observation notes provided the foundation for further probing into participant’s opinions and perspectives of school life. For example, the teachers assured me that they were involved in extra-curricular activities in the afternoons, but observation notes illustrated that this was not the case. Yet, during individual interviews and focus groups, teachers informed me that they did organise extra-curricular activities. It finally rested on the learners to validate my observation notes, and to prove what was said previously by educators and the principal as incorrect. Hence, cross-checking proved challenging, and in most cases it was not achieved by all groups of this school community.

7.7. Language issues

Although the school is an English-medium school (Xhosa is the second language) and lessons are taught in English, there were times when subtle nuances of daily activities were missed due to a language issue. The staff, principal and learners were very understanding of language differences, and they were sure to communicate in English during observations, interviews and focus groups for this research. They were perfectly fluent in English, so a translator was never necessary during the research process. However, there were occasions when ‘behind the scenes’ communications between participants occurred that may have shed some light on the issues observed.

For example, there were instances when staff room conversations in Xhosa would abruptly end, and the teachers would speak English. On other occasions, teachers would be teaching in English, but before observation commenced, a conversation in Xhosa would occur. After focus groups and interviews, there would be a Xhosa conversation between participants that may have involved or contributed to the questions asked during the interview. These are subjective observations and merely another challenge dealt with. Clarification was sought on occasions. Participants were always more than helpful to share meanings or elaborate on observations made, but there was still a sense of missing out during these conversations. The end result was a longer period for clarification and analysis of issues observed. The research process was prolonged, due to the extra commitment to ensure correct information was recorded, and clarification was received from participants during interviews and focus groups.
7.8. Out of my comfort zone

Corporal punishment became an issue to overcome, not only as a researcher, but also as a teacher who believed it had been abolished in 1992. The reality for these teachers and learners was very different from the experiences I had in South African schools. Hence, corporal punishment was a difficult topic to discuss during interviews and focus groups as participants did not want to talk about it. There was a sense that this was due to their knowing that this behaviour was wrong in light of current trends and policy. Yet, certain teachers seemed unable to release themselves from past practice and change their behaviour. Once again, cross-checking difficulties made this almost impossible to investigate further, and it was the learners that shed light on the issue during their focus group.

The other reality faced regularly during the fieldwork was safety and security entering into and leaving the township each day. A few times there were episodes in township life that restricted access to the school. In November 2009, there were radical and intense riots occurring. Community members protested against lack of housing provisions. The burning of tyres in the main streets of the township, toi toi (shouting, dancing and singing), and prohibiting access into and out of the township, were part of this protest. Lee (1995) would describe this as situational danger – an unexpected crisis that needed to be dealt with in this research context. The South African police were monitoring the situation, ensuring the safety of the rioters and other people. They would not allow entrance into the township. I had to turn around and go home. I could not gain access to the school for three weeks at one time. Lee (1995) explains how data collection in challenging situations demands considerable ingenuity on the part of the researcher, and I knew that in this environment, it would be best to stay away.

The other factor that greatly influenced my ability to run interviews and focus groups was the strike action that took place during my fieldwork. Strike action ranged from go-slows, where teachers deliberately worked, taught, walked and behaved in a manner that was much slower in pace than usual, to leaving school early to protest at the department of education offices. Striking is a normal occurrence in South African society, yet I never imagined the severe impact it had on everyday functioning of school life in this context. As an educator who has gone on strike myself, this was very different. Go-slows were taken seriously, with educators literally doing as little as they could throughout the day. The school day would also end early. As one educator explained during their interview:
Teacher … These go-slows – it is affecting this school and all other schools. And it is affecting the kids. If you go into a classroom now, you will see that they don’t care. The teachers and the learners don’t care. They just know school will end early and they can go home. They want to leave, both parties [II, T3].

7.9. Standing out

Throughout the fieldwork period, cross-checking and confirmation of evidence was an important part of gaining valid research material. What evolved from the research process were instances where certain educators behaved differently from the majority of teachers. Specific events were noted that strayed from more typical behaviour recorded in the evidence. These events are important to show rigorous recording of evidence. The reason for these disconfirmations is due to a divide in the staff at the school. There were two distinctive cultures in the staff body. The majority of educators displayed behaviours that have been and will be further described. This group consisted of about eighteen educators. They even had their own space at the school – a cottage (single garage) at the back of the school grounds. A smaller group of around eight educators behaved differently. They ‘stood out’ from the rest in ways that were unique. They avoided communication, confrontation or ‘hanging out’ with the other educators. Both groups just got on with their business. The distinction between groups in the staff runs through all the findings.

Throughout the presentation and discussion chapters, a ‘Standing out’ section is presented which will highlight these events that stood out. Careful analyses of these observations will be presented as well as their usefulness in understanding the participants’ lives. These occurrences often shed helpful insight into values contradictions around policy and practice, implementation problems, usefulness of policy and how policy manifests in unique, township school settings. These sections are of vital importance to the research.
7.10. School layout and details

In order for the findings to make sense during discussion and analysis, a brief overview of the layout of the school, daily schedules and routines is necessary.

The school layout consists of four blocks; three classroom blocks (see Figure 24) and a fourth block that houses the principal’s office, computer laboratory, a small kitchen and the staff toilets. The staffroom is attached to the Grade 7 block, across from the principal’s office attached to the computer laboratory. Opposite this is the library, attached to the end of the Grade 5 block, which is not used as a library but more as an additional staff work area and where the principal and heads of department hold meetings. The learners’ ablution area is situated at the bottom of the school grounds next to a sports field. The school is fenced with a parking lot in the front. In the centre of these four blocks is a quad area where assemblies are held and where children play at break times. Behind the Grade 6 block is a single garage, which is referred to as the cottage, and initially it seemed this is where tools and goods were stored for school maintenance. However, it was used as another staff area, due to the staff room being small and unable to contain all the staff at one time.

The school day begins at 07:40 when staff are required to report to the staffroom. They sign an attendance register. Learners report directly to their classrooms (Figure 28) where they await the teacher, except for Mondays and Fridays when they line up for assembly in the quad. Assembly is
normally twenty to thirty minutes and this cuts into the first lesson on Mondays and Fridays as school lessons begin at 07:50 according to the timetable. There is a short break time from 09:50-10:00 and then the longer lunch break from 11:30-12:00. School ends at 14:00 each day. Lessons are broken into half hour periods, with subjects such as mathematics and languages requiring double lessons of an hour each.

Figure 24. Layout of school grounds with map key
(photograph numbers are shown in image, see Figures 22, 23, 25, 26 and 27)
No extra-curricular activities were witnessed and no timetable was produced. There was also a small tuck-shop on the school field, run by the school. There are five classes per grade, and the staff subject teach and have a home room that they are in charge of. Students remain in their classes, and teachers move around between lessons. School layout, routines and timetables is general information needed in order for the findings to make sense in the following chapters.
7.11. Conclusion

The research experience was demanding in a way that could not have been anticipated before arriving at the school and learning about the research environment. Professionalism and ethical consideration were at the forefront of my approach to this fieldwork, although there were times when this proved difficult, due to the emotional nature of investigating children and people, and coming to terms with the life of a disadvantaged school. Recording valid, accurate evidence was the agenda for each day, and therefore learning how to cope with the challenges described above was important.

The environment of impression management, and the fibs that underlie this feature of the school’s organisational culture, made the task of investigating values more demanding. Deciphering the truth from the fabrications was difficult, and observation became the most reliable tool in ensuring correct information was recorded. Material collected needed to move beyond the facade portrayed by participants, particularly the principal, to investigate the truth about this school and how it functioned. This facade seemed to be founded on a culture of denial and white lies that were used to cover up what was not being done or achieved. All the stakeholders embraced fib-telling as a means of operation (as recorded in participant’s responses, cross-checks, and member-checks in focus groups and interviews). Therefore, cross-checking observations and findings with different participant groups were taxing and not achieved in some instances. As observation notes were the basis for further investigation in interviews and focus groups, it took much probing and discussion with participants to try to find out why things happened the way they did. Cross-checking proved futile at times, as participants denied, diverted or would not respond when challenged on their responses. My learning from this was that many school processes were not being achieved or even attempted by these staff members, and no one appeared to be held accountable. The behaviour had become embedded as part of the school’s organisational culture.

Although language was not a barrier during this research, as the school is an English medium school, there were occasions where an understanding of Xhosa would have been beneficial in considering more subtle conversations between members of this school community. Furthermore, coming to terms with behaviours and attitudes that did not reflect my own beliefs as a teacher was challenging. Corporal punishment proved difficult to research and investigate, as teachers did not want to discuss this. However, due to the fact that instances were observed, and this determined values enactments, the issue needed to be addressed with participants, and finally light was shed on the subject (as seen in observation and interview material presented in the following chapters).
The two distinctive groups or cultures in the staff are vital components of this research. The majority group, of roughly eighteen educators, all displayed the behaviours described in these chapters. However, a smaller group stood out, and the material collected from these educators highlights crucial contradictions and contrasts in the findings. This material will be presented in Standing out sections. Safety and security guided the research process, and there were times when I was unable to access the school because of riots and protesting. Strike action also affected research appointments and overall, flexibility was key. All of these challenges influenced how values were being realised at this school.

Describing the story behind the fieldwork is an important part of my study. These were specific experiences and occurrences that shaped how this study developed. Next, I present the themes that resulted from analysis and interrogation of the fieldwork evidence. The first of these themes is ‘Teachers’ practice and accountability’.
Chapter 8. Theme One: Teachers’ practice and accountability

Teaching and learning are described as the heart of school life. Within any educational institution, teachers serve as the instruments through which this environment is to be established and made effective. Teachers’ practice and accountability involves the complex relationship between how teachers behave and conduct themselves in this school, and how these actions relate to policy. I also explore the accountability structures in place to ensure professional practice, namely structure initiated and action taken by the principal. Nelson Mandela emphasised in his opening comments to the Saamtrek Conference on Values, Education and Democracy in the twenty-first century, the vital role of those adults in leadership positions of young adults and children.

One of the most powerful ways of children and young adults acquiring values is to see individuals they admire and respect exemplify those values in their own being and conduct. Parents and educators or politicians or priests who say one thing and do another send mixed messages to those in their charge who learn then not to trust them. The question of leadership generally, and in the educational sphere particularly, is therefore of vital importance (Nelson Mandela, Department of Education, 2001b).

Beyond everyday school life, South African policy clearly defines the manner in which educators are to conduct themselves professionally. There were several issues that altered the teaching and learning process in this school, most importantly the role of the educator.

8.1. Theme layout and presentation

- **Description of events**

  Behaviours, events, incidents and situations that resulted from firstly, teachers’ practice and secondly, leadership (accountability) during the first three months of fieldwork are described in this section. Evidence was collected in the form of observation notes written daily. My methodological positioning for the descriptive part of my analysis and evaluation can be found in the methodology chapter. I used this technique to portray ‘what was happening’ at the school.

- **Explanations from participants**

  Participants’ responses to questions and comments based on observations during Phase One, are presented. These responses resulted from a variety of focus groups and individual interviews. This explanatory part of my research analyses is described in Chapter Six. This section presents the ‘why’ investigation during the fieldwork and is the voice of the
participants. Three categories that emerged from the evidence are used to structure this information, and reference is made to teacher and leadership behaviour and perspectives.

- **Evaluation**

  Evidence is analysed and examined through different lenses, predominantly using the South African values framework. This process provides my diagnosis (my voice) on the evidence presented. I draw together key ideas and give a critical assessment on what I observed and the participant’s explanations. The process of evaluation was described in the methodology chapter. Reviewed literature and other empirical findings support, reflect and enhance the conclusions drawn in this evaluation.

- **Conclusion**

  I conclude by discussing how these findings relate to the research question and how they relate to values education in South Africa.

### 8.2. Description of events (observation stage of fieldwork)

The fieldwork material presented below is used to illustrate the realities of this school’s day-to-day functioning as observed over the fieldwork period. This material resulted from inductively derived analysis described in the research methodology chapter. Information is presented in two categories; ‘Teachers’ Practice’ and ‘Accountability’. The sub-themes arose directly from the fieldwork material. Issues that affected the culture of teaching and learning will be revealed throughout the section. There is also a strong connection to education in South Africa as a whole, as many of these sub-themes are highlighted in the media on a daily basis.

#### 8.2.1. Teachers’ practice

The following sub-themes are used to signal the three most common teacher behaviours that influenced school life.

**Absenteeism of teachers**

Absenteeism is a growing problem in township schools in South Africa. One only needs to glance at the daily newspaper to understand the severity of the situation. Headings such as “Absent teachers could be costing the Eastern Cape Department of Education more than R1 billion a year” (Zuzile, 2003, April 23) and “There are too many reports of teacher absenteeism and of non-teaching when they are at school” (Alston, 2006, March 15). The way in which teacher presence or absenteeism is
monitored is through an educator attendance register, which is to be signed at the beginning of each day on arrival at school. This register is sent to the department of education and monitored by the school’s EO (education official) (Observation notes, 21 July 2009). The following accounts are a few examples of the many instances that this behaviour was recorded in the observation notes:

The department of education officials raised the fact that during the month of June, staff members were only 70 percent present. Therefore, 30 percent of teachers were absent during this month, according to the officials (Observation notes, 20 July 2009).

Many teachers were not present at school or at the meeting (Observation notes, 21 July 2009).

There were six unsigned spaces in the attendance register today (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).

There were many teachers not present at school (Assembly) (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).

Principal … You know, and this absenteeism of teachers is so very high here. Teachers do not come to school [II, P].

**Lateness**

Promptness, or lack thereof, proved to be an issue affecting the school’s day-to-day functioning. Although this school had bells notifying staff and learners of lesson changes, break times and end of school times, there were several occasions where lateness appeared to be deeply embedded in the organisational culture of this school. The accounts below highlight a few of the many occasions where lateness was observed in the fieldwork material:

The teacher who arrived fifteen minutes late for the class, shouted at the learners who arrived after her. (Observation notes, 22 July 2009).

Teachers were arriving at school half an hour after the school bell rang (Observation notes, 28 July 2009).

The Grade 6 teacher arrived twenty minutes late and she reprimanded learners for not working (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).

After the short break, the learners had Economic Management Science. The teacher was late for class (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).
The principal and teachers were in the staff room and were arriving well after the school bell rang. The principal herself was late, and she immediately announced to the staff that everyone needs to improve their punctuality, herself included (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).

This morning there was a teacher monitoring the late comers and writing down their names. There were as many late teachers as there were learners (Observation notes, 12 August 2009).

Disengagement

On several occasions during the fieldwork, behaviour was observed that suggested discrepancies between how teachers are described in South African educational policy and what happens in reality. As Jansen (2001, p. 242) details, education policy documents in South Africa contain powerful images of the ‘idealised’ teacher. Policy makers hold cherished images of teachers, as end users of education policy. South Africa’s Norms and Standards for educators contain well-defined roles of what educators should be. The fieldwork material revealed discrepancies with these educator roles. These notes from various observation days show the relationship between disengagement and classroom practice in this school:

Teachers were out of their classrooms and walking around outside speaking to other teachers (Observation notes, 20 July 2009).

The teacher left the class to speak on her mobile telephone for twenty minutes (Observation notes, 22 July 2009).

The teacher spoke of taking children into East London to do their sports and play matches against other schools, but there has been no evidence to support this. One teacher said he coached swimming and took the children into town to the swimming pool, but no forms of transportation or evidence to support this has been observed (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).

The class was unsettled and disruptive when the teacher left for the staffroom, and although there were still fifteen minutes left of the lesson, the male mathematics teacher did not return (Observation notes, 28 July 2009).

The teacher sat throughout the lesson while texting on her mobile telephone (Observation notes, 29 July 2009).

Many teachers were in and out of the staffroom, checking mobile telephones, having five minute conversations with other teachers, or just sitting down reading the newspaper. The timetable confirmed that all these teachers could not have had administration lessons at the same time. Upon further observation, it was clear that teachers were leaving learners unattended during contact time. One teacher voiced two minutes before the end of the
lesson, that he was supposed to be teaching and had missed the lesson. He laughed and continued reading the newspaper (Observation notes, 11 August 2009).

The three behaviours of lateness, absenteeism of teachers, and disengagement, contribute to concerns with the teaching and learning environment, and highlight specific problems with teachers’ practice.

8.2.2. Accountability

No actions, behaviours, incidents or events were observed that related to accountability structures or processes addressing teachers’ behaviours. The only relevant material was an observation made where the department of education officials reprimanded the teachers for absenteeism during the previous school term (April-June). This was a verbal reprimand (Observation notes, 20 July 2009).

The observation material formed the basis for further inquiry into why these behaviours were happening, why they are tolerated, and how participants responded to these issues. ‘Fibs’, impression management and cross-checking difficulties made it a challenge to decipher the truth behind these actions. However, some active probing into participants’ perspectives during interviews allowed interesting evidence to emerge.

8.3. Explanations from participants (focus groups and interviews)

Firstly, participants’ responses appeared to fit a ‘Talk the Talk’ category, and this involved the almost automatic responses that the participants would give to department of education officials or parents. They attempted to ‘tick the box’ in their approach to answering questions about observations made and the challenges facing them. After further probing, responses began correlating more clearly to fieldwork material and highlighted discrepancies. This category is titled ‘Inconvenient Truths’, as it presents the reality regarding what the participants say and do. Finally, the ‘Alibis and Rationalisations’ category describes the reasons why these behaviours occur and participants’ rationalisations for these behaviours. Teacher and leadership perspectives are presented.

8.3.1. Talk the talk

When the senior management team of the school was interviewed about teachers’ behaviours, the principal’s first response was incongruent with observation notes:

Principal … If the learners are to learn, they must learn, if the teachers are to teach, they must teach and if the government is to support, they should support, and the parents must
also take on their duties and send us learners who are disciplined…This is what we believe at this school [FG, SMT].

This response correlated with what is thought of as effective school practice in South Africa. It may have been what they believed, but it did not happen. Specific events were presented for comment. A head of department quickly assured me that the teachers were accountable to their roles as educators:

**HOD 2** … There is a sense of accountability for the educators at this school. Educators are heading some of the activities in the school; for example under safety and security, there are teachers who ensure that the learners are protected, that they are safe, inside and outside our schools. So the teachers take the accountability towards looking after the learners at the school [FG, SMT].

The principal backed this up immediately:

**Principal** … I think as the previous speaker [HOD 2] was saying, we as a staff are accountable to the learners and even our vision and mission addresses this. Our staff will drive effective teaching and learning through the value of accountability. Accountability is one of our values; as much as we cannot be a hundred percent perfect, it is something we are proud of. Yes, I believe that we are accountable [FG, SMT].

The senior management team believed teachers were driven by the value of accountability, and they were verbally and theoretically committed to ensuring accountable practice. Observed events presented during the interview for comment revealed how they appeared to ‘turn a blind eye’ to ‘bad’ behaviour. They were reluctant to explain.

Learners were asked what their perception was of the different roles at school, to gain an appreciation for their view of the school reality and the role of their teachers.

**Learner 4** … The teacher’s job is to teach children.

**Learner 3** … You know, every time we come to school, our teachers need to almost be our parents. They teach us a number of things that our parents are not teaching us, so they have to guide us in each and every step that we take because our parents are not with us all the time. Teachers need to be almost like our parents.

**Learner 2** … It is important for teachers to be role models for us. We must look up to her [FG, L].

The learners were asked about leadership and accountability. Their responses show a clear acknowledgement of the leadership roles in a teaching and learning environment:
Learner 2 … The principal is like the manager … She looks that everything is going well.

Learner 1 … She must check that the teachers are teaching well. And that the learners are learning. And all that stuff.

Learner 2 … If something is going to happen, like school plays or school children need to go somewhere, she is in charge. People go to her first, and inform her [FG, L].

It becomes clear that within this organisational culture, there is a discourse of accountability and a cover-up of what really happens. For example, an account of teacher absenteeism was shared during the learners’ focus group, as recorded in observation material, and a learner responded:

Learner 2: Sometimes they attend meetings then … They don’t attend class when it is something important. But often they do attend class [FG, L].

The problem of perceived ‘fibs’ and ‘cover up’ tactics presented a challenge during interviews. The principal was confronted with specific examples. She began with espoused theory, confirming the importance of classroom practice and the role of the teachers:

Principal … You know, it takes everybody’s effort to run a successful school and to build a school, make it grow. You know what, it starts in fact in the classrooms [II, P].

Gaining contact with parents was nearly impossible. However, the one opportunity to gain a parent’s perspective was extremely valuable in gaining his perspective into the role of the teacher in his child’s education:

Parent … I mean, teachers are there to teach. They arrive every day at school to teach. They are there to teach, not discipline and be parents. I mean, I don’t understand some parents, as some children cause lots of problems not only for the principal and teachers at the school, but the other children too. My sons always tell me about times when teachers spend the whole lesson disciplining and shouting at the learners instead of teaching, and this makes me mad, because that is not what I am working hard for, to send my children to school for. They must be working in class and learning and teachers should be making sure of this [II, Pa].

Participants have learnt a discourse of accountability and how to cover-up the difference between discourse and reality. Espoused theory and a ‘tick the box’ approach give a good impression of school life. The principal suggested that it takes everyone to be on board to have an effective school, and that the school’s vision and mission statement addresses accountability. However, the result of this cover-up is misrepresentation of reality. The difference between the discourse and reality had to be investigated.
8.3.2. Inconvenient truths

Teacher behaviour

When examples of teacher absenteeism were presented, learners eventually explained the reality:

Learner 1 … Teachers don’t come to class, especially after the long break … after lunch because they are always talking or doing whatever … [FG, L].

One learner responded by sharing how that made him feel:

Learner 4 … Yes, it is a little unfair on us, because then we need to try and control the class [FG, L].

Some of the learners felt uncertain and nervous about the situation created when teachers did not attend class, and one learner described just how absenteeism affects them:

Learner 2 … The teacher does leave work for the class to do, but … if you try to explain to the class when the teacher is not there, and you try and make them [other students] understand, they don’t listen to you. And then when it is time to write tests, they know nothing. And then the other learners always say that it is always about us [those learners who try to teach]… They all say that the learners who try to teach and explain are … like it is all about us [attention seeking]. Then they like tease us, make us feel bad. But we get teased for our doing this and some of the children even bully us [FG, L].

It seems that the learners who try to maintain control when a teacher is absent, and those learners who even attempt teaching, get bullied and intimidated. This places them in a vulnerable position. Extra-curricular activities were also problematical in what was observed and what was articulated. The Values Manifesto places much emphasis on extra-curricular activities (sports teams, debating teams, arts and culture) as strategies to achieve values education. This proved to be a very awkward subject to raise with the teachers, as they firmly stated that they did organise after-school activities. The principal assured me that this was the case. The learners were asked to comment and their reply was as follows:

Learner 1 … The teachers did not do anything [extra-curricular/sport] this year. Maybe they will start it next year [FG, L].

The learners’ comments were not confirmed by the teachers or the principal. This comment was the only confirmation with observation notes. The opportunity to ask the principal about absenteeism presented itself. She confirmed what the learners had said:
Principal ... The long break is after 11:30, then after 12:00 [end of lunch break] and then those Grade 6 teachers do not want to go back to class [II, P].

Accountability, appraisal and performance management systems did not appear to exist in this school. This will be described in detail throughout the development of this theme.

**Leadership behaviour**

The principal began revealing the reality:

Principal ... A lot is happening in the school, that is not supposed to be happening, in this environment. And when that happens, the teachers become loose, and if the teachers are loose, then the learners pick up on that and take advantage of that [II, P].

The opportunity to discuss accountability procedures and consequences presented itself at this point, but the principal seemed frustrated and she responded:

Principal ... But then I always talk to the staff... I say people, let us not lose contact time with these kids. I say that all the time. This is very very very important [II, P].

Cleary, this verbal prompt to staff was not effective. Her explanations illustrated that there were many occasions when teachers were losing contact time with learners:

Principal ... The teachers just don’t go to classes. These teachers are lazy. You find that they will just be sitting in another class, they don’t care. And that is where I wish people would be self responsible. And this is very evident in Grade 6. As the SMT [School Management Team], we thought what could we do?... What could we do about these Grade 6 problems? It is the teachers... how can we mix them with the teachers who are motivated and enthusiastic? To separate the problem teachers, but... They will be very unhappy... I don’t know... I don’t know... [II, P].

This statement confirmed observation notes. “They don’t care,” and “Teachers are lazy,” seemed to be the underlying element (in her opinion) that linked all these factors to what was observed. This is clearly a major challenge for this principal. The motivated and enthusiastic teachers at the school, although they are a minority, are discussed in the ‘Standing out’ section. The principal gave further examples of the challenges she faced:

Principal ... It takes everyone to be on board. I have managed, in fact, we are getting there slowly, but there are still those who are putting their own interests above those of the school. It is not in the interest of the school and the children, that is the problem. Say, to show you.... We are not supposed to make profit on kids. We cannot make money off
these kids. We cannot sell anything to these learners. We can sell if we are fundraising for the school. That is ultimately for them, for the school. It benefits the children and the parents, they will benefit. But what I have learnt here, many of us have that tendency of seeing these learners as people who are going to augment their salaries. As a result, there are those teachers who are selling during the school lessons. Actually in the classroom, during lesson times. And this has come to me not because … not reported by other teachers who are seeing them. They have been reported by the kids.

… And immediately, I corrected that and the teachers become arrogant. So, to have such teachers, you know, I really don’t know what to do.

… So, if we have such teachers here and even when I call upon them and address this issue and tell them it is not allowed, you find that they don’t want to admit that what they do is wrong. So they don’t own up to their mistake. It becomes something that is killing the school. It is killing the school. You will find that … some of them, although it is ok that people must develop themselves, but they mustn’t leave the learners and their responsibilities to teach in that time. Learners should not be left alone. So in other words, if the teachers could take the responsibility of being like parents to these kids, then that would be progress. It would bring it all together [II, P].

This behaviour is unacceptable and unethical as role models to the learners. There has been a distinctive move from espoused theory and learnt discourse. Participants’ awareness of these issues has been a necessary step in attempting to decipher why these participants behave the way they do, in light of teaching practice and accountability.

8.3.3. Alibis and rationalisations

**Teachers’ voices**

Teachers seemed to have many reasons as to why they behaved the way they did. Some examples include:

A teacher stated that no learning would happen today because of casual day [school uniform not worn]. He said they give up as the learners do no work and they talk during class (Observation notes, 4 September, 2009).

Teacher … There is no point in even trying to teach because of the strike. [II, T3].

Further to casual day and strike action, one teacher informed me that it is to do with rights that their behaviour is allowed:
A Grade 7 teacher commented that it is the learners who suffer through this strike, but they as educators have rights too and they should be allowed to stand up for their rights (Observation notes, 16 October 2009).

Rights talk is a crucial element in teacher behaviour, and rights came up many times during interviews. Another reason that was used was training and class size. Teachers seemed to feel that their disengagement to classroom practice was due to the lack of support, as one teacher explains:

Teacher 2 … To me, even this taking on of learners with disabilities, it is a challenge and not all of us have been trained to deal with them. And even when we are given kids that do not belong here, we are expected to be giving and producing miracles with these children … and the numbers of other learners in the classrooms makes it very difficult.

Teacher 4 … and not even trained with these new ways of teaching, not just the learners in the class we have these days [FG, T].

However, when this topic was addressed with the school management team, one head of department was very clear in his feelings towards staff that use the lack of development and training as a reason for ineffective practice. This response disproves the response from Teacher 2:

HOD 1 … But we seem as teachers to resist the change [to learning new skills] – we do not want to gain these new skills. Even with the new assessment programme – some of us, even though we know we have to change and it is important, especially for the kids of today (as compared to the school children of long ago) it is not easily done. Teachers are not wanting to be trained [FG, SMT].

The principal corroborated this account by relaying an occasion when the department sent a trainer for a staff information technology course during the school holidays, but the staff were not interested in attending [II, P].

When teachers were asked about their whereabouts during teaching time, they appeared reluctant to admit where they were and what they were doing. A long pause in the teacher focus group was finally broken by a teacher who commented the following:

Teacher 4 … because sometimes you get out of the class because you are called to the office or something [FG, T].

Following this comment, one teacher blamed it on the fact that she felt overwhelmed with the paperwork that the department expected from her, so she used teaching time to make sure files and documentation were up-to-date:
Teacher 3 … A contributing factor that does not go down well with us is that here at school we have large classes, and then when you sit down and think I am teaching a learning area [Life Orientation] and I’m teaching over 300 learners, I have to make sure that over 300 files are up to date, and then you teach another learning area and you think I have to make sure that all those files are up to date, so you are dealing with close to 700 files and you are dealing with all this on your own, you have to teach all these classes… And then you are still a class teacher with all this paperwork. I catch up on this work sometimes … [FG, T].

This was a legitimate claim, as twice a year educators would need to update learner files and they have large classes. Yet, there is also an expectation on South African educators (according to job descriptions and educator roles) that paperwork and administrative tasks be done outside class contact time. Department officials reprimanded educators for not doing this job, but there were no documents available for analysis to support this claim. There was no acknowledgement from the educators that their disengagement was adversely affecting the environment. They were asked how they judged this behaviour in light of policy, curriculum and codes of conduct, but there was no response to this question. After a long pause, the teachers responded by comparing themselves to town school (previously white schools) teachers:

Teacher 3 … And when you look at it, the schools in town, they have small numbers, they have administration support like secretaries and clerks and things … There is somebody who does this job, for this paperwork but here we are expected to do it. It must come from us, and it is not fair… [FG, T].

All teachers concurred with this response, and suggested that this was a reasonable excuse for them missing class. Teachers felt that their jobs were a lot more difficult and complex. This discussion developed into the hardships they experienced compared to town schools teachers:

Teacher 3 … What I did, I asked one of the teachers who works in the town schools, and she told me that they haven’t changed a thing! [like adopting the new curriculum] They just take all this new curriculum stuff, and put it aside and do what we always have done [laughing]. Why can’t we do that here too? [FG, T].

The educators’ perspectives seemed driven by a sense of resentment, as town schools appeared to be able to accommodate policy changes and educational transformation more easily. They believed teachers in town schools had an easier teaching life than them. Still, the teachers were vague about their whereabouts during teaching time when they were not in the classroom, and further probing only resulted in a long silence. Where were these teachers during teaching time? The principal was eager to suggest what the problem was, and her clarification below corresponds to what had informally been observed during the fieldwork:
Principal … You will find that they are at school, but the learners go to call the teachers but they don’t go to class. They don’t sit in the staffroom even… They go to the cottage. You know, our staffroom is so small, so we said that the staff can also use the cottage, but only during break times… because we cannot all sit in the staffroom. So during tuition, I said that all teachers should be in the staffroom. This was my rule. And it was better when they were doing that. But then, during this conflict, they were very upset by this. This was also the staff’s grievance, that they mustn’t be forced to stay in the staffroom during their admin lessons, they mustn’t be forced. The want to be everywhere, anywhere they want to be. If I want to stay in my car, I can be in my car and they said they must not be forced to stay in the staff room. They don’t want to be forced. And unfortunately the department of education task team did not hear us, that is the school management team, that this cottage is causing problems. We are not saying that during their free time, they shouldn’t be at the cottage or in their cars. But what we want them to do…it becomes easier for us to see when everyone is in the staffroom. And if the kids are alone, they know where to find the teachers. It is easier to talk to the teachers too. And also it builds the relations of the staff. But, the staff saw us as being tyrants when we said we need them to be in the staffroom during admin lessons. We were not saying that they cannot use the cottage. But during tuition time, that is from 7:40-14:00 at least, they should be held accountable and should be in the staffroom. But the SMT was crushed. It was very clear that the staff felt that people should be free. And do whatever they want to do [II, P].

The cottage seemed to be a root problem. Teachers used this area on the school grounds as an escape. Learners did not go to this room. The principal or heads of department were not observed entering this room. There were only a certain group of teachers who occupied this space. No one confronted them or challenged the system. The principal realised that this cottage posed problems, but she was unable to stamp any type of authority on what is expected from educators.

Leadership voice

Teachers’ behaviour appeared to be condoned, with no accountability structures or consequences in place. The principal appeared non-authoritative in her leadership approach (her perspective), and she believed that accountability should lie with the teachers themselves:

Principal … You know, I don’t know… I think they aren’t responsible for their role as a teacher. You’ll find that if somebody misses school, it won’t even be for a good reason. You see me now… I am not well, but I have to come to school. I am sick, and have been for a long time, but I do not miss school. I must come to school. It must be a very serious matter to miss school. If I am so sick, that I just cannot come to school, then it is understandable. I don’t know. It’s about the conscience, there is no conscience involved here. It lies on the teacher [II, P].

This response reveals that there seems to be little awareness of conscience or responsibility when it comes to behaviours from the staff. The principal elaborated on why she believed the educators behave in this way:
Principal … In fact, they aren’t taking teaching as a profession where you don’t get money, where you can’t get rich. We are here to help, to nurture the future, to help build the nation. In fact, I also want the money, we all do. But, first things are first… I cannot run after money when I cannot do my job properly. You find that even them, the staff… they compete with each other… I have got a car, a house, I have got this or that … To me, it shows that they are not mature. Then they focus on these things, and the learners are neglected. It is the kids who suffer in the end. They aren’t getting the attention they need [II, P].

This account, together with the description of teachers selling goods during teaching time, highlights what these specific teachers regard as important. Yet, this goes against their professional responsibility. As with any organisation (and in my experience as an educator in South Africa), codes of conduct, warning systems and dismissal procedures are used as tools to ensure functionality and effectiveness of any institution. This is also clearly addressed in educational policy such as educator codes of conduct. Her reflection on herself as a leader seemed to alleviate her of this responsibility:

Principal … With my leadership I like people, and I like people to feel open with me. For example, if a teacher is coming late to school on a regular basis, I will just call upon him or her and say “Can you introspect [examine] yourself and what is it that you are doing wrong?”

… My personality is not like that [authoritative]. Maybe, those are the things that are preventing me or beating me when handling these teachers, you know. And most of the staff here, they are very immature, and they are new teachers in this school, very arrogant…. The ones that are causing trouble…. [II, P].

According to the principal, these statements, “My personality is not like that,” and “I like people,” provide the reason why she avoids taking action. She elaborated further:

Principal … You know, there is a code of conduct and a warning system for staff. There are also procedures you have to follow when a teacher does not adhere to the code of conduct, but the labour law wants us to be fair. You must be fair, like for example with this teacher. And normally you know “education shambles blamed on union” [shows headline of article on her desk]. Immediately, you charge a teacher, rest assured that you will be in for a high jump with the unions. Even if the teacher has done something wrong, look… when there was this crisis here at school, the SATU [union] was involved. And they also said that the union were also the people who made the problem worse, like throwing petrol on a burning fire. Instead of helping, they were firing up the staff and making people angry, because the union wanted it’s members to have confidence in them. That the union can do anything. So what I am trying to say is that the union sometimes makes it very very difficult to put procedures for accountability in place. It makes me reluctant to actually do anything. Unions have been around all the time, but they are much stronger now. Before, they couldn’t do much, but now it makes it almost impossible to set these accountability procedures in place. They are a force. And I think because I am a lady maybe… but the union plays a big part in my leadership. So when you are trying to eradicate something from a teacher, the union will oppose you, they will oppose you [II, P].
Union action in South Africa is actively promoted and taken seriously at all levels of organisational life. There were two major strikes during the fieldwork, and this affected school life considerably by shutting down the school. Above this, union action is seen as a reason for why this principal hesitates to take action against teachers who are clearly going against codes of conduct. Yet, union action had been an entrenched part of South African education for many years. How had previous principals dealt with this challenge?

Further investigation and discussion with the principal revealed her hesitation to act. This was a recent development, as previous principals did not seem to face the same challenges as she did. She describes this history:

Principal … The parents, some have lost hope on me as principal and also on the school as a whole, because when it was Mr ‘X’ as principal… People were very afraid of him. And others respected him. I don’t know how he was doing that, but these crisis situations that happen wouldn’t have happened if he was principal. I don’t know whether it was because he left and the people were working under pressure when they were under him, or if they took advantage when I came in, because I am myself in this role. I am nothing like him. He was so very strict… you know, I like my leadership [II, P].

This comment revealed interesting information about the school and previous leadership strategies. The principal continued by revealing how the previous principal would have dealt with these teachers’ ‘bad’ practice:

Principal … No, no, no… He would say “Stop it!” And he would be firm and strict. But I am not like that. My personality is not like that. Maybe, those are the things that are preventing me or beating me when handling these teachers, you know. And most of the staff here, they are very difficult, very arrogant…. The immature ones are causing trouble…. You know the reputation of the school. The previous two principals had a very, very good staff. I was one of them. We spoke with one voice, we were united. We were very diligent. In fact, all of us desired something that would make us grow. And as a result of this, the school grew and grew. And this school is different from other schools in the townships. Alright. You will hear that from many people. Hence, we also won the provincial award for school excellence… And again, sometimes, you know with these gentleman [previous principals], if someone was doing something wrong, it doesn’t need the principal or the HOD or whoever to say hey –you are doing something wrong. Please correct this. We corrected each other. We would help one another in previous years. We were a community of staff and everyone was watching and helping everyone else. A community… but at the moment, it has broken away, unfortunately [II, P].

The inefficiency and ineffective practice on the part of the educators and the principal is not a deeply embedded part of this organisational culture, as the principal described that these behaviours were not tolerated under previous school leaders. It appeared that these behaviours were a recent development,
under the leadership of the current principal. Previously, the organisational culture of the school embraced the behaviours, traditions and values that saw effective teaching and leadership practice. Previous principals were not intimidated. Yet, this new means of behaving has dramatically affected a school that was once described by community members as effective [according to II, T1; II, P].

8.4. Standing out

There was evidence of effective teaching and motivated teachers. Although this group of teachers were a minority, it is important that these notes be presented and discussed in light of this theme. Observation notes showed the following examples of effective teaching practice:

The Grade 7 Mathematics lesson was engaging for the learners (group work, discussions). The teaching was effective, and the learners were attentive (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).

This teacher gave reassuring touches on the shoulders of the learners, and encouraged them to do well in this formal assessment project (Observation notes, 6 August 2009).

Group work and discussion were used as part of teaching during the Science lesson. The learners were responsive to this method (Observation notes, 3 September 2009).

The principal noted several times throughout her interview that she did have specific staff who were effective educators:

Principal … There are those teachers who are accountable and do their jobs properly. They want to be accountable.

You know some teachers are good when it comes to helping the learners with problems. In that way, these teachers are very good. They do more than is required if there is a problem with a child. They pick up things that might be wrong at home or whatever and they talk about it [II, P].

These specific teachers were unable to attend focus groups due to their commitment in teaching during the school day, but opportunity to interview them at their convenience (after school) allowed for valuable information that stands out from previous educator comments. When asked what being a teacher meant, Teacher One responded by saying:

Teacher … Yes, you have to be a role model. By the mere fact that you chose this profession, you are a role model and whether you know it or not, actually there is someone who is looking up to you. Now, being a teacher, you are transferring yourself onto these
learners. So you become their role model, all of them in every class that you enter into, because they want to know what you know. And as a result they want to be what you are. So every successful teacher is the one who makes his learners to look like him. So, once they look like you, not to be teachers like you, but to be as successful as you are, this should be the goal of each teacher [II, T1].

It may be argued that statements such as these are espoused theory, and may have been articulated by the ‘cottage’ staff as well. Yet, these teachers not only spoke of believing they were accountable, but they were observed being effective, accountable educators. There was no cover up between accountability discourse and reality. Their practice reflected their comments. Teacher Three commented on what she perceived her role to be as an educator:

Teacher … But as a teacher, I am trying my best you know, to be there for these learners, and be more than just a teacher. It is important for me to try and know each and every child [II, T3].

Teacher Four added to the fieldwork material by talking about her role as a teacher:

Teacher … I look forward to coming to school, to seeing these kids, to helping them learn. That is my job. I don’t want to get promotion to HOD because that is administration. I want to be making a difference in the classroom [II, T4].

The learners also spoke differently of these teachers and the strong influence these teachers had on them:

Learner 1 … because of my teacher. The one teacher, they comfort me, they look after me. They help me to get a better education. When I think of this teacher, I think of my parents.

Learner 2 … Our teachers are well educated and give us a lot of information. My favourite teacher, it is like they have a library in their head. Our teacher knows everything. It is really like they have a library in his head.

Learner 3 … My best teacher gives me advice about some things in life. Like, not all the teachers, but they give us advice about life. They help us even more than our parents. They teach us about lifestyles and life.

Learner 5 … I always feel free to talk to my teacher. We feel that we can go and talk to our teachers about these problems and friends and things. And they help me when they can [FG, L].
These educators guided learners beyond merely curriculum and subject matter. The effectiveness of their practice was evident in the learners’ attitudes and motivation. Although the minority, motivated and committed educators do form part of this teaching organisation.

8.5. Evaluation

8.5.1. Teachers’ practice

The Values Manifesto lays out a role modelling strategy that promotes commitment as well as competence among educators. These two factors are crucial areas in this research. Members of the working group on the values education initiative have stated that educator commitment and competence is vital, as educators were the “custodians of our value systems in the school environment (Zuma, Department of Education, 2001b)). I use these two ideas, competence and commitment, to comment on the fieldwork material. Firstly, regarding commitment, I use relevant literature on teacher motivation to analyse the reality for these educators. Regarding competence, I evaluate pertinent training and development issues around change participation. I comment on the usefulness of training and development attempts at equipping teachers with what is needed, in light of the transformation in education. Finally, I conclude this section by discussing the complex relationship that arises from these two educator qualities, and I propose that one cannot be achieved without the other.

Commitment

The underlying questions concerning the evidence on teacher behaviours are: What is (de) motivating these teachers? Are there bigger issues influencing teachers’ practice? Why is this behaviour tolerated and accepted in this school community? The reasons expressed by participants are not credible, especially when there is a small group of motivated educators in the same position as them behaving in very different ways. When comments from the two groups are compared, it becomes clear that the ‘excuses and reasons’ are the reality for all these educators, but some choose another path when facing these challenges. Why is there such a gap between the practice of these two groups, and what factors contribute to this difference?

One way to begin analysing these behaviours is through the discourse of teacher motivation. In the fieldwork material, the principal referred to statements such as “They don’t care” and “They are lazy” [II, P] when it comes to describing the attitudes of the majority of her staff. Teacher motivation encompasses a teacher’s desire to participate in the teaching and learning processes within a school
setting. It is the basis for a teacher’s involvement or non-involvement in academic and other activities at school:

The teacher, is the one that translates educational philosophy and objective into knowledge and skills and transfers them to students in the classroom. Classroom climate is important in teacher motivation. If a teacher experiences the classroom as a safe, healthy, happy place with supportive resources and facilities for teaching for optimal learning, he/she tends to participate more than expected in the process of management, administration, and the overall improvement of the school (Ofoegbu, 2004, p. 81).

Similarly to South African schools, Nigeria faces problems with the fast decay of their schools due to a range of problems, from a shortage of resources to a lack of effective leadership and proper motivation for teachers (Ofoegbu, 2004, p. 83). Ofoegbu recognises the role of teacher motivation in ensuring classroom effectiveness and school improvement. “Motivating teachers would ensure that there is effective instructions in the classroom and more collaboration in school management” (2004, p. 88). Further, Ozigi (1992, as cited in Ofoegbu, 2004) found that Nigerian teachers were unhappy, frustrated, uninspired and unmotivated, hence their lack of educational success. It is important to see teachers as skilled workers, rather than “cheap” labour to achieve educational objectives (Ofoegbu, 2004, p. 88). Teachers are crucial in the moulding, shaping and teaching of values in schools. But this is considered part of educators’ work, and does not manifest in additional monetary or other reward. The drastic strike action and go-slows for remuneration increases in South Africa create at times a volatile and destructive atmosphere in school life. Remuneration issues are a continual area of contest in South Africa. Ofoegbu (2004, p. 81) recommends that, in this era of materialism and wealth, teachers need to be adequately motivated for an effective viable school system. The fieldwork evidence suggests that the majority of these educators could possibly be motivated by material incentives, such as pay increases and benefits (as seen in explanations from the principal regarding her educators ‘wanting more’). Yet, the effective ‘Standing out’ teachers prove that it may be more multifaceted than merely an issue of money.

Jessop and Penny (1998, p. 396) discuss the nature of teaching, job satisfaction, motivation and morale in the South African and Gambian contexts. They identify two groups of educators in their South African sample. One group attributes instrumental reasons to teaching like salary, status, the desire to urbanise and the attainment of qualifications. The other group viewed teaching as an avenue of service, a noble profession to which one is called. One third of their sample group fell into the latter group. These findings correlate with aspects of teacher practice in my findings. Educators from the minority group in my study spoke fondly of their intentions (personal motivators) in becoming educators with statements such as “wanting to make a difference” [II, T1], “changing the lives of children” [II, T3]
and “working with children” [II, T4]. These teachers modelled behaviour that was committed and motivated. In contrast, the other group’s behaviours seemed to be driven by external rewards, such as salary, status or holidays (none of which were adequate in their opinion). The principal even relayed a story of a teacher trying to ‘augment’ their income by selling goods during teaching time, and how a lack of material motivators such as cars or houses could be the reasons for these educators’ bad behaviour [II, P]. Educator groups seem to have distinctively different motivations when it comes to educating children, and these influence their commitment to the job. This is exaggerated in the new political and social dispensation, which requires more from educators, as with new curricula, codes of conduct and values reports. Schools that give the impression of commitment, motivation and success appear to be an annoyance to unmotivated educators. Comments on town schools allow these teachers the space to accept their own school’s apparent failure: For example, they have it tougher, their reality is more difficult, town schools have more money and funding, and their class sizes are better. Many of these reasons are viable causes for apparent educational failure or success. They also feel let down. Promises of redress in 1994 assured black South Africans that an influx of money into township schools would see them on par with town schools. This is far from being achieved. Small attempts at redress, such as the government giving the school twenty computers, proved futile because teachers do not know how to use them. It may be argued that new policies, especially those addressing abstract concepts like values, are formulated for successful schools. Town schools, with the resources, facilities, and well trained and motivated educators are able to adapt and embrace educational change more easily. The assumption from policy writers appears to be that all schools would be able (after redress efforts) to match policy outcomes in practice. These new policies are not context specific, which means that they do not address the unique needs of township schools that have not been ‘redressed’. Redress and equity as promised have not been realised.

In order for policies to be context specific, the first consideration needs to be end users; teachers. “Teacher-as-person” seems lost according to Jessop and Penny (1998, p. 401), who argue that the “teacher-as-person” needs to inform policy-makers and teacher development if education change is to be sustained. They suggest that a shift from theorising about educational change, from the arena of policy to the arena of teacher beliefs and their histories, is necessary: “The recovery of teacher voice and vision becomes critical” (p.402). Jansen (2001, p. 242) argues the need for three crucial considerations of teacher identity, including their professional basis (how teachers understand their capacity to implement proposed policy), emotional basis (how they feel about and respond to particular policy initiatives) and their political basis (how they understand and act of their authority with respect to new policy). New policy initiatives define or “image” (p. 242) the roles of educators,
and their consideration and feelings towards these roles is vital for successful comprehension and implementation of policy.

Change rests on teachers’ attitudes towards their role as educators. Role modelling as an ‘ideal’ strategy for values education appears to be ineffective in this township school context, because policy formation does not consider ‘where teachers are at’ in this specific environment. It would also seem in this study that teachers motivated by material rewards and benefits, who are teaching in difficult settings, are not the appropriate exemplars to have representing behaviour that models the ‘ideal’ policy values. Teachers ‘augmenting’ themselves by selling goods during teaching contact time to learners living in poor, difficult contexts are a good example of this type of teacher. Further research on teacher motivation and commitment is recommended to shed further light on these issues.

Competence

Commenting on teachers’ competencies and roles in South African education, Harley, Brasa, Bertram, Mattson and Pillay (2000, p. 288) emphasise how the demands on teachers’ skills and professionalism are considerable, especially for teachers working in impoverished schools. An aspect that dramatically affects the demands on teachers’ skills and professionalism is educational change. Radical change has affected all aspects of South African life, and will probably continue to do so for years to come. Teachers are continually faced with the task of facilitating and implementing education reform that was designed without involving them (Swanepoel, 2008, p. 39). So what do these teachers in my study do? The curriculum and other educational policy, as written, demands great understanding (such as the values framework). Given that they do not have, and have not been able to acquire the skills and understanding needed, these teachers ignore it. The evidence showed that educators were totally unaware of any values policies or guides. Reform is more than merely an implementation of policy issue. It relies on basic pedagogical skill, understanding and knowledge that for many of these participants are in not being developed, facilitated and supported. These teachers are unable to see the benefit of change or acquiring skills to implement change. Specific competencies are required for new education policy. Education under apartheid encouraged teacher conservatism and compliance, whereas the reverse is now being attempted, with the new curriculum and values policies requiring teacher autonomy and professional discretion. Educators are left feeling incompetent when it comes to the skills and knowledge needed to embrace change because of their history and apartheid training, which overall involved no critical and creative thought. This outcome is not unique to South African educators.
In a case study of the innovation “Operation Blackboard” in India, Dyer (1996) concludes that it failed because of the low level of teachers’ professional skills and their exclusion from policy development. Commenting on Botswana’s failure to reform, Tabulawa (1997) attributes this to the historically entrenched authoritarianism on the part of the teachers. Botswana teachers were threatened by the new learner-centred pedagogy. They believed in imparting knowledge and learners ‘receiving’ teachers’ knowledge. Both these examples show that educators trained in one manner of teaching (as with my research participants and apartheid teacher training) lack the new-age skills and proficiencies to easily move between ever changing educational goals and outcomes. Hargreaves (1994, p. 43) describes this as the real crunch; merging policy, development and the teacher-as-person:

The real crunch comes in the relationship between these new programs or policies, and the thousands of subjective realities embedded in people’s individual and organisational contexts and their personal histories.

The result of the lack of this “real crunch” described by Hargreaves is poor communication, leaving schools and teachers unaware, fearful and helpless in light of change. Hence, competence, a requirement of all educators as prescribed in values strategies, becomes an avenue of resentment and failure. This was noted by the head of department in the interview evidence, when he commented on how teachers do not want to receive training [FG, SMT]. Teachers who gained their primary teaching qualifications under apartheid education are unable to comprehend these new ways of educating.

There are many policy documents outlining the role of the educators and their competencies and responsibilities; for example, National Department of Education Duties and Responsibilities for Educators, South African Council of Educators Code of Conduct, Education Labour Relations Council Manual for Developmental Appraisal, Committee for Teacher Education Policy Norms and Standards for Teacher Educators (Harley et al., 2000, p. 291). This study highlights the vast mismatch between ‘ideal’ teacher competencies and ground-level reality in a township school. As Harley et al., (2000, p. 289) emphasise, policy needs to be effective in a world that is real, rather than ideal. New South African policy does not seem to inform change in this context. Policy-designers appear to be ignorant of the unique context of disadvantaged schools in South Africa, and they lack an appreciation for teachers’ personal realities and histories:

… formal changes cannot guarantee better practice, and where the policy makers take little account of the context and agents of implementation, policy may impede rather than enable transformation (Enslin & Pendlebury, 1998, p. 262).
My research participants clearly articulated concern and apprehension at new policy, and even suggested that they ignore the change, as they “do not know what to do with all these changes” [FG, T].

In addition to competencies for new policy, educators also need, to a degree, to ‘unlearn’ past practices. For the participants in this study, the past is held on to tightly as a time when teaching and learning were effective. The teachers spoke of the ‘past’ being a time when they felt committed. Apartheid teacher training had a different mandate from new complex policies and curricula. It appears too many educational ‘promises’ were made at the onset of the transformation (training, funding, resources, qualification upgrades, salary increases to name a few), and not enough have been carried out. What is left is a majority of non-committed, unmotivated educators on the ground level. Significant change, whether voluntary or imposed, entails an ‘unlearning’ of what is believed to be right, and this brings about a sense of loss, anxiety and struggle (Harley et al., 2000, p. 300). ‘Unlearning’ is a crucial part of understanding why change is not effective in this study. Jessop and Penny, (1998, p. 395) commenting on rural education in South Africa and Gambia, found that teachers perceived contradictions between tradition and modernity in rural schools, and they found the change from the golden age, when children respected their elders, to be overwhelming. For South African teachers, nostalgia for the old order was coupled with suspicion towards the new, politically radical values that accompanied the collapse of apartheid and the coming of modernity. Teachers also found difficulty in reconciling the contradictions of the breakdown in traditional values, seen as a bad thing, and the collapse of apartheid, seen as a good thing. My participants often reflected on the past as a time that was good, orderly and effective [FG, T]. They articulate only negative aspects of today’s school environments, and continually complain about indiscipline, lack of parental involvement and lack of leadership. When complex change is involved, people do not, and cannot, change by being told to do so (Fullan, 1993, p. 24). These participants perceived new policy as the instrument ‘telling’ them to change, with no direction as to how to move from the old to the new.

Any development attempts have proved unsuccessful in this school. Teachers commented that course facilitators of these workshops did not even know what was going on, or how to ‘teach’ them the new ideas [FG, T]. To them, these efforts were a complete waste of time. For teacher development to be successful, it needs to incorporate the teacher’s purpose, the teacher as a person, the real world context in which teachers work daily, and the culture of teaching in that context (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992, p. 5). The sense of ownership to which teachers feel towards a particular innovation is a frequently cited ingredient of successful change (Robinson, 2003). This can be achieved only once educators have the understanding needed to be competent in new ways of educating:
For real change then, what teachers need is not impersonal policy directives implemented from above with the overtones of authority and control, but localised, contextualised, even personalised, developmental support and assistance in the everyday business of teaching. And what this requires is policy that is sensitive to contextual diversity being implemented at local community level by those most in touch with local conditions (Harley et al., 2000, p. 300).

Policy, as well as training and development, needs to be directed at the level of the educator – for their very specific needs:

Policy describes the ideal teacher with clarity and precision, but does not see the real teacher and the cultural and material constraints imposed by classroom reality clearly enough to understand what must be involved in achieving this ideal (Harley et al., 2000, p. 302).

These participants lack specific pedagogical skills, understanding and knowledge needed to embrace ‘new’ educational policies. They still operate in ‘old’ ways. Training programmes need to consider ‘where they are at’,

If policy makers in South Africa propose successful education policy change, it is essential to elicit the underlying assumptions, experiences, social and historic context, the degree to which, these are congruent or not with teachers’ beliefs, experiences, commitments and educational practices (Smit, 2001, p. 81).

‘Competency’, as described in the values strategies, is a complex and challenging part of the education system of South Africa, and it seems a lot more needs to be done before competence is achieved.

**In conclusion: Role modelling?**

I have analysed the fieldwork material on teacher practice by using the values framework. Commitment and competency are described as the ingredients for educator role modelling and teaching values. I sum up this discussion by emphasising that these two qualities go hand-in-hand. An educator is more likely to be committed when they feel more competent in what they do in the classroom and school. Understanding policy, implementing policy, and having the specific skills to cope with ‘new’ educational thought are crucial. My findings suggest that when these teachers are more competent in the understanding and skills needed for the requirements of new policy, they are likely to feel more committed and motivated in their role. Role modelling as a strategy for values education requires educators to ‘go the extra mile’, and without commitment and competence, this is not achievable. ‘Teacher-as-person’ and context-specific consideration in policy to invoke commitment and motivation in teacher’s behaviour and development seems crucial if policy is to drive
change. Unique histories and backgrounds need to be considered. In my research sample, these histories and backgrounds include black teachers teaching in township schools, many of them previously trained under apartheid education, specifically for apartheid education. Idealistic policy written for effective and successful schools has minimal use in this disadvantaged school context.

8.5.2. Accountability

In South Africa, school management and leadership have changed profoundly, and a lot of trust has been placed on those in charge on the ground level while change occurs. No longer an authoritarian, closed-door process, all members of school life (department officials, parents, teachers and learners) have a role to play in the management of the school. School management has moved drastically toward a bottom-up, shared decision making model:

Devolution of control in the education system requires trust in principals and teachers, alongside determination to build their competence over time … Roles and procedures are flexible and open to question. Accountability comes through results more than procedures (Malcolm, 2001, p. 231).

With this ‘self-managing’ philosophy, the role of the principal becomes even more pivotal. It is crucial that the principal should not only be an expert in areas of teaching and learning, but should also demonstrate outstanding leadership skills to utilise this knowledge to facilitate improved learning (Botha, 2004). “The role of the South African school principal has changed dramatically and leadership is of the utmost importance in the new principalship” (Botha, 2004, p. 242).

I explore accountability in my study by analysing the role of the principal. There was no governing body (parental involvement) at the school. The school management team consisted of two heads of department who were not eager to comment without the principal present. There was no deputy principal at the time of the fieldwork (waiting for appointment according to the principal). Hence, the monitoring of accountability in this school environment lay with the principal and the principal alone, despite any efforts to change this situation (governing bodies, participation from staff etc.). According to the policy values, ‘Nurturing a culture of communication and participation’ and ‘Bringing back the rule of law to schools’ are the strategies that involve school leadership. To begin, I summarise the story behind the principal in this township school.
The principal as person

The principal had been a teacher at this school since it opened in the late 1970s. She was the first appointed teacher [II, P] and secondly, she was a head of department and deputy principal under two principals who were described as dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking [II, P, Observation notes, 21 July 2009]. She was primed for the headship by the two previous principals, who were described by department of education officials (Observation notes, 28 July 2009) and a parent [II, Pa] as exceptionally effective and visionary:

Principal … So Mr X used to use me a lot in the administration of doing everything about the school, that is, I was responsible for admission registers, a lot of administration things… It was like he was training me to realise all the different things of the school and to understand what being a leader of a school is all about. But, you know, I was so keen to learn everything, so inquisitive… I wanted to know why is this done, and all that. And then he helped me, in fact… I helped the school. I think, it is sad to say, I was “born a leader”… No, I wasn’t… not like Mr X and the other principal. Those two principals were born leaders. I think I should say that I learnt to lead, I was taught. But I was a leader in the classroom, as a teacher. In everything in the school, I was keen to know… I was so flexible to do everything, any responsibility, and I didn’t want anything to fail in my hands, and I was also hands-on. I wanted to be there, in the action [II, P].

This enthusiasm and training were clearly the reasons why previous principals encouraged her to apply and accept the position of principal at this school. She further describes the process:

Principal … So basically it has been steps, from a teacher, to HOD, to deputy principal. And I learnt everything through this process. I became deputy principal in 2006, and then in 2007 I became the principal. I was acting principal in 2006, when the post was not yet advertised [II, P].

Previous principals had faith that she could continue running an effective school (as it was under the leadership of previous principals). The understanding was that she was seen as the ideal candidate for the position of school leader according to previous school leaders whom she had worked with:

Principal … At first, when I applied for the post, I was so enthusiastic and I wanted to make a difference as Mr X did – he made the school what it is today. Lots of people talk about him. So I said to myself I must do something more… But unfortunately, this life is full of challenges [II, P].

This assumption was based purely on her interview comments. She had never participated in an independent appraisal or review, and I was unable to contact previous principals. Next, I evaluate these accountability findings through the values strategies.
Bringing back the rule of law to schools – or not

The principal highlighted specific reasons why she was unable to instil ‘rule of law’ or accountability in her school.

If there is no respect for the legitimacy of those who administer the rule of law, it is little wonder the consequence is the chaos that exists in so many schools (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 51).

Teacher trade unionism dates back to the 1900s, and history has shown that the major aim of the establishment of teacher unions in South Africa, especially black unions, was to fight for the rights of teachers and to pursue political interests. Teacher unions have influenced education policy and social change throughout history in South Africa, and their development and history are strongly related to their political relationship with the government of the day (Govender, 2004, p. 267). The growing feeling of young teachers, in particular during the 1980s, was that teacher unions had to confront government directly and use militancy if necessary. More recently, the ideologies of teacher unions came into conflict. The conflict is between the “militant to fight government” perspective, and the “professional” perspective (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001, p. 223). Professionalism and unionism are not often seen as partners. The South African Constitution declares it a right for educators to belong to a union. Unionist activities like condoning teacher ‘stay-aways’ and strikes are counter-productive to the enhancement of a culture of learning and teaching in schools (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001, p. 224).

Union action in this school is manifested in ways that seem counter-productive to school life. It seemed that union action was more apparent and disruptive than it had even been before (based on the principal’s comments). Strike action and go-slow dramatically affected school functioning for weeks at a time. Unions were quick to react when educators were held accountable for actions that went against their responsibilities as educators. Union support is exceptionally strong, a selling point in gaining membership. Their approach, according to the principal, was not one showing support of the professional perspective, but rather the “militant, fight” perspective. “Unions have become much more fierce than they used to be” [II, P]. Anxiety from the principal manifested in the hopelessness she felt in holding educators responsible for their actions.

The fact that there is a breakdown in the rule of law at some schools is not because, as many educators feel, a “culture of human rights” has eroded discipline, but rather that the decades of illegitimacy and abuse of authority under the Bantu Education system have resulted in a culture of entitlement, and an attitude of non-compliance with rules and regulations (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 51).
Absenteeism, missing class, disengagement and arriving late were behaviours tolerated by the principal. These behaviours reinforced ‘entitlement’ and ‘non-compliance’ by teachers, and they were an integral part of union action taken against the principal [II, P].

The absence of the rule of law in some schools means … educators are often unaccountable, not showing up to teach and regarding their positions as sinecure rather than vocation (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 51).

Hence, union action intimidated the principal into not taking action against educators that behaved unprofessionally. Whether previous principals did not have the same challenges, or dealt with them differently, could not be verified. There are no consequences for this ‘bad’ behaviour, and this reinforces teaching positions as sinecure. The principal describes this as the “union throwing petrol on a burning fire” [II, P]. Furthermore, these behaviours have now become entrenched in the organisational culture of this school. Unions, like other stakeholders in education, have an important role to play in the restoration of teacher professionalism, and enhancing the culture of learning and teaching in schools (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001, p. 227). As a result, unions should make their members aware of codes of conduct. These must be enforced with assistance from other stakeholders such as the department of education and parents. Teachers need to be willing to do their best. In light of the values framework, the first step is the development of a culture of communication and participation between all stakeholders. A sense of accountability in schools is crucial in light of new changes and policy initiatives.

**Nurturing a culture of (mis) communication and (non) participation**

This study involved the basic and important aspects of school life, hence department officials were not incorporated in the research design (further research into their role would enhance understanding). Yet, officials play a vital role in supporting the teacher and principal.

It means improving channels of dialogue between educators and officials, so that educators feel valued and officials feel that their directives have been adhered to rather than stonewalled (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 18).

Department officials in my study have let this principal down. The ‘cottage’ situation showed how the teachers at this school stood together, and in this instance, could easily override management decisions, as department officials supported the educators instead of the school management team. This is a significant example within my research findings, as it emphasises the lack of support and power that the principal has, as well as the lack of communication between the stakeholders. Although the ‘cottage’ is the only instance recorded with interaction from the department, it appears that
educators have realised that they can remain unaccountable for unprofessional behaviours, and thus over-power management decisions. This has greatly decreased the principal’s authority and power.

During her interview, the principal describes how she knew the cottage was a breeding ground for ‘bad’ behaviour, and an instigator of negative attitudes in the organisational culture of the school. She emphasised how the school management team stood firm in stating that staff could not use this area during teaching time, but they were “crushed” by the department officials, and the educators were “free to do whatever they want to” [II, P] (hence, keep the cottage as opposed to being in the staffroom during school hours). The department officials overrode the principal’s decisions. This incident shows that the values strategy of nurturing a culture of communication and participation is problematical in this school, as officials did not listen to and support the principal. Hence, weak management, a lack of support for the principal, and behaviours from educators that were unacceptable, continued in this school.

It [the educational strategy of Values Manifesto] means giving principals the kind of management training that will enable them to mobilise their staff effectively (Department of Education, 2001a, p. 18).

In arguing the lack of support for school leadership, I also need to critique the principal in her role as school leader. Ngidi and Qwabe (2006, p. 537) discuss factors that affect the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Their findings specifically showed that principals’ poor management of schools was the most frequent factor that contributed to the decline of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Other factors were related to educators’ unacceptable behaviour, such as educators who are uncommitted, absent from class, and who lack discipline and a professional work ethic.

It is important to emphasise that responsibility for the monitoring and supervision of teachers’ actions does lie with the principal. Avoiding conflict and no follow-through are listed as habits that lead to ineffective leadership (Capelluti & Nye, 2004, p. 8). The principal in my study avoided conflict, and lacked follow-through for a variety of reasons. As the history of the school shows, the other principals had a similar environment but different results. Hence, her structural explanations for inefficiency are not totally valid. In an attempt to understand the current situation of the school, I tried to get hold of previous principals, but this was unsuccessful. The professional principal is the manager of the school and, therefore, is responsible for the work performance of all the people in the school (Botha, 2004, p. 239). Studies of effective leadership show that the major reason for principal’s failure is an inability to deal with people who need to be held accountable for their poor performance.
Principal … No, no. I am still enthusiastic. But the problem is that I have yet to find the people, the staff, who are causing the problems and making problems. But to work with the chosen few staff, who are working well is not going to make the difference and to get everyone involved. It takes everyone to be on board [II, P].

The principal is aware of the challenges that face her, but her inaction is not contributing to school effectiveness, or enhancing any form of values education in this school.

8.6. Conclusion

This chapter presented evidence that ‘new’ values education is not being achieved at this school. Without the commitment and competence of educators, an effective teaching and learning environment is impossible. The majority of teachers at this township school lack personal commitment to their roles as teachers, and because of the dreadful legacies of the apartheid past, their competencies for dealing with educational policy are extremely limited. This makes embracing the values framework very difficult. The lack of inspirational or effective leadership from the principal is just another challenge that inhibits progress. The school has moved from being in a position of promise and hope (under the leadership of the two previous dynamic principals) to the demoted position of being just another ‘township school’. Both the principal and the teachers accept their situations by diverting their thoughts to the many reasons and excuses they have created. Although they at times profess the espoused theory that new policy promotes, their reality is very much the same as it was years ago. They cover up the differences between espoused theory and discourse with fibs, alibis, and rationalisations that they have come to accept. No accountability structures are in place to change these behaviours, and with the poor communication between all school stakeholders, decisions that are made to try and break bad behaviours are overridden and things stay the same. The few motivated educators are the only people keeping things going. Teachers’ practice and accountability profoundly influence how values manifest in this school; that is, values manifest in ways that, at times, directly oppose new education policy.

The second theme that emerged from the fieldwork evidence was new talk and old habits. The ‘new’ and the ‘old’ were in daily conflict at this township school. In the case of new talk and old habits, I focus on the pressure exerted on participants from rights talk (the ‘new’) and how this is counteracted by habits from the past, namely religious instruction, discipline, duties and obligations. This evidence is presented and discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 9. Theme Two: New talk and old habits

New talk and old habits proved to be the most fundamental way that children were learning values at this school. Before fieldwork evidence is presented, I provide the reader with background information that further describes the details of this theme. Township school life is unique, and information is offered that provides a more integrated picture of the tensions in this township school.

The ‘old’

Evidence revealed that topics relating to respect, discipline, rights and religion were recorded many times over in fieldwork material. This theme highlights how old habits, mainly religious instruction and physical forms of discipline, are used as they were during apartheid.

Until educators experience the concept of ‘child-centred’ learning as a mechanism to gain (rather than lose) respect and discipline in the classroom, the tension between repressive and rights-centred interpretations of values is likely to continue (Department of Education, 2001c).

Reliance on these old habits goes against new policy initiatives. However, the ingredient that motivates participants to rely on old habits is specifically the new talk; namely their opposition to new rights talk. Theoretically and practically, talk of human rights in South Africa has no direct application to these participants’ lives. Participants do not understand human rights, or the values that encompass a human rights culture, and therefore find it a nuisance. This creates tension and anxiety when they are faced with new talk.

Religion is used as it was before 1994 in assemblies and classrooms. A fear of God, the Bible and all that religion encompasses, regarding authority, respect and punishment, is stressed and emphasised. It forms an integral part of the organisational culture of this school. Historically, religion also produces a style of discipline that aligns with corporal punishment. The physical nature of punishment in this school is made compatible with the Bible. This is the way things worked in the past and according to these teachers, it worked, and still does work, well today. Old habits die hard, but further to this, they are maintained for a particular reason. Old habits are successful in this environment; they provide foundations and a basis in an ever-changing environment. With little understanding or motivation for understanding ‘new’ talk, these old habits will continue to be a deeply embedded form of organisational life in this school.
Interestingly, teachers stressed that ‘old’ practice included well-behaved, disciplined learners. They stressed how today’s learners were out-of-control, ill-disciplined, and showed no respect for educators or their school. Yet, observation notes illustrated a completely different situation. According to fieldwork material, learners were exceptionally well-behaved. In particular cases, learners were strangely shy, withdrawn and timid and did not display the behaviours that were described by educators in the classroom. These contradictions will be addressed.

The ‘new’

Within the new political and educational agenda, human rights (including child rights) are to replace the repressive and cruel behaviour of past practices in South Africa. Nurturing a human rights culture, and the values integral to this culture, are to be the focus in South African schools. Old ways of behaving, such as physical forms of discipline and strict religious instruction, are undermined by rights talk. Hence, the abolition of corporal punishment and strict religious instruction, which was seen as a form of indoctrination and part of the ‘old’ South Africa, were immediate actions taken by the new government. Yet, the ‘new talk’ seems superficial to these participants. Participants do not understand rights talk in a critical or applicable way. Their understanding simply is about a sense or form of entitlement. The word ‘rights’ is used commonly with an expectation of a promised outcome. For example, teachers have the ‘right’ to strike, and hence they should or will receive higher remuneration. Also, learners have a right to education. Therefore, they deserve a place at the school, competent teachers, and facilities that support them.

Further to this, teachers feel students have too many rights – these should be taken away. Although rights are good for them, they feel these rights are not good for children, again highlighting an apparent misunderstanding of rights discourse. Rights talk results in anxiety and fear for educators, and is contrary to its original purpose. Basically, rights have been used as a form of ‘magical talk’ that were to replace apartheid ways of life. Rights talk in this school has undermined old ways, but participants still seem to hold on to old ways, while at the same time appealing to new rights talk in a way which “makes them get things” (Observation notes, 29 July 2009). Beyond practices involving old habits, teachers appeal to their personal rights, but deny and at times abuse children’s rights. This contradiction appears to be the root of many issues for the stakeholders at this school.

Link to research

The focus on new talk and old habits arises from particular values contradictions. When one compares the values being taught at this school through old habits and educational practice, and the ‘magical,
ideal’ values and expectations portrayed through the Manifesto and rights talk, the stark difference and gap between these two forums forms an integral argument for this research. Firstly, the new talk and new policy initiatives undermine the old habits and practices, and thus create anxiety. This anxiety generates an environment where participants feel helpless and fearful. They therefore seem to hold on to old habits and old practices more strongly. Secondly, participants lack the understanding and capabilities around alternatives. There is a systemic problem regarding the lack of skills in implementing new educational initiatives and what new policy and new talk expects from educators. These problems manifest themselves in educators addressing rights as something good for them, but not allowed for the learners. There is ‘magical’ thinking on the part of South African policy writers; that a document or group of words will mean that people can do it. My research shows that this is not the case. Ultimately, these policy documents appear symbolic (Jansen, 2002), rather than tools to improve practice and transform apartheid ways of life.

9.1. Theme layout and presentation

Observation notes and fieldwork material provide the reader with a picture of school life, particularly old habits. Thereafter, the explanations given by participants are presented. Two categories are used to organise participants’ responses. ‘Old habits’ describe participants’ feelings towards their current teaching practice. ‘New talk’ presents participants’ responses regarding rights talk, and the fear and annoyance they feel regarding new talk. In the Standing out section, material is presented that highlights the imbalance between what is stated by educators regarding the learners’ behaviour, and observation notes that illustrate a very different picture. This mismatch in interpretation as to what constitutes ‘good’ and ‘bad’ behaviour is important. Not all educators participate in physical discipline, yet they all feel strongly about it; this is addressed in the Standing out section. In the evaluation section, I briefly address religion and discipline as old habits and I explore rights (new) talk. The conclusion argues the importance of these findings with regards to how values are enacted and realised in this school environment.

This chapter is structured like Chapter Eight, with evidence presented in Description of events and Explanations from participants. The ‘Standing out’ section presents the material that disconfirmed the majority of evidence. Thereafter, I evaluate the evidence and draw conclusions to end this findings chapter.
9.2. Description of events (observation stage of fieldwork)

Religion and discipline are described as old habits in this research because of their significant history in the South African education system.

9.2.1. Religion

Within the Values Manifesto, South Africa is described as a deeply religious society. According to South African policy, religion offers effective moral codes which values can be based on (Department of Education, 2001a). Religion as a tool for values teaching unfolded particularly through the messages and prayers given by staff members during assembly, and took on two general roles. Firstly, to invoke a consciousness in guiding their personal moral compasses (values), such as sexual immorality and resisting temptation:

There was a strong message given by one of the staff about resisting temptation in light of being a child of God. According to this educator, it was temptation that caused them to behave badly. The behaviours addressed were swearing, beating each other up and not completing homework (Observation notes, 21 July 2009).

Another educator gave a message in assembly which was dedicated to sexual immorality. The teacher emphasised how if learners did not lead a good life as stated in the Bible, they could get STDs and HIV/AIDS. This would be due to living an immoral life and giving into temptation according to this educator (Observation notes, 23 July 2009).

The message in assembly this morning was to live a life of example as Jesus did and not do bad things (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).

During assembly, the male teacher spoke of respecting one another as God would have them do (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).

The school day began again with songs and prayers and a message about caring for each other as the Bible says (Observation notes, 6 August 2009).

Secondly, religion was used to enforce and encourage good, scholarly behaviour:

The message from the teachers in class was to pray to God to help the learners to behave and learn (Observation notes, 22 July 2009).

The message this morning was based on how if the learners read their bibles, they will become clever, and will be smart in the ways of the world (Observation notes, 24 August 2009).
The teacher began the lesson asking God to help them be good (Observation notes, 28 July 2009).

It became clear through these observations that religion is the reason for learners to respect their educators and one another, the reason to behave in an appropriate manner at school, to care for each other, and not to engage in bad or immoral behaviours. These messages and incidents were the most observed way that values were communicated and taught at this school.

9.2.2. Discipline

Discipline was a complex subject to tackle not only during the observation stage of the research, but also during interviews and focus groups, as participants were reluctant to share their opinions or experiences. The observation notes presented highlight the emphasis and conditioning effect discipline techniques had on the learners at the school. There was also no evidence of any school-wide approach to discipline that all educators followed. Educators set their own standard, and dealt with discipline individually based on personal history and personal expectations. It must be stressed that these observations are a few of many recorded during the fieldwork period that described this type of behaviour:

- During the first assembly of the term, 900+ learners stood silently and diligently waiting for the principal to arrive (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).
- Learners line up quickly and lead into the quad area without a sound (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).
- Learners in the classroom were shy, reserved and timid. They were reluctant to answer questions or put their hand up (Observation notes, 6 August 2009).

The uniquely disciplined environment stood out. Observations in the classroom disclosed incidents that provoked further investigation:

- When the next teacher came in a bit later, she asked for the stick. She did not bash it on the desks and blackboard (as was observed previously) but poked children who misbehaved with it (Observation notes, 27 July 2009).

- The following lesson observed was a Xhosa lesson. This teacher pinched two learners who were misbehaving. Immediately afterwards, the teacher reported on the pressures she had as a teacher at the school (Observation notes, 28 July 2009).
The learner physically cowered away from the male teacher, who reprimanded him aggressively after he laughed with another boy sitting next to him (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).

The female teachers made two learners come to the front of the class, where she hit their hands with a stick (Observation notes, 5 August 2009).

The teacher was trying to walk in between the learners’ desks, and at one stage he smacked one of the learners who was not copying from the blackboard. All the learners were extremely obedient after this (Observation notes, 6 August 2009).

All the observations involving discipline appeared to be linked to religion, as observed events suggested that ‘God’ was the authority providing rules, boundaries and limitations for learner behaviour. Prayers and religious rituals emphasised messages about being good at school. If learners did not adhere to this authority, then teachers would use physical discipline. Historically in South Africa, religion aligns with this form of discipline.

9.3. Explanations from participants (focus groups and interviews)

It was difficult for participants to reflect on their actions and attitudes toward discipline and religion, and the role these ‘old habits’ played in the life of this school. There was a definite sense of ‘getting into trouble’ if they said the wrong thing, and this inhibited the interview process. Distinctive categories arose from the transcribed interview material.

9.3.1. Old habits

The evidence below links to the way teaching and learning took place in the apartheid past.

Religion: ‘The Bible tells us so’

Within the design and discussion of the values initiative, the difference between religious education and religion education was emphasised. Albert Nolan (Department of Education, 2001b) stressed how religious education is about nurturing a religious consciousness, and this task involves the role of churches in the community. However, “religion education”, which is seen as the school’s responsibility, is about providing knowledge about religions, morality and values. Jansen (Department of Education, 2001b, p. 30) called for the banning of schools “from using Monday mornings to run church services”. Yet, participants in this school felt differently about the role of religion in their school environment:
Principal … We are a Christian school, so many of our values come through in this way. But other values, though it is a bit difficult, because the Constitution states that we cannot preach a religion, although we say that we are a Christian school and we have a policy that states this. But we teach other religions too, in Life Orientation. We do know that when a child is having Christian religion, it makes him or her become a better person – not that I’m saying Islam or Buddhism is wrong, it’s just a manner in which learners can become better people. South Africa is full of Christians, so these values come through. [FG, SMT].

HOD 1 … I think other values in the terms of Christianity come through in our assemblies and teaching as well, you can see by the class rules and that [FG, SMT].

Teacher … Oh yes, because basically, the morals and the values in all religions are the same. There are a few different ideologies here and there, but morally they are the same. So, Christianity here plays a role in bringing discipline to the learners. When the word of God is preached at the assembly here, you can feel a change in the children’s behaviour. They feel that they are not only accountable to themselves, but to God as well. And they get the sense of knowing that I am important, I am also a child of God and I was created for a purpose. That’s why I am here [II, T2].

The strong connection between religion and values is clear. Teachers argued that values are taught through Christianity. Therefore learners are accountable to God. Certain educators also professed their personal link to Christianity, and how their religion drove them to become educators:

Teacher … It is a calling for me. It was meant to be [II, T4].

Teacher … Yes, God intended for me to do this. You know, as Jesus is the teacher and when I am teaching, I feel at home. Even when I’m not teaching the learners, I explain things to people such that they are clear. I don’t like to leave people with questions. And as a result, if there is something that I do not know, I go out and research it, so that I come with answers. I am that person who always wants to give people answers to their questions like Jesus [II, T2].

When it came to probing about the links between these two habits of the past, an educator was quick to explain why certain behaviours were acceptable in this school community:

Teacher … There are many ways of punishing learners, but you find that even those [new] methods, they are ineffective. For instance, some learners enjoy staying outside. If you chase a learner outside, they will play out there and be happy. Or then the teacher has denied the right of learning in class, because you have sent the child out. Now, as a Christian, I still go back to what the Lord said. [Does physical action] Hit the child with a stick, but with love. Because what we did not like about the corporal punishment, was the hatred that was in the punishment. Even if it is not beating, it is swearing at a child, if it is done with bitterness and anger and hatred, it kills the child. When we grew up, we chose to rather be beaten than the words, because they are more dangerous to the emotions than being beaten. So getting away from corporal punishment was not a solution, because now these children are emotionally damaged by what we say. It is the words that stay with them.
forever. And also the marks that are left after being beaten, they just go away after some time, but words stay forever. So, even if a person was beating you, those marks would go away, but the words stay. Discipline is a big problem that needs to be debated again and needs more discussion and the review of that legislation.

And what they say about the violence that is inflicted by the corporal punishment, there is no violence when you beat a child with love as the Lord commands. Instead the violence they get even now when they are not beating children, is from these wrestling programmes on TV, these movies and those things and of course when their parents are beating each other. And also, these learners, there is no language they understand – they beat themselves up. They beat each other. That’s how they get to be respected by one another, by beating each other up. Though we do not and cannot beat them. So how can we say we are doing it right? [II, T2].

The complex response from this educator stresses the intricate pressures that the old and the new create for these teachers. Beating a child with love, as the Bible says, is not wrong, according to this educator. The emphasis on religion in the school produces, as it did before 1994, a type of acceptable physical punishment. In fact, this educator believes that it is the right thing to do. But he and other educators deny actively being physical with these learners. Although they believe it, they do not do it according to this response. Evidence, however, was recorded that showed educators being physical with learners. Learners admit to being disciplined in very physical ways by educators. This disjunction is a crucial element in this research, as again it shows the tension between the new and the old. Even when observed incidents were described in focus groups, participants did not respond.

**Discipline: The truth**

After intensive interviews, teachers did not respond with information that correlated with observations made. Teachers would either ignore the questions or divert the conversation. When asked outright about observations made in the class, one teacher answered by suggesting the following:

Teacher 2 … When I was working at a High School, we used to make a plan for the learners to discipline each other when we have functions at school. We used to use the older boys to keep the discipline, for those who are rude and all the other stuff. They would keep quiet because they knew that this old boy is going to give him a “clap” [smack]. So, they kept quiet – no words nothing. You just stand there and you find the class peaceful. And you as a teacher, you can’t clap, you can’t beat, you can do nothing, you speak – that is all you can do. Even when you are speaking, they just speak over you.

Teacher 5 … And also, if you punish them by staying after school for 3 hours to do certain things around the school and what ever in the afternoon, yes, they may feel that punishment, but you will also feel that punishment, because you have to stay behind and watch the child and with discipline, if the child is not disciplined, it is not easy for them to learn. Because, an undisciplined child will be restless in class. It is unfair on us [FG, T].
The past still underlies current practice, with teachers suggesting that if they themselves could not be physical with learners, then a strategy would be to get older learners to be physical with their peers. Physical discipline is so deeply embedded in practice, that new talk, and the reasons behind new talk, have not affected how these educators think and feel. The parent interview also shed some light on the physical nature of disciplining, which suggested that this type of behaviour was not limited to school life:

Parent … You see, like, the problem right now – when they talk about things like corporal punishment and child abuse and these things, I try not hit my kids, like only once or twice, but you know when you go shopping and you know, my youngest… He’ll see a soccer ball or something and he will want it. But I tell him the money is for food, not balls, not for toys. And then he will beg and beg and even start crying, and then I will take him aside and tell him that if he doesn’t stop it, I will take him home and shopping will be over. And if need be, I will give him a smack and then it is over. Tears for a while, then it is over. It is finished.

So even though I don’t believe in beating a child, I do think that there are times when a smack does the job, when you can’t talk to the child, make him understand. I draw the line though. I don’t smack all the time. I really don’t like to be physical [II, Pa].

Different responses highlight mixed reasons and alibis for physical discipline. This parent does not believe in beating a child, but reasons that there are occasions when a smack ‘does the job’. The example he gives for a physical act of discipline is his son throwing a temper tantrum in a store. Evidence was presented to the parent regarding behaviours that occurred at the school involving certain teachers’ physicality toward learners. He commented the following:

Parent … You know, I think it depends on the seriousness of what the child did wrong, of the offence. You can’t smack a child for breaking a piece of chalk on the blackboard, for example. But you can smack a child for swearing, or disrespecting the teacher, or carrying alcohol on them at school or weapons. And of course bullying, that is serious. But I think that before you do that, normally, you talk to the child first. You ask them to not do this again and try to find out why they are behaving like that. You try to educate them about what they are doing wrong and why [II, Pa].

This parent feels that particular incidents at school deserved physical discipline, although he articulated not believing in beating a child. A seemingly deliberate turn away from new policy and new ways of educating emerges. In addition, issues around the links between cultural background and values, and corporal or physical punishment, also emerge for consideration. The fact that human rights were the result of the apartheid struggle makes these statements from previously-discriminated-against black teachers and parents appear contradictory. Parents and teachers often expressed their difficult, apartheid upbringings. They recall this time in a very negative way, emphasising the cruelty and pain.
they suffered. Yet, they behave in ways that reflect their pasts. The Bill of Rights, drawn up as a symbol of hope after decades of segregation and cruelty, clearly states that no one will be physically punished or abused in the new South Africa.

The learners also commented on the different forms of discipline (no school-wide approach) and the inconsistency of discipline from the different authority figures in their lives:

Learner 2 … The teachers try their best to discipline us, but there are some learners who do not really care about that.

Learner 4 … So like the teacher will take him or her out of the class, until the period is done and then when the lesson is over, he can come back. So they send us out of the class.

Learner 2 … But the teacher will say that she does not want to send the learners out, but we are forcing her to take action and do something that she doesn’t want to do. That’s why. Our teacher then also writes a letter for your parents, telling them she wants to see your parents, but still parents don’t come… They say things like, “Well tell your teacher I’m busy with business” [FG, L].

The learners were aware that certain techniques used by educators seemed ineffective, and parents seemed unsupportive as well. Learners were still nervous to comment on the observations made regarding the physical nature of discipline. After describing an incident, the learners revealed information that aligned with observation notes:

Learner 3 … You know, they can hit us, but when it is something that you have not done wrong, you can’t just like … hit a child, but you can give the child a second chance, but … you must not hit a child because you don’t know the problem.

Learner 1 … It’s normally over unnecessary things…Even unfair things…Even if you put up your hand with a question, you get shouted at … he says “Why didn’t you listen the first time” … That’s why it was a bad year.

Learner 2 … Yes, that was the problem with that teacher. It was really difficult to concentrate on learning and listening to the lesson when you are afraid [FG, L].

Questions regarding how they felt about the effectiveness of this type of discipline were answered as follows:

Learner 1 … Yes on the whole, but not all the time. Like in Grade 6, that wasn’t a good grade. [All nodding in agreement]. Especially if you were in specific classes (examples given)... Because … (long pause) the learners were very afraid of one teacher. All the
learners were scared of him. Yes, it was last year [all learners nod in agreement] … He can hit us over something that is not really important … something that he shouldn’t be hitting a child over.

Learner 4 … We always feel tense in his classroom, so we didn’t learn much.

Learner 2 … You know, the whole year in Grade 6, I wasn’t happy. Now that we are in Grade 7, I feel much happier. I am free now. When I was in Grade 6 it was really difficult, I couldn’t even move my hip when I am next to him because he is very … you know … like he is going to fall, and if he falls then you are going to get into trouble. So you have to hold yourself still so that he mustn’t hit you. It was very hard in Grade 6 [FG, L].

The impact of this type of behaviour on the learners’ ability to concentrate during school is apparent. Learners seemed extremely fearful of certain teachers who disciplined in this manner. This proved to be yet another aspect learners needed to cope with in school life. It also explains the ‘strangely disciplined’ environment recorded in observation notes. Learners are afraid, and they continued to describe their reality:

Learner 4 … Yes, in Grade 7 each and every teacher is fair and if they hit us it is for a reason. Like if you do your own things and not your work. They hit you for a reason.

Learner 2 … Yes, in Grade 6 there was not a good reason. It was like he was having a bad day. Almost, he was in a bad mood every day.

[The learners describe how the teachers would hit them. He would make them put their hands out and then hit down on their hands with a stick. He would continue with this until they could not write.]

Learner 4 … If you try and write straight afterwards, he will hit you again, because you cannot write if your hand is sore enough. So he wants your hand to be sore.

Learner 3 … And he will even hit your body… Like your arm or leg … with the stick. It is unfair [FG, L].

Further inquiry into the cultural implications of these sorts of behaviours is earmarked for further research, discussion and debate. However, in the case of my study, it appears that the old habits embraced by educators influence not only the effectiveness of the teaching and learning environment, but also challenge the values of the ‘new’ South Africa. Although adults reflect on their personal histories as cruel and painful, they are unable to relinquish the control their pasts still have on them. This point is explored further in this chapter.
Community behaviour

It is impossible to ignore the extent to which the environment plays a part in the life of the school. Township reality is harsh, and poverty is visible in every part of this community’s life, as Moloi describes in her township school research:

Among these global changes are some context specific challenges marked by increasing levels of poverty among school communities, high levels of illiteracy and unemployment, high parent mortality rates that increase the number of child-headed families and thus exacerbate child poverty. In the midst of all these challenges are some of the most disadvantaged, ill-resourced schools (Moloi, 2010, p. 622).

Participants were aware of these challenges, and it seemed that their reliance on old ways of doing things was not the only factor shaping how these learners were taught values. The surrounding community also played a big part. Physical behaviours and violence were an everyday part of this community, as the descriptions below illuminate:

Parent … What I will tell you about my sons, where we live, there are about two shabeens [illegal drinking areas, “taverns” which are normally houses of people, who sell alcohol illegally] around our house. So we have people swearing, people shouting, people fighting, and my sons stand and watch them. They always run away when the people start fighting and it’s because I tell them to come inside when that happens because children learn from what parents do. They learn behaviour by seeing what adults do and then copying that. I mean, I have seen my sons friends come to my house with bruises or cuts on their body and I ask them where those marks came from. They say oh, they were just pretending to be these people in the street, you know – play fighting [II, Pa].

Besides the fact that these learners observe and model this type of behaviour in the environment surrounding their homes and school, it is also a very real part of their lives at home as one of the teachers highlighted:

Teacher … So these learners come from broken families and in these families where there is a mother and father, there is fighting all the time. Nowadays parents do not know how to handle conflict. They fight in front of the children, especially those who use drugs at home. When the father is drunk and comes home, his children will hear him drunk at the gate and swearing at everybody and the children will be afraid and go to hide, because there is this ‘animal’ that is coming. But this ‘animal’, sometimes he comes fighting and sometimes he comes with a lot of care that is over the one that they are used to (sober father). Waking the children from their sleep, wake up, wake up. He will want to kiss them or see them with that smell of liquor, or make a row. Although he is not fighting today, he wants to see them - “sit here my child” and the children are drowsy, they want to sleep, but the father wants to see them, waking them up. So those are some of the abuses these children have to live with and grow up with and they are used to that. They do not know what is right, what is valuable. As a result, it is difficult to say to the child, it is wrong to drink or it is wrong to fight, because they think it is part of the life that they are living, their parents enjoy this.
Even though for some of them, their mothers don’t drink or fight, it is only their fathers, but the mothers will buy the liquor for the fathers or fight openly in front of the children, so they think it is just part of life, it is just part of life [II, T2].

The complexities of township life appear to supersede the ‘magical’ talk accompanying new policy initiatives and rights talk. ‘Old habits die hard’ in this school, but the circumstances some learners face at home appear to make any chance of realising new policy values, improbable. Parents and home life do not contribute to or support new talk:

Parent … Because sometimes these problems come from home you see. Children think it is ok because their parents or older siblings do it. Like, their mom could be a drunkard, or their parents could be fighting and swearing all the time. So the child then thinks that this behaviour is ok, and that it is alright to treat other people that way. And then also you will find, that a child will bottle all these emotions inside and then now when he comes to school he will take it out on this classmates and that is why he behaves like he does. So you have to sit down with the child and ask them what is happening and what is wrong [II, Pa].

The physical nature of discipline at school is not isolated. It is very much part of everyday life for these children. The external environment, cultural influences and forms of fighting and violence impact on how these children learn values. Home life is also a challenge. Teachers describe the parents’ role when other methods of discipline are attempted:

Teacher 4 … You know there is a learner in my class. He is so ill-disciplined. So then, I called the parent and the mother came and said that she has tried everything to discipline the child, but the child is like that. She doesn’t know what to do. So what can I do? Because we punish the kids, but then at home it is not carried through. Parents say they cannot do anything about this [FG, T].

The correlation between this comment, and that of the learners, illustrate that parents appear to be unwilling or unable to deal with discipline in ways that support school attempts. Another teacher raised an important issue when it comes to diagnosing students’ behaviours in class and at school:

Teacher 3 … I think another factor that contributes to this discipline thing is that most kids are staying and living with the grandparents. Because of the circumstances, you will find that they are not proud, that they are staying with their grandparents. And the grandparents do not want to know about discipline, they have had their own children already. Grandparents leave their grandkids to do anything they want. And in the classroom, you will find that because he or she has no parents, the child will be a little bit rowdy. I don’t know whether it is because of the parents. And then those learners with single parents, you will find that they are shy and that. And also, that there is no discipline at all at home. It is very difficult. And with the very many young parents, they are always going around and are out on the town, or working somewhere far away from home, so you find that there are no rules. It is problematic [FG, T].
The family’s role and cultural implications of these issues require further investigation. The teachers were willing to share that there were instances where they felt frustrated in their environment:

[After observation of pinching learners] She said she was tired and it was extremely challenging. She also reiterated how difficult it was to teach in a cramped classroom that she could hardly walk around in. She said this was the reason the learners were so badly behaved and why she was so frustrated. (Observation notes, 28 July).

Teacher 5 … You know I will always refer back to the numbers [60-70 learners in each class]. Because if we had fewer numbers, I think that me as a class teacher, would know all those who are ill-disciplined and then maybe there would be fewer too. Then I could try and control that and not let them influence the class or the way I react [FG, T].

The complexities of discipline and lack of unified action pose threats to attempts at ‘new talk’. This sees old habits become further entrenched in daily practice and organisational culture. Old habits appear to be the only option for participants.

**These kids have got it lucky**

History, and an inability to let go of or ‘unlearn’ past habits, is a challenge for these educators. Not only is the ‘unlearning’ of past behaviours a difficulty, but there appears to be a sense of resentment to how ‘lucky’ these learners have it compared to these teachers who grew up during apartheid. This sub theme developed from many discussions with teachers and parents who would compare their own upbringings to the lives of today’s learners. These comparisons were very important in light of discipline and punishment. When asked about how they discipline learners in their classrooms, the teachers responded as follows:

Teacher 1 … Corporal punishment is out [banned]. We can’t hit these kids.

Teacher 4 … Staying after school doesn’t work.

Teacher 3 … Detention is a waste of time. It wastes our time as teachers and the children think it is nice and fun and good. If you take the learners to do detention, then tomorrow they will say let us do the wrong thing again so we can go to detention again. It is a complete waste of time because they enjoy that [FG, T].

Physical behaviours to demand respect, show authority and enforce behaviours are a dominant form of teaching in this school environment, as it was pre 1994. This stems from a painful history on the part of the teachers and parents. They often relayed stories of how life was for them and why today’s kids ‘got it lucky’. The parent interview revealed the following:
Parent … Because we grew up the wrong way – I was beaten everyday, me. And when I was at home, I used to cook, I used to do the garden and grow the vegetables. I never had a chance to play. I had these … you know … responsibilities. I had 4 younger siblings, and I had to take them to school, to look after them, do their washing, cook them supper and everything. I never had half the chance to do all the things that the children do now. And I don’t beat them, like I was beaten. Not like me – but I want them to help me… I use other means or other ways of getting them to do things and discipline them, not like when I was young and I was just beaten. Because I have to make sure that the rules in the house are obeyed. That is my job as a father [II, Pa].

Personal history clearly alters the way in which this parent views his role as a father. Teachers’ responses to questions about discipline highlighted their difficult pasts:

Teacher 4 … And also this behaviour of these learners today. When you try to be serious and try to educate them about something, they will just laugh at you … You are not angry, you are trying to calm them down, and make them to understand that what they are doing is wrong, but they will just laugh and that makes you mad … We were very ill treated. We were very ill treated. It is definitely not that that made us decide to become teachers. It’s not a good memory. We try our best not to be like the teachers we had at school. As a teacher, we try our best not to be those teachers. It’s a chain…. The teachers ill treated us, the principal ill treated the teachers and the department ill treated the principal [FG, T].

Within all this ill treatment that occurred, there is a feeling that ‘these kids have got it lucky’; resentment towards how ‘easy’ they have it compared to earlier times. The argument, however, is that the opportunities facing today’s learners are what the ‘struggle’ aimed to achieve. Why do these teachers feel this way? Perhaps it is resentment or jealousy. Or they feel that the opportunities fought for are not yet realised or available. They kept emphasising that learners should be doing more, like they did during apartheid:

Teacher … They battle a lot. You know, I always make an example to them that in our times, before the switch [corporal punishment] was used, but as I was a student here, I was beaten four times in three years [very few]. And I can account for them – in Standard 3, I was beaten once. In Standard 4, I was beaten once, and in Standard 5, I was beaten twice. But in their [current learners] years, how many times would they have been beaten? Just this year – for noise making, for all these types of things, because the reason why I didn’t get the punishment is because every time the teacher steps out I became a teacher and I would stand in front of the class and take any textbook, any note book and ask questions. If there was work that was unmarked, then I would do corrections on the board and the teacher would come praising and check the corrections. And if there were problems, correct those problems here are there, but most of the time the answers would be right.

And that helped me when it came to self-discipline. Whereas, there was a lot of chance for me to be punished, but for them, there is a chance for them to discipline themselves. They are given a chance to take responsibility and discipline themselves and yet they go for discipline [punishment]. You will find that not a single one of them spends a whole day without doing something wrong that would need a punishment. That is how bad it is. And I
feel that this one [value of discipline] should be revived. There are some of the old methods that need to be brought back, just for the sake of their goodness [II, T2].

There is a vast mismatch between teachers’ comments on learners’ behaviour and the descriptions of learners’ behaviour in observation notes. Teachers expected ‘apartheid’ behaviour premised on fear and respect for authority from the learners. Yet, learners seemed to behave well. The educators’ personal histories lives clearly influenced their expectations and demands today. Teachers even suggested that when it comes to their behaviours, these learners had it easy compared to what they did for their teachers in the past:

Teacher … As I have told you, I started teaching from Sub B (Grade 2). In the classroom, when the teacher is out, I would take a textbook and start teaching. I would treat them like students and me the teacher. I grew up with that. In Standard 8, one of the teachers who was teaching English, he used to, after long break, be very tired. And he would send me to his other classes to teach the learners for him. And then he would sleep in our class. And I would do it! Even the principal can tell you – I was in her class. Every time she was in a meeting or whatever, I would teach for her and mark for her and stand up in front of the class [II, T2].

There is an expectation that learners should be doing ‘more’, and educators ‘less’, in view of the past. This expectation opposes all new education initiatives, where educators are expected to guide, facilitate and teach not only the curriculum, but values. The parent contributed by describing his difficult upbringing, and how this affected his life today:

Parent … You see, I grew up the hard way. My father used to work here in town, here where I work now. He spent 18 years here, and then he passed away, I was only about 19, that was 24 years ago. So I was forced to leave school and come and work and feed the family. I used to come home crying everyday because I wanted to be a lawyer, but now because my family needed me and I was the one who could do it – work and provide for the family, I had to do it. And it was a lot of pressure because I had to work long days, long long days, and then come home and look after the family, look after my younger brothers and sisters. I did so some studying (courses N1 and N2 at Technikon) and I did well. I passed everything. And I did this while I was working, looking after the family and all that. And when I tried to continue I just realised it was too hard. I couldn’t do everything and I felt worried all the time, it was affecting my head. [II, Pa].

The participants’ difficult pasts still haunt them. The opportunities that face today’s learners today are vastly different and therefore, teachers seem to be hard on these learners. It appears they see nothing wrong with forms of physicality when dealing with discipline problems, as it is nothing compared to how they were treated during apartheid. They feel that learners today behave badly, because it is not the same behaviour that was expected from them during apartheid. Cultural and personal definitions of
physical punishment, together with the emotional scars of teachers’ personal histories, are elements for further investigation. The next category presents an underlying reason for these behaviours.

9.3.2. New talk

During the late 1980s as the African National Congress (ANC) moved towards majority rule, they clarified a commitment to a democratic, rule-of-law state by outlining a vision of the Constitution for the new South Africa. What was indispensable to this Constitution was the accompanying Bill of Rights, which called for equal protection and non discrimination for all South Africans. The Bill of Rights was to guarantee the fundamental human rights of all citizens. The inclusion of the socio-economic rights in the Bill of Rights represented the culmination of the struggle for human dignity, freedom and equality which have socio-economic dimensions (Liebenberg, 2010). These rights are regarded as crucial in reflecting the aspirations of all South Africans. It was hoped these rights would enable marginalised people, and would give the state legislation and programmes for equitable distribution of social and economic services and resources, particularly for poor communities. “Socio-economic rights were regarded as crucial to facilitating the fundamental transformation of South African society” (Liebenberg, 2010, p. 22). It was at this point that rights became the foundation for ‘new talk’ and the avenue for many promises made to South African citizens, particularly black and non-white citizens who had been so cruelly treated.

Fieldwork evidence revealed that rights talk was a contentious subject among school stakeholders. Two distinctions were revealed in rights talk and these are explored in this section; the rights of children and teachers’ rights. Regarding teachers’ views on discipline, the following notes were taken that highlighted what grew to be the most prominent reason for old habits being relied:

Teacher 4 … Teachers are powerless.

Teacher 5 … Yes, as from 1994, teachers are completely powerless. And learners have more rights than teachers. And if the teacher does something wrong, the department takes you up and you get in trouble.

Teacher 4 … You know, here in South Africa, we have rights. So like in our school, our rights have to go with responsibility. But this does not always happen [FG, T].

What evolved from this discussion was that teachers felt powerless in their daily lives at school. Emphasis on children’s rights had undermined all past educator practices, and left them with nothing
familiar or known to rely on. There were no alternatives that proved useful. Even learners were aware of their rights and what it meant to exercise their rights:

Learner 4 … Most of the children here just talk about their rights… Their rights to this and that …

Learner 2 … They don’t really understand that you have to be responsible. You mustn’t talk only about your rights; you must talk about your responsibility too. So it is very important to know that. Like every single teacher should respect every single child, and every child must respect every single teacher. So it is respect for everyone [FG, L].

The first response shows how rights result in a sense of entitlement or ‘getting something’. Throughout the research evidence, this appeared to be the general understanding of what rights were, and how rights affected participants’ lives. Although participants’ talk revealed acknowledgment of responsibilities that accompany rights, no evidence reflected this. When learners were asked exactly what their rights were, they responded by saying:

Learner 4 … We have rights to education. But our responsibility is to work hard at school. [All agree] It is to work hard… Like reading books and things.

Learner 3 … So like, our teacher always tells us. When you are writing tests or exams, you must not write it for the total (result). You must write it for understanding. We must all understand what we learn so that it stays with us.

Learner 2 … You must do your homework, but some learners do their homework and others don’t. So they are not being responsible to their rights. Others do not do their homework.

Learner 5 … They don’t care. The others just don’t care [FG, L].

Acknowledgement of theoretical rights and responsibilities was evident, and learners shared that their peers appealed to rights without responsibility or understanding of their part in claiming rights. Again, the sense of entitlement and ‘getting something’ was the basic expectation when talking rights. During observation notes in the classroom, rights and responsibilities came up many times. One example is described:

[After aggressive shouting] He stated that although all children in South Africa have a right to education, there is a responsibility on the part of the child to work hard and do well in school. This was stressed by the teacher throughout the lesson (Observation notes, 4 August 2009).
No evidence showed understanding responsibility, or the influence responsibility and rights have on practice. Teachers felt strongly that many of the problems faced in their day-to-day reality were because of children’s rights:

Teacher 3 … The learners have got too many rights, and that hinders our progress in terms of our work, and the other concerns, because you cannot be accountable as an educator when the learners are relying on rights. Learners should be told about their responsibility also and the thing that is being echoed and relayed in the media, the newspaper, the radio, the TV … is RIGHTS, you see this rights business is killing us because it comes along with us and that is why there is no progress and the standard is always going down, and we are also told by the [DoE] official that a learner cannot fail, because of their rights to education and then the learner on the other hand, is not accountable for his or her work, rights… Children’s rights. It’s too much.

Teacher 4 … They always go back to rights - we may not abuse the child, yet we are punishing them because they are not working or behaving properly.

Teacher 1 … There is absolutely no discipline; it is only getting worse and worse because of rights.

Teacher 2 … Listen, we cannot separate this discipline from the rights. The learners are ill-disciplined because of this rights business. So we cannot separate the two [FG, T].

The link between the anxiety and frustration teachers feel (which in certain cases leads to physical punishment), and the new rights talk is visible. All teachers in the focus group expressed similar views. All educators felt that the overall problem with discipline was children’s rights, and that rights and discipline share a volatile relationship. This section highlights a few examples of the many discussions around rights that evolved during the fieldwork. The intricate and complex relationship between old habits and new talk has been revealed. This evidence is scrutinized in the evaluation section.

9.4. Standing out

It is necessary to emphasise that not all educators engaged in physical discipline with learners. Only a few participants (four recorded in the evidence, although the learners indicated more) were observed using physical punishment. Observations were also made that showed effectively executed discipline with learners being sent out of the class and returning a few minutes later remorseful (Observation notes, 5 August, 6 August and 12 August 2009). There were also educators that did not focus on religious instruction in their classrooms. They modelled behaviour that resonated with those strategies detailed in the Manifesto. One of these educators, who modelled effective discipline, described her approach to discipline below:
Teacher … There is a problem [with discipline], no, there is. But, I think it is the way you are with the learners. For instance, I may be harsh today, because at that particular time, I may be angry because the child was driving me to the point where I could not tolerate it. But at the end of the day, the learners… even if you are harsh, but if you do it with love, and you are firm, and fair, they will see that you are not disciplining them just because you are angry, but because it is wrong. So you need to be fair and firm, even when you are dealing with the big classes that we teach [II, T1].

She similarly thought that being ‘harsh’ with ‘love’ was effective discipline. Although her comment resonates with historically religious views on discipline, she was observed using effective techniques. Her learners reflected on their behaviour, discussed with her and their peers why such behaviour could not be tolerated in such a big class and hence, became more aware of behaving in ways that were conducive to a good learning environment (Observation notes, 3 September 2009). All educators that participated in this research articulated a problem with discipline. They felt that learners today were ill-disciplined in comparison to learners before the ‘new talk’. All educators also expressed that they firmly believed there was too much emphasis on rights, particularly children’s rights. They felt that the focus on rights made them feel powerless in their roles as educators (as per fieldwork evidence). Many of the educators, not only those whose responses have been presented, felt that physical forms of discipline needed to be brought back. The majority of teachers at this school felt that the banning of corporal punishment was not in the best interests of the learners or education. They felt that old habits were much more beneficial to the overall effectiveness of the school environment.

Interestingly, confirmation between teachers’ descriptions of ill-discipline and observations made of learners’ behaviour was not achieved. In fact, observation notes described behaviour that was significantly different from what teachers had described. For example, at every assembly over nine hundred learners stood in the hot sun, silently for half an hour as they listened to messages, sang hymns and said prayers (Observation notes, 27 and 29 July, 4 and 6 August, 24, 25, 26 September 2009). If a learner was caught whispering to their friend during assembly and reprimanded by an educator, a sense of genuine remorse and guilt accompanied total silence once again. In the classroom, similar accounts were noted. Learners were timid and reluctant to put up their hand to answer questions or contribute to a discussion. Often a teacher would ask a question, and there would be a long silence. Eventually, a learner would whisper an answer. These accounts were numerous throughout the observations (Observation notes, 27, 28 & 29 July 2009). The only confirmation between teachers’ descriptions and observed accounts was when educators left the classrooms. When an educator was not present, learners did talk, get up from their desks, read magazines, and behave in a disorderly fashion. At times they would run out of the classroom. But this behaviour was only noted when teachers were not in attendance. This juxtaposition based on behaviour is a crucial element to this study. Why is there such imbalance between what educators say and what was observed? Again,
personal histories appear to determine what constitutes good and bad behaviour. With no school-wide approach, there is nothing that defines or adequately explains misbehaviour and therefore, teachers set their own standard based on their individual experiences.

9.5. Evaluation

In order to evaluate these findings, it is necessary to address both religion and discipline in a broader contextual framework. I use other empirical studies to enhance understanding of my evidence. However, most of this section will argue a critical dimension on rights talk and the human rights movement in South Africa. This proved to be a foundational aspect to the grievances of these educators and the root problem to why old habits die hard.

9.5.1. Religion

Religion is a contested area for South Africans, and amongst the documentation on the values initiative, the area was described as “thorny and unresolved” (Department of Education, 2001b, p. 30). Chidester (2006, p. 66) comments on the previous regime’s system of religious education with its indoctrination of Christian children, and the denigration of adherents of other religions. Policies that were devised around this contested area were backed by the then Minister of Education, Kadar Asmal, who insisted that educational policy had to flow from the essential constitutional values.

Applying constitutional principles and values, this new advisory committee found that the proposed mixture – the teaching of religion and the teaching about religion – was an educational contradiction rather than a viable compromise (Chidester, 2006, p. 67).

Regarding the conditions of religion in schools, schools were allowed to incorporate religious activities, as long as they were conducted on an equitable basis and were free and voluntary. This condition was not evident in my findings, as there were no acknowledgements of other religions. The only acknowledgement was in the learners’ enrolment forms, where many learners were classified as African Traditional under the religion category (Document Analysis, 28 July 2009). It seemed that, although a strong majority of these learners were African Traditional and not Christian, the school did not try to incorporate African Traditional activities in their school practice. Together with the values in education initiatives, new policy for religion in public education was planned. Chidester (2006) highlights an important point which resonates with the previous chapter as well:

All of these initiatives, as we have seen, are mandated by the South African Constitution. However, while the supremacy of the Constitution, as the rule of law, became established
in South Africa within a remarkably short period of time, the cultural and transformational politics of the country have persisted in exposing the tensions between the many and the one, between the old and the new in an emerging nation. Should these strains be considered creative tensions or crippling contradictions? (Chidester, 2006, p. 78).

The haste with which policy was formed and initiated in South African education has revealed tensions and contradictions between the old and the new, and has left educators feeling helpless. What the educators in this research have done in an attempt to deal with these complications, is to keep things the way they always were. Although there were attempts to justify and explain their decisions in having a ‘Christian’ school, and adhering to the rules of the Constitution and educational policy, in practice, their behaviours and actions remained as they were before 1994. Chidester contends that South Africa’s expanding classroom requires critical reflection on the role of religion, spirituality and the sacred in a constitutional democracy (2008, p. 294). Training and development that is specific to these educators’ unique environments, their histories and their current skill sets, are crucial if education policy is to be followed. Without ‘unlearning’ past practice, their reliance on old habits will continue.

9.5.2. Discipline

The Constitution of South Africa states that everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhumane or degrading way (Liebenberg, 2010, p. 495). What stems from the Constitution is the National Education Policy Act, that states no person shall administer corporal punishment, or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution (Department of Education, 2000a). Current research shows that learner indiscipline is on the increase in South African schools, and this has raised issues about the safety of schools and classrooms (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010). Schools are facing the dilemma of trying to respect children’s rights, and at the same time find adequate and meaningful measures to deal with learner discipline (Chisholm, 2007).

The complexities of rights with discipline were fundamental issues, affecting all stakeholders at the school. As Chisholm states, teachers battle to find meaningful measures to discipline learners. This manifests in teachers feeling helpless, unmotivated and desperate. Maphosa and Shumba (2010) found that educators generally feel disempowered in their ability to maintain discipline in schools in the absence of corporal punishment. They found that their research resonated with Makapela (2006, May 10), who stated that learners literally take advantage because they know that whatever the punishment is, it will be nothing that equals corporal punishment. No instances of learners ‘taking advantage of the system’ were observed, and this could be attributed to their young age (as opposed to secondary school learners). However, it was clear that educators felt disempowered in their ability to maintain control
and discipline in the classroom. ‘New’ discipline measures did not work and therefore, they relied on past practices and old habits to maintain control. This is not uncommon. Naong (2007, p. 287) describes how many teachers have a positive attitude towards corporal punishment and,

the lack of consultation with regards to its abolition excluded teachers from the sphere of discourse on an issue that would have a pronounced effect on their working environment.

This appears to be part of a reoccurring theme regarding new issues facing educators. It must be stressed again; not all educators used physical forms of discipline to maintain order in their classrooms, but they all felt that bringing back old ways, such as corporal punishment, would be extremely beneficial to South African education. Educators who were not physical used other measures, such as leaving the classroom, or afternoon detention. They also stressed that this was not always effective. Again, Maphosa and Shumba (2010, p. 396) found that educators in their study felt the same way; alternative measures to corporal punishment were not very effective in curbing learner indiscipline in schools.

All research participants felt that rights and rights-based talk were problematical. Similarly, the thrust on children’s rights, and the subsequent banning of corporal punishment described in Maphosa & Shumba’s (2010) study, was found to have ushered an era of freedom for learners, who no longer had respect for or fear of their educators. Yet, the learners in my study clearly feared certain teachers, and attributed a ‘bad year’ to the authority and punishment dealt by one educator. Within the Standing out section, it also became clear that teachers’ perceptions of misbehaviour differed significantly and that there was no general agreement on what constitutes misbehaviour (no school-wide approach to discipline). Naong (2007) stresses that evidence is constantly resurfacing that teachers are not complying with the legislation regarding corporal punishment in South Africa. My study is another example. Naong (2007) explains further that, because of inflexible and non-accommodative policy, teachers no longer enjoy their work, and one of these policy issues is school discipline.

This sense of despair and helplessness amongst teachers can only fast-track their exit from the profession. It is evident that most teacher training programmes in this country continue to fail, not only to keep up with the national transformation agenda, but also to pro-actively spearhead the necessary changes in education (2007, p. 297).

This quote aligns with the findings in my study. Maphosa & Shumba (2010) recommend that (a) educators should be developed on the use of co-operative and supportive disciplinary approaches, (b) the teaching of human rights education as a separate subject in schools with the emphasis on responsible behaviour and (c) there should be close collaboration between parents and educators to
ensure the development of self-discipline. My findings and analyses support all these recommendations, but I feel that, further to this, an in-depth critique of rights talk in South Africa is crucial in order to fully address the tensions between past practices and new ideals. How has rights talk (seen as the major goal after years of discrimination) resulted in such problems for educators in schools? Why is the understanding of rights to people living in disadvantaged settings all about entitlement? What is the impact of rights talk in developing or third world countries?

9.5.3. New rights talk

Rights talk proved problematical in this study. There were several contradictions in the evidence. Firstly, participants continually appealed to rights, and although they espoused knowledge of the responsibilities that accompany rights, there was no indication that these participants knew what this meant in practice. This resulted in misinterpretation around rights talk. Secondly, educators at this school articulated several times throughout the evidence that children should not have rights; it undermines their authority and results in ‘bad’ behaviour. Thirdly, and most contradictorily, although educators felt that children should not have rights, they felt that adults could exercise their rights at any time, no matter how this influenced school life. Ultimately, the lack of congruency between rights talk in the evidence, and a deeper understanding of the human rights discourse, had a significant influence over how values were being communicated and enacted in this school environment. The evidence revealed that rights talk in this school community was rife with confusion, anxiety, resentment and fear. Upon further investigation of the evidence and other empirical literature, I propose an argument for why rights talk has been such a problematical issue in this school environment. Figure 29 details this misinterpretation and I describe this below.

‘Human rights discourse’ (illustrated in the left column of Figure 29) was signalled as the ‘engine of change’ in the new South Africa, because apartheid was so strongly positioned as a gross denial and abuse of human rights. A human rights culture is one in which people value human rights highly, are unwilling to sacrifice them under most circumstances, and jealously guard against intrusions into those rights. “Such a culture may stand as a potent (but not omnipotent) impediment to political repression” (Gibson, 2004, p. 6). The many new policy documents and initiatives were designed around and fully supportive of the human rights movement, as was the Values Manifesto. Professor Asmal argued in the Saamtrek conference on values (Department of Education, 2001b, p. 14) that because of “the absence of a clearly-articulated values system to which everyone subscribes in our places of learning, fundamental human rights are violated every day in our classrooms”.

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The deliberate inclusion of socio-economic rights in the Bill of Rights was seen as the way in which redress would occur for those South Africans who were worst treated during apartheid, particularly ‘people-of-colour’ and those marginalised and poor. The protection of these human rights in South Africa is founded in a vitally important document; the Bill of Rights. The South African Bill of Rights is one of the most progressive in the world (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005, p. 282). This is due to not only the ordinary first generation rights being addressed (that is traditional civil and political rights), but also the more controversial second and third generation rights. These include the social, economic and cultural rights. Some of these rights include access to adequate housing, the right to health care services and sufficient food and water, the right to access social security and basic, on-going education. Also, the right to fair labour practices and trade unionism, as well as the right to an environment that is not harmful to people’s health or wellbeing, is specified. The inclusion of these socio-economic rights (including housing, health care, education, quality of life) was interpreted by the participants in this study (illustrated in the right column of Figure 29) as things they should get, things they were entitled to, things that would put them on par with those South Africans (predominantly ‘white’ South Africans) living in the towns and cities. The participants in my study appealed to and denied these second and third generation rights on a daily basis, and it appeared that these rights
caused the confusion for them. Because these rights reflect specific areas of basic needs or delivery of particular goods and services, the enforcement and protection of such rights would go a long way in addressing issues of poverty (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). However, my study shows that attempts to alleviate poverty, change the lives of these participants or ensure a clear understanding of what these rights are have not been successful in this township school.

The promise that rights talk would change the lives of the average South African was interpreted as promises of things ‘they would get’ to change their lives. However, the participants’ lack of conceptual understanding did not allow for any concrete discussion or thought on how these things would happen and I call this ‘magical thinking’. Magical thinking is the process of placing faith in the power of verbal formulae that will ‘make things happen’, without causal theory on how it will happen. Through magical thinking, these participants believed these promises would ‘just happen’. Now that they have not occurred as they initially thought, their lack of understanding has become apparent, and they are left feeling resentful and frustrated by rights talk. Using Jansen’s (2002) political symbolism notion, I argue that the human rights discourse was not intended as the instrument that would practically change lives for people on the ground level. In the African developing world, it is doubtful that human rights as the instrument or remedy would address the cruelty of the apartheid regime in a concrete way. I address this tension in the section below. Human rights were a symbol and a signal of change and hope. I use Jansen’s political symbolism as a vehicle to argue the intentions behind rights talk in the South African context. Further to this, I propose that ‘magical thinking’ is how these symbolic politics are interpreted by participants. ‘Magical thinking’ has resulted in resentment and anxiety for the participants in my study. Further to this, rights talk has sent mixed messages on an ethical and moral level. This talk therefore undermines the values education initiative in South Africa.

Using these two positions (discourse and interpretation in Figure 29), I assess rights talk in the new South Africa. ‘Human rights discourse’ analyses the position taken by the new government on rights, particularly the second and third generation rights (socio-economic rights). I argue that rights talk appears more of a symbolic representation of political change than concrete means to change a previously cruel and discriminatory society. This has resulted in ‘magical thinking’; misinterpretations of rights talk on the ground level which have left groups of South Africans fearful and resentful. The work of other researchers and authors will be used to critique rights talk in South Africa from a political viewpoint. ‘Interpretation of Rights’ is founded in the evidence. The sense of entitlement, and ‘getting something’ that accompanies rights talk, as well as the fear and anxiety that participants feel when faced with new talk, is analysed in this section. These teachers lived through a politically revolutionary time, and these learners have been brought up in a discourse of rights, yet there appears
to be little true understanding of what rights mean and how they can or should establish change. Empirical literature is drawn on to reflect the interpretation of rights and rights talk in education, particularly with regard to participants who are living in a transformative political time.

**Human rights discourse**

‘Reconciliation’ was initiated by nurturing a set of cultural values among South Africans that would make the gross human rights abuses of the apartheid regime difficult, if not impossible, to implement in the future (Gibson, 2004, p. 5). Yet, the lives of the participants in my study have not changed dramatically since the new dispensation. Sachs (2005) describes an experience with a group of black law students who established a body called the Anti-Bill of Rights. These students saw the proposed Bill of Rights as a document that would advance the white minority, and deny any true movement towards economic and social transformation. They felt the Bill of Rights would defend the unjust socio-economic environment of apartheid, and would therefore, limit equal access to wealth. The poor would remain the poor and the rich would get richer. One commentator stated, “the Bill of Rights would in effect be a ‘Bill of Whites’” (Sachs, 2005, p. 134). Many years on, it would appear that these students had justifiable concerns. The participants in my study articulated that not much had changed for them.

The appeal of human rights to the Third World is that problems of material conditions of life (as with the apartheid regime), state instability, and other social crises (poverty, unemployment, education) can be contained, if not substantially eliminated, through the rule of law, granting of individual rights, and a Constitution (Mutua, 2002). The most important feature of the post-apartheid state is its virtually exclusive reliance on rights discourse as the engine of change (p. 128). ‘Rights’ (particularly socio-economic rights) was the promise that this township school would become like town schools. The life of the township school teachers would magically become like the lives of town school teachers, as with the learners. Yet, town schools (previously white schools) have remained as they were before 1994; wealthy and well-resourced educational institutions. Unfortunately, township schools have also remained as they were. The patterns of power, wealth and privilege have not been altered. South Africa has fallen victim to all the pitfalls of rights discourse (Mutua, 2002, pp. 128-129). The façade of a society transformed by new rights talk is ‘largely cosmetic’. One need only walk through a South African township to realise this. Rights talk has a double-edged nature (Mutua, 2002) and this is visible in my study. Except for the largely cosmetic effects, there is little possibility that the particular conceptualisation of rights in the new South Africa will alter the patterns of power, wealth, and privilege established under apartheid. This argument aligns with ‘political symbolism’ presented further in this section. Mutua (2001, p. 207) explains that,
if the human rights movement is driven by a totalitarian or totalizing impulse, that is, the mission to require that all human societies transform themselves to fit a particular blueprint, then there is an acute shortage of deep reflection and a troubling abundance of zealotry in the human rights community. This vision of the ‘good society’ must be vigorously questioned and contested.

Although there are signs of tailoring and customizing the human rights ideology for the South African context, it is largely based on American or European legal traditions, which in itself is problematic considering the current time, history and diversity of the South African people. But, what other engine or driver would have sufficed in the tremendous job of transforming apartheid society? The idea of human rights – the quest to craft a universal bundle of attributes with which all societies must endow all human beings – is a noble one. The problem with the current bundle of attributes lies in their inadequacy, incompleteness, and wrong-headedness (Mutua, 2001, p. 209). I argue that, further to the ‘inadequacies’ of the rights South Africa have put forward as crucial to political transformation, the assumption from policy makers is absurd; that a bunch of words/attributes/rights (new talk) on a policy document enables people to ‘make them happen’. This is magical thinking. Both philosophical thought and the concrete discussion of what rights talk means to parents, teachers and students need considerable revision for the South African audience:

It appears highly unlikely that the new South Africa, which has been ushered in with great fanfare and overwhelming international goodwill, will meet the reasonable expectations of the long excluded black majority. The deployment of the rights idiom as the principal medium for transformation will in all likelihood fail to reverse the deep-seated legacies of apartheid. Blacks must continue to wait – although it is not clear for how much longer – before they can genuinely capture state power and use it in addition to the rights language to better their lot (Mutua, 1997, p. 114).

The participants in my study have yet to “better their lot”. The despair and hopelessness that the lack of change brings to their thoughts, behaviours and actions have been revealed. Their lives are only slightly better than the era before rights talk. Promises made have yet to be met. The result of this situation is fear, hopelessness, resentment and anxiety, all of which have been exposed in the evidence. In the quote above, Mutua hints that ‘capturing state power’ would be the first step in allowing South Africans to ‘better their lot’ however; this may be yet another form of ‘magical thinking’. How state power is defined or how it would be useful to the participants in my study is questionable. These participants desire ground level change and from the evidence, it appears that rights talk needs serious revision and interrogation as the driver for change in South Africa.

Jansen (2002) argues that, despite the production of any many new policies since South Africa after apartheid, there has been little change throughout South Africa, particularly in schools and classrooms.
He proposes that an explanation for this gap can be viewed through the lens of ‘political symbolism’. During the period of 1994-1999, when the Constitution and Bill of Rights were formulated and passed, the broader political aim was to settle the apartheid struggle in the political domain, rather than in practice. This period is described as an explicitly ideological-political time, and was dominated by establishing the ideological and political credentials of the new government (Jansen, 2002). This was measured by a rapid departure from apartheid, which resulted in the large number of policy papers, documents, legislation and regulations that were produced. Ultimately, the human rights discourse was the new government’s way of achieving a broad political symbolism that moved away from the apartheid legacy. Jansen argues that in most cases, implementation of policy was never on the agenda of the politicians. Unfortunately, it appears that this policy-making tradition has continued, evident in the policies I have addressed that seem to emphasise politicians and government selling their benefits, more than concrete steps for implementation and change on the ground level.

Until the government delivers on its election promises and on socioeconomic rights contained in the final Constitution by addressing implementation steps, promoting human rights will continue to be more of a symbol than a reality (Sarkin, 1998, p. 629). In addition, the state needs to focus more on human rights education. My evidence highlights a distinctive lack of conceptual understanding of human rights discourse. “Emphasis should be placed on developing an understanding of, and respect for, the Constitution and Bill of Rights and the processes and mechanisms for their enforcement” (Sarkin, 1998, p. 665). Commenting on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Roose and Bouverne-De Bie (2007, p. 440) argue that rights of the child (or adult) should be more than just what they have or do not have. They state that the important question from a social political viewpoint should be how the rights of children (like the rights of adults) are to be realised.

Naturally, education is one avenue for rights talk to become effectively understood and conceptualised. Sifuna (2000, p. 216) emphasises how political literacy goes hand in hand with political action. Historically, the apartheid education legacy did not promote tolerant and participant political values, which are a requirement for political literacy. Sifuna comments on colonial rule in Africa: “Instead, through their authoritarian schools structures, schools encouraged unquestioning acquiescence to authority … the colonial state in Africa did not need an ‘educated native’ but ‘a loyal educated native’” (2000, p. 219). To move from the past in Kenya, Sifuna encouraged educators and schools to embrace free discussion and democratic or liberal education inculcating societal values in schools:

Such an approach stresses the ability of the individual to make up his or her own mind after consideration and discussion of relevant evidence, fairness, toleration of the values of
others, the freedom to make political choices, a critical stance towards political information, individual rights and responsibilities and others (Sifuna, 2000, p. 231).

Democratic and human rights education cannot be provided as part of the school curriculum without attention to the pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Schools are the starting points for promoting democracy and human rights values in society. Increased provision of education itself is not enough – literacy and skills are not enough. Sifuna (2000, p. 236) recommends that African educators need to realise the need and importance of this type of education. Transforming magical political rights talk into practice requires a commitment beyond just knowledge and skills from educators and school stakeholders. This is a long way from being achieved in my study. My findings revealed that not only are rights not being realised, but they were being abused and denied on many occasions. Education in this case, does not provide for an effective understanding or conceptualisation of rights talk.

Like all rights in South Africa, socio-economic rights have to be exercised and not only codified. “Much of the theory about rights is strangely bloodless, as though it is the preserve of lawyers and academics” (Graham, 2005, p. 281). Mubangizi comments in his research that South Africa has made the most advanced constitutional provision for socio-economic rights. However, there is no doubt that the level of realisation of socio-economic rights in any country is indirectly influenced by the level of its economic development. These rights reflect specific areas of basic needs, and Mubangizi cautions that this makes these rights subject to progressive realisation (2006, p. 19). Hence, the complicated and contested nature of these second and third generation rights leave room for much discussion. Are they ‘symbolic’ (Jansen, 2002) and ‘largely cosmetic’ (Mutua, 2002)? Or should South Africans insist on implementation steps to start realising these rights? While the discourse is being debated and fleshed out, people like the participants in my study are left feeling resentful and frustrated.

In conclusion, the rights discourse and the assumptions made about the impact rights talk would have on South Africans, particularly black South Africans, has not changed ground level life. It appears simply the politics of symbolism at play. Policy development appears disconnected with practice. Symbols do not constitute an effective environment for change. “What is doubtful, however, is the ability of the South African state, and the possibility for any state, to overcome such a dreadful legacy of human rights abuses primarily through the rights idiom” (Mutua, 2002, p. 150). Until drastic measures are taken to analyse, understand and change the lives of the people like the participants in my study, through critical education, training, resources and opportunities for realisation, I fear rights will remain a tool for symbolic and magical thinking.
Interpretation of rights

The participants in this study live rights talk. ‘Rights’ is possibly a word that rolls off their tongues at least once a day. Everyday life for these South Africans is encompassed by rights talk. With that comes talk of responsibility, but little evidence of genuine understanding of either rights or responsibility emerged from the findings. The manifestation of this is evident in how educators continually appeal to their own personal rights, but blatantly deny and sometimes abuse the rights of the learners they teach. Mutua (2002) describes how in South Africa, all groups, including the wealthy, powerful, poor and excluded, have all found either refuge or empowerment in the language of rights. As contradictory as their motives may be, all groups seek to advance and protect their interests through rights talk. “In the case of South Africa, the democratic, rule of law, rights-based state has ironically turned out to be an instrument for the preservation of the privileges and the ill-gotten gains of the white minority” (Mutua, 1997, p. 112). Mutua goes further to describe Karl Klare (1989):

Rights discourse does not and probably cannot provide us with the criteria for deciding between conflicting claims of rights. In order to resolve rights conflicts, it is necessary to step outside the discourse. One must appeal to more concrete and therefore more controversial analyses of the relevant social and institutional contexts than rights discourse offers; and one must develop and elaborate conceptions of and intuitions about human freedom and self-determination by reference to which one seeks to assess rights claims and resolve rights conflicts (cited in Mutua, 1997).

The struggle against apartheid was not waged so that blacks could boast of abstract or magical political rights. It was waged so that blacks could have equal access to economic resources (Mutua, 2002, p. 140). The Bill of Rights specifies secondary rights that address socio-economic needs. Participants in my study understand this as entitlements that are owed to them. The evidence showed that participants believed that rights would ‘get them things’. For them, it is about entitlement and gaining ‘things’ they did not have during apartheid. These are the economic resources Mutua refers to.

Gibson (2004) asks the question in his research: How do ordinary South Africans judge and value basic human rights? He describes an appropriate paradigm for the meaning of a human rights culture in South Africa – everything that the apartheid regime was not (p.8). With human rights talk comes the very important ‘responsibility’ talk which my participants were clearly aware of verbally. Gibson refers to this as the “rule of law” which accompanies human rights discourse. He found that, firstly, South Africans are not very supportive of the rule of law. Secondly, strong racial differences arise in commitments to law, “with Africans and Coloured people exhibiting much weaker support for legal universalism” (2004, p. 33). More interestingly, he found that those who have not learned the complex lessons of democracy have also failed to learn about the importance of the rule of law. For some,
Law is politicized in South Africa. Rather than being a means of protecting all South Africans from arbitrary and abusive action, law may be seen as means of protecting the privileged minority. I suspect that some South Africans view law as a means by which whites maintain their hegemony in South Africa. If so, this is an important, and ominous, finding (Gibson, 2004, p. 33).

There is a contrast between a ‘rights-based’ and a ‘needs-based’ approach to development (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004, p. 1417). This description links to the analysis of my participants equating rights with a sense of entitlement. A needs-based approach focuses on securing additional resources for delivery of services to a particular group, whereas a rights-based approach calls for existing resources to be shared more equally, and for assisting the marginalised people to assert their rights to those resources. It therefore makes the process of development explicitly political (Uvin, 2004). In addition,

Perhaps the most important source of added value in the human rights approach is the emphasis it places of the accountability of policy-makers and other actors whose actions have an impact of the rights of people. Rights imply duties, and duties demand accountability (Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights, 2003).

The ‘getting something’ approach to how participants in this research see rights is explained further by Uvin (2004), who argues that the move from charity to claims brings about focus on accountability. If claims exist, methods for holding those who violate claims accountable must exist too. If not, claims lose meaning. The contradictions and complexities around growing up and fighting for a rights discourse, as with the participants in this study, are realised. Participants believe in getting things and things being shared. They believed that their school would become like a town school, based on what government and policy-makers promised. Although the ANC government would be accountable for the lack of progress as promises have not been met, they hold resentment primarily towards those who do have – schools and teachers in the town. Teachers even resent the learners today, who have opportunities and things they did not have. The ambiguous nature of how educators continually appeal to their own rights, but deny the learners their rights, contradicts the very nature of a human rights culture. Furthermore, the political tool – education – used to embrace the political rights discourse and transform society, is corrupt. Learners are left with no understanding of what rights are, how rights influence their lives, or how rights are to be realised. Teachers contradict and undermine rights daily. In addition to this, these misinterpretations send mixed signals to stakeholders at this school, which fundamentally affect how values are enacted and communicated.

Mutua (2002, p. 73) contends that it is the Western tradition that brought about the individualistic by-product of rights talk; “In the West, the language of rights primarily developed along the trajectory of
claims against the state; entitlements which imply the right to seek an individual remedy for a wrong”. These participants long for ‘individual remedy’. This is their only interpretation of rights talk. And, without the fiscal capacity for government to implement the resources to realise and ‘remedy’ these rights, rights discourse remains a magical representation of life after apartheid. My study revealed that in addition to the symbolic representation of rights, people interpret rights through ‘magical thinking’ and when they do not receive what they think they are owed, the result is a disjunction on an ethical and moral level (if the government can lie about what they are going to do, why can’t I? If politicians are corrupt, why can’t I behave similarly?)

The unique economic environment in South Africa contributes to problems with the interpretation of rights. Torres (2005, p. 61) explains that after Brazil, South Africa demonstrates the largest inequality between poor and rich in the whole world. There are third world and first world living conditions side-by-side. The ‘poor’ observe the ‘rich’. When it comes to interpreting rights, the poor believe rights will get them what the rich have. Mubangizi (2005a) argues that from his survey, an important conclusion to be drawn in South Africa regarding human rights, is that the lack of knowledge and public awareness of human rights is mainly prevalent among the poor. And those who are aware of rights are not happy with the level of protection of their socio-economic rights, “as the majority of respondents agreed that government delivery in the areas of housing, health care services, food, water and education was inadequate” (p. 44). As with my respondents, many South Africans equate rights to entitlements, and believe that they are not receiving what they are owed.

In Uganda, there is a high level of public awareness of the Constitution and the human rights it contains (Mubangizi, 2005b). Similarly to South Africa, a Ugandan survey showed that human rights violations took place more in rural areas than in urban areas. “The significance of this is that poverty is in itself not only a denial of human rights, but it also erodes or nullifies the realisation of both socio-economic rights, and civil and political rights” (p. 185) Ugandans also felt that the government is the main culprit of human rights violations, and the main causes are social and economic inequalities, and the lack of access to basic social services. In South Africa, a lot more needs to be done to educate the public, mainly the rural masses. Of all the social phenomena that impact human rights, poverty ranks amongst the highest and poverty in itself is a denial of human rights (Mubangizi, 2005a). These social and economic inequalities still encompass all parts of South African society (as is shown in my study), and cause tensions in how rights talk is interpreted on ground level.

Tikly (2010, p. 89), interrogating the Education Roadmap (the ANC’s strategy in analysing the current educational situation in South Africa and plans to move forward) explains how the objective of South
Africa’s human rights approach to education is the realisation of fundamental human rights. My research reveals that this has not yet occurred. Tikly (2010) explains how, in the Education Roadmap, these include the enactment of negative rights, such as protection from abuse, as well as positive rights such as celebration and nurturing of learner creativity, use of local languages in schools, pupil participation in democratic structures and debate.

Following on from the end of apartheid there have been some important achievements in terms of realizing these rights including the creation of a unified education system, an attempt at greater equalization of government expenditure between historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools and the abolition of corporal punishment (p.90).

According to my findings, none of the above holds true. Rights have not seen the unification of the education system. Teachers at this school long for the past, and wherever possible, do things as they did in the past. Adoption of new educational curricula and ways of teaching are not embraced and, in most cases, ignored and rejected. As for government expenditure, this school is no better than it was twenty years ago. There is a fundamental lack of resources and provisions and it does not equal town schools. Corporal punishment is longed for, and in some instances still utilised.

Other empirical research that supports these findings regarding rights talk in South Africa was exceptionally difficult to find. In Hong Kong, human rights education is considered an aspect of civil education, but Leung’s (2008) research contends that human rights education remains a minor activity in most countries. In Hong Kong, human rights education (HRE) seeks to cultivate citizens who not only live in accordance with the principles of human rights, but also are willing to take action to protect their own and other citizens’ human rights when rights are infringed upon (Leung, 2008, p. 233). But there has been resistance at the school level. HRE is not valued by Hong Kong teachers. Leung’s research finds that Hong Kong teachers do not have an adequate understanding of the concepts of human rights, and are similar to South African teachers regarding rights and values. HRE never played a part in teacher education. There is no systematic programme and hence, these teachers fear HRE. The factors contributing to this fear resonate strongly with the fears of South African teachers: fear of confusion, fear of losing authority, fear of being troublesome, fear of too heavy a workload, fear of lack of understanding, fear of abuse by students and fear of implementation (Leung, 2008). Other factors included lack of teaching materials, professional training, and time. These fears and hindrances align with South African teachers’ concerns, although teachers in my study do not always reveal a conscious awareness of the connection between these factors and rights talk. Hong Kong has a variety of strategies in place to address these issues, and meet the needs of teachers and HRE.
The teachers and learners of this township school are rights people, leading lives that incorporate rights talk. However, the lack of conceptual resources for thinking about what rights mean, and what has to happen to make rights work in South Africa, is fundamental. At this stage, rights talk is symbolic, magical talk. Until these resources are in some way made available, the current thinking about rights, reflecting a sense of entitlement and ‘getting things’, will continue to cast a gloomy shadow over any hope of realising, living and gaining from South African ‘rights and responsibilities’.

Concluding rights

Rights talk has highlighted crucial elements regarding values in township schools. My rights argument has skimmed the surface of the topic and further exploration into the rights discourse and interpretation is vital. My argument has been context specific, based on the thoughts, actions and behaviours of the participants in one township school. Further investigation is crucial in order to move beyond symbolism, cosmetics and magical thinking towards a realisation of what rights are, how they can be realised, and how they can help achieve the unified nation of post-apartheid South Africa.

The way rights have been interpreted and are used in this township school highlights major contradictions to the values that are stated in new South African policy. The very nature of rights and values statements should be aligned and complementary. However, the interpretation of rights in this school community contradicts values development, at times directly opposing new values, as with corporal punishment and religious emphasis.

As with the Bill of Rights, it is feared that policy documents promoting values in South African education, such as the Manifesto, also present ‘political symbolism’ and do not have a connection with ground level life. On one level, without the capacity to enact these new policies and initiatives, Jansen (2002) argues that the state has little alternative but to play up the symbolic value of policy with no concrete initiatives to change people’s lives. I argue that in addition to this, symbolism will be interpreted as magical thinking. My study shows that magical thinking results in resentment and anxiety and leaves people feeling uncertain about their ethical and moral stance. Policy symbols will remain unreachable ideals until context specific programmes are promoted and realised in the heart of the communities most needing help. It is more than merely implementation. Policy implementation is one branch of this problem. It is about context specific missions to enhance conceptual understanding, hence making ideals in some way realistic and achievable. Until then, both human rights and values initiatives will remain a ‘symbol’ for the outside world.
9.6. Conclusion

This theme has encapsulated a vital element in the new South Africa. The disparity between the old habits that the participants hold on to and the new talk, particularly rights discourse, but broadly all new policy initiatives, are foundational problems in this school. Any hope of achieving the ideals and strategies laid out in values policies are diminished by severe challenges faced daily by these participants. These challenges include a lack of understanding or conceptual knowledge of new South African policy and intentions. The lack of material, social and economic resources available to this township school and its people make the ‘new’ in the new South Africa nothing but symbolic, magical talk. Promises have not been understood or fulfilled, and people on the ground level are left anxious, resentful and uncertain about the future. For many of these educators, the only way to cope with their environment is to rely on old habits such as religious instruction and corporal punishment. They know no other way than what they have been taught during apartheid. Educators in this study will continue to deny and abuse the rights of the learners in their care, as they have no useful alternatives, and the old ways work for them. It is more than merely training and development. It is a way of life that needs to be realised. Until then, learners in this school environment will keep being fed contradictory and ambiguous knowledge founded in values and human rights that were thought to be forgotten with the cruel apartheid past. New talk and old habits is the crux of this research. Simply put, no Values Manifesto, or any other policy, will manifest successfully in these township schools. The specific needs of these school stakeholders, and this poverty stricken environment, must be considered. Unique conceptual understanding and the ability to teach, learn and think critically, are crucial to liberate and change the reality for township school communities.

Chapter Nine concludes the presentation, analysis and discussion of the fieldwork evidence. In the next chapter, I conclude this thesis by discussing overarching ideas that emerge from reflection on and interrogation of these findings.
Chapter 10. Summary and significance of findings

Values have been described as the ‘beacon of hope’ in the new South Africa, and the engine for unifying the multicultural communities that make up society. The attempts at overcoming the legacy of apartheid have been written about in many new policies, but true change is not yet visible in this township school.

10.1. Overview of findings

In Chapter Four, I presented a picture of values education that illustrated ‘where school stakeholders were at’ in 2001. This research provided a starting point for the development of the Manifesto, hands-on guide and various other documents that encouraged change and provided a foundation for schools to adopt values education as part of daily school life. Core findings from this schools-based research revealed a basic lack of communication between school stakeholders which left participants feeling insecure, frustrated and annoyed. These findings emphasised the need for policy-makers to ensure that values were negotiated through dialogue in the school environment and not prescribed or forced. Hence, communication and dialogue were presented as the first of the educational strategies in the Manifesto. The second of the big themes exposed in this 2001 study was the complicated relationship between teachers and human rights. It was clear that educators were uncomfortable with human rights discourse and how rights should affect teaching practice. Related to rights was the issue of corporal punishment, and the fact that educators were not supportive of its abolition. They also lacked effective alternatives. ‘New talk’ had shaken educators’ sense of control in the classroom. Redress also revealed itself as a problematical issue. Participants felt that the government could not promote values education when there was still such inequality, particularly in schools. Parents in this study even suggested that attention to the values debate was diverting the government from its core purpose of providing housing, jobs and quality education for all. The practicality of the strategies proposed in the Manifesto were said to be ‘impossible’ in the state of most schools in 2001.

My 2009 fieldwork investigated the state of the values education initiative almost a decade on from this point, after the introduction of the many policies (described in Chapter Four) that were intended to shape values education in schools. My initial proposal for this study was to investigate how effective these policies, many resulting from the 2001 schools-based research, were in the enactment and realisation of values in a township school. My findings paint a picture that does not differ significantly from the 2001 evidence.
Teachers’ practice and accountability

Nelson Mandela emphasised the importance of role models and adults who play a part in how children learn values. The teachers at this township school were the models that Mr Mandela referred to. The link between teachers’ practice and the accountability structures that monitored these behaviours was a vital component of values realisation and enactment in this school. There were two distinctive groups of educators in my study; a larger majority group and a smaller ‘Standing out’ group. Firstly, I presented evidence that showed how, for the majority of teachers, their behaviour was dominated by lateness, absenteeism and disengagement. Teachers’ explanations varied, beginning with a ‘cover-up’ of the truth, to slowly explaining and rationalising their behaviours. These reasons included big class sizes, a lack of training and development, too much emphasis on human rights and disobedient learners. Regarding accountability, the principal described material that followed this progression from cover-up to slowly revealing and justifying the lack of accountability in her school. She reasoned that her leadership style was different and that her staff were lazy, had little conscience and were not committed, accountable or enthusiastic.

Remuneration as motivation for teachers aligned with the evidence in my study that showed the majority of teachers wanting to ‘augment’ themselves [acquire more material assets]. This also correlated with the evidence that described the strike action and go-slows that involved increases in remuneration. However, it was not that simple because the ‘Standing out’ teachers, who were motivated and enthusiastic, did not feel the same way. They described the reasons for their effective behaviour as seeing teaching as a ‘noble profession’ and ‘a calling’. Their behaviours were distinctively different from the bigger group of educators and showed effective, motivated teacher practice.

Further investigation revealed deeper issues. The majority of educators felt resentment towards town schools and teachers. The participants’ perceptions were that town teachers ‘had it easy’ and therefore, their own behaviour was acceptable because of their difficult circumstances. This influenced their level of motivation and commitment. Promises of redress had not yet manifested in physical, material or other changes in this school. Values policies that called for strategies which required elaborate resources proved futile. Teachers did not know what to do with these new policies, and so they ignored them, which affected teacher morale. Evidence suggested a lack of competence and an inability to implement and work with new policy, which required a more sophisticated understanding of pedagogy. These educators were not considered when new policies were formulated. They were trained under apartheid education which encouraged authoritarian, content-based teaching methods. They themselves, as students, learnt that learners were to be quiet, fearful, submissive, always to listen
and adhere to the teacher’s instructions. Now, educators are expected to facilitate and enhance learning that is learner-centred. They are unable to do this and development attempts have been unsuccessful for a variety of reasons that were presented in the evidence. Overall, the evidence revealed that without policies written for context-specific schools in South Africa and policies that incorporate teacher identities and histories, new initiatives will continue to be unsuccessful in certain schools.

Accountability was a crucial aspect in light of teachers’ practice. The evidence showed that teachers continually ‘got away’ with bad behaviour and continued to behave in ways that negatively shaped how values were realised. The principal’s explanations were that she was not an authoritative leader and that she preferred to allow people to reflect on their own actions and hold themselves accountable. This was unsuccessful and reinforced the ineffectiveness of the values strategies. Further investigation revealed that there were occasions when she had tried to hold her staff accountable, but she was pushed out by the strong force of teacher unions. Because of the unions’ fierce protection of their members, this principal had ‘given up’ trying to hold teachers accountable. The ‘cottage’ also proved to be a root problem that contributed to teachers’ bad behaviours. Teachers would be in the cottage when they were supposed to be in class. The principal noticed that the cottage was a contributing factor to this ineffectiveness and tried to enforce a rule that prohibited teachers from using the cottage during teaching time, but this resulted in highly upset teachers. During a meeting with department officials, the department sided with the staff and ‘crushed’ the decisions made by the principal. Since this incident, it appeared that teachers gained confidence, knowing that the principal was outvoted and they got what they wanted. The lack of accountability, rule of law, communication and dialogue significantly altered how new policy values were realised and enacted in this school community.

**New talk and old habits**

This theme introduced the ‘new’ and the ‘old’ and highlighted the tensions between them. The ‘new’ refers to new policy talk and particularly focuses on new human rights talk. The ‘old’ refers to the old way of doing things, particularly religious emphasis in the school community and discipline which aligned with corporal punishment. Religion was used, firstly, to invoke consciousness in guiding moral and value-laden behaviour (such as sexual immorality) and secondly, to enforce good behaviour. Religion was the most utilised tool for values education and evidence revealed similarity to the Christian ‘indoctrination’ of the apartheid period. Observations regarding discipline revealed a strange dichotomy. Evidence showed that learners were particularly obedient, yet educators complained of their bad behaviour. In the classroom (observation notes), certain teachers used physical means to discipline children; methods such as pinching, slapping, poking and hitting hands with a stick. Yet all teachers denied being physical with learners during interviews and finally the learners confirmed that
they did face physical discipline in the classroom. These physical actions caused them to fear certain teachers and dramatically influenced their learning and confidence in the classroom as well as their values realisation. Corporal punishment was abolished in 1992, but was still alive in this school.

When teachers were asked to explain their perspectives on discipline, three main sub-themes emerged. Firstly, discipline was linked to religion. ‘Beat the child with love, as the Bible commands’ was the opinion of certain educators, although they all denied or did not respond when asked whether they utilised corporal punishment in their classes. Although they believed in it, they did not do it. Secondly, participants revealed that this behaviour was part of the learners’ ‘norm’, and that they experienced this sort of physicality at home, with their friends and in the community. This justified it if it happened at school, and the parent articulated that there were occasions when a teacher could hit a learner. Thirdly, participants’ pasts still haunt them and they felt that the children of today ‘got it lucky’ compared to their lives under apartheid. Adults relayed stories about how many times they were beaten as children and how difficult life was for them. There appeared to be a sense of resentment to how lucky the learners of today had it. These explanations were rife with contradictions and ambiguities.

New talk in this study was human rights talk. Human rights are the driver of transformation in South Africa. Evidence revealed contradictions around new rights talk. Firstly, educators made it known several times that it was children’s rights that caused all their frustrations. They believed children’s rights undermined their authority, created an excuse for learners’ bad behaviour and prevented them from teaching values. In their opinion, children should not have rights. Yet, educators felt that certain aspects of their teaching practice related to their own rights. The right to strike, protest, and be involved in go-slows was their right even though it significantly affected school life. These inconsistencies and disjunctions revealed that there was a fundamental lack of understanding of what rights are, and how they are realised. All participants in this study defined rights in a sense that involved entitlements, things that they ‘should get’ or be allowed to do. Although on an espoused level, participants spoke of their responsibilities that needed to accompany these rights, the evidence showed a common theme of rights equating to entitlements. The overarching message of new talk was that promises made, such as rights to housing, free education, medical assistance and quality of life, were not met and this caused participants to feel resentful and frustrated with new talk.

The ‘Standing out’ section in Chapter Nine described an ambiguous terrain. Certain educators were observed using effective discipline techniques that did not involve physical punishment. Nonetheless, all educators in this study, regardless of their history or actions, felt the same way about two elements of education in the new South Africa. Firstly, corporal punishment should be brought back to instil a
sense of respect and order in classrooms. Secondly, the emphasis on children’s rights should be removed as it undermines their authority. In light of new talk which caused frustration, anxiety and fear, ‘old habits die hard’ and participants held on tightly to religion and discipline as it worked in their environment and they felt confident with it. Policy changes were made (as with abolition of corporal punishment and removal of religious emphasis in schools) but with no effective alternatives provided, educators stuck to what they knew. Educators did not comply with new talk and new inflexible, non-accommodative policy initiatives. These old habits were a deeply entrenched part of school life and resulted in a form of values education that differed significantly from the current values framework.

My findings, together with the 2001 study, paint a picture of the current status of values education in South Africa. Even during the decade between these data, human rights, discipline, communication and inequality are at the forefront of ineffective values education in a township school setting. Reflecting on this evidence, I discuss three key crosscutting issues that arise from my findings:

- Magical thinking
- The importance of personal character
- End users: Educator’s experiences

10.1.1. Magical thinking

A significant mismatch between the human rights discourse and the interpretation of rights by the participants in this study was unmistakable. I suggested that this tension was due to the process of magical thinking. I described magical thinking as the process of placing faith in the power of verbal formulae that will ‘make things happen’, without causal theory on how it will happen. In my evidence, magical thinking occurred because of the human rights discourse. Rights were signalled as the ‘engine of change’. The Bill of Rights encompassed the country’s political development and transformation, and was seen as the result of the apartheid struggle. The particular inclusion of the socio-economic rights, described in Chapter Two, proved problematical as participants believed that these were things they were entitled to (including housing, safe environment, health care services, and free basic education). Magical thinking is the process whereby the rights policies were to transform the lives of the average South African, without any consideration of what this process would actually entail. People on the ground believed that their lives would be magically altered and they would receive these entitlements. I argue that although my evidence linked magical thinking to human rights, it extends to many of the new policies and initiatives in South Africa.
One useful perspective is Jansen’s (2002) proposal that policies were not intended to magically alter the lives of these township residents. Policy formulators do not always invent policy in order to change practice; sometimes it is symbolic, as with the transition from apartheid to the new South Africa. Some may argue: What is the harm in political symbolism? Surely, people realise that to some degree this is expected? The ground level impact of this symbolism is that magical thinking will continue until ground level life begins to reflect policy ideals. My evidence showed the negative effects that such symbolism has on people. If politicians stand up in front of crowds or profess through different forms of media that these human rights are theirs to enjoy and live, people expect them to happen. People do not consider how they will happen.

Magical thinking results in two significant problems for values education. The first is that magical thinking results in resentment and uncertainty, which sends mixed messages to the South African people on a moral and ethical level. These mixed messages give people the ‘space’ in conscience to behave immorally and unethically, depicted perfectly in my evidence by the teacher who was trying to force disadvantaged township learners to buy his stock (sweets, chips, etc.) during contact teaching time. Promises not met are interpreted as government or government officials being deceitful, and this insecurity affects South Africans’ sense of morale and confidence. Dishonesty and mistrust is replicated on the ground, as participants believe “if they [government] can do it, why can’t I?” With corruption and fraud openly evident in South African life, it is not difficult to understand why the teachers at this school behave in ways that are unethical and immoral. A legitimate context is crucial for values realisation and it has to start in the classroom, then the school, the department, home life and the community, as well as government. Another repercussion of this resentment is an underlying animosity between different groups of South Africans. My evidence suggested that in this school community, the poor dislike the rich, citizens dislike the government, adults dislike children, teachers dislike department officials, parents dislike teachers, effective teachers dislike ineffective teachers, certain racial groups dislike other racial groups and the list continues. How can a unified nation ever develop when there are these dislikes and hostilities between groups of South Africans?

My extensive reading on human rights in South Africa did not lead to convincing conclusions. No one appears to have effective suggestions or answers to whether or not South Africa can truly adopt a human rights culture, or other options to the human rights discourse as an engine of change. What alternatives are there to human rights as the driver of transformation? Mutua (1997) suggested that until black people have truly captured state power, they will have to wait for their lives to change. My evidence has shown that the issues are more complex than shifting power sources or gaining complete state control. We have seen first hand the obliteration that occurs when there is too quick a rush to
equate access to economic and material resources. Just across our border in Zimbabwe, South Africans have witnessed that without accompanied mass education, training and development, economic and material resources will not transform the lives of any average citizen when this change is met with haste and aggression. Economic and social equity has to be realised, not imposed.

The second result from the magical thinking process is a desperate ‘clinging on’ to the old ways of doing things. Evidence showed that there were minimal changes at a grass roots level in this school and the fundamental reason for this is due to ‘old habits die hard’. Teachers relayed cherished memories of obedient, submissive learners who ‘taught’ in the classroom and ‘did their marking’; as was their experience as learners. The reality is that none of the ‘new’ changed these participants’ lives; past habits were heavily relied on. Furthermore, old habits prevent any of the new initiatives and pedagogies being realised by the learners. The learners in my study were not receiving any form of quality education that would equip them for the future. On a higher level, they were learning to value things that go against the very nature of the ‘new’ in South Africa. Beyond the policy values, learners’ submissive, obedient, and fearful response in the classroom denied any of the educational philosophies from being realised (particularly developing intellectual abilities and critical faculties of learners). Old habits die hard as a result of the resentment and anxiety that magical thinking creates.

I conclude that magical thinking in the South African context denies much of the new talk and creates a further disadvantage for certain groups of children and people in South Africa. Until real-life solutions are found to equip South Africans to understand what has to be done before change can be realised, these behaviours, misinterpretations and misunderstandings will continue to undermine all that is ‘new’.

10.1.2. The importance of personal character

A critique of the values initiative was presented in Chapter Four. Although the South African values policies are extensive, they also highlight many problem areas that need careful consideration before implementation, enactment and realisation of these values can occur. The first core critique involved personal versus political values. On reflection of the findings, I argue that personal values realisation is crucial for values education.

The current values initiative is character-focussed (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2007), that is, the values are shaped around the kind-of-person that policy formulators would like to produce. This is described in South Africa as a ‘national character’; an ideal citizen premised on politically-driven moral and ethical
development. The values documents do not specifically address personal character development as important or part of the process in values realisation. Nowhere is it suggested that there is value in individual South Africans being honest or developing integrity as primary personal characteristics. The findings from this study revealed that for many of the educators and role models at this school, their personal moral compass did not align with policy values. Their actions, attitudes and behaviours did not reflect policy values and, at times, directly contradicted them. This influenced how values were being realised in this school. However, it is more than merely listing personal values in these documents. It is about living the values that policy formulators propose for South African society. It requires a deep internalising of one’s ethical and moral make up. At the highest level of society, these values are being denied and dishonoured by individuals every day and the result is significant tensions in the values framework. In Chapter One, I described the secrecy bill which was initially passed in November 2011. This bill represents the misinterpretations and violations of values that I explored in my study. If individual accountability is not openly visible and modelled to the public, and individuals continue to behave unethically without consequences, then why should the average South African communicate, enact and come to realise policy values?

In schools, there is a need for teaching and learning practice that encourages children to first learn primary personal values, for example, honesty, integrity and accountability that will then inform the more communal, national-character values of openness, social honour and tolerance. Together with this, it is crucial that people in leadership positions (such as teachers) mirror and model personal integrity and honesty. These findings correlate strongly with the work of Halstead and Pike (2006) who emphasise that values are learnt through observation, including observing the behaviours and actions of educators. If personal values are not aligned with policy values, the cycle of ignoring and pushing aside policy will continue and the values tensions may sharpen into a distinct disjunction. The current values documents imply that when all the social, economic and political things around the South African people are right, then behaviours, attitudes and actions will automatically support with policy values. They will ‘just happen’. However, values are not ‘given’. My evidence suggests that values are learned and taught through interactions (correlating with Nodding’s (2005) caring approach) and observations of daily school life (correlating with Snook’s (2000b) emphasis on how school life affects moral development) and therefore, it is crucial that personal character is addressed as a primary focus to enable values realisation.

10.1.3. End users: Educator’s experiences

This study has provided a ground level, explanatory investigation into the personal lives of the end users of South African policy. In Chapter One, I described how the policy-practice gap has been
studied extensively; however, evidence that reflects exactly why this gap occurs is not always available. Prior to the fieldwork, I anticipated that my study would reveal aspects of the participants’ lives. However, I never expected the level of in-depth evidence that was captured, which reflected the participants’ personal histories. It was a privilege to be allowed this opportunity to explore their personal memories. There was a level of openness between researcher and participants, although there were still boundaries, as with the cover-up of physical discipline. It almost appeared to be a therapeutic experience for these participants as someone wanted to explore their lives. It is due to the explanatory nature of these findings that a unique contribution is made to the South African values education discourse.

Literature was presented that questioned the conceptual resources available to these teachers for implementation and understanding of the values initiatives, based on their teacher training and personal histories (Jessop & Penny, 1998; Swanepoel, 2008). The educators in this study came from backgrounds founded in the apartheid past, and many of them felt fearful and ill-equipped to deal with the new pedagogies and teaching methods. Although training and development efforts were attempted, it appeared that they were not effective. Many educators saw these initiatives as adding to their already heavy teaching loads and they ended up rejecting any new talk. But these were surface level findings, resonating with other literature and studies that discuss why implementation is unsuccessful in certain settings. My study exposes another dimension to the ‘teacher-as-person’ discourse.

Participants divulged their inner thoughts; their resentment towards the ‘new’, their annoyance at town schools and town teachers, their jealousy and envy towards the actual learners in their classes, their anger at the opportunities and ‘luck’ their learners had, and their deeply affected psyche and emotional scars founded in their cruel apartheid memories and stories. Through this evidence, the real reasons for their lack of motivation and rebellion against new policies are exposed. We have learnt why they feel it is acceptable to behave ‘badly’ and we sensed their victory over incidents such as the cottage. Evidence revealed their lack of concern or consideration for authority. Through deeply explanatory evidence, we are able to identify links, tensions and contrasts which further unpack the poor success of values education in township school communities. This information creates a broader platform for diagnosis and analysis and we have a unique understanding of the township school setting.

This evidence is raw and sheds light on why South African education continues to fail certain groups of children. These findings allow researchers and educationalists to understand some of the deeper complexities that the old and the new present for South Africans. There is a detrimental disjunction between old and new. These problems are more complex than resourcing, training and development or
financial capacity. It is more than having a stronger rights talk or shifting power bases. Educators’ voices are crucial for explanatory evidence that will create a valid discourse around the intricate elements of teacher-identities. In this study, their resentment, fears, anxieties and haunting pasts are exposed, all of which dramatically influence the teaching and learning environment. This understanding provides a critical platform for future proposals that unpack emotional and psychological tensions in school settings.

10.1.4. Looking ahead?

Magical thinking, personal character and educators’ experiences are the contributing features of this study. Looking back, these issues shake the core of the values education initiative in South Africa. On all levels of society, there is a need to minimise the effect of magical thinking and this will be achieved only when a legitimate context is established. Leaders need to behave authentically and inspire those at ground level to reflect deeply within themselves and behave within their personal moral framework. This will open up the possibilities that values education in South Africa promotes.

The South African values discourse is hugely selective and limited. There is a need for critical engagement within the field. There are researchers, such as Pendlebury & Enslin (2007; 1998), Green (2004), Solomons and Fataar (2011) and du Preez and Roux (2010) who have engaged in a critical discussion around the South African values initiative and who are conducting critical research in this field. Yet the discourse remains highly political, biased and limited, particularly with new policies which end up being counterproductive on the ground level. These tensions undermine the core of the values framework as a result. The academic field of values education in South Africa tends to some degree to hinder the attainment of desired goals, because of the lack of critical interrogation and findings that result in ground level change. Further critical discussion and research is needed to deepen the discourse and inform change.

10.2. Limitations and future implications for values education

My experience in this township school also confirmed the usefulness of values education in South Africa. The small group of effective teachers who were ‘getting things right’ provided hope for what values education can achieve for township school learners. The school is a place where students observe every day of their school lives and moral messages, no matter how subtle, are realised through these observations (Halstead & Pike, 2006). Educators play the most active role in shaping how and what the people of tomorrow (learners) are learning to value. There is a need to get South African schools and teachers believing in and living the values of a transformed, new South Africa. This may
involve educators stepping outside the classroom to examine their pasts and heal. Snook (2000b) supports this recommendation with his suggestions of how schools participate in values realisation and how values such as truth-telling, freedom and justice cannot be taught in isolation from their application to life. Values need to begin with the individual, but schools are the nurseries where they should be fostered and grown.

10.2.1. Multicultural, unified society?

Culture affects South African society. Within the findings, there were hints at the extent to which different cultures influence school life. I was unable to fully explore and diagnose these tensions. The principal suggested that her lack of control over her teachers could be to do with the fact that she is a female amongst African men and women. The physicality of corporal punishment was explained as being the cultural norm in the community in which these school children live. The lack of participation from parents in school matters (such as the school governing body) was placed in a cultural setting. Although the values initiative is premised on the ideals of a unified, multicultural society, there is a strong calling for different cultures and communities in South Africa to have a voice in the values framework. Although there is a selective discourse around the importance of multiculturalism, multilingualism and cultural sensitivity, there is a need for more direction and openness to exactly how these aspects ‘fit’ within current policy values.

Jarrett (1991) argues that one problem with a values system is that values vary according to people’s varying beliefs, acquaintances and backgrounds. Snook (2000b) recommends critical reflection as a key ingredient should we not intend to indoctrinate one set of values in a pluralistic society. I consider this study a reflection of these suggestions and I propose cultural impact on values education as an important recommendation for future study. This would enhance the critique of policy values by du Preez and Roux (in Chapter Four) who detail that South African values taught at schools and those in the home and community were rife with discrepancies. A well-founded, objective values discourse that allows for participation and reflection from all voices will address some of these current tensions. I was unable to fully explore these cultural nuances due to my particular focus on the manifestation of values and I consider this a limitation of my study. However, I emphasise that further research is required in order to interrogate the cultural implications of the values discourse.

10.2.2. Final words

An important aspect of my study is the realisation that South Africa may have transformed on paper, but for the participants of this study, the apartheid legacy still lives with them. Their personal histories
affect how they feel towards the ‘new’. Developments that address their emotional and psychological scars outside the classroom are recommended in an attempt to free these participants from their pasts and enable them to deal with new ways of thinking and teaching. Until then, old habits will die hard, and the apartheid legacy will continue to influence the learners in classrooms today. Policy as political symbolism is one part of the transformed state of South Africa, but fifteen years on, there is a desperate need for legitimacy and capacity to change the lives of marginalised South Africans.

This investigation has explored values at one township school, in one township in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. I do not propose that these findings are generalisable or would reflect all township schools in South Africa. However, what my study has revealed is that educationalists need to consider different school settings and the people who make up these school communities. One way to gain an accurate picture is to generate real, explanatory ground level evidence. It is my aim that these findings will be disseminated and will inform future thinking about values education. It appears we (South Africans) are still a far way from achieving a ‘rainbow nation’, but all contributing evidence that informs further debate, discussion and critical thinking, provides hope of those ideals and promises being realised.
# Appendix A. Phase One: Document Analysis

**Document analysis (planned) - What documents am I going to analyse and what am I looking for?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What documents?</th>
<th>What am I looking for?</th>
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| School statements - Mission or vision statements |  What is being communicated – Knowledge? Skills? Values?  
Who is it written for?  
Who is the audience?  
Looking for content/structure of the document i.e. order of content (values first or knowledge first)  
Frequency of values words  
Gendered words (boys before girls) or neutral (children or learners or students)  
How are parents positioned?  
Is there reference to a ‘national’ character?  
Are there terms used that are broad or have multiple meanings – misuse or uncertainty around values terms?  
How current is the document? (when was it formulated) |
| Report cards | How are report cards structured? (order of subjects, are there skills or values statements)  
How are parents addressed and communicated with?  
Are there action statements (“doing”) from the teachers or for the parents?  
Is there reference to collaboration? (togetherness – involving parents)  
What attributions are given to children’s characters? (lively/talkative/calm)  
Any reporting on the children’s values? |
| Textbooks or Language books in Social Science and Language classes | What values are being portrayed in these books?  
What is taught in social science lessons regarding values? (curriculum structure) |
| Photographs/Posters/Symbols/Artifacts | What values are being portrayed?  
What does the document say or express about values? |
| Letters to parents | Is there a school ’motto’ or emblem on letters sent home and what does it say about the school’s values?  
On what occasions are letters sent home? Do they say something about the organisational culture, traditions or values?  
What is the values rationale in the letters? |
| Regulations  
Discipline policies  
School Rules/Codes of Conduct | For what purpose are these documents written and how do they communicate values?  
How accurate are they likely to be? (theoretical, espoused or written for practice)  
Is there collaboration and participation present in the formation of these documents? (Governing body/parents participation)  
What does the outcome of these documents say about the school’s values?  
How current is this document?  
What do the readers need to know about values to make sense of these documents?  
What is the values rationale? |
| Graffiti/Student messages | What is the emotive or expressive language telling me about the understanding of values?  
What does the writer take for granted about the reader?  
Who or what is in it?  
What do readers need to know in order to make sense of this? |
| Lesson plans/timetables | Is there evidence of Arts and Culture/debate/critical reflection activities that teach values?  
Is there evidence of sporting activities that promote values?  
What gets done regarding the teaching and learning of values? (extra-curricular activities) |

**Overall:**

Are documents coherent with and communicating policy values and the educational strategies?

Are values present in this school community?

How effective are the values?
Appendix B. Phase One: Observation

**Observation:** What will I specifically observe? (planned/actual)

- Assemblies - What is happening here? What messages or values are being portrayed? What are participants in the assembly doing or saying to one another? In what activities or routines are participants engaged? What resources are used in these activities, and how are they allocated? How are activities/routines organised, labelled, explained, justified? What differing social contexts can be identified? How are students being treated? Who is in charge? What specific incidents address values?

- Language classes and Social Science classes - What stories, anecdotes, and homilies do participants exchange and why? What verbal and non-verbal languages do they use for communication? What beliefs or values do the content of their conversations demonstrate? What formats do the conversations follow? What processes do they reflect? Who talks and who listens?

- Staff meetings - Who is present during the meeting and why? How do participants in the group behave toward one another? What is the nature of this participation and interaction? What statuses and roles are evident in these interactions? Who makes what decisions for whom? What is the agenda and content of the staff meetings? What are they talking about? Are values present?

- Special occasions - How are the elements of these special occasions connected or interrelated, either from the participants' point of view or from the researcher's perspective? How is 'special' constructed or maintained? How do these occasions originate, and how is it managed? What rules, norms or mores govern this social interaction? How is power conceptualised and distributed? How is this group related to other groups, organisations or institutions? What values are communicated? How?

- Playground interactions - Groups of children: Why does the group operate the way it does? What meanings do children attribute to what they do? What goals or aims are articulated in the groups? What symbols, traditions, values, and world views can be found in this group? Are there instances of violence? Are there instances of bullying? What values are evident in what is being observed?

- Sporting activities/Cultural activities - What physical settings and environments form their contexts and what does this say about values? Are different languages/cultures/groups utilised, embraced and why? What values are emphasised through these interactions? What reflection occurs and does this involve values?

- Parent evenings (in whatever form) - What are these meetings about? When does this group meet and interact? How often are the meetings? How does the group use and distribute time (focus)? How do participants view the past, present and future? What do these interactions say about the school's values?

**Overall:**

Are interactions, events and school life coherent with and communicating policy values and the educational strategies?

Are values present in this school community?

How effective are the values?
Appendix C. Phase Two: Focus Groups

Focus Groups

Who am I going to interview and what am I going to ask them? (planned)

**Knowledge:** Do participants know what the policy values are? Do they know what the educational strategies are? Do they know what values are? Do they know how to teach values? Do they know how children learn values?

**Agreement:** Do they agree with the values in new South African policy? Do they agree with the strategies? Do they agree with values being taught at school? Do they agree to be involved in the process?

**Understanding:** Do they understand what values mean? Do they understand how to teach them? Do they understand the strategies? Do they understand what is required of them?

(actual) **Focus Group One:** School leaders and Governing Body members

- Are you familiar with the Manifesto on values, education and democracy?
- What do you think the role of values in schooling is?
- How relevant are the values in the Manifesto [will be given to participants] to the learners at your school?
- What [other] values would you like to emphasise at this school and why?
- How would you describe this school’s values to an outsider?
- Do you think these values will unify the future South African community? How?
- What support do you get from the EDO or department of education in values teaching and learning?
- To what extent are these values present in the school? Why or why not?

(actual) **Focus Group Two:** Teachers

- How relevant are the values in the Manifesto [will be given to participants] to the learners in your classroom?
- If you could place them in a list of importance, which would be at the top and why?
- Do you promote values education in your lessons? How?
- What is your role as an educator to these learners (modelling)?
- How successful do you think the school is in teaching these values?

(actual) **Focus Group Three:** Learners

- What do think ‘values’ mean?
- What rules do you think are important for your classroom?
- What rules do you think are important for your school?
- What do you learn from sport activities, besides how to play the sport?
- What does it mean for you to be a ‘South African’?
- Are you proud of your school? Why/Why not?
- How safe do you feel in the classroom? Playground?

(planned) **Focus Group Four:** Parents

- Are you familiar with the Manifesto on values, education and democracy?
- What values do you think are important for your children?
- What do you think would contribute to South Africa becoming a united society?
- What is your role at this school?
- Do you teach your children values? How/Why/Why not?
- Would you encourage other parents to send their children to this school? Why?
Appendix D. Phase Three: Individual Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews - Who am I going to interview and what am I going to ask them?

**Overall (planned):**

**Knowledge:** Do participants know what the policy values are? Do they know what the educational strategies are? Do they know what values are? Do they know how to teach values? Do they know how children learn values?

**Agreement:** Do they agree with the values in new South African policy? Do they agree with the strategies? Do they agree with values being taught at school? Do they agree to be involved in the process?

**Understanding:** Do they understand what values mean? Do they understand how to teach them? Do they understand the strategies? Do they understand what is required of them?

*(actual) Interview One: Principal*

- What values do you portray as the leader of this school?
- What would you like to be remembered for as the principal of this school?
- What experiences have shaped how you lead this school?
- Is there a person/people who has helped shape the way you lead?
- What values would you like future South Africans to have?
- How do you lead values education?
- What role do you play in values teaching and learning?
- What do you think of the Manifesto values and strategies?
- What difference does it make to your work as the school leader?

*(planned) Interview Two: Chairperson of the Governing Body*

- What values do you portray as the chairperson of this school governing body?
- How do you understand your role as the GB chairperson?
- How do you deal with potential conflict situations?
- What values do you think are important for learners at this school?
- What do you think of the Manifesto values and strategies?
- What difference does it make to your work at this school?

*(actual) Interview Three: Teacher*

- What specific experiences shape the way you teach?
- Why did you become a teacher?
- What is your role in the lives of the learners in your classroom?
- What motivates you to come to school every day?
- What do you think of the Manifesto values and strategies?
- What difference does it make to your work as a teacher?

*(actual) Interview Four: Parent*

- What values would you like your child to have?
- What is your role in values education for your child?
- Do you believe in the emphasis on values in education? Why/Why not?
- What kind of person would you like your child to grow up to be?
- What do you think of the Manifesto values and strategies?
- What difference does it make to your role as parents?
Appendix E. Example of Participant Information Sheet

CRITICAL STUDIES IN EDUCATION

(Participating Education Studies, Health & Physical Education, Pasifika, & Social Sciences)

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Epsom Campus
Gate 4, 60 Epsom Avenue
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 623 8899
Facsimile 64 9 623 8836
www.education.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street
Auckland 1150, New Zealand

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

[School name, and name of principal],
East London, South Africa

Title: An investigation into how the values in 'new' South African educational policy manifest in disadvantaged school settings.

Thank you for your initial agreement to be part of this research project. My name is Melanie Drake and I am currently undertaking a Doctorate of Philosophy in Education at The University of Auckland, New Zealand. I have previously been a primary school teacher in East London, South Africa for six years and have completed a Masters degree through Rhodes University, Grahamstown. Being passionate about South African education, I am writing to give you the information regarding your school’s participation in this research project. Your school has been recommended as a functional and effective educational institution and I am most pleased that the Eastern Cape Department of Education has given permission for this research. This information sheet describes what is being requested of you should you choose to participate, and I will remain in telephonic contact to discuss any further information or concerns you may have.

The aim of this study is to investigate how the values in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, presented by M.P. Kadar Asmal, and supporting educational policy are visible in disadvantaged school communities. This study will investigate:

- How values are put into practice in school settings, particularly from management (principal, deputy, governing body) to parents, staff and learners;
- What support is given by the South African Department of Education in implementing South African policy (the Manifeston on Values, Education and Democracy) in disadvantaged schools;
- How values become or form part of school life (influence day-to-day happenings).

Your school’s participation in the study (if you agree to participate) will involve:

- In-depth observation of school life (learners, teachers, parents) by myself as the researcher at your school, over a five month period (June to December, 2009). This will involve me observing assemblies, staff meetings, parent evenings, playground etc… as well as general teaching and learning, at the convenience of the teachers. You/teachers may at anytime ask me to leave these meetings or events if you feel something needs to
be discussed that is sensitive, private or confidential. I would like to be at the school full-time for three days a week over the research period. These observation times will be consulted with the teachers/participants regularly throughout my time at your school.

- Group discussions (roughly 6-8 people) regarding values that will take roughly 60 minutes with yourself as principal and various governing body members, staff members, learners and parents.

- One-on-one discussions of roughly 45 minutes each, with yourself as the principal of the school and various teachers, learners and parents.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary and each participant in this research will receive a personal information sheet and consent form at the time of this research (June/July, 2009). It is important that teachers, learners and parents understand that participation/non-participation in this study will in no way affect their relationship with the school, for example, employment status for teachers and grades/marks for students. You, as the principal, and other school leaders should have no expectations or influence over participation from school community members. This will be explained to participants in their information sheets. A general letter will also be sent to all parents informing them of my research at your school. The research time will be negotiated in such a way as to cause as little disruption to the normal school day as possible.

As a gesture of thanks to you and your school’s participation, teas and lunches will be provided during these interview sessions. A small educational gift (book/stationery pack) will also be given to the learners who participate in this research. Transportation costs will also be compensated for parents or learners who need taxi fare to get to and from the school for these interviews.

If you agree to be involved, I would like to audio tape the discussions. You can request that the tape recorder be turned off at any time. The tapes will be transcribed by myself, as the researcher.

A transcript of each interview will be sent to individual participants as soon after the one-on-one interviews as possible so that they can verify that it is an accurate record, or for them to make changes if they so desire. Time will be allocated for reflection and summary during group interviews. Participants will have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, or withdraw information they have provided up until the data analysis, approximately 3 months after the interviews (December, 2009). The school as a whole may also withdraw up until December, 2009.

Transcripts and consent forms will be stored separately and securely for six years in the researcher’s office at Epsom Campus, University of Auckland, New Zealand and then destroyed. Tapes will be destroyed after six years.

Information gathered will be analysed and reported on around common themes. At completion of the study you will receive a summary of main findings. The final report will be submitted for assessment for the Doctorate of Education from the University of Auckland and a copy of the thesis will be given to the school upon completion. Findings may also be used for publication and conference presentations.

If the information you provide is published, it will be done in a way that does not identify your school as the source. I will do everything in my power to assure confidentiality, although the nature of focus group interviews does not always guarantee this, due to numerous participants being involved.

If you would like any further information about the proposed research project, please feel free to talk about this when I am in telephonic contact with you or contact me on the South African contact no: (details to be given) during Dec and Jan (2008/9) or June to December, 2009. My postal address in South Africa during these times:
(Details to be given once a post office box has been set up).

A local contact person has been set-up should you want to discuss anything at anytime. Mrs Zondeki is happy to relay any information to me, if you so wish. She is the Xhosa teacher at *** School and can be contacted during the day on the telephone number: ***. She will also contact my supervisors or the University Ethics Committee should you have any ethical or other concerns regarding my research.

My supervisors are: Prof. Viviane Robinson (email: vmj.robinson@auckland.ac.nz)
Associate Prof. Robin Small (email: r.small@auckland.ac.nz)

They can be contacted in writing at the following address:

Faculty of Education
The University of Auckland
Private Bag
92019
Auckland, New Zealand, 1105

Or telephonically on +64 9 3737599.

For any inquiries regarding ethical concerns please contact: The Chair, University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland Research Office – Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag, 92019, Auckland.
Telephone: +64 9 3737599 Extn. 87830

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I look forward to becoming part of the *** school community if you choose to participate in this study.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Drake

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 9 October 2008 for 3 years, Reference Number 2008/364
Appendix F. Example of Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Principal

[School name], East London, South Africa
(This consent form will be held for a period of six years)

Title: An investigation into how the values in ‘new’ South African educational policy manifest in disadvantaged school settings.

Reseacher: Melanie Drake

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project through the information sheet provided. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I consent to the school’s participation in this research with the understanding that our participation and the various learners, teachers and parents participation is entirely voluntary and we/theys can withdraw personally at any stage and have information we/theys have contributed withdrawn up until the point of data analysis (approximately December, 2009). I affirm that participation/non-participation of the teachers, parents and students at the school will in no way affect their relationship with the school (for example, employment status for teachers or marks for learners) and that I will have no expectations or influence regarding their involvement. I understand that the school as a whole can also withdraw from the research.

I agree to:

- Allow for observation (site access) by the researcher for the period of roughly five months (June to December 2009). This will include Miss Drake being present at staff meetings/parent meetings/observing at break times etc… I also understand that these times will be negotiated regularly throughout the research time. We may also ask Miss Drake to leave should a sensitive matter need to be discussed at anytime.

- Take part in the focus group interview stage as well as the individual interview stage if required and understand the time allocation for these.

- The interviews being audio recorded and transcribed but I am aware that I can have the tape turned off at any time and I will read these transcripts.
I understand that my/the other participants name(s) and the school's name will not be used in any written or oral presentation, unless we request this for any specific reason. I understand that our school's privacy will be respected. I also understand that the researcher will actively encourage participants of the focus groups to maintain confidentiality of information shared under these conditions, but this cannot be guaranteed.

I also understand that this research will be negotiated in such a way as to cause as little disruption to the normal school day as possible and Miss Drake will make times with the relevant participants at their convenience (admin lessons/afternoons). I will facilitate the arranging of areas/rooms for these interviews. I understand that compensation will be provided for travel if necessary. I understand that the findings will be used for a Doctoral thesis and possible publication/conference presentations.

I (the school principal) agree to [school name] participating in the research:

Signed: ..................................................
(Principal)

Name: ..................................................

Date: ..................................................

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 9 October 2008 for 3 years, Reference Number 2008/364.
Dear Parents

My name is Miss Drake and I am a student at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. I will be doing research at [school name] over the next few months. Being passionate about South African education, I am most excited to be conducting my research at your school. This letter serves to advise you of my research.

Your school principal, Miss ***, and the Department of Education, have been informed of all the necessary information regarding my study and they have agreed to allow me to observe school life at [school name]. This will include me observing staff meetings, parent meetings, children at break times, some class lessons and the like.

If you have any questions regarding my research, please feel free to send a note to the school. I will contact parents who would like to know more telephonically or make a meeting time at your convenience. I will be contacting various staff members, parents and learners to become more involved in my research through discussions and chats.

I am most privileged to become a part of your school community. Thank you in anticipation for your assistance and kindness.

Yours sincerely

Miss Melanie Drake

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 9 October 2008 for 3 years, Reference Number 2008/364
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Learners
[school name], East London, South Africa

Title: An investigation into how the values in ‘new’ South African educational policy manifest in disadvantaged school settings.

Dear Children

My name is Miss Drake and I will be doing research at your school. I am very excited to be able to spend time with you and learn more about your school.

I would like to talk with you and ask you a few questions about your life at the school. You can decide that you do not want to be asked questions at any time or you can ask me to turn off the tape recorder if you don’t want to be recorded. It is completely up to you!

Your parents will chat to you about what I am studying and what it means for you to be involved in this research. Remember, you can ask me questions about it at anytime! No one will know your name. I will just be using the information you give me to help other children and schools in South Africa.

I am looking forward to chatting with you!

Yours sincerely

Miss Drake

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 9 October 2008 for 3 years, Reference Number 2008/364
References


