EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS OF LEARNER MIGRATION

AMONGST SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that **EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS OF LEARNER MIGRATION AMONGST SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE is** my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

Post-apartheid education policy as enshrined in the South African School's Act no 84 of 1996 transformed the education system. The policy ensured the right of access to the school of one's choice and lead to the migration of learners from township schools to former Model C and independent schools. The study aimed to investigate the management of learner migration using a literature review and a qualitative inquiry. Data was gathered through interviews with principals, School Management Team members, parents and learners who had migrated. The findings indicated that learner migration as determined by parents' social and financial capacity is steered by factors such as a school's sound culture of teaching and learning on account of good principalship, dedicated educators, motivated learners and good discipline. It was recommended that the culture of teaching and learning should be cultivated in all schools through capacity building workshops for educational managers and educators to curb excessive learner migration.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1   INTRODUCTION.

The movement of black learners from rural schools to racially integrated schools in urban areas is a given fact of the current education situation in South Africa. This migration is a result of the stipulation in the South African School's Act (SASA) no 84 of 1996, which entails the abolition of admission boundaries (RSA 1996:B-5). According to this stipulation parents now have the right to enrol their children in the school of their choice.

This has resulted in the migration of learners from predominately black schools to former Model C schools and to certain independent schools. These former Model C schools are public schools and many operate under section 21 of SASA (RSA 1996: B-48). This section allows these schools to take responsibility for school buildings and grounds, curriculum and extra-mural choices and the purchasing of textbooks and other education materials. Due to these factors these schools are frequently able to provide a better service to clientele and are thus a viable option for many black families.

The local exodus of learners from predominately black schools to former model C schools is a situation with equivalent manifestations globally. In New Zealand, for example, the Labour Government came into power in 1989 and restructured the education system, which resulted in self-governing schools. Parental choice became an integral part of compulsory education and the choice led to a distinct movement away from low socio-economic schools (serving high proportions of disadvantaged and minority students) to high socio-economic schools (serving a more advantaged clientele (Fiske & Ladd 2003:55). In England and Wales school choice is available only to those families that are able and willing to pay high fees for private schooling (Walford 2003:68). In Czechoslovakia and Hungary education was reformed after the collapse of communism. The transition process involved the overhaul of the education system in order to provide greater flexibility and to give far more substantial decision-making

power to parents and students, also with regard to their choice of school (Fiske & Ladd 2003:57).

As the 21st century unfolds, more and more parents in the United States of America (US) are being confronted by the seeming inadequacies of the nation's public education system. Affluent African-American parents often find themselves caught in the crossfire of intense political debate when it comes to choosing elementary and secondary education institutions for their children. Since the 1960's affluent African-American families have increasingly viewed predominately white, elite boarding schools as viable educational options for their children (Alexander 1999:106).

In South Africa the issue of school choice is inextricably bound up with overcoming the legacy of apartheid and racism (Pampallis 2003:144). Prior to 1994, education was extremely complex with fifteen different education ministries. The system was a conglomeration of different subsystems. Each department had its own school models, its own funding formula for schools, its own relationship to individual schools and parents, and its own arrangement for governance. The schools belonged to a particular ministry and could admit only members of the ethnic group for whom that particular ministry had been established (Pampallis 2003:144). Since 1994 the government has faced the challenge of transforming the legacy of the past and creating a system that will fulfill the vision of a learning culture for all citizens (RSA 1995). Legislation was passed which made it possible for the previous segregated white schools to admit children of other racial groups. Related to this was the right of parents to send their children to the school of their choice (RSA 1996 B-5; Appels, Harley & Penny 1999:418). In particular, the Admission Policy Act no 27 of 1996 allows learners to public schools, expanding the choice and opportunities available to South African parents and students with regard to school attendance to those previously disadvantaged by apartheid (RSA 1996:A-9; SASA 1996:B-5).

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Brooks (1993:10) states that there is a crisis of resources in black schools. This lack of resources includes human, physical and material resources. There is also a prevalence of a massive overcrowding. Basic resources such as libraries, laboratories and

textbooks are often unavailable. The percentage of black schools in South Africa without electricity was as high as 85% in 1994. However, the current situation is that the principle of "Better life for all" has made it possible for most schools to have electricity. Morever, poor academic achievement, inadequate facilities and ill motivated teachers often characterise black schools (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:3). The authors add that the majority of the teachers are demoralised and most schools are under-resourced. For these reasons black learners and teachers who are in advantageous positions increasingly migrate to predominantly white schools, leaving the residual schools with even less capacity.

Ten years ago Litshani (1998:8) claimed that black parents are concerned about the education of their children. These concerns are elicited by adverse publicity, which states that black public schools are places of rampant misbehaviour where traditional academic values have been allowed to slip. This assertion is validated by matric pass rates for the past five years in the Zoutpansberg East circuit, Limpopo Province as can be seen in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Matric pass rates (2002-2004)

YEAR	ONE FORMER MODEL C SCHOOL	ONE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL	ONE BLACK SCHOOL
2002	100%	100%	85%
2003	100%	100%	95%
2004	100%	100%	62%
2005	100%	100%	85%
2006	100%	99%	58%

(This information was obtained from different schools telephonically).

Pampallis (2003: 154) concurs that the motivation of township parents to send their children to schools outside the township is due to the fact that many township schools are characterised by tardiness, poor discipline, absenteeism of both students and

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teachers, the prevalence of a culture of poor teaching and learning, poor management, the prevalence of drugs, gangsters and violence.

In a study conducted in New Zealand, Fiske and Ladd (2003:54) found out that white schools offer a better quality education than black schools. The reason for this could be attributed to the fact that white schools have a better infrastructure and better learning and teaching resources. These schools also have better qualified teachers and school managers, and an ethos that is more conducive to learning. In South Africa the situation is similar. Former Model C schools are better equipped than the black schools due to the fact that the model C schools were previously for white learners. These schools are characterised by better facilities, better provisions and better-qualified teachers (Carim & Sayed 1991:22).

Initially Carim and Sayed (1991:21) claimed that former model C schools admitted black learners under the condition that school management determined the selection procedure. This resulted in teachers violating admission laws, by selecting only the best learners and refusing admission to weak learners under the pretence of lack of space. Similarly, teachers in these schools enjoyed teaching in a better-kept environment in which the threat of redeployment due to decreasing learner numbers was less possible. However, the ANC led government outlined the basic restructuring of schooling in the SASA (RSA 1996) and thus replaced the multiple school models of the apartheid education system with two categories of schools: public and independent.

A major strategy of educational change in South Africa is to redress previous unfair practices and to strive for equality (RSA 1996: B-3). The SASA proclaims schooling to be compulsory for all learners between the ages of seven and fifteen (RSA 1996: B-5). It bans corporal punishment (RSA 1996: B-8), proclaims that human dignity be respected and protected (RSA 1996:B-8) and that everyone has a right to basic education (RSA 1996). The establishment of school governing bodies and the abolition of school boundaries, which restricted black learners from attending white schools, are a result of the SASA (RSA 1996).

Carim and Sayed (1991:21) illustrate that the abolition of school boundaries and the 'opening' of white schools to all South Africans have created meaningful possibilities

for many black parents. This 'opening' of white schools provides opportunities to black parents to arrange for good quality teaching and learning to children. The 'opening' of white schools enables migrating learners to rededicate themselves to an environment in which they are empowered by effective teaching and learning. In such an environment parents and the broader community are involved in education matters while teachers are focusing on their teaching task (Brooks 1993:10; Lukheli 2002:38).

Learner migration from township schools to former model C schools is experienced nationwide. At Rhodes Fields Technical High School, as an example of a former model C school in Gauteng, the learner enrolment increased from 787 learners in 2003 to 983 in 2004. A total number of 1051 learners were registered for the year 2005. This represents a yearly increase of 25% over a period of 3 years (Gauteng Department of Education Management Information System).

But it is evident that former model C schools will not be able to accommodate all South African learners. The South African education system therefore faces the challenge of capacity building and training strategies. It should find ways to utilise all available brainpower and to aim for academic excellence at all schools whether in highly developed industrialised areas, in rural areas or in township areas.

Linked to the imperative of social redress of inequalities with regard to quality is the imperative to be globally competitive. Erasmus and Ferreira (2002:28) argue that in order to grow and survive South Africans must invest in schooled human resources to prepare the country to cope with the demands of a competitive world economy. In the 21st century, productive citizens should possess the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills needed by the global world economy, which relate to knowledge-oriented skills within the service sector. This places a high demand on increased access to a broader quality provision at school level. Apart from the demand for world market competitiveness, however, the challenge in South Africa today is also to build a society that unites rather than divides (Warner 1994:10; Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:3). The school as a specific organ or institution of the society exists within a particular community context and this context is part and parcel of what shapes the school and gives it its identity. In this regard the school is at the heart of education change, which needs to be managed vigorously.

It is the duty of all Senior Management Teams to market their schools effectively and community perceptions should be regarded as a driving factor in meeting marketing determinants that will change school images (Warner 1994:8). The effective marketing of schools can only be based on a good service offered, adherence to clientele demands and the development of manpower for both local and global needs.

1.3   MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Warner (1994:8) maintains that images are created (or re-created) by communicating your desire to serve your constituents, by working with them openly and honestly to establish a relationship of trust, and by consistently delivering the expected product of service. The researcher's experience as an educator for the past 36 years alerted her to a study of the management of the migration tendency of black learners to former Model C schools with particular reference to Limpopo Province.

The researcher is a Head of Department at a secondary school, which is situated near Makhado (Louis Trichardt) in the Limpopo Province. With regard to this area, about hundred and fifty learners travel to town on a daily basis by two buses to attend former Model C schools. These learners are leaving behind secondary schools, which are poorly resourced in terms of human, physical and material resources. As in the case with most township schools, these learners have left schools in which there is massive overcrowding and a lack of basic resources such as libraries, laboratories and textbooks (Brooks 1993:10). Competent teachers and dedicated learners form part of this migration exercise to schools with an advanced culture of teaching and learning.

The researcher has an ardent desire to research this problem: firstly to analyse this trend and secondly, to disclose the factors relating to migration of learners as is experienced worldwide. A first assumption is that the principal and his/ her Management Team is crucial role players in the development and maintenance of a good school image. A good school image relates to the retaining of existing learners and the recruitment of a valuable clientele in terms of dedicated teachers, learners and supportive parents. This good image is synonymous with the development and maintenance of an acceptable culture of teaching and learning.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The migration of learners to former Model C schools is a result of the implementation of an open school admission policy and the abolition of school zones (RSA 1996; Litshani 1998:4). Thus South African learners of all racial groups are now able to attend schools of their parent's choice without any restrictions. This results in an exodus of learners from township schools to former Model C schools. Against this background, the following problem arises:

➢   How can the migration of learners be managed?

In order to find solutions to this main research problem, the following sub-questions are investigated first so that the solutions to these sub-problems can contribute to the solution of the main problem:

➢   How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest globally?
➢   How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest in South Africa?
➢   What are the perceptions of school principals, School Management Teams, learners and parents in selected secondary schools in Limpopo Province on learner migration?
➢   What guidelines can be considered by school stakeholders to manage learner migration in an informed way?

1.5   AIMS OF RESEARCH

The study aims to obtain an insightful understanding of the phenomenon of learner migration from township secondary schools to former Model C schools. Linked to this main objective the researcher aims to disclose a set of factors as basis on which learner migration tendencies are executed worldwide. The awareness of these factors could assist stakeholders of local schools to manage the learner migration phenomenon efficiently. In order to accomplish this, the following objectives are pursued:

➢   To determine the phenomenon of learner migration as experienced globally.

➤ To determine the phenomenon of learner migration as experienced in South Africa.

➤ To explore the experiences of School Management Teams, learners and parents in selected secondary schools in Limpopo Province on learner migration.

➤ To develop guidelines for school stakeholders to manage learner migration in an informed way.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will be based on a literature study and an empirical investigation.

1.6.1 Literature review

The literature review in a research study accomplishes several purposes such as sharing with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported on. It relates the study to the larger ongoing dialogue in the literature about a topic. It fills gaps and extends prior studies. It provides a framework for establishing the importance of study and a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings (Cresswell 1994:20-21). In this study, the literature review enabled the researcher to gain information about the worldwide tendency of learner migration, which also applies to the South African exodus of learners to former Model C schools.

1.6.2 Qualitative research paradigm

Qualitative research methodology is defined as a 'naturalistic' evaluation or as an approach that describes and evaluates the performance of phenomena in their natural settings (Mouton 2001:161; Litshani 1998:14; Johnson & Christensen 2004:31; Schulze, Myburg, Poggenpoel 2002:161). Qualitative research represents a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of interpretive material that makes the world visible. Qualitative research represents an inductive top-down approach that relies on the collection of quality data i.e. non-numerical data such as words and pictures (Denzin & Lincoln 2000:3; Johnson & Christensen 2004:30). A qualitative research approach does not usually provide the researcher with a step by step plan or a fixed recipe to follow as is normally the case with a quantitative research

approach (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2002:273). Schulze, et al (2002:161) states that in the process of researching, the qualitative researcher aims to understand society and the meaning that people attach to everyday life.

In this study on the migration of learners to former model C schools, the researcher used the qualitative method because she wanted to understand the learner migration phenomenon in depth. Moreover, the investigation needed to be done within the socially constructed natural environment in which the researcher was the primary data collection instrument. This enabled the researcher to interview, observe and interpret gestures that added to a more thorough construction of meaning of the matter. (Johnson & Christensen: 2004:31; Schulze, et al. 2002:57).

The strategic aim of qualitative research, namely that of an understanding and interpreting of the meaning that subjects give to everyday life enabled the researcher to have entered into the subjects' life worlds or life settings and to have placed herself in the shoes of the participants and to have collected relevant information regarding the learner migration (De Vos et al. 2002:273).

1.6.2.1 Participants and sampling

Strauss and Corbin (1996:202) state that sampling is important when exploring new or uncharted areas because it enables the researcher to choose those avenues of sampling that can bring about the greatest theoretical return.

Johnson and Christensen (2004:215) explain that with purposive sampling or judgmental sampling, the researcher specifies the characteristics of the population of interest and locates individuals with those characteristics. Once the group is located, the researcher asks those who meet the inclusion criteria to participate in the research study.

Purposeful sampling was used to select information rich participants from the ranks of principals and members of the School Management Team of selected schools. Learners who have migrated to former model C schools and their parents also formed part of the research sample.

The focus of this research was on two former Model C schools situated in an urban area and one township school situated in a rural area. These three secondary schools fall under the jurisdiction of the Zoutpansberg East Circuit at Makhado (Louis Trichardt) in the Limpopo province. The researcher has chosen the specific three schools because these three schools represent a clear example of the phenomenon of learner migration.

1.6.2.2   Research methods

Semi-structured focus group interviewing and phenomenological individual interviewing were deemed the most appropriate methods to obtain meaningful answers to the formulated research problem. These two research methods are methods that are typically used with a qualitative research approach.

(a)   Focus group interviewing

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:836) hold the opinion that the focus group interview focuses on the participant's attitude, experiences and beliefs. The researcher keeps the group focused on the topic being discussed. It saves time, provides in-depth information and promotes discussions. The interaction between participants enhances data quality (Johnson & Christensen 2004:185).

The researcher led the interviews with five focus groups, namely: The first focus group was with the members of the School Management Team of a former Model C school. The second focus group was with the members of the School Management Team of a former Model C school that had become a fully independent, private school. The third focus group interview was conducted with the members of the School Management Team of a township school in which the learner migration phenomenon is heavily experienced. The fourth focus group interview was conducted with parents and the fifth focus group interview with learners who had migrated to former Model C schools.

The researcher wished to collect information about how different groups think and feel about the learner migration. Interview topics were derived from the literature on the migration of learners (Schulze et al. 2002:61). The School Management Teams of the

different schools and the learners who migrated to former Model C schools were interviewed within the school premises for the sake of convenience. The confidentiality of participants were respected at all times during the investigation. Parents who had taken their children to former Model C schools to register was interviewed in a central place such as a parent's home for the sake of comfort and the prevalence of a more relaxed atmosphere in which opinions could be more openly expressed (Coleman & Briggs 2003:145-146). These parents were hoped to share commonalities on thoughts that have directed their actions for exerting a choice of appropriate school for their children.

(b)   Individual in-depth interview

The in-depth individual interview is also called the informal interview by means of which the researcher enters into the inner world of another person and gains an understanding of that person's perspective on the topic under discussion (Schulze et al. 2002:61; Johnson & Christensen 2004:183). This enables the researcher to have a face to face or one to one in person interview with purposefully selected participants in a designated place (Cresswell 1994:150).

With this study on the migration of learners to former Model C schools the researcher applied the phenomenological interview approach, which meant that no interview schedule was used, but that the interview commenced by asking one main question only (Schulze et al. 2002:61). Three principals from the above-mentioned schools were interviewed by this method.

1.6.3   Data Analysis

Data is defined as all the research information that is empirically collected by means of research instruments such as interviews, observations and field notes (Strauss & Corbin 1996:57; Cresswell 2003:185). In this study data was collected by means of the tape recording of interviews, the verbatim description of these tape-recorded interviews and the decoding of the transcribed interviews into emerging categories and recurring patterns. Transcripts of recorded interviews were carefully scrutinised and analysed over a period of time in order to gain familiarity and to be able to identify categories

and recurring patterns by segmenting sentences into categories. Preliminary analysis was performed.

The researcher transcribed the interview tapes, analysed them and identified emerging categories and recurring patterns and link the findings to information from the literature survey. From this analysis, it was hoped that guidelines for the sound management of learner migration would emerge.

1.7   CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPT

The following concepts need clarification:

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team of a school consists of the principal, the principal's deputy and the Heads of Department. The management function of a school's management team relates to the managing of the school as an enterprise for the realisation of the most important task of any school, namely excellent teaching and learning (Kruger 2002:10). In this regard the principal and his /her deputy principal(s) should be involved in the marketing process to make it successful. Their responsibility is to market the school in such a way that the image of the school is restored to one that represents an excellent culture of teaching and learning (Kruger 2002: 81).

School marketing

Kruger (2002:64) defines marketing as a fitting process between supplier and consumer. The school as the supplier of an education service supplies the client with something he or she wants, namely a product. In this regard the client represents the learner with his/her parent(s).

Successful marketing means that the client's expectations are taken into account. Marketing is regarded as a management process that is responsible for anticipation, identification, and satisfaction of client's needs in a mutual beneficial manner (Kruger

2002:65). The school management team should play a major role in the marketing of the school (Kruger 2002:81; Kotler & Fox 1995:35; Warner 1994:10).

Education

Davies and Ellison (1997:3) state that education is the means by which the school actively communicates and promotes its purpose, values and products to the learners, parents and the broader community. The education correlates with the major task of all schools, namely teaching and learning which demands the offering of the best service possible to the wider community.

Pushing factors

In the context of this study the concept of pushing factors refers to all those factors that force a learner to leave that particular school, due to undesirable conditions prevailing in that particular school. Such conditions are detrimental to effective teaching and learning.

Pulling factors

Pulling factors refer to the availability of resources that attract learners to a particular school.

Learner migration

In the context of this study the concept learner migration refers to the movement of learners from township schools which are predominately black schools to urban schools that are former Model C schools that were historically predominately white.

Pampallis (2003:155) acknowledges that the impact of migration of students is felt not only in the schools to which they go but also in the school that they leave behind in the township. The researcher's focus is on both situations.

Secondary school

Hawkins (2004:949) defines a secondary school as a school that offers education to learners who have received primary education, but who have not yet proceeded to university or an occupation.

Limpopo province

Limpopo Province is one of the seven provinces that constitute the Republic of South Africa. The Limpopo Province is situated on the northern part of the country next to the Limpopo River, which forms the border with Zimbabwe. It is one of the poorest provinces of the country.

Former Model C schools

Former Model C schools are former state-aided public schools, which formerly constituted mainly white learners. Like all other schools, former Model C schools may determine their own admission policies within the legal bounds of the SASA and the Constitution of South Africa (Appels et al. 1999:418).

Cohen and Swart (1987:17) compare the conditions that prevail in these former white schools with exceptionally fertile ground. This fertile ground is prepared by excellent teaching methods and unquestioned authority. These qualities of former Model C schools make them attractive to parents and dedicated learners.

Township schools

In this context township schools are schools that are found in black townships in South Africa created by the previous government. These schools historically only admitted black children.

1.8 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter one comprises of a general orientation of the research. This includes an introduction to the research and a reflection on the background to and motivation for the study. The statement of the problems, the aims and objectives with the research, the study demarcation and the research design are matters that are addressed in this chapter.

In chapters two and three the relevant literature and past findings with regard to the problem under investigation are reviewed. Chapter two focuses on a highlighting of the learner migration phenomenon as experienced internationally and in South Africa. In both cases the reasons for learner migration and the main tendencies are determined and explained. Due to the fact that a good product is something that everyone is pursuing in all spheres of life, chapter three focuses on what is evident from literature with regard to a good school product. This is done to provide a theoretical background and framework to the problem under investigation.

Chapter four deals with the research design, which includes the data collection techniques, the sample of the study, and the research procedure that was followed to collect relevant data. Data collected are reported on in chapter five. This includes a focus on the research findings by means of a scientific analysis of the gathered data and an interpretation and evaluation of the research results.

In terms of the research findings, conclusions are drawn, guidelines developed and recommendations made in chapter six.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter represented an orientation with the aim of exposing and creating an awareness of the research problem. Learner migration is the focus of this research and the migration of learners from township schools to former Model C schools are the specific learner migration phenomenon that is focused on.

This migration action is the result of school system transformation that manifested in the lifting of the restriction on school admission. Due to the introduction of school

choice, the migration of learners from township schools to former model C schools is increasingly occurring. The SASA with its legalising of school choice is instrumental to this migration exercise in which pulling and pushing factors serve as the driving forces for migration activity.

The legalising of school choice which results in migration tendencies poses a serious challenge to School Management Teams to market their schools viably for the sake of survival. The principal plays a huge role in this marketing exercise of his/her school to improve its image. Chapter two focuses on the relevant literature with regard to learner migration tendencies, the reasons for these migration activities and the strategies already implied to reverse such actions.

CHAPTER 2

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF LEARNER MIGRATION: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Increasingly a global marketplace of ideas is available to education policy makers and practitioners. Among these ideas with a demonstrable global reach are the notions of parental choice of schooling and market competition among educational institutions (Ladd 2003: 1). Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s different countries introduced educational reform policy and legislation based on these ideas. The traditional view that one size fits all when it comes to education is no longer accepted. Research shows that children differ in their learning styles, and people are increasingly recognising that alternatives are needed for those learners who do not function well in the traditional public education system (Ladd 2003: 6). For the learner to reach his / her ultimate goal, school choice is an important phenomenon in the modern education system. School choice, of necessity, implies that learners will not always opt for schooling at schools situated in the nearest geographical area. Learners are then compelled, albeit voluntarily, to migrate to schools often outside their immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, these schools are often very different in cultural and socio-economic composition to the schools nearer to home.

Internationally school choice is generally understood, as the occurrence whereby the family chooses the school its children will attend. The parents can make this choice from among all of the approved schools within a reasonable community distance (Nelson, Calson and Palonsky 2005:84). Cookson and Schneider (1995:574) maintain that school choice is a form of empowerment that gives a person a sense of dignity that is hard to achieve when a family feels compelled to send their children to a particular school. Parents choose a school for their children based on many different considerations. However, most research in the United States and the United Kingdom shows that parents identify educational quality as the most important choice factor. Location, as well as discipline and size, also play a role in school choice (Sugarman & Kemerer 1999:102).

In the South African context, learner migration as a result of school choice has come to refer to the voluntary movement of learners from public schools located in black townships (know as township schools) to schools in the urban areas (known as former Model C schools) which have been predominantly attended by white learners.

This chapter focuses on various manifestations of learner migration, including school choice, in an international perspective. It also discusses learner migration in South Africa, which has emerged since comprehensive and dramatic reforms in the education system.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

Hawkins (2004: 254) defines demographic shifts as the movement of people from one geographic area to another. Demographic shift may be caused by a number of conditions: natural disaster, political upheaval, immigration and changes in socio-economic circumstances. The movement of people from one geographic area to the other has an impact on schooling. The term may also refer to statistics of birth rate and death rate and illustrate the conditions of life. In the context of this study demographic shifts as the movement of learners from one school to another are both the cause and the outcome of learner migration in different communities.

2.2.1 Demographic shifts and school choice

In New Zealand geographic zones for schooling were abolished in 1991 and parental choice became an integral part of compulsory education. Parental choice led to a distinct movement of students away from low socio–economic status schools which served the disadvantaged and minority students to high socio-economic status schools serving more advantaged students (Fiske & Ladd 2003: 55).

In Sweden the basic principle dominating the Swedish education system today is that all students should have an equivalent education, regardless of their sex, ethnic or social background, or place of residence (Daun 2003:97). Immigration and urbanisation made it difficult to maintain a stable school population. Each public school has its own area and is obliged to accept all pupils living within this area. These public schools are also

allowed to take in other students as long as there are available space and adequate teaching facilities. Schools are expected to market themselves in order to attract the maximum number of students. Majority of the areas offer a choice of schools. Commuting distances and the lack of independent schools effectively limit which schools students can attend, therefore school choice, in reality, is most commonly determined by the commuting distance to the school rather than pedagogical preferences (Daun 2003:97).

In the People's Republic of China schools are divided into districts or zones and the government's general policy on school assignment is that students go to government schools in their districts of residence. In fewer cases, parents can petition to have their children go to school in the district where they work (Tsang 2003:164).

2.2.1.1   School choice in the United States (US)

In the US the immigrant population depends heavily on public schools. Thus, public schools are called upon to develop techniques for teaching children that come from homes with different languages and customs (Spring 1996: 150). School choice is an option that is widespread in the US. Doyle and Feldman (2006: 367) define school choice as a practice of allowing parents and students to choose among a variety of schools, a practice that has become widespread in many states and districts. The concept of choice dates back to the 1950's when Milton Friedman advocated giving parents vouchers that could be used to purchase an education for their children at any school in the US. The reason for this move was that public schools had poor quality performance and lacked competition when compared to private schools (Hannaway & Bischoff 2004). He also argued that impoverished parents are often trapped in a poor school system, because they cannot afford to move to the schools that offer better education (Spring 1996:180). Salisbury and Tooley (2005:26) acknowledge that a number of states have enacted school choice as a way to improve educational options for parents. The US Supreme Court recently upheld school choice as constitutional as parents have extensive and legal sanctioned control over their children. The theory that justifies the legal authority is that parents are the people who are most likely to understand the needs of their children, and are also the ones most concerned about their welfare (Nelson et al. 2005 :86). Thus, the major argument for more parental choice

emerges from the cherished value of freedom to choose. Given that people are generally permitted to choose where to live and where to work, it is reasonable to ask why they are not given more control over where the children go to school. For this reason, the US Board of Education ruled that schools needed to integrate and provide equal education for all people and it was unconstitutional for the state to deny certain citizens this opportunity (Patillo 2004: 1).

As the 21st century unfolds more and more parents are being confronted by inadequacies in the US nation's public education system (Hannaway & Bischoff 2004). Affluent African American parents often find themselves caught in intense political debate when it comes to choosing an elementary and secondary educational institution for their children. Since the 1960's affluent African American families have increasingly viewed predominately white elite boarding schools as viable educational opportunities for their children (Alexander 1999: 106). As a result, the administration of different states in the US has put mechanisms in place to empower parents to choose schools for their children, known as school choice plans. Cookson and Schneider (1995:564) maintain that every state has either enacted or is considering a choice plan that is uniquely configured by its political environment. They define the following choice plans for the parents and their children:

(a)   Intradistrict choice: A plan that allows students to choose schools within one public school district.

(b)   Interdistrict choice: A plan in which students may cross district lines to attend school. Tuition funds from the state are provided as well as transportation costs.

(c)   Intrasectional choice: A plan that is limited to public schools.

(d)   Intersectional choice: A plan that includes both public and private schools.

(e)   Controlled choice: A student assignment plan that requires families to choose a school within a community, with choices possibly restricted to ensure racial, gender and socioeconomic balance of each school. Often such plans reflect a strategy to comply with court-ordered desegregation.

(f)   Voucher plans: Any system of certificate or cash payments by the government that enables public school students to attend schools of their choice, public or private. Vouchers have a fixed value and are redeemed at the time of enrolment.

All these choice plans tend to fit with the traditional structure of the American education system. For now, however, most choice plans have been developed and implemented within the parameters established by the state constitutions and by traditional conceptions of a public school district (Cookson & Schneider 1995:564). Van Heemst (2004:123) argues that the nation's children deserve the best education they can get and a system of school choice improves their education options.

2.3   FACTORS CAUSING LEARNER MIGRATION

Various factors add impetus to learner migration. These are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.3.1   Race

Hawkins (2004:85) describes race as a group of persons connected by common descent, posterity of tribe or nation. In this context race refers to black and white people. Racial inequality is experienced globally. Racism refers to the acts of oppression of one racial group towards another. Often racism is defined as prejudice plus power. This definition of racism distinguishes between simple feelings of hostility and prejudice toward another racial group and the ability to turn those feelings into some form of oppression (Spring 1996:133). McCarthy (1990:1) confirms that racial antagonism and racial inequality continue to plague societies in the developed modernised world such as England, Australia and the US and this impact negatively on the education system. This results in the practice of racism and contributes to parents choosing schools for their children based on issues of race.

Tedin and Weiher (2004:2) maintain that a common critique of school choice is that it will have the practical effect of further increasing racial and ethnic segregation in American education. However, most survey evidence indicates that the highest priority

of parents in choosing schools is academic quality, with the race and ethnic composition of the student enrolment being much less important. Again the literature on parental preferences indicates that many parents see high test scores and good quality teachers as the most important criteria when families choose schools.

Most opinion studies show that the racial composition of schools is largely irrelevant when evaluating schools or making choices. Moe (2001:54) argues that while attitudes towards race and racial composition may have mattered for choice at an earlier time, current data show that it is no longer the case or at least there has been a reduction in their importance of school choice.

2.3.2 Class and economic status

Hawkins (2004: 171) defines class as a rank or order of the society namely: upper class, middle class, lower class and working class. He further defines economic status as the indication of a person's social position as regards to wealth. Social class and economic status are intertwined. People who belong to the upper class are the haves while the lower class comprises the have-nots. The income of the family usually determines the type of school the parents choose for their children. Research has revealed that parents with higher incomes enrol their children in schools offering quality education. In Chile higher income parents enrol their children more in private schools than in public schools (Carnoy & McEwan 2003:37).

Economic status goes hand in hand with the level of education the parents received. In England and Chile parents who choose private schools have a higher level of education and income compared to parents who choose public schools (Carnoy & MacEwan 2003:37; Walford 2003:69; Carnoy & Mc Ewan 2003:36).

Schools offering quality education are usually well resourced and have better qualified teachers. Fiske and Ladd (2003:57) acknowledge that parents choose schools that are well resourced and attract higher quality teachers. Carnoy and Mc Ewan (2003:37) argue that school choice is governed by not only resource availability but also by access to information and internalised viewpoints associated with social status.

Lower–income parents may not have full information concerning school quality because such information is costly to obtain or interpret. These parents may not be as likely to choose higher performing schools with higher social-status, even if their children might qualify for these schools or if they could afford to pay the somewhat higher costs associated with them (Carnoy & Mc Ewan 2003:38). The lower–class always strives to move to the middle class while the middle–class strives to move to the upper class. Research shows that low-income children attain higher academic performance when they attend classes with middle-class peers. The middle-class parents often purchase or rent a home based on their perception of the quality of the schools (Colvin 2004:13).

Parents' income also contributes to the transport that the child uses to go to the school of their choice. Many public school programmes in the United States of America allowing parents to choose a school provide some form of subsidised or free transportation, usually based on parents' income (Colvin 2004:14).

A school characteristic, such as the test scores and the socioeconomic background of other children in the school, is also a driving force behind the choice of school by parents for their children. The latter characteristic is particularly important. Highly educated parents are more likely than less-educated parents to base their decisions on these characteristics (Carnoy & Mc Ewan 2003: 38). It is confirmed by Walford (2003: 68) that in England and Wales school choice was available only to those families able and willing to pay fees to private schools.

It is therefore evident that less educated parents and parents of low-socio economic status are less likely to make choices based on school quality.

2.3.3 Cultural aspects

School choice is not only based on class and economic status; cultural background also plays an important role.

Culture refers to knowledge, beliefs and attitudes passed on from one generation to the next. Every society possesses a culture or way of life which members of that society

share (Mothata, Lemmer, Mda & Pretorius 2002:39). Culture refers to all aspects of life, including the mental, social, linguistic and physical dimensions. It refers to ideas people have, the relationships they have with others in the families with larger social institutions, the language they speak, and the symbolic forms they share, such as written language or art/music forms. It refers to their relationship with their physical surroundings as well as technology that is used in society (Masemann 2003:116).

The transmission of culture from one group to the other is called education. Masemann (2003:116) defines education as a cultural process the way in which each newborn human infant, born with a potentiality for learning greater than that of any other mammal, is transformed into a full member of a specific human culture. All processes that a human being undergoes are defined as 'education'.

It is only through education that children learn their culture in different societies. In America during the seventies education of different ethnic and language group was a major issue. Culture and parental education levels play a major role in which students exercise choice options for schools (Spring 1996: 148).

In the United States of America (USA) African Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans and Puerto Rican children were classified as children from dominated cultures, who have developed distrust towards the major institutions in the American society. For instance, a history of forced subjugation and slavery, segregation, discrimination, and harassment by police and government officials has left many members of the African American community with the feeling that the government works primarily to benefit the European Americans. This general distrust of institutions includes public schools. The children of dominated cultures may also develop an anti-school attitude. They also feel a strong hostility towards schools because of the deculturalisation programs. These are programmes that are used to ameliorate one culture for the purpose of replacing it with another (Spring 1996: 148).

The cultural frame of reference can result in differences in action in a particular situation. Ogbu (1998: 164) argues that a negative cultural frame of reference held by some students from dominated cultures can cause low academic achievement. He further identifies three ways in which it may occur. For some dominated cultures doing

well in a school requires 'acting white'. Peer pressure against acting white can result in students doing poorly. From this standpoint, doing well in school symbolises a rejection of one's culture for a European American culture. Secondly, the cultural frame of reference held by students from dominated cultures can cause conflicts with European American administrators, teachers and students. These conflicts contribute to a distrust of the institution of schooling and a rejection of school rules. The open rejection of school rules leads to suspension, expulsion and other forms of school punishment, which also contribute to poor achievement (Ogbu 1998: 165). Thirdly, the cultural frame of reference of many students of dominated cultures can cause them to become disillusioned about their ability to achieve. This can result in little effort being put into academic work. These three effects of a dominated group's cultural frame of reference results in what Ogbu calls the 'the low academic effort syndrome' and 'counter academic attitude and behaviors'. Low academic effort syndrome refers to lack of effort to do school work, which results from peer pressure, conflict and disillusionment. Students display counter academic attitudes and actions that are hostile towards the school (Ogbu 1998:165).

Spring (1996:155) suggests that one possible solution for students from dominated cultures whose low academic achievement is a result of low academic effort syndrome and counter academic attitudes and behaviours, is the creation of educational programmes that are taught from the students' own cultural frame of reference. He further identifies an ethnocentric programme that is designed to overcome the problems of low academic effort syndrome and counter academic attitudes and behaviour. This has led to ethnocentric education, that is, subjects are taught from the perspective of a particular culture. This has given impetus to parent choice of public schools in the US. The curriculum of certain public schools is organised around the cultural frame of reference of a certain group.

2.3.3.1 Language

Culture is transmitted from one generation to the next by the use of language. It is important that during teaching and learning, home language is respected and retained. Daun (2004:98) maintains that for many parents, the opportunity to hear children speak

English properly as well as home language instruction is an important factor affecting their choice of school.

Spring (1996:159) postulates that language is linked to culture, therefore the two are intertwined. In the USA, the Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans and Native Americans believe that the maintenance of bilingual education is essential for the retention of their cultures. During the 1960's they demonstrated for the use of Spanish in schools and the teaching of Mexican American history and culture. In 1968 they boycotted four East Los Angeles high schools, demanding bilingual programmes and courses in Mexican American history and culture. In addition, students demanded the hiring of more Spanish-speaking teachers and the firing of teachers who appeared to be anti-Mexican American. Politicians responded to the Mexican American and Puerto Rican demands for the preservation of Spanish in the schools.

Bilingual education legislation was passed that focused on students whose mother tongue was Spanish. The legislation included programmes to impart knowledge and pride about Hispanic culture and language. Native Americans, along with Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans welcomed the idea of bilingual education. On the other hand, a conservative group opposed the bilingual education programmes originating among Latinos and Native Americans. While bilingual education remains a controversial issue, large numbers of non-English speaking students are served primarily by English as a second language. The Mexican Americans, Native-Americans and Puerto Ricans advocate bilingualism as a method of retaining both the student's native language and culture and while learning English and European American culture. The schools choice programmes become a means of achieving integration (Spring 1996:111).

2.3.3.2   Religion

Most parents believe in the principle of totality where a child should be taught as a whole: mentally, emotionally and spiritually. On occasion parents choose a school, which serves a particular religion, preferred for their children.

Hawkins (2004:877) defines religion as a system of faith and worship. Religion is important in the education of the child because it influences events and cultures and therefore helps to explain why the world is as it is. It also addresses ultimate concerns and provides ways of thinking about inescapable existential questions about suffering and death, love and guilt, justice and injustice, about how to make sense of the world and how to live our lives (Nord 2002:11).

Parents usually choose a school based on the religion of that particular family. In the US as well as many other Western countries including South Africa, parents are free to choose among all public and private schools. In the US religiously based schools include Roman Catholic and other schools that have a 'special character' and are run by boards that are accountable both to the Ministry of Education and to the sponsoring agency (Fiske & Ladd 2003: 47). Research has revealed that non-religious schools are slightly less effective than religious schools in promoting academic achievement. Established Catholic schools are more effective than public schools, although they are similarly cost-effective (Cannoy & MacEwan 2003: 38).

Catholic schools have made a significant contribution to education. They do not only strive to be academically excellent institutions, but they are also dynamic centers of dialogue and a hub of cultural and religious interaction. Tabet and Lemmer (2002:102) mention that Catholic schools in Lebanon are more effective than public schools. They focus on academic outcomes and their mission is to develop in the learners an understanding of faith, commitment to serve society and their country and a set of values that will influence their present and future lives. The Lebanese people are therefore privileged to have a choice between two available options: the public school system and the private school system, which includes the Catholic schools.

Hoffman and Hoffman (2001:144) believe that the Netherlands is one of the most secularised countries in the Western world yet it has a large number of private religious schools. They further indicate that all over the world, education is one of the most important pillars on which the society rests. In this country, Catholics and Orthodox-Protestants maintain freedom of choice of educational institutions for their children. In the constitution of the Netherlands public and private education is funded on an equal footing. This has resulted in a large number of private educational institutions existing

alongside the public sector. This large private sector is composed chiefly of denominational schools, for the most part Catholic and Protestant.

The Netherlands school system laid down school choice during the first decade of the 20th century. This has not been changed since and it was still active in 2001 (Hoffman & Hoffman 2001:146). Dutch research on the motives of school choice shows a three-factor model as the basis of school choice. These three factors explain most of the variance in parents' preferences for certain kinds of schools. The most important reason for school choice is the expected quality of the school and the distance that the children have to travel to get to their school. Travelling distance is somewhat more important in primary education while school quality is somewhat more important in secondary education. The third factor, in order of importance, is denomination (Hoffman & Hoffman 2001:150). Parents stress the importance of denomination as a motive for school choice, which is strongly related to the religious affiliation of parents. Ninety percent of Orthodox Protestant parents and eighty percent of Protestant parents choose a school because of its denomination. However, less than half of the Catholic parents and less than half of the parents of children in public schools have chosen their school because of its denominational or non-denominational nature. A survey carried out in 1981, 1987 and 1991 respectively among parents with children under the age of 21 shows how the Dutch preferences for schools are distributed. A third of the parents preferred public education and this preference is still growing. Approximately one fifth of the parents preferred Protestant schools and the other fifth preferred Catholic primary schools (Hoffman & Hoffman 2001:150).

The evidence from Chile reveals that non-religious public schools appear to produce less academic achievement than religiously based private schools among similar kinds of students on average. Considered conceptually, less-educated parents are less likely to make choices based on school quality. Most poor students attend public or non-religious schools while children of better-educated parents with higher income attend the best quality voucher schools, operated by the Catholic Church. These schools enroll more students than non-religious schools and charge higher tuition co-payments (Cannoy & MacEwan 2003:40).

2.4   INTERNAL FACTORS

Internal factors refer to factors such as quality of the school, which includes leadership qualities, effective management and academic achievement of learners. School quality plays an important role in choosing a school for the child. Parents tend to judge quality of the school by better teachers and better resources and they base their choice on the educational level of the parents of the other children who attend such schools (Ladd 2003:12).

School choice is also based on the quality of academic achievement. In England and New Zealand the school inspection system is designed to provide the public with full information on the quality of each school. In both countries the 'naming and shaming' of low performing schools through public reports deters students and good teachers. In New Zealand, such schools are referred to as 'downwardly spiraling' schools and in England as 'sinking' schools (Ladd 2003: 13). Parents remove their children from these types of schools to schools with a better academic performance.

One further focus of research on the reasons for choosing a particular school is to conceptualise it in terms of 'process' and 'product' criteria. Process criteria involve factors indicative of the capacity for human relationships such as the happiness of the child; product criteria refer to such outcomes as examination results. Early studies showed that parents were more concerned with process than product criteria. However, current emphasis is on examination results by parents and is used as a criterion and a screening mechanism for selecting particular schools for children (Walford 2003:81).

Students and their parents choose specific schools based on unobserved differences, such as their own motivation, which are very difficult or impossible to measure. Internal factors are also accompanied by external factors on parental choice of school for their children.

2.5   EXTERNAL FACTORS

External factors refer to factors outside the school, such as natural disasters. For example, the occurrence of floods, cyclones and tsunamis force parents to make certain choices about schooling for their children.

Factors, such as the floods, which affected areas such as California, Mississippi, Florida and New Orleans in the USA, are examples of external factors. In 2005 Hurricane Katrina destroyed most of the New Orleans's public education system. In the central city's Orleans Parish schools, fewer than twenty of approximately one hundred and twenty school buildings were usable in 2005. All the students, teachers and administrators were forced to evacuate. Thus, parents regarded inner New Orleans like a rotten borough in England, which is typified by 'sinking' schools. Although Catholic schools reopened in some of the highest and driest neighbourhood and some damaged schools elsewhere also reopened, it was not clear when all the flooded schools would reopen (Hill & Hannaway 2006: 1). Under these circumstances, parents were faced with the challenge of choosing a school for their children. The New Orleans Archdiocese set up satellite schools in other cities to serve its displaced students. Seventy nine percent of Catholic school students returned to class by the end of 2005. In Baton and Rouge for example they were instructed to take in as many displaced public school children as possible, with or without support (Hill & Hannaway 2006: 2).

Hill and Hannaway (2006: 2) confirm that most city children now attend schools elsewhere, and no one knows whether parents will want to uproot them yet again. Certainly, families will be reluctant to expose children to moulds, toxic, dust, bad sanitation and other health hazards menacing the most flooded neighbourhoods. The relatively few parents who returned to the city to take jobs and to restore houses were likely to leave their children in safer places. Teachers were unlikely to return in large numbers until jobs were available and many who found posts elsewhere never came back. It is a given fact that New Orleans parents will choose schools for their children in other areas. At some point the availability of public schools will determine whether displaced families relocate to New Orleans. After three years or more, it is expected that upheavals in education will still be a 'trailing' phenomenon following the Hurricane, dependent on how fast the economy and housing are built.

In the spring of 2005 Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, together with business leaders, proposed that the city take over 20 of the lowest-performing schools in the district from the local school board and operate them as charter schools. The New Orleans school district had faced trouble in the schooling system well before Katrina. Like all urban school districts, New Orleans was not built to handle the kinds of uncertainties created by the storm. The existing system was based on certain assumptions – a student population of a predictable size and neighbourhood distribution. However, these arrangements no longer make sense for New Orleans. Most of the buildings are gone; at the end of 2007 there is still great uncertainty about the student numbers: How many will there be? What are their academic needs? How will students be distributed across the city? How much money will be available to serve them? (Hill & Hannaway 2006: 3)

New Orleans is an example of a schooling system affected by external factors, which has to cope with uncertainty while providing quality education. The government developed a model called the Educational Network Model to address its educational issues. Network managers will monitor schools and facilitate the exchange of best practice. Problems, such as finding buildings for schools, attracting quality school leaders and teachers, making sure families know how to find schools, placing children in schools not too far from home or their parents' work and linking children with schools that can meet their needs are all part of the Network's functions. All these are efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning

2.6 SOCIAL STRATEGIES REGARDING LEARNER MIGRATION

2.6.1 Government efforts

Education departments in different countries have implemented various social strategies to reform their education system. One of the social strategies in the US was the "No Child Left Behind Act"(NCLB) of 2001. During its first two years this project provided both a bird's-eye view of developments across the nation and a closer look at developments in selected communities and schools. The NCLB mandates that each

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state adopt a testing regime intended to force schools to continually improve student performance and include school public choice (Hess & Finn 2004:1).

Maranto and Maranto (2004: 4) explain that the popularity of the NCLB Act is due to the fact that it offers a revolutionary break from traditional US education policy by permitting students in low-performing schools, which need improvement to move to other public schools where space is available. In view of this, Hannaway and Bishoff (2004:108) believe that school choice can play an important role in school reform efforts. School choice results in a better match between the student and the school, which in turn should result in greater academic commitment and academic achievement. Doyle and Feldman (2006:367) argue that the NCLB extends new schooling opportunities to children in underperforming public schools. They further point out that the Act gives quest a more successful school within the district (Plank & Dunbar 2004:145).

Howell (2004:171) acknowledges that the chances that parents will explore new education options depend on how satisfied they are with their child's current school. Parents who are basically pleased with the current school are not likely to request transfers to higher performing public school.

School choice is finally decided by educational authorities. It is their duty to identify schools where school choice is available and also to select the 'sending' and 'receiving' schools (Reed 2004: 265). Lips (2006: 2) identify the following choice:

(a)   Public choice

Lips (2006:1) postulates that the NCLB Act was intended to give children in underperforming public schools the opportunity to transfer to better performing schools. Under this Act, children in Title 1 public schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress on state exams for two years are eligible to transfer to a higher performing public school. After three years of missing the annual program, students are eligible to receive supplemental educational services or after-school tutoring from a public school or provider. These limited parental choice provisions, however, are not widely used.

Casserly (2004:195) identifies four aspects of school choice as follows under the NCLB:

(a) Methods for notifying parents

The school districts inform parents by letter of their school choice options. They also supplement the mail with website information, newsletters, flyers, phone calls, parent and community meetings, advertisements and media announcements. In particular, New York City schools posted families first class mail newsletters in ten languages; placed automated telephone calls in ten languages; provided phone calls home; convened regional information sessions; sought help from some twenty community-based organisations and provided materials at local Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. Still there were parents and groups who indicated that they did not get the information. This information informed parents of numbers and restrictions.

(b) Numbers of choices and restrictions

The districts give parents more than one option of schools. The norm is to grant parents two or three options. New York City, however, offers eight choices of any elementary school in the district. Most cities limit options by zone, geographic region, feeder patterns or clusters. Parents are also given a period in which to choose a school.

(c) Period to choose

The period of choice depends on the particular district officials. In Columbia the districts informed parents before the end of the school year (during June and July). Each parent receives options for their children's school. The parents are given three weeks to a month to respond to the choice. The period to choose differs from district to district.

(d)   School capacity and choice

The issue of capacity to accommodate students in the receiving schools is also looked at. Because the demand is low, most districts are able to accommodate all or most of the students requesting transfers. The number of students eligible for transfer from one school to another is likely to grow in the next several years, even if schools make substantial progress in boosting student achievement. But a physical limit rapidly approaching, beyond which schools may not be able to handle large numbers of new transfers.

Casserly (2004:201) and Lips (2006:1) mention that the NCLB Act requires that, after three years of missing the annual programme, students are eligible for supplementary educational services.

(e)   Supplementary education services

The Law requires districts to offer tutorial services to students enrolled in schools that have failed to make adequate yearly progress for at least three years. These services are to be delivered by a public or private provider selected by parents from the list of state approved providers.

2.6.2   Community strategies and site based efforts

Apart from different departments, USA communities play an important role to bus learners to more productive schools. Downey (2003:1) acknowledges that in Atlanta both white and black parents send their children across town for the sake of diversity and productivity. As part of the court settlement between the county and black parents, the district slowly phased out a minority to majority busing programme that transported black students in South Fulton to higher-performing, predominantly white schools in North Fulton. Colvin (2004: 25) explains that busing programmes are phased out because they are race-based choice programs and can be challenged in court as discriminatory.

2.7 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL MIGRATION

The question is raised as to what lessons can be learnt from overseas developments regarding learner migration. Holdaway (1991:13) indicates that education systems are increasingly being influenced by developments in other countries. Guthrie and Pierce (1990: 202) are of the opinion that a 'similar model of modern public education is developing worldwide'. Thus a study of learner migration in South Africa can benefit from research evidence concerning the leading trends in other education systems.

2.7.1 Learner migration and parents' right to school choice

The above discussion indicates that in most democratic school systems it is considered the right of parents to choose a school for their child. Family choice of school is undoubtedly an area where we have a great deal to learn. Educational freedom around the world promotes school choice. Every country in the world with a well-developed educational system allows parents at their own expense, to choose alternatives to state operated schools (Glenn 2005:80). Research in France, England, Belgium and Netherlands indicates that the right of families to choose schools for their children is first and foremost a question of freedom of conscience. Considered as an ideal of life, it is a fundamental injustice to make the exercise of that right contingent upon the financial resources that each family has at its disposal (Glenn 2005:83). However, harsh reality reveals that choice is indeed worldwide contingent upon financial mobility.

2.7.2 Learner migration as a result of poorly performing schools

Millions of students across the United States are enrolled in persistently failing public schools. During the 2004-2005 school years 2,112 title 1 public schools were identified as having failed to make adequate yearly progress for five or more years. In addition, failing schools serve a disproportionately high number of low-income children. In 2006, President Bush proposed the America's opportunity scholarships for Kids initiative in his budget request for the Department of Education. The plan would make $100 million uncompetitive grant awards available to provide for scholarships to low income students in persistently failing public schools. The No Child Left behind Act of

2002 was intended to give parents of children in failing public schools an opportunity to choose better schools for their children (Lips 2006:2).

Johnson (2002:8) mentions that all parents want their children to attend safe schools where they receive a high quality education that prepares them to have options and opportunities. He further points out that these schools create a challenging, respectful learning environment for all students. For example:

- A rigorous and culturally relevant curriculum
- A restructured learning environment that includes smaller units and reduced class size.
- Staff training that focuses on proactive classroom management, cultural competence, and high expectations for all students.
- Community and parental involvement as an essential component of the school environment.

Research conducted by Doyle and Feldman (2006:377) reveals that learners migrate from poor performing schools to more effective schools because of the following:

- Academic quality

Academic quality encompasses challenging curriculums, progress and activities, future success, career preparation, arts stimulation, health and science development and college preparation.

- Support

Support includes good teachers, i.e. teachers that are supportive, knowledgeable, helpful and caring. Supportive environments also encompass learners attending small classes where teachers act as advisors.

- School culture

A positive school culture includes positive student/teacher/management relationships, a focus on what is important in life like a clean physical environment, security and stability, trust in students, diversity and parental involvement.

The above-mentioned characteristics may operate as magnet to attract learners.

2.7.3 Learner migration and desegregation of schools

Hawkins (2004:259) defines racial desegregation as the abolishing of racial segregation in schools. A common critique of school choice is that it will have a practical effect of further increasing racial and ethnic segregation in American education. The evidence of many surveys however indicates that the highest priority of parents that choose to send their children to schools of choice is quality, with the race and ethnic composition of the student body being much less important. Critics argue that when choosing an option, the existing racial composition of schools will be a non-trivial factor in the decision calculus many parents use when deciding where to send their children; the only thing that matters is that their children will experience quality teaching and learning (Tedin & Weiher 2004:1109).

2.8 LEARNER MIGRATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The global experience of school choice is experienced in South Africa in a unique way shaped by contextual factors. School choice has caused the migration of learners from predominantly black schools to former Model C schools that are predominantly white. This migration is the result of the stipulation in the South African Schools' Act (SASA) no 84 of 1996, which abolished admission boundaries (RSA 1996:B-5). According to these stipulations, parents now have the right to enrol their children in the school of their choice. These former Model C schools are public schools and many operate under Section 21 of the SASA (RSA 1996:2B-48). This section allows these schools to take responsibility for school buildings and grounds, curriculum and extra-mural choices and the purchasing of textbooks and other education materials. Due to this, these schools are frequently able to provide a better service to clientele and are thus a viable

option for many black families. Moreover, it can be argued that learner migration from township schools to former Model C schools is the result of a lack of leadership qualities, effective management and poor academic achievement in many black public schools. The following factors serve to substantiate this argumentation:

2.8.1 Pulling factors

The most important factor in counteracting migration tendencies away from a school is to create a positive image of the school (Warner 1994:8). A positive image gives rise to public esteem which, in turn, is capable of creating public support. A good school image eventually leads to the acquisition of resources, whether in terms of increased learner numbers, a highly qualified teaching corps or improved funding. Each school has its own image, which relates to an environment's specific set of beliefs and expectations (Stott & Parr 1991: 8). A school that has a good image and participative management effectively carries a positive message to the community (Warner 1994:3). The culture of teaching and learning as well as the spirit of dedication and commitment prevails in such a school.

The possible factors contributing to attracting (pulling) black learners to former Model C schools are discussed below.

- Matric results

The culture of teaching and learning and the spirit of dedication and commitment that prevails in former Model C schools produce good results. Former Model C schools consistently produce better matric results compared to township schools (Sunday Times 2005:15).

- Learning opportunities

Maile (2004:104) argues that learners migrate to former Model C schools to acquire the skills that will allow them to earn a living. Similarly, Bishoff and Koebe (2005:158) argue that learners migrate to former Model C schools in order to acquire knowledge and skills in order to receive quality education. Former Model C schools have opportunities for learning mathematics, science, technology, computers, art and music. If learners can develop and become skilled in these areas, they can follow a variety of careers in different disciplines and are able to make a living for themselves.

- Extra curricular activities

Apart from prescribed curriculum subjects, in former Model C schools learners are more widely exposed to sports, which are regarded as an extra-curricular activity. Learners believe that if they migrate to these schools, they will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities such as rugby, cricket and basketball (The Teacher 2003:10). Sporting activities as important aspects of an extra-curricular programme are lacking in township schools. According to the Minister of Sport and Recreation, Rev. M. Stofile, children in township schools should be assisted to do sport as it is a crucial lever to empower young people to live healthy lives and cultivate disciplined lifestyles. (The Teacher 2003:10).

- Discipline

An orderly school environment and effective leadership promote discipline in a school that is conducive to both educators and learners. Good discipline is the result of good management and committed educators. Most former Model C schools emphasise an orderly environment. Educators attend to disciplinary problems such as truancy, late coming and absenteeism (Bishoff & Koebe 2005: 159; Nemukula 2002:82).

- Respect

Discipline and respect always goes hand in hand. Learners are very sensitive when it comes to respect. They feel comfortable in a school where educators and other learners respect them. Learners desire to be treated with dignity and respect at all times (RSA 1996; Bishoff & Koebe 2005:61).

- Better infrastructure

School buildings and sports fields play a significant role in learner migration. Learners from township schools are attracted by the inviting environment of a well cared for school. Well-kept grounds, neat buildings, sports facilities (soccer fields, basketball fields, tennis courts) and multipurpose halls are extremely inviting. Learners often migrate to former Model C schools because they want to attend town schools with green lawns, beautiful flowers and notably luxurious buildings (Bishoff & Koebe 2005:166; Maile 2004:94).

Most former Model C schools have a variety of historically provided specialised facilities such as gymnasiums, laboratories, workshops, computer laboratories and media centres. Former Model C schools are not only historically characterised by better facilities, but they are also better provisioned and their teachers have better qualifications (Carim & Sayed 1991:22). The Teacher (2004:11) reported that the older South African schools, built to educate whites only, are often housed in attractive red brick buildings. These facilities serve to attract learners.

- External influence

A school's image is enhanced by a number of factors such as projects and programmes. Former Model C schools often invite influential members of the community to visit the school. They also have regular parents' days and parents' evenings, which are organised by the leadership with the aim of sharing experiences between educators and parents (Warner 1994:15). Stakeholders of former Model C schools share information as a result of their communication.

Learners migrate to former Model C schools because of the influence of other people in the community (Bishoff & Koebe 2005:158). This results in a snowball effect: former Model C schools become magnet schools to which large numbers of various kinds of learners are attracted, including learners from township schools (Maile 2004:94).

It is evident that the pulling factors discussed above characterise most of the former Models C schools. In contrast, township schools often struggle due to the lack of basic leadership qualities, which leads to ineffective management and leadership that impacts negatively on quality teaching and learning (Nxumalo 2002:15).

2.8.2 Pushing factors

- The influence of ineffective management and leadership on school deterioration

Poor management and administration contribute to the breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning (Nxumalo 1993:15). McGregor (1998:51) stresses a total absence of a culture of learning in township schools. This inefficiency manifests itself in some of the following ways discussed in the ensuing sections.

- Ineffective use of time

Time management is one of the most important resources in effective management and leadership of a school (Kruger 2003:96). Frequently in township schools the first six weeks of the year are wasted as a result of the registration process that is done at the beginning of the year. Optimal time utilisation increases productivity whereas time wasters such as inadequate planning, an inability to delegate and poor communication result in ineffective leadership and poor management (Brooks 1993:10-11). Ineffective leadership and management with regard to time utilisation affect both the educators and learners.

- Low morale of educators

The poor morale of teachers is a contributing factor to the erosion of a culture of teaching and learning. In township schools a low level of teacher morale prevails which is intensified by the lack of authentic authority and the involvement of trade unions, such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). SADTU orchestrates chalk downs and educators stay away that contribute to the erosion of the culture of teaching and learning.

A low teacher morale is reflected in the way teachers execute their professional duties. Both McGregor (1998:50) and Nxumalo (1993:55) indicate high levels of teacher absenteeism, truancy during certain lessons during school hours and irregular school attendance. Many instances exist of teachers who do not attend lessons but who chat in the staff-room or keep themselves busy with their studies or marking. Some teachers come to school unprepared. They talk about non-academic subjects and crack jokes with the students. Instead of teaching, learners are given notes to write and study on their own. Teachers also feel insecure in the school (McGregor 1998:50; Nxumalo 1993:55). This lack of teacher professionalism has eroded the culture of learning and teaching in certain schools.

- Negative attitude of learners

As stated above, ineffective leadership affects learners. Nxumalo (1993: 54) acknowledges that there is high absenteeism, late coming, irregular attendance of lessons, tarrying outside the classrooms, playing dice, talking, smoking and idling. Learner behaviour demonstrates a lack of motivation to learn. Learners lack inspiration, have no sense of direction and do not take learning seriously. These incidents should not be viewed separately but are the results of the lack of the most important characteristics of an effective school.

Effective leadership encourages knowledge of learner development, multiple teaching strategies and a variety of assessment strategies (Moloi 2000:8). Thus, the effective school trusts the educator to make decisions that benefit the learner. Maile (2004:95)

explains that learners migrate from township schools because the public realises that rural and township schools are under-performing. He further pointed out that, in recent years, the reputation of schools in township or rural areas has become tarnished. Parents complain about the declining quality of education that their children receive in these schools.

School effectiveness is generally concerned with outcomes such as examination results or learners' attitudes (Kruger 2002:5). But when these important outcomes are lacking, a real crisis emerges. This is what Brooks (1993:10) calls a management crisis.

Nxumalo (1993:54) acknowledges that the anti-academic and destructive attitude and behaviour found amongst many African youths are manifested in chaos, lack of discipline and demoralisation found in many township schools. He further indicates that disrespect prevails amongst students; many of them are unruly, aggressive and rude towards teachers and other students.

Ineffective leadership and poor management lead to a total collapse of educative teaching. What is firstly needed in such a detrimental situation is a shared vision, which creates a vibrant atmosphere in the school that ignites a sense of purpose, binds people together and propels them to fulfill their deepest aspirations (Moloi 2000:7). A shared vision implies a developmental strategy, which includes the ability of the principal to listen and do, so as to be able to move along with the rest of the school (Moloi 2000: 7).

It is evident that ineffective leadership and poor management of the school lead to learner migration. This is also the case in other countries as has been indicated in sections 2.2 to 2.7. In the following section ineffective leadership and poor management are analysed as pushing factors that cause learners to leave the school and to register at another school.

Ineffective leadership and poor management influence learners to migrate to former Model C schools. An analysis of leadership and management in these schools reveals the existence of specific factors. These factors are regarded as pushing factors that push learners away from a poor school and encourage them to register at other schools such as former Model C schools.

- Curriculum

Learners' expectations are high and if these are not met by the school, they will consider moving or changing to another school (Bishoff & Koebe 2005:156). In township schools, due to ineffective leadership, the learners' need for a diversified curriculum is not considered. Subjects like mathematics, art, technical education and music are not included in the curriculum. Moreover, there is a grave neglect of vocational and technical education (Hartshorne 1992:26).

- Better learning opportunities

The Government admits that its science programmes mainly target urban areas to the disadvantage of other areas (The Teacher 2001:8). Gauteng Education Department's Director of Communications, Matlakala Mnota Mokang, confirmed that the biggest challenge facing the provincial departments is the migration of learners and teachers to areas where these subjects are taught (The Teacher 2001:8).

- Overcrowded classrooms

Many of the previously disadvantaged schools have overcrowded classes; some schools have 80 learners per class (Nemukula 2002:17). These large classes make it difficult for educators to pay individual attention to learners. The Department of Education's principle of learner-teacher ratio is never fully implemented in township schools.

- Lack of discipline

Ineffective leadership results in lack of discipline as learners do as they wish. Hartshorne (1992:81) confirms that in rural areas, the schooling system is in real danger of becoming a wasteland. There is a breakdown of authority and discipline in the school system. The South African School's Act of 1996 (RSA:1996) abolished corporal punishment but did not suggest any other measures of disciplining learners.

A lack of discipline is a barrier to effective learning. Bishoff and Koebe (2005:159) add that in township schools, bullying and theft are common practices among township school learners. They fight one another and teachers do not care about it. Disrespect prevails amongst students; many of them are unruly (Nxumalo 1993:54).

- Strikes

The crisis in South African education is the direct results of the previous government system, whereby historical inequalities prevailed (Carim & Sayed 1991:22). Learner migration is therefore simply a trend deeply engraved in politics because Model C schools were historically characterised by better facilities (Carim & Sayed 1991:23). Pampallis (2003:144) confirms that township schools became key sites in the struggle against apartheid, which resulted in deterioration in the quality of black education. Boycotts, strikes and other forms of resistance took their toll on 'normal' schooling processes. Due to strikes effective teaching totally collapsed. This increased the quality gap between the education offered at former Model C and township schools.

- Lack of service delivery

Community problems such as failures by leaders to facilitate the delivery of services, such as water and electric power to schools, have a negative impact. As a result there is violent and aggressive behaviour among many youth (Nxumalo 1993:60). Political intolerance and political ignorance plays a part. All these contribute to the erosion of the culture of teaching and learning.

- Abuse of learners

Child abuse is common in township schools. The current prevalence of rape cases affects effective education in schools. Children's rights organisations have accused education officials of failing to act on cases of sexual abuse at schools. The NGO'S allege that the rape of children by teachers, active cover–ups by schools and the rape of children by children (often on school premises) are escalating (City Press 2005:2).

- Poor financial management

Poor financial management results in financial mismanagement. In township schools the principal as finance officer is in control of finances, but is reluctant to control funds. This results in poor financial management because the principal should be responsible to account for public funds in a systematic and prescribed manner (Kruger 2002:147; Matamela 1998:11).

- Poor parental involvement

Parental involvement leads to effective management and educative teaching. If this fails, the learners take advantage of the situation. Nxumalo (1993:57) indicates that parents of learners in township schools fear to exercise discipline over their children and do not have time for them. He further points out that poor upbringing in many homes causes problems in the school. What teachers experience at school actually stems from the home as many parents neglect their responsibilities. Supportive parents often prefer to take their children from the school to former Model C schools at great cost to the family.

- Urbanisation of black families

When the democratic African National Congress government came into power in 1994, all apartheid laws were scrapped, including the Group Areas Act of 1994. This resulted in many black families moving to white suburbs and former Model C schools opened their doors to these children.

Maile (2004:103) found that after 1994 many formerly white schools received black children because of black families moving into 'white' suburbs and domestic workers' children were part of this migration. He also pointed out that families moved because nothing had changed in rural and township schools, regardless of the increased state funds pumped into these schools. Erasmus and Ferreira (2002:28) confirm that a large number of learners who attend former Model C schools hail from non-technological

cultural backgrounds, but are urbanising and hence moving away from a local traditional life style.

- Poor infrastructure and resources

Township schools became key sites in the struggle against apartheid and this resulted in vandalising of buildings and destruction of the few resources that were there (Pampallis 2003:144). Bishoff and Koebe (2005:162) state that many township schools do not have laboratories, libraries and computer laboratories and if some of these sources are present, they are very often vandalised and neglected. These schools are not attractive in any way to learners who live close to them. That is why they choose to attend schools that are well resourced. Township schools were disadvantaged during the previous dispensation (Maile 2004:162). This resulted in an education crisis in township schools on account of the historical inequalities which affected the education system, such as high teacher–learner ratio, poor facilities, shortage of textbooks, high failure rate and drop-out rates and insufficient schools (Carim & Sayed 1991:92).

Nxumalo (1993:93) maintains that in township schools there is a lack of resources such as textbooks, desks, windows, electricity, laboratory equipments, libraries and sport facilities. The few resources that are available are in many instances neglected and dilapidated on account of ineffective management. Pampallis (2003:144) adds that the schools of different racial groups are differentially resourced, with an enormous gap between the relatively abundant resources available to former Model C schools and the meager resources provided for township schools.

Shortage of resources is a situation that the management of township schools lives with. Year in and year out the requisition forms are completed and sent to the department but they do not succeed in obtaining supplies. Brooks (1993:10) confirms that in township schools there is a crisis of resources, including human, physical and material resources. Even in the face of a ten-year time span of democracy, there are still schools without classrooms. This was confirmed by the MEC of Education in the Limpopo Province, Aaron Motswaledi, as broadcasted on SABC 2 on 11 June 2006. According to him the schools that experience shortage of classrooms will be supplied with mobile

classrooms. Maile (2004:102) confirms that township schools are dilapidated, devoid of books and teaching equipment.

Clearly parents do not want their children to be part of the problem and move their children to former Model C schools. This results in a learner exodus to former Model C schools because parents and learners are uncomfortable with what they experience in the township schools due to the many pushing factors prevailing in township schools. Poor management and ineffective leadership escalate these factors.

2.8.3 Implications of migration

Learner migration has serious implications for both the parent/guardian of the learner and for teaching and learning. Some of these implications are discussed below.

- Financial constraints

There has been a continuous rise in fees in both private and former Model C schools over the past decade. These fees have been increased on average by 10 to 20 percent a year (Sunday Times 2000:15).

Registering learners at former Model C schools results in parents making sacrifices by directing their meager income towards the education of their children (Bishoff & Koebe 2005:160; Maile 2004:99). Children and their parents incur difficulties attending schools in distant suburbs: high transport costs, long traveling times, early waking times in order to get to school punctually, higher school fees, higher school uniform costs and other costs associated with schooling. All these are endured for better learning experiences that are important to life success (Pampallis 2003:154).

- Educators' redeployment

Principals, school management teams and parents of former Model C schools are regarded privileged, because they are solely focused and take responsibility for the education of their children. Thus, McGregor (1998:50) mentions a snowballing effect in

that privileged schools have been able to employ skilled teachers and draw on educated parents to help access private resources. Meanwhile, in poor schools learner numbers are decreasing on account of pushing factors at the same time as the system is losing teachers.

The impact of migration of students is felt not only in the schools to which they go but also in schools that they leave behind in the townships. This impact is complex and differs from area to area. For example, in Soweto many schools have seen dropping enrollments. This has resulted in some schools which were previously over-crowded with high learner-teacher ratios, losing teachers in the rationalisation and redeployment process on account of decreasing numbers (Pampallis 2003:155). Schools to which learners migrate experience a huge influx of learners, which impacts on the school administration. At the same time the increase in learner numbers is accompanied by a tendency amongst some of the migrating parents to refuse to pay school fees, even if they are in the position to pay. The hampering effect of this on proper financial management for the sake of proper teaching and learning is obvious.

- Racial discrimination

Due to the significant influx of learners, former Model C school learners feel threatened. Vally (1999:71) reports that racial incidents involve typical racial name-calling and various forms of racial harassment, which often results in physical altercations. In some instances racially inspired murders are committed. He pointed out that although tolerance is espoused, little effort is made to accommodate the differences of new learners, nor the issues around discrimination or prejudice.

Township school learners have difficulty in coping with the academic demands and feel a sense of alienation in schools with cultures quite different from those they are accustomed to (Pampallis 2003:154).

2.9 RETROSPECTION

2.9.1 Lessons learned from international practice

What became evident from international perspective is that school choice for the sake of reaching one's ultimate goal is an important phenomenon of modern education. School choice not only relates to a freedom of conscience, but also to empowerment and a sense of human dignity. Criteria that are most commonly considered by parents when exercising school choice pertain to interrelated matters such as the quality of teaching and learning, the prevalence of school discipline, class size, school locality and the feasibility of commuting distances.

Various factors add impetus to learner migration such as race, class and economic status, cultural aspects in which language and religion are embedded, internal factors relating to the quality of academic achievement, and external factors relating to natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes. What becomes evident however is that quality of academic achievement is the primary consideration when parents exercise school choice. It becomes apparent that the quality of education and school quality are associated with good teachers and good physical resources. School quality is also associated with the level of education of the other parents of the school. Against common perception of the interrelatedness of level of education and economic status, school choice and relating migration tendencies due to quality education are based on the dual factors of parents' economic status and parents' level of education. What is categorically revealed is that although the ideal situation would be that school choice should not be contingent on parents' financial capabilities, global marketplace reality determines that the choice of quality education with relating migration tendencies occur on account of parents' financial mobility.

2.9.2 The South African situation

With the start of democracy and the accompanying freedom of executing a choice with regard to school, segregation that was formerly based on race changed to the worldwide tendency of segregation on account of economic status and level of education.

Increasingly former Model C schools that were previously white dominated and that are well resourced with regard to effective management, good teachers and inspired parents and learners, are infiltrated by migrating learners from township schools. As is the case internationally the parents of migrating learners exercise their choice on account of school quality and the relating quality of teaching and learning. These parents form part of the growing black middle class who are financially in a position to execute a choice with regard to school.

2.10   CONCLUSION

Learner migration from township schools to former Model C schools occurs, as is the case worldwide, on account of school quality and the relating quality of teaching and learning. The question remains as to what is meant by school quality with the relating quality of teaching and learning. Linked to the aspects that were identified as the major pulling and pushing factors at work in the exodus of learners on account of quality, chapter three focuses on a discussion of the elements of a good school product.

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CHAPTER 3
ASPECTS OF A GOOD PRODUCT

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Recent changes in government policy have been designed to establish a market in education (James & Phillips 1995:75). All marketing texts stress the importance of viewing products in terms of their benefits. Schools like any other business organisation are concerned with the quality of the 'product'. However, rather than profitability, the concern of educational institutions is education and the achievement of educational goals (Allias 1995:279).

A good quality product relates closely to effective leadership and good management. A good product relates directly to satisfying consumer needs and wants. In the case of the school this refers directly to the needs of the parents and their children and indirectly to the needs of the surrounding community and broader societal needs. Skinner (1990: 52) suggests that the school principal needs to establish learning characteristics in a school that fulfil needs and wants of learners and the broader community.

Effective leadership as part of good management is perceived to be directly related to school effectiveness (Allis 1995:280). The concept leadership is defined as creating a sense of purpose which the manager performs to enable others to fulfill their tasks effectively by means of communication, direction, developing a vision and aligning people to make it become a reality (Davies & Ellison 1997:145; Campher, Du Preez, Grobbler & Sheeba 2002:42; Pretorius & Lemmer 1998:57).

Leadership is the ability to influence any group towards the achievement of identified goals. Leadership attributes comprise the following (RSA, 2004:18).

- Crafting a vision for followers.
- Articulating how the vision may be realised.
- Influencing and steering groups towards accomplishing goals.
- Creating desirable opportunities.

- Directing and coordinating activities.
- Creating conditions for the team to be effective.
- Inducing followers to behave in a desired manner.

Leadership is seen in relation to management. Leadership means taking charge, giving direction, and having followers, which require vision. On the other hand, to manage is to control administration affairs (RSA 2004: 8)

Effective leadership goes hand in hand with good management. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:80) define management as a process of working with individuals and groups and other resources to accomplish educational goals. Davies and Ellison (1997:145) emphasise the planning, organising, staffing, controlling and problem solving activities of management necessary for good productivity. With regard to effective schools, good management relies on the vigorous presence of a dedicated principal who ensures that outcomes are reached through continuous interaction between teachers, learners and parents (Allias 1995:280).

Parents and learners prefer an effective school that responds to individual learner and staff needs and to the changing face of the community in which it is placed. Dynamic management and effective leadership are vital factors that contribute to school productivity (Bush & Westburn 1994:67). Charlton (1996:25) indicates that a good leader, who is also a good manager, is able to visualise a prosperous and expanding future of the school.

A school that has effective leadership and participative management effectively carries a positive message to the community. A culture of teaching and learning as well as a spirit of dedication prevails in such a school. It is evident that this type of school will produce good products.

The principal who wishes to manage his/her school effectively in pursuit of providing a good quality product should create a healthy school climate that contributes to the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This implies a major focus on aspects such as the management of physical resources, the management of the instructional

programmes, the management of parent involvement and the building of a positive school climate.

3.2   SCHOOL CLIMATE

Kruger (2002:27) conceptualises school climate as observable effects of all aspects of the school, such as the management and leadership style, interpersonal relationships, attitude, motivation and academic achievement of all stakeholders who work in the school.

3.2.1   The creation of a positive climate for the sake of establishing a culture of teaching and learning

A positive school climate should be created, developed, nurtured and utilised carefully so that teaching and learning can take place, which will contribute to good production. Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith and Kleiner (1995:65) maintain that to create and develop a climate that encourages learning is a primary task of leadership and the only way that a leader can genuinely influence or inspire others. To develop a climate conducive to learning, a leader does not look first to bring other people on board, he/she must attend to appropriate details within his/her sphere and people will eventually come on board.

The principal plays a decisive role in initiating and maintaining the school climate. The following points are regarded as basic components of the principal's task as an initiator and caretaker of the school climate (Kruger 2002:22):

(a)   Regulating the organisational structure
        Professionally oriented organisational structures produce job satisfaction, whereas teachers in schools with bureaucratically oriented organisational structures experience the climate as secure and healthy.

(b)   The management and leadership role of the principal
        There is a direct connection between the principal's management style and the school climate. To foster and maintain a school climate where the majority of the staff is committed to their work, an efficient outstanding management and

leadership style is essential. This pertains to adhering to the following and should include the following:

- Setting a personal example
- Increasing the personnel's professional autonomy
- Flexibility and adaptability of the situation
- Insight into and effective management of the teaching programme.

(c) Establishing a mission for the school

The formulation of the school mission makes a considerable contribution to establishing a positive and sound climate of cooperation in the school. The principal should involve all staff members when establishing a mission statement.

(d) Establishing relationships

The initiation and maintenance of sound human relations are of paramount importance for school effectiveness and contributes directly to a positive and healthy school climate (Van der Westhuizen 1991:174). Personal relationships that the principal should attend to include the following (Kruger, 2002:223):

- Their relationships with the staff, learners and parents
- The various relationships between members of staff.
- The relationship between the personnel, parents and learners
- The relationships between the learners.

(e) Professionalising the education profession

The professional teacher's responsibility and autonomy is closely linked to the principal's management and leadership role (Kruger 2002:224). The principal should regard the teacher's contribution meaningful to both the school and to the staff.

This results in creating a positive school climate, which is conducive for teaching and learning to take place in the classroom.

3.2.2 The relationship between the school climate and classroom climate

Educative teaching and learning takes place within the classroom situation. The school climate should influence the classroom climate, where there is an interaction between the educator and the learners. Classroom climate has an effect on the learner's conduct. Motivated educators create environments which maximise opportunities to learn. Learners rely on educators to create a sense of security and order in the classroom and an opportunity to participate actively and to experience the class situations being interesting and exciting. Responding positively to learners' needs helps teachers to understand and predict learners' conduct inside and outside the classroom situation. Learners' conduct reflects the feelings learners have towards the school. Teachers who treat their learners with respect create a positive climate (Kruger 2002:25).

Both school climate and classroom climate may contribute to better learner achievement that will form a good product.

3.2.3 The relationship between school climate and learner achievement

Positive school climate and learner achievement are interlinked. Totally or highly effective schools, characterised by strong, principal leadership as well as strong, effective participation from stakeholders contribute to a good school climate that is conducive for excellent academic achievement (Botha 2006:343).

3.2.4 The relationship between the school climate and educator morale

A school that has a positive climate which is influenced by both effective leadership and good management has the following advantages to the staff: It promotes a positive self-image; boosts the morale; a spirit of cooperation and collegiality prevail; every one is motivated; committed and dedicated and good interpersonal relationships prevail (Kruger 2002:25).

Effective leadership encourages knowledge of teacher development, multiple teaching strategies and a variety of assessment strategies (Moloi 2000:8) Thus, an effective

school with a positive climate trusts the teacher to make decisions that benefit the learner. Teachers also feel secure and a spirit of professionalism prevails (McGregor 1998: 50).

The effective school principal who performs her/his managerial duties to produce a positive school climate also recognises cultural elements that influence the behaviour of all stakeholders and affect productivity.

3.3 SCHOOL CULTURE

Kruger (2002:27) defines school culture as the shared convictions, values, norms, temperament, assumptions and expectations that bind the individuals and shape their behaviour within an enterprise.

School culture is also described as a 'peculiar way of life' of a group or class, including meanings; values and ideas embodied in institutions; in social relations; in systems and beliefs; morals and customs and in the uses of objects and material life (Davidoff & Lazarus 1997:41-42). Thus, Torrington and Weightman (1993:46) define school culture as the characteristic spirit and belief of an organisation. This demonstrates the norms and values that are generally held about how people should treat each other, the nature of the working relationships that should be developed and attitudes to change. These norms are deep, taken-for-granted assumptions that are not always expressed, and are often known without being understood.

The school culture is affected by three general factors. The first is external influences, for example, the natural environment and historical events that shaped the community. The school has little or no control over these factors. The second factor is composed of societal values such as individual freedom, hard work and time consciousness. The third factor comprises organisational-specific elements that are within the school that affect the school culture. These include factors such as the nature of the task of the school, significant people in the school, critical events in the school, the nature of the school buildings and grounds, the history of the school and the size of the school (Kruger 2002:29; Badenhorst 1999:45).

Summarising the school culture, Kruger (2002:30) and Badenhorst (1999:46) state that the organisational culture manifests itself on three levels. These are discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1 The first or basic level of a school culture.

The first basic level is invisible, seated in the subconscious. It represents the essence of organisational culture and includes the assumptions, philosophies, ideologies and beliefs based on the collective philosophy of life supported by people in the organisation. The organisational culture of a particular school will be based on the beliefs and assumptions of the principal and the staff, which will be expressed in the teaching practice.

The beliefs and assumptions held by the principal and the staff should be a key factor in making the school effective. Phendla (2004:17) and Kruger (2002:94) postulate that good principalship leads to good leadership where teamwork spirit prevails and a vision is shared among stakeholders. All barriers that hinder progress for growth are removed. Good relationships are created where educators and leaders become equal partners. All these result in good production.

Good leadership is geared by visionary qualities, which serve as a guiding force in the school. A clear vision is an integral component of holistic leadership that manifests in a well founded and formulated mission to develop an environment of excellence.

Beliefs and assumptions lead to a philosophy of a school. Kruger (2002:31) maintains that the philosophy of a school reflects the views of the staff and people involved and the essence and a true meaning of which comprises a school. This basic view of the place and task of the school in the particular community gives rise to the second level.

3.3.2 The second level of school culture

This level comprises of conscious criteria for action in the school culture, namely those norms and values which are revered in a school, which are usually verbalised in the mission statement, school's policy and credo (Badenhorst 1999:46).

The values of the school are expressed in the mission statement of the school. The mission statement expresses the main reason for its existence; it also articulates the core or main purpose of the school. The mission statement should also emphasise academic performance by the learners (Kruger 2002:32).

The mission statement should be followed by formulating a school policy. The school policy forms a guide for conduct for those involved in the school. The most important requirement of a policy should be that it gives clear guidelines for all involved, namely, the teachers and the learners to realise effective teaching and learning in the school which will make a school productive.

3.3.3 The third level of school culture

The third level, cultural manifestations, comprises of the visible aspects of school culture, which can be grouped in the following categories (Badenhorst 1999:46):

(a)   Behavioural manifestations

These include aspects such as rituals, ceremonies, teaching and learning. Rituals are behavioural expressions of the norms and values of the school. They also include functional practices, implying that there is a 'best way' of doing things in harmony with the philosophy and values of the school. Ceremonies such as prize giving functions, assemblies, matric dances and youth day celebrations can be of great value in the cultivation of a good culture of the school. The nature of teaching and learning activities also contributes to the school's culture (Badenhorst 1999:46; Kruger 2002:33).

(b)   Symbolic and visible manifestations

In this category aspects such as crests, motto and school uniform are included. Kruger (2002:34) acknowledges that crests and mottos visually express the values and philosophy of the school. The wearing of uniform is a manifestation of learner commitment to a specific school.

School buildings and grounds also form an integral part of the school culture. The organisational culture of the school will determine whether buildings and grounds are looked after or damaged. Better infrastructure plays a significant role in cultivating a culture of teaching and learning, which will contribute to a good quality product (Bishoff & Koebe 2005:166; Maile 2004:94).

(c)   Conceptual and verbal manifestations

This is the third level of an organisational culture. It comprises of conceptual and verbal manifestations, which includes aspects such as school legends, heroes, and organisational structures. Aims and objectives of a school embody the values and philosophy of the school. Effective leadership encourages teachers and students to peruse the aims and objectives of the school (Kruger 2002:34; Badenhorst 1999:46).

Curriculum and extra-curriculum activities are also included in this category. Often the emphasis of the timetable of the school is an indication of what may be regarded as important subjects for a specific school and thus the culture of the school. The curriculum of a school can have a positive effect on the school and an impact on the lives of students; therefore this aspect is conducive to the success of an organisation (Kruger 2002:34).

Badenhorst (1999:46) describes this level as very important level in the school culture because the management style of the principal is an important aspect, which influences the culture of the school. Stories and myths are methods used to convey values and meanings of a school culture. It is the duty of the principal together with his staff and learners to influence people to identify with the school.

It is evident that beneath the well accepted organisational characteristics of effective schools are cultural elements that influence the behaviour of all stakeholders in a school. Culture affects productivity of the school. (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:26). Keeping in mind that a school's culture, the perception of what a school's climate is will be co-determined by the community's culture.

The utilisation of three levels of school culture is necessary to deliver a good product.

3.4 THE RELATIONSHIP OF A SCHOOL CULTURE AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

Both the concepts cannot be separated in two watertight compartments because they are both concerned with the school. School climate represents those interactions that underpin the school culture, whereas the culture of the school is reflected in its climate. If, for example, the belief system underpinning the culture of the school is one whereby learners are the most important focus of education, the mode of interaction between learners and staff will reflect such a value (Van Deventer & Kruger 2002:15). The climate, in turn, reflects the quality of interaction because the way in which things are done influences the quality of interactions. The school should have a positive climate and culture conducive to success (Badenhorst 1999:45). The community consists of values, sentiments and beliefs that govern the school and provide norms and standards that guide behaviour and give meaning to community life which is based on culture. A good leader can base his/her set of moral values on a positive school climate by regarding others as equals, being emotionally aware, having factual knowledge and making effective decisions (Campher et al 2002:53).

3.5 THE INFLUENCE OF MANAGEMENT ON A GOOD PRODUCT

Good management goes hand in hand with effective leadership, which is teamwork that is manifested in collective efforts that are supported by effective participation of everyone, namely educators, parents and learners (Phendla 2004:168). Leadership is not a position, but a service and a function. Those who lead must serve (Thakhathi 2005:3). It is therefore important for a good manager to influence his team for the success of the institution to produce quality products.

The job of managing a school entails managing the people who comprise the main stakeholders, namely, the staff, learners and parents. For the principal to influence the production, he/she should perform the following roles that will influence the production of good quality products. Thus, these important aspects should continuously be considered.

3.5.1 Application of visionary leadership

RSA (2004:18) describes visionary leadership as an ability to craft and create an attractive and appealing vision, which a leader persuades followers to embrace. Success in an organisation is preceded by a great deal of hard work, which is motivated by a clear vision for the school. Good leadership is geared by visionary qualities, which serve as a guiding force in the school (Mugatroyd & Morgan 1994:79). When a principal has a realistic vision for a school as a guide to school productivity, he/she will influence both the staff and the learners to visualise the vision. Quality products are not produced accidentally; they are produced because of the way the organisation functions. The principal should apply a Total Quality Management leadership style in order to ensure a good product.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994:45) describe total quality as quality assurance, which refers to the standard, appropriate methods and quality requirement prescribed by the principal. It also refers to contract performance, where some quality standard has been specified. Lastly, total quality management is defined as customer driven, a notion of quality, which aims to meet the expectations of the customers.

Leadership in total quality management is visionary, in that it embraces motivational strategies, effective communication, empowerment of followers, collaboration and open handedness and marketing strategies (Badenhorst 1999:61; Gullat & Bennett 1995:140).

3.5.2 Management function of motivation

Satisfying teacher's needs is essential to their effectiveness in the production of good quality products. Research affirms that principals of effective schools are an important link in teacher motivation since they use techniques that assist in satisfying teacher needs (Gullatt & Bennett 1995:140). The following strategies can be applied by the principal to motivate the teachers so that they can achieve good production in the school.

(a)   Recognition

Principals should recognise teacher's strengths as a means of maintaining and developing their skills while promoting confidence and satisfaction. Actions such as the following can influence teacher's behaviour and attitudes towards production (Gullatt & Bennett 1995:140):

(i)   Praise: The principal should praise his teachers sincerely with expressions and gestures that are sincere.

(ii)   Non-verbal communication

It is the role of the principal to maximise non-verbal communication such as smiles, nods and pats that will motivate the teachers towards production.

(iii)   Scheduled time

The principal should regularly schedule time to recognise teachers, such as at the beginning or end of the faculty meeting, on the intercom at week's end, or during student assembly.

(iv)   Hand written notes:

Principals can send hand written notes to individual staff members to praise them for jobs well done.

(v)   Outstanding performance

Outstanding performance can be recognised by promotions, individual awards or honour, personal talk and feedback, different career opportunities and career advancement.

(vi)   Motivational workshops and in-service training

Long term motivation can be enhanced by motivational workshops and in-service training which are based on Maslow's self actualisation process (Mills 1996:137; Gullant & Bennett 1995:141). Long term motivation improves the sustainability of production.

(b)   Job enrichment

Gullant and Bannett (1995:141) state that job enrichment is the professional growth where teachers should be given adequate opportunities for challenge and advancement to satisfy the achievement motive of those with high growth need.

The following strategies used by the principal will elicit more challenge, more responsibility, and more varied and informative content.

(i)   Conducive environment

Principals should provide an environment that is conducive for development of teacher's behaviour and skills needed to participate in decision-making processes that will allow growth of production (Gullant & Bennett 1995:142).

(ii)   Special duties

Principals can enrich teachers' jobs by enhancing professional responsibility through work with master teachers, special duty or responsibilities besides teaching (Gullant & Bennett 1995:142).

(iii)   Experiment with new methods

Principals should encourage teachers to experiment with new methods and materials, new subjects, grade levels or special groups of children (Gullant & Bannett 1995:141).

(iv)   Curriculum material

Principals should circulate curriculum and professional material such as innovative articles and books. Principals should also select instructional themes to direct teacher's attention. Once the instructional theme is institutionalised, principals should be visible in the activities and familiar with recent literature. They should seek teacher opinions for feedback about instructional issues and promote collegiality and professionalism. All these will enrich the teacher's job and make them productive (Gullant & Bannett 1995:141).

(v)   Daily activities

Gullant and Bannett (1995:141) acknowledge that the principal's daily actions can influence the teacher's professional growth towards production. Daily activities should be accompanied by effective communications.

3.5.3   Management functions of communication

A good principal uses effective communication to lead his/her team, in order to enable all members to participate in decision–making processes. Good leaders allow stakeholders to speak their minds, voice their opinions and make suggestions (Campher et al 1998:52; Thakhathi 2005:7). This is achieved by making use of intensive communication systems that are both formal and informal. Two-way communication builds trust among team members by providing the information that they want and need on a timely basis during production of good quality products (Warner 1994: 29).

Production of a good quality product means that all stakeholders should be dedicated and committed to the achievement of the goal of the institution. It is the role of the principal to communicate required standards of performance to each and every staff member of the institution. He/she must make it clear what the goal is and remind people of the goal frequently, focusing on managing the processes for achieving the goal exceptionally well (Mugatroyd 1994:61) Effective communication goes hand in hand with empowerment of followers.

Communication is commonly defined as an ongoing, infinite and vital process, which is needed for living organisms to survive through the successful exchange or the transmission of meaning, whether internally or from person to person (RSA 2004:1). Campher et al (1998:54) define communication as a means of empowerment, a function that involves motivating the employees by supporting their efforts to realise their vision through coaching, feedback, and role modeling, so that they can grow professionally and enhance their self-esteem. It is evident that the principal should play a leading role in empowering the teachers, so that they can develop good quality products. Empowerment should be followed by teamwork so that the goals of the institution can be achieved.

3.5.4 Management functions of delegation

It is the duty of the principals to delegate some managerial duties to their subordinates. In order that the school can succeed they should build a strong team. A team is defined as a number of people who are working together towards a common purpose (RSA 2004:6). Within a common purpose, there is within teams a clear definition of roles and responsibilities. The overall success of the team depends on every member pulling his/her weight.

When a teamwork spirit prevails in a school, staff members are able to collaborate. Collaboration means that two or more people are working together in order to obtain a goal set out of that specific purpose. Collaboration implies the following (Campher et al 2002:54):

(a)   Negotiation: to make joint decisions, where the parties involved have different preferences.

(b)   Problem solving: the problem can be resolved by identifying the gaps between the actual and desired state of affairs and determining the causes.

(c)   Commitment of each member to achieve a common goal.

Good leadership should have the ability to attract and retain good teachers, who are committed especially in key shortage subjects such as mathematics, science and modern languages. This will enable the learners to achieve their goals (Taylor & Ryan 2005:7).

(d)   Joint decision-making: problems occur in the form of both performance deficiencies and unexplored opportunities. They need to be resolved by making a firm decision after consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

It is evident that the essence of quality management is leadership that ensures that each and everyone in the organisation is working in a way that ensures consistently high

performance and constant improvement that increases production quality and makes the products marketable.

3.5.5 Management function of control

Quality management cannot succeed without proper control. A good school's most important requirement is to have an inspiring, highly respected leader. But it is also vital that he/she is backed up by a strong team of deputies and departmental heads to enable him/her to control and guide all the learning and teaching activities taking place in a school (Taylor & Ryan 2005:3).

A child can learn properly in a disciplined and orderly school environment. Taylor and Ryan (2005:13) believe that the best technique for having a disciplined and orderly environment is to emphasise teaching and learning. They also believe that if the students' minds are focused on learning, it leaves no room for misbehaviour which is combined with zero tolerance of physical violence and bullying. This is only possible when the principal and the management team are in control of the school. Botha (2006:341) confirms that the participative management required for school based management structures can only take control if authority is delegated from higher to lower levels.

3.5.6 Management function of school marketing

The concept of marketing is a process of planning and executing ideas and services to create an exchange that satisfies individual needs (cf. chapter one). Schools are compared with economy. Maile (2004:100) compares education to the economic market that provides service at fixed costs and requires enormous capital investment. The school building itself and the variety of specialised facilities such as gymnasiums, laboratories, workshops, computer laboratories and media centers, are of significant costs.

Stott and Parr (1991:3) describe marketing as a creative process of satisfying customer needs profitably and effectively. In the educational context it reveals several important features with relevance to education. It is the duty of the principal and the management

team to market the school in order to attract more educators and learners who will be productive.

Taylor and Ryan (2005:16) mention that education is an economic imperative. The needs of a highly competitive global economy require all our young people to be challenged to perform to the maximum of their potential. This is only possible if the schools that they attend have good principal leadership and participation by school based management and the school governing bodies. Above all, the main effective criterion is the academic achievement of the learner (Botha 2006:343).

The market theory illustrates principals as entrepreneurs and parents as clients. Maile (2004:100) explains that enrolment is equated to shopping: customers are not compelled to buy at one shop if the service and products in one shop do not satisfy them. There are four key variables that are identified and can give effect to an organisational marketing strategy, namely product, place, price and promotion. Within the context of this study it seems that place as factor is critically connected to product causing significant learner migration activities.

Schools in which certain components vigorously prevail represent active marketing. These components relate to the prevalence of a positive culture of teaching and learning, a healthy school climate and a manager focusing on all the important aspects relating to school culture and school climate to ensure a good product.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The desire of a quality school product is universally experienced by both parents and learners, regardless of the specific context. In unpacking the features of a good product, it became evident that it correlates directly to the intertwined situation of dedicated and effective management that is focused on developing and maintaining a healthy school climate that contributes to the prevalence of a positive school culture. With consideration of the hen/egg theory, the factors of effective management, a healthy school climate and a positive school culture are always accompanied by committed teachers, concerned parents and inspired learners. It stands to reason that in a democratic society, concerned parents with their children will always aspire to 'shop'

for the best school product possible within the limits of their financial mobility. This results in the migrating phenomenon from less good products to better products based on the democratic principle of evaluation and assessment and executing a choice on the evaluated reflection.

By means of an empirical investigation, the learner migration phenomenon that is taking place in the Zoutpansberg East Circuit at Makhado in the Limpopo Province is explored. Compared to literature findings, the aim is to disclose the learner migration tendency within context in order to assist parents with their children to make informed decisions about school choice. A related rationale is to disclose to school management and staff that they have the power to impact on learner migration.

Firstly, the research design and methodology for executing the empirical investigation needs to be explained. This will be discussed in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the two preceding chapters, a literature study was undertaken that firstly examined learner migration in education systems both internationally and in South Africa and secondly the quality and features of a good school product. With the literature study the first two research sub-questions were answered, namely (par 1.4):

- How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest globally?

- How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest in South Africa?

The purpose of chapter 4 is to describe the design of the empirical investigation aimed at addressing the remaining two research sub-questions, namely (par 1.4):

- What are the perceptions of School Principals, School Management Teams, learners and parents in selected secondary schools in Limpopo Province on learner migration?

- What guidelines can be considered by school principals with their School Management Teams to manage learner migration in an informed way?

The description of the empirical research design covers the selection of participants, data gathering and data analysis techniques, trustworthiness measures and ethical considerations. The discussions represent an extension of the initial explanations on the research design and methodology used as was presented in chapter one. Paragraph 1.6 indicated that the investigation will be conducted from a qualitative research paradigm.

4.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

From the literature study, it may be concluded that learner migration is experienced in education systems worldwide and that concerned parents with their children will always aspire to 'shop' for the best school product possible within the limits of their financial mobility. The aim of the empirical investigation is therefore to explore the phenomenon of learner migration as experienced in South African schools from the perspective of school principals, school management teams, learners and parents.

Within context, the aims with the empirical investigation are to determine:

- The general and management factors that may push learners to migrate from township schools to former Model C schools.
- The general and management factors that may attract (pull) the learners to migrate to former Model C schools from township schools.
- The role played by the leadership and management of principals of township and former Model C schools in the learner migration process.

4.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

In conjunction with what was said in paragraph 1.6.2 a research paradigm is a perspective based on a set of assumptions, concepts, values and practices that are held by the community of researchers. It is an approach to thinking about and doing research (Johnson & Christensen, 2004:29). The educational research paradigm that is adopted for the empirical investigation of this study is that of the qualitative research approach.

In order to obtain as full a picture as possible of the phenomenon of learner migration, the researcher made use of the qualitative research methodology because qualitative research is naturalistic in nature and open to change throughout the process of data collection. One phenomenon of interest is examined in depth at a selected site for the sake of a better understanding of that phenomenon, regardless of the number of participants, social scenes, processes and activities (McMillan & Schumacher 1997).

Creswell (1994:150) lists the advantages of using qualitative research methods, particularly the interview, as follows:

- The researcher obtains first-hand experience of the participants during interviews.
- Information can be recorded as it occurs during interviews.
- Unusual aspects can be noted during interviews.
- The interview is useful when the participant cannot be directly observed.
- The researcher can control the line of questioning in an interview.
- Qualitative research is value–laden and allows the researcher to explore the values of participants in a non-judgemental manner.

In this study the researcher is primarily concerned with the process rather than the outcomes. This implies that the main concern relates to how stakeholders make sense of the learner migration phenomenon. In the process, data was mediated through a human instrument in that the researcher was the main research instrument which implied that she could adapt to circumstances to obtain rich information about learner migration and the role to be played by principals in the learner migration process (Creswell 1994:145).

4.3.1 Selection of participants

A sample is a group of individuals who will participate in the research; it is selected from a population. The purpose of a sample is to get a manageable group for research purposes (Lethoko 1999:107; Masitsa 1995:278). Purposeful or judgmental sampling is a suitable method of sampling that can be used to select the sample that can be judged to represent the total population. This judgment is made on the basis of available information or the researcher's knowledge about the information.

For the purpose of this study, information rich participants were chosen from the league of the School Management Teams of a former Model C school, an independent school and a township school. In the entire three selected schools learner migration is a common phenomenon. Purposeful participants were also selected from the league of

parents who have arranged that their children migrate to former Model C schools and from the league of learners who have migrated to former Model C schools.

Both the former Model C and the independent school are situated in Makhado (Louis Trichardt) in Limpopo Province. The township school is situated 18km on the southern-eastern side of Makhado in the Limpopo Province. The characteristics of the schools where the empirical study was conducted are tabulated in Table 4.1. The characteristics of participants are tabulated in Tables 4.1- to 4.4.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of schools

School	Type of school	Learner enrolment	Teaching staff	School fees
A	Former Model C school	693	23 + 6 (paid by SGB)	R360.00 per month
B	Independent school	194	23	R315.00 per month
C	Township school	690	23	R150.00 per annum

The former Model C School has a learner enrolment of 693 and teaching staff of 29 educators. Six educators are paid by the SGB. School fees are R360 per month. The independent school has a learner enrolment of 194 and a teaching staff of 23. School fees are R315 per month. The township school has a learner enrolment of 690 and a teaching staff of 23. School fees are R150 per annum, that is, R12.50 per month. Clearly there is a huge gap in school fees paid by the township school and the two other schools.

Table 4.2 Members of the School Management Team

Type of school	Management team	Gender
A	4	2 females + 2 males
B	3	2 males + 1 female
C	6	2 females + 4 males

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The School Management Team members are presented in Table 4.2. The former Model C school, the independent school and the township school have management teams of four, three and six members respectively.

Table 4.3 Parents

Parents	Age	Gender	Occupation	Residential Area
P1	43	Female	Educator	Township
P2	35	Female	Educator	Township
P3	27	Male	Salesman	Township
P4	49	Male	Pastor	Township
P5	45	Female	Manager	Township

Five parents whose children have migrated from the township school were selected: three mothers and two fathers. All reside in the township and all are employed.

Table 4.4 Learners

Learner	Age	Gender	Type of school	Grade when migrated	Present grade
L1	14	Female	Independent	8	8
L2	17	Female	Independent	9	11
L3	15	Male	Former Model C	8	9
L4	18	Male	Former Model C	8	12
L5	16	Male	Independent	8	10

Table 4.4 gives a description of the five learners. Three migrated to the independent school and two to the former Model C school. Four migrated in Grade 8 and one in Grade 9.

All the participants selected are chosen on account of their direct involvement with the learner migration problem. They are information rich and can supply valuable data on learner migration.

4.3.2 Data collection

The researcher used focus group interviewing and individual interviewing to collect data in order to find answers to the postulated research questions. As a means of gathering data from participants in their natural environments (Johnston & Christensen 2004:31; Schulze, Myburgh & Poggenpoel 2002:57) five focus group interviews were conducted. A focus group interview was conducted with the School Management Team of a former Model C school, the School Management Team of an independent school and the School Management Team of a township school. This was followed by a focus group interview with five parents who have arranged for the migration of their children to either the former Model C school or to the independent school. A focus group interview was also conducted with five learners who have migrated to either the former Model C school or to the independent school. For the sake of refinement and an in-depth knowledge on the practicalities of leadership and management of principals that are intensely involved in learner migration, the five focus group interviews were followed by three individual interviews, one with each one of the principals of the selected three schools.

Because the setting for the interviews is natural, as opposed to an artificial setting, this design is well suited for research, which aims to obtain the insights of participants from their own point of view. People are interviewed to find out from them those things that we cannot directly observe (Frankel & Wallen 1993: 385). In this study, the purpose of the interviews was to discover the feelings and opinions of participants on the phenomenon of learner migration.

4.3.2.1   Focus group interviews

Focus group interviewing is seen by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2002:314) as a purposive discussion of a specific topic or topics that takes place among eight to ten individuals with similar backgrounds and common interests. In the case of this

study, the focus group interview was chosen as a useful tool that allows a group of people to come together and create meaning for them rather than as individuals (Babbie & Mouton 2001:292). By putting individuals together, through their interaction, data quality is enhanced and participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other, which weeds out false or extreme views (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000:288). Additional advantages of focus group interviewing relate to the fact that it can be done within a relatively short period of time; financial costs are limited; considerable probing is permitted and participants are exposed to each other's worldviews; group interaction is facilitated that enhances quality data; as a flexible technique unanticipated issues are explored; allows for participants to build on the responses from others; speedy results are provided (Babbie & Mouton 2001:292; Cohen, Manion & Marrison 2000:288; De Vos et. al. 2001:324):

With a review of the techniques and advantages of focus group interviewing, the researcher decided to implement this method, keeping group dynamics in mind. To maintain rapport with participants and to put participants at ease, the researcher employed empathetic communication skills. For example, the focus group interview with learners took place at a coffee shop in town so that they would not feel restricted in the presence of teachers or parents. The researcher also took care to facilitate the group without being too directive, keeping the focus group interview open-ended and on track.

4.3.2.2   Individual interviews

Three individual interviews were conducted with the three principals of the selected schools. The purpose was neither to get answers to questions nor to evaluate in the usual sense of the term but to understand the experiences of the principals and the meaning they make to the migration tendencies. The value of the individual interviews is that it is focussed, discursive and allows the researcher and the participant to explore those issues that the School Management Team mentioned.

4.3.2.3   Arrangements with data collection

Prior to conducting the focus group and individual interviews the researcher carried out careful planning with respect to participants, the environment and questions to be asked. The latter are crucial to conducting effective focus group interviews (De Vos et. al. 2002:309) and a plan is absolutely critical for ensuring that logic is followed when collecting data and that all important aspects are covered during the interview. An experienced group facilitator accompanied the researcher during the data collecting process.

Two tape recorders were used to record the interviews: one battery operated and the other electrically operated, which ran simultaneously in case of mechanical or electricity failure. Qualitative researchers need to record information they collect and the recordings are later transcribed. The researcher also made field notes to supplement the recordings. These field notes were used by the researcher in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected (Neuman 1997:363). The two languages most frequently spoken in Limpopo were used, namely, English and Venda and translation of the Venda transcripts was done.

The venue was prepared before time. This included the placement of chairs, elimination of disturbances, setting up of the tape recorders and refreshments. Refreshments were served, since eating together tends to promote conversation and communication within the group (De Vos et. al. 2002:316).

4.3.3   Data processing

The data collection phase naturally and logically phases out into formal data analysis and the presentation of data. Data processing begins early in a qualitative research study. In this study, the qualitative researcher created meaning from the raw data contained in the transcriptions by analysing it. Tesch's model was used which consists of the following steps (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel, Schurink & Schurink 1998:350):

- The researcher gets a sense of the whole by reading through all transcripts and jotting ideas as they come to mind.

- One interview is selected (the most informative interview) which the researcher goes through, asking about the underlying meaning. Each thought about the meaning is written down in the margin.

- This is done for several participants. A list of all topics is made; similar topics are clustered together; major topics, unique topics and leftovers are classified.

- The list is used to abbreviate topics by means of codes and these codes are written next to each segment of data in the transcribed interview. The researcher sees if new categories and codes emerge.

- Categories are formed by grouping topics together and determining relationships between categories.

- Codes are alphabetised

- The data material of each category is assembled in one place.

- The existing data is recoded if necessary.

Once data has been processed in this way, the explanation of a phenomenon should match the realities of the world. Thus, in qualitative research the concept trustworthiness is used (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:404).

4.4   TRUSTWORTHINESS AND TRANSFERABILITY

In qualitative research claims of validity are interpreted as trustworthiness, which points to the applicability, consistency, neutrality and truth-value of research results (De Vos et. al.1998:343):

Guba's model for trustworthiness addresses ways for warding off biases in the results of qualitative analysis. Within this model four strategies are proposed to ensure trustworthiness (De Vos et. al. 2002:351):

- Credibility demonstrates that the research is conducted in such a way that the phenomenon is accurately described. In this research the research design has been described in detail.

- Transferability demonstrates the applicability of the findings to another context. In this research no attempts were made to generalise the findings.

- Dependability refers to whether the findings would be consistent if the enquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context. In this research all stages of the research design are described so that a similar investigation could be carried out in another context.

- Conformability (neutrality) focuses on whether the results are a function solely of the participants and not of the biases and motivation of the researcher. In this research the researcher has endeavoured to discover the participants' meanings from their point of view and has not made any value judgements.

4.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics represent certain standards according to which a particular community or a particular group agrees to regulate its behaviour. They are the principles and guidelines that uphold the things we value (Du Plooy 2000:107; Johnson & Christensen 2004).

The ethics of science concerns what is wrong and what is right in the conduct of research. Because scientific research is a form of human conduct, it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values. As in any sphere of human life, certain kinds of conduct are morally acceptable whereas others are not. When doing research, the researcher is called upon to fulfil certain responsibilities because he/she is dealing with people. What the researcher does may have a detrimental effect on others (Mouton 2001:238; Du Plooy 2000:107).

In this study, human beings are the subject of study. As such great care was exercised to ensure that their rights were protected. Permission to conduct the study within the Zoutpansberg Circuit was obtained in writing from the Circuit Manager, Department of Education and Culture (Annexure 1). Moreover, permission was obtained from principals of the three secondary schools selected for the research. This permission was verbal. All principals of the three secondary schools permitted the researcher to conduct interviews with their School Management Teams. Finally, permission was also granted

verbally from parents of learners who have migrated to former Model C schools. Identities were protected and all the participants understood the purpose of the study.

For the purpose of this study, the purpose, methods, personal motives and consequences of research were regulated by the following six behavioural norms (Smith 1988:285; Mouton 2001:241):

- Universalism: this norm requires that the research must pass peer evaluation. In this study the researcher's supervisor oversaw the process of data gathering and analysis and considered the findings critically.

- Communality: this norm requires researchers to accurately report the method, purpose and consequences. The principle of communality compels all researchers to share their research findings, including means, ends, motives and consequences freely and honestly with all other members of the research community. In this study a clear research design was given.

- Disinterestedness: This norm requires that personal gain should not be a researcher's main reason for doing research. In this study the main reason for the study (cf. chapter one) was not personal gain but to acquire insight into the phenomenon of learner migration with a view to the improvement of practice.

- Organised skepticism: This norm requires the researchers to be critical of their own and other's research and to be honest when they spot errors, omissions and subjective biases. In this study the researcher endeavoured to be critical of her own research.

- Honesty: This norm requires researchers to be honest with themselves, with the participants and the research community. In this study the researcher was honest with the participants and shared the aim of the study with them. Participants were also invited to read the interview transcripts and the final research report to ensure a true representation of their views.

- Respect: This norm requires researchers to protect participants' basic human and civil rights. In this study basic and human rights were taken into consideration. Identities were kept anonymous and confidentiality respected.

4.6   SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research design was described. Selection of participants, data collection and data analysis were discussed in the light of the research aims. The advantages of the qualitative methods were also highlighted. Tesch's model was explained as tool used to process data.

Chapter five represents the research findings of the empirical investigation and focuses on an analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the empirical investigation was to explore the experiences of learners, parents and SMTs regarding learner migration from township schools to former model C and independent schools in selected schools in Limpopo Province. The empirical investigation was conducted within the jurisdiction of the Limpopo Province as explained in paragraphs 1.3, 1.6.2.1 and 4.3.1.

The main research question was as follows (par 1.4):

- How can the migration of learners be managed?

The following sub-questions were posed to address the main research question.

- How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest globally?
- How does the phenomenon of learner migration manifest in South Africa?
- What are the perceptions of SMTs, learners and parents in selected secondary schools in Limpopo Province on learner migration?
- What guidelines can be considered by school management to manage learner migration in an informed way?

The first two sub-questions were answered by conducting a literature study. The empirical investigation was carried out to address the remaining two sub-questions i.e. the perceptions of participants on learner migration. The design of guidelines to manage learner migration in an informed way is based on the findings of the literature survey and the empirical inquiry.

5.2   CATEGORISING DATA FROM INTERVIEWS

To categorise in terms of qualitative data analysis means to look for recurring regularities in the units of data, that is, identifying units of data that are related to each other and grouping them to form categories (Schulze, Myburgh & Poggenpoel

2002:77). In this regard the researcher used the data analysis steps of Tesch as explained in paragraph 4.3.3. In brief, this implies that after the researcher had read through each interview a number of times, several responses were identified in each interview. Similar responses were clustered together and organised into categories. For the sake of manageability, the number of categories was reduced by grouping together related units of meanings as sub-categories into major categories. From this arrangement nine major categories were identified that serve as headings of the ensuing paragraphs to report on the findings of the research.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

For the sake of confidentiality and fluent discussion, the former model C school is referred to as school A, the independent school as school B and the township school as school C.

5.3.1 Policy and admission

Policy is a general plan of action adopted by governments, institutions, or persons (Hawkins 2004:793). After 1994, new policy was adopted in South Africa to ensure the right of access to the school of one's choice. The stipulation of the South African Schools Act (SASA) no 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996) in terms of admission to the school of one's choice has resulted in dramatic changes with regard to racial representation in public schools as increasing numbers of black learners have been admitted to schools that previously had been reserved for white learners. Former 'white only' English medium schools became a prime site for learners from the black and coloured communities whereas former 'white only' Afrikaans medium schools saw a steady increase in enrolments from students in the coloured community whose home language was Afrikaans (par 1.2).

In school A and school B there is ample evidence of learner migration especially since 1997. The principal of school A stated: "*In 1998-99 we had an Afrikaans medium school. In 1997 we had only seven to twelve black learners, but in 200? two thirds of the school are black learners*". The SMTs and principals of schools A and B confirmed that a much broader spectrum of feeder schools in their areas increasingly supply their

schools with learners each year. In that regard the principal of school B identified the extended feeder area as to include learners from *"Kutama, Sithumule, Waterval and Vleifontein."*

Both principals of schools A and B agreed that the largest numbers of learners admitted are in grade 8 because this is the entry year to the secondary school. For the sake of continuity and to provide learners with the best possible chance of success and to maintain a sound culture of teaching and learning, the management of the receiving schools prefers not to admit grade 12 learners to their schools. The principal of school A said:

> *"I do not normally admit grade 12 students; it must be under very, very special circumstances; the reason being that the learner will not cope with our standard of learning in order to produce good results."*

The policy regarding admissions at schools A and B relates to ensuring that learners will have the best chance of success by arranging that learners are provided with enough opportunities in terms of time period to gain and develop the required social and cultural capital needed for success (par 2.3.3). In that regard admission takes place after a proper assessment of the learner's scholastic performance to ensure that the learner is appropriately placed in an applicable learning environment and to plan in advance for extra assistance with learning. The principal of school B explained as follows:

> *"Learners are selected by means of tests, which enable us to place them properly in the class that matches their standard".*

Participants from schools A and B emphasised that when learners' performances in the admission tests indicate that they will need extra assistance in certain learning areas, such provision is immediately planned. One of the SMT members of school B said:

> *We admit learners to the school regardless of their performances in the admission tests, but if a learner performs poorly in the test, we admit*

him/her and we make sure that he/she is supported by extra lessons without delay".

An interesting reason for migration seems to be partly based on the desire for prestige and status. The principal of school C is of the opinion that township school parents' enrolment of their children in former Model C schools is steered by a fashion statement motive. In his own words:

> *"To enrol your child in the town schools has become fashionable in our*
> *community because the whites' standard of education is perceived to*
> *be higher than that of our school".*

A SMT member of school C said: *"Parents withdraw learners from our school and enrol them in the town schools because they want to be classified amongst the 'haves'."* The interview with parents also supported the motive for migration as partly based on the desire for prestige and status. One parent whose child now attends school B vocalised these sentiments as follows:

> *"If you are working and you do not enrol your child in the schools in*
> *town, you are recognised as a failure in this community and you do not*
> *belong to the middle class, but the working class".*

Discussion

The findings show that learners from township schools are increasingly admitted to former model C and independent schools due to policy reforms which ensures school choice. In this regard receiving schools are adopting supportive arrangements to ensure that learners are provided with sufficient opportunities to progress. However, some black parents are strongly motivated to change the school of their children by the desire for prestige and status. This is in contrast with the international literature which found that reasons for learner migration are usually related to the desire to arrange the best possible education for one's child (par 2.7.2).

5.3.2 Medium of instruction

Language is a primary means by which beliefs, values, norms and world–views are transmitted and influences perceptions, transmits meanings and moulds patterns of thought (Foure, Parry & Sondeling 2000:21). In contemporary technological environments English is regarded as the international language for economic competitiveness. In South Africa English is also treated as a dominant language with, as major stimulus, its global status connected to economic and technological development. Regardless of the value of instruction in one's mother tongue with regard to beliefs, values and meaning transmissions, many black parents tend to prefer English as medium of instruction for their children because proficiency in English is seen as synonymous with a gateway to prosperity (par 2.3.3.1).

In the light of this, the receiving schools, which are Afrikaans medium, have been obliged to make adjustments with regard to medium of instruction to cater for black learners. The new black learners in these schools are not proficient in Afrikaans and view English as the dominant official language. The principal of school A explained as follows:

> "We run a parallel medium school, so we have three Afrikaans classes
> per grade and two English classes per grade".

This has resulted in an even sharper increase in learner migration due to the provision of English as alternative medium of instruction. In this regard the principal of school B indicated:

> "The enrolment in this school has increased by 90% since 2005,
> because all the subjects are now offered in English".

It is interesting that the provision of English as medium of instruction at the receiving schools is perceived differently by participants from schools A and B as opposed to participants from school C. In schools A and B English was included to accommodate black learners who are not mobile in Afrikaans and to therefore effectively maintain a culture of learning for those learners who chose to migrate for reasons relating to

quality and status. Participants from school C regard the inclusion of English as medium of instruction at receiving schools as the sole reason why learners migrate, namely to be instructed in English. One member of the SMT of school C said:

> *"When the child is enrolled in a white school, where English is included as medium of instruction, parents believe that they will be able to communicate in English better than in our schools."*

One parent whose child is now attending school B admitted the high premium that she puts on a competence in English and her subsequent desire that her child should develop English language proficiency. She stated:

> *"I enrolled my child in the town school because of the medium of instruction which is English". Here in the township teachers are using a lot of 'Tshivenda'. As a result learners cannot express themselves in English."*

Another parent whose child is also now attending school B revealed her admiration for good English and her desire that her children should acquire an acceptable accent by pointing out that her children should

> *"be conversant with the Queen's language and speak it in the same way as the Queen does and be able to communicate globally".*

Learner participants agreed with the importance of proficiency in English and the exposure to English as medium of instruction. They indicated a certain dissatisfaction with the use of mother tongue languages during teaching in the schools from which they migrated. In this regard, a learner now attending school B explained:

> *"By the time when I was attending school here, (School C) some teachers were offering the subjects in Tshivenda and expect us to answer questions in English. This was really a problem."*

The impression is that learners choose to migrate for the sake of consistency, namely to be taught and evaluated from the start in the same language rather than to be instructed in the mother tongue, but be evaluated in English. They wish to be taught and assessed in English. This is in line with the findings of Johnson (2007: 315) that black learners who had exposure to additional languages are not interested in pursuing these languages further when migrating to former Model C schools.

Discussion

It is evident that English as medium of instruction as offered by the receiving schools is an important cause for learner migration. Many parents enrol their children at the schools in town because they prefer the language policy of teaching and learning through the medium of English. It is an added bonus if educators are English mother tongue speakers who use a standard English pronunciation.

5.3.3 Academic results

From the interviews with parents and learners it became evident that, apart from prestige and status, a high premium is placed on academic results. Both learners and parents are of the opinion that good academic results open avenues for learners who want to further their studies at tertiary institutions and in general result in better job opportunities. A participant parent whose child is now attending school A expressed her opinion as follows:

> *"Good matric results will open doors to free bursaries that our children can get and enable them to study at any institution of their choice."*

Participants had consensus that good academic results as reflected in good matric results are obtained through the mutual commitment of both the educators and learners and the effective leadership qualities of the principal prevailing in a positive culture of teaching and learning. The principal of school A explained the value that the clientele of his school places on a healthy culture of teaching and learning as follows:

"I think that one of the things that cause a lot of learners to apply and hope that they will get into the school is because if you take for instance, since we moved into the new dispensation, it's giving us 11 years. In the past eleven years we had the top candidates in the Province, so I think that is one of the main reasons why you find a lot of learners trying to get into the school".

Good matric results, however, is the outcome of educator commitment to quality instruction across the broad spectrum of teaching staff. A member of the SMT of school A explained this as follows:

"The matric results are just the tip of an iceberg of sustained dedication from each and every member of staff throughout the year."

Participants from school A emphasised that dedication to teaching is required from all staff and that matric results should not be the grade 12 educator's sole responsibility. The whole staff is and should be responsible for the eventual end results. All staff members are expected to focus on dedicated teaching for the sake of successful learning from the very first day of each learner's high school career. In addition to this professional responsibility is the need for teaching continuity as explained by the principal of school A:

"One of the things we differ from other schools is that, for example, I taught the grade 10 Geography last year, this year I am having them in grade 11, next year I am having them in grade 12 meaning that I am building them over a period of three years. Now I know that when the results come out, those results are actually my responsibility because I had three years of building them."

Coupled with good academic results are well behaved learners as found in both schools A and B. In this regard the principal of school B pointed out that when parents are interviewed for admission of their children they always mention the good results and the well behaved learners of school B. Principal B stressed that their school's 100% matric pass rates for the past five years can be attributed to

"hard work, guidance from our Lord and the proper behaviour of our learners".

In support of the value placed on proper behaviour, a parent whose child is now attending School A remarked that she took her child to a former 'white only' school not only because they produce better matric results, but

"especially also because they emphasise considerate behaviour to each other."

A committed focus to dedicated teaching and learning as is evident from good academic results implies that learners are expected to be conscientious and motivated to achieve in the examinations. Regular formative assessment helps learners to practise exam skills required by the final summative examinations. The principal of school A elaborated:

"If you look at the system that we have at present, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays we start with a scheduled test period each and every morning for 50 minutes, so the whole school is writing tests".

Principal A pointed out that these tests cover substantial volumes of work which require good preparation from learners and which imply that

"system-wise they are building on their academic achievement throughout the year, because they are writing regular tests."

Thus, in schools A and B participants felt that their good academic achievements are the result of a mutual, dedicated and continuous focus on disciplined hard work. However, members of the SMT of school C pointed out that the academic achievements of schools A and B can to a significant extend be attributed to arrangements of the past dispensation in which matriculation examiners were invited to the 'white only' schools to give learners and educators tips about the examination. One member of the SMT of school C pointed out that

"it is only since 1994 that the same privilege has been extended to township schools".

In this regard the relation between social capital in terms of an informed preparation for the examination and an honest dedication and perseverance to the educational goal of doing what one can for one's learners seem to be two important factors for school success.

Discussion

A distinguishing factor with regard to the migration phenomenon is the value placed on good academic results which occur on account of continuous dedication from all stakeholders and which is motivated by acquired social capital competencies. As is clear from the interviews, learners want to enrol at schools A and B because these two schools produce good matric results due to the commitment and hard work of management, educators and learners. The approach at the receiving schools is that nothing that is worthwhile comes easily. Continuous, committed and dedicated hard work from teachers and learners as inspired and directed by management results in good academic achievements and stimulates learner migration to such schools.

5.3.4   The culture of teaching and learning

Although academic results are part and parcel of school culture, the latter emerged as a separate category due to its multi-dimensional features in terms of underlying assumptions, norms and values and physical and social manifestations. School culture is popularly described as 'how things are done around here' and it reflects the behaviour and actions of learners and teachers (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003: 19). In this regard academic results manifest on account of a specific school culture relating to a specific interpretation of and approach to teaching and learning. Against this background, school culture in terms of teaching and learning emerged as a separate category with regard to the learner migration phenomenon.

The culture of teaching and learning and how it relates to migration tendencies are discussed under two sub-categories, namely educator and learner commitment to teaching and learning and effective teaching/learning and its relationship to facilities and resources.

5.3.4.1   Commitment of educators and learners to teaching and learning

The teaching profession is usually regarded as a labour of love and dedicated teachers show this by being unconditionally committed to teaching and by forming positive and productive partnerships with all the stakeholders for the sake of learning success.

In both schools A and B teachers and learners regard teaching and learning related activities as the key activities of the school day. All other actions, aspirations and dreams are subordinate to the all-embracing focus on teaching and learning. In this regard a SMT member of school B confirmed:

> *"We use our time fruitfully by focusing on teaching and learning and*
> *allow God to guide us in all our activities:"*

As a result a good relationship exists between educators and learners which is characterised by management and staff's commitment to the all-embracing aim of always acting in the best interest of the learners. This not only makes learners feel safe, but also inspires them to give their best. The result is that learners achieve optimally according to ability and interest. A member of the SMT of school B expressed the staff's dedication to the learners' well-being as follows:

> *"We establish a good relationship between ourselves and the learners.*
> *If they have problems, we immediately respond so that teaching and*
> *learning can take place optimally, for example, at present we offer*
> *extra maths lessons in the afternoons for those slow learners "*

It became evident from the interviews that the same motivated dedication to teaching and learning as experienced at schools A and B is not present at school C where learner

numbers are decreasing. A parent who is a teacher at school C but whose children have migrated to school A remarked:

> "*The teachers in the town school are more committed than us. For example, on Friday* (25 May 2007) *we were on strike. We never reported for work but our children that are attending schools in town went to school and the teachers were teaching*".

The parent-teacher participant emphasised the hampering effect on successful learning of a generally poor work ethics and low educator morale appearing at some black schools. In her own words:

> "W*e have this 'don't care attitude' that prevails in our school. It emanates from the black mentality and the abuse of the new dispensation is crippling our school.*"

In the light of the industrial action strike of June 2007 which jeopardised teaching/learning time seriously, the national government introduced a catch-up programme whereby teachers had to extend working hours during the week and also teach on Saturdays. It appeared however that both teachers and learners at school C were reluctant to attend these additional sessions. At a certain stage police had to intervene when some unruly grade 12 learners disturbed other learners on the school premises due to an

> "*also pull them down syndrome amongst some of our people*" (parent-teacher participant).

When teachers are not devoted to teaching and learning, learners are negatively affected in more than one way. Apart from failing to develop the knowledge and skills needed for independent adulthood, responsible behaviour is not inculcated. Some learners exploit the prevailing undisciplined conditions to their own detriment as is explained by a learner participant who migrated from school C because:

"There are learners who abscond periods to go and abuse drugs and alcohol behind the toilets. When they come back they start bullying other learners and they are very much aggressive. Some of the drugs are sold within the school premises".

Discussion

What was clear from the interviews was that teaching and learning require consistent commitment from educators and that this commitment is appreciated by learners and parents. As became apparent from the research data on schools A and B, policies pertaining to dedicated teaching and learning and which ensure mutual commitment, are in place. These policies enable the receiving schools to run their teaching/learning practices smoothly in line with the principles of the South African School's Act, Act no 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996). Teaching/learning practices that are managed smoothly constitute a significant pulling factor within the learner migration phenomenon.

As opposed to the well oiled teaching/learning practices at schools A and B, teachers at school C appear to be passive about the absence of a professional work ethic and its impact on learner migration. This may be attributed to the fact that a continuous lack of exposure to good practices on account of long lasting deficient social capital impacts negatively on the competence and psychological resilience needed to cope with challenges pertaining to the cultivation and maintaining of successful teaching/learning practices (par 2.3.3; par 2.7). In line with the findings of Johnson (2007:316) it appears that the values and ethos of the former Model C schools represent the difference between social and economic success or a continuing struggle for survival in the township schools.

5.3.4.2 Effective teaching/learning, facilities and resources

Participants had consensus that effective learning is made possible where there are adequate facilities and resources. The principal of school A confirmed:

"Our learners have a flying start because our school is well resourced".

Principal A emphasised that there are enough classrooms at his school and well equipped science laboratories where learners partake in practical work by conducting interesting experiments. One of the SMT members of school B acknowledged similar conditions at school B:

> *"Our school is well resourced. Each and every learner has a textbook of her/his own".*

Another SMT member of school B admitted that for learners to have their own textbooks are rare at most of the surrounding schools and that that could be one of the reasons why learners migrate in large numbers to school B. These conditions however are maintained by means of good management as explained by the principal of school B:

> *"We have an inventory to control them: if a learner loses a book, he/she must pay for it."*

What also became clear from the collected data is that a commitment to teaching and learning and resource maintenance are closely linked because

> *"motivated learners develop a culture of caring and ownership of the school buildings, furniture and surroundings and thus prevent vandalism in schools"* (SMT member of school B).

What was also apparent from the interviews with the SMT's of schools A and B is that, in the face of substantially decreasing state funds due to government efforts to redress previous disadvantages, schools A and B have launched intensive fund raising efforts to maintain and develop their adequate facilities, resources and personnel.

School C as a previously disadvantaged school lacks facilities and resources and in accordance with the belief prevailing in many disadvantaged schools, participants from school C sub-conscientiously blame the exodus from their school (and weak academic achievements) solely on the lack of resources. The principal of school C said:

"The previous regime concentrated on white schools. You will never compare our resources with that of the white schools. They also supplied them with maintenance staff whereas with us here we have only one personnel who works as a gardener, a factotum and a gate controller."

The acute shortage of human resources is also apparent with regard to materials and facilities. A member of the SMT of school C said:

"There are no research facilities. We do not have enough resource materials for the old curriculum (Curriculum 2005). In some subjects the matric students have to share a textbook."

An aspect linked to meagre resources is the overcrowded conditions of classrooms as experienced at school C where there are four grade 12 classrooms; of which one class has 85 learners. Participants of school C emphasised that although teaching and learning take place, it is difficult to concentrate on individual problems because of overcrowding. Nevertheless, insufficiency and ineffectiveness is a relative concept because

"despite of overcrowding, the lack of resources and facilities we managed to produce A's in our matric results in 2005 which many other township schools cannot boast of" (Principal of school C).

Discussion

It is clear that in schools A and B resources are available on account of privileges dating back to the previous dispensation. Due to social capital in terms of competencies in budgeting and general efficiency, these resources are maintained and developed regardless of the new implementation of redress. Owing to vigorous efforts from all stakeholders and steered by dedicated management, funds are raised for maintenance and progress within an organisational culture of care and respect for resources and facilities. This serves as a significant pulling factor within the learner migration phenomenon. As opposed to this scenario, conditions in school C as a previously

disadvantaged school are deteriorating yet further due to vandalism and the lack of willpower to transform on account of deficient social capital. The downward spiral caused by the neglect of existing resources and a lack of adequate knowledge and skills to develop and maintain resources create a major pushing factor with regard to learner migration.

5.3.5 Discipline

From the interviews with participants of schools A and B, it became apparent that an orderly school environment promotes teaching and learning which in turn results in a disciplined milieu. Respect for authority based on a consistent discipline policy mutually developed and understood contributes to an orderly teaching and learning environment sought after by parents for their children.

In school A discipline is consistently practised according to a code of conduct that is aligned to departmental policy. A well developed set of rules clearly communicated to all learners and which they willingly abide by, serves as blueprint to deal fairly and humanely with the broad spectrum of learner disobedience. The principal of school A explained:

> "If you look at the code of conduct, we have the whole system of a code of conduct in place. When there is a serious problem, we have a disciplinary hearing system - the less serious ones, like homework not been done, textbook not at school up to a very serious one where you have alcohol abuse."

Linked to mutually understood and respected discipline arrangements is a reward system where outstanding performances of learners are recognised by awarding prizes and merit certificates. This motivates learners and improves discipline, hence the culture of teaching and learning improves. A member of the SMT of school B said: "We have the reward system in place; learners are rewarded for good discipline by giving them 'day offs' once a quarter. This results in a win-win situation."

In contrast to the well developed and effectively implemented disciplinary systems of schools A and B, School C has struggled to develop alternatives to corporal punishment. The SMT and principal of school C blame the abolishing of corporal punishment by government for the prevalence of undisciplined conditions at their school

> *"because the government took corporal punishment away and did not replace it with an effective measure"* (SMT member of school C).

What became clear from the interview with parents is that good discipline and the proactive approach of providing effective and realistic measures of dealing with possible misconduct is a significant factor in the migration phenomenon. All participant parents indicated a lack of discipline at school C which is intensified by the inability to terminate gangster oriented peer pressure activities. One parent whose child is now attending school A had the following to say about school C:

> *"I do not want my child to attend this school because there is a lot of peer pressure in our community, and when he is in town he is safe from this peer pressure."*

What was a serious concern for the parents was the lengthy period incurred at public schools to enforce school discipline. A parent explained that it takes a long time to discipline a child who misbehaves because the principal should follow a certain procedure and is not allowed to expel the child – *"He must wait for the Department of Education"* (parent participant). Thus, badly behaved learners can take advantage of the system. Unlike the public schools, school B as an independent school reacts immediately to serious misconduct because

> *"if the learner commits a serious offence, the school board expels him, of course, after following the correct procedure"* (school principal of school B).

The learners interviewed did not want to be associated with the misconduct prevailing amongst many learners at school C. One learner now attending school B remarked with strong feelings about learner discipline at school C:

"The learners have no manners and are disrespectful towards the teachers. Oh! I do not want to be like them!"

The learners who have migrated to receiving schools are proud of their new schools and approve of the humane disciplinary measures (although unpleasant) used to discipline them. One learner now attending school A explained:

"In my school, if you do not write homework, the teachers will punish you by remaining in the class while others go for break. It is not nice, but it is fair."

Discussion

Sound and humane disciplinary measures prevail at the schools to which learners are migrating. These measures are based on taking initiative, are motivated by fair practice, are dedicated to a work ethic and consider what is good for the child. The approach at School C as a previously disadvantaged school with a lack of social capital to act proactively is to wait for government to 'supply' a substitute for corporal punishment. The irony of such an approach at a time of decentralisation and site-based management with its increasing demand on schools to take responsibility and initiative for their own well being is clear and constitutes a reason for the exodus of learners.

5.3.6   A safe environment for teaching and learning

Linked to developing and maintaining a solid discipline system is the need to keep one's school safe from crime. Due to the high levels of crime currently experienced in South Africa, educators and learners have also become vulnerable. For that reason a key managerial task of the school principal and SMT is to create a crime free environment in which teaching and learning can take place.

It emerged from the interview with parents that a school environment that is rigorously protected from violent crime is a dominant criterion for school selection. They want their children to attend schools with crime-free environments and for that reason proper fencing and gate control are key measures. Data from the interviews with learners and participants from schools A and B showed that these two schools are committed to the creation of a secure environment in which learners feel safe. In both schools A and B security guards at the gates control people entering and exiting the school premises. A member of the SMT of school A explained:

> "We *make sure that intruders do not enter the premises during the day and at night, we want our learners to be safe.*"

For that reason school gates are locked during school hours and during lunch time food is sold within the school premises. This means that learners do not leave the school premises to buy lunch outside. A learner explained:

> "M*y school's gates are locked against strangers. We are safe, and we have the privilege to buy nice food from the tuck-shop at school during breaks*" (learner participant now attending school A).

A safe school environment also connotes a school surrounding that is well cared for and classrooms that are maintained and clean. As was evident from the literature findings, attractive and clean school premises serve as significant pulling factor in the learner migration phenomenon (par 2.8.1). This was confirmed by the empirical investigation in which a learner now attending school B emphasised:

> "*I adore my school for its beautiful buildings and gardens and clean toilets! I am so proud of my school.*"

As opposed to the safe and attractive conditions prevailing at the two receiving schools, school C is characterised by vandalism due to the lack of a mutual competence to reverse the situation. The lack of competence is easily wrongly interpreted as a profound lack of will. In this regard a learner participant now attending school A reported as follows:

"You find learners at my previous school vandalising the school, the classrooms are dirty, plugs and doors are removed yet this winter they feel cold. How can one attend lessons in such a classroom? And the teachers do not give a damn".

Discussion

What is clear is that ideally all stakeholders should develop a sense of ownership for the school and develop and maintain an attractive environment that is highly appreciated as a school selection criterion. In the face of violent crime rates that have escalated to unacceptable levels, the need for physical safety and emotional well being at school manifests as a significant demand testing school management competencies and serving as a major factor in the learner migration phenomenon.

5.3.7   Effective leadership qualities of the principal

Effective leadership is directly linked to the realisation of the core activities of the school, that is teaching and learning. The opinion of all participants from schools A and B revealed that effective teaching and learning realise on account of the principal's dedicated beliefs, decisions, strategies and tactics to ensure these activities. The dedicated principal inspires all other stakeholders and makes the school conducive to teaching and learning which results in the moulding of a good product.

Dedicated principalship includes a commitment to good decision making inspired by high moral standards. In this regard one of the SMT members of school B said:

> *"My principal is very much good in decision making. She is also stable and she applies Christian values in her leadership strategies. This enables us and inspires us to follow suit".*

Dedicated principalship is also interpreted in terms of technical skills that relate to not only knowing and showing the way, but also going the way. The principal of School A explained as follows:

"One of my strengths as a leader is to develop and maintain a system that is to the advantage of everybody ... another question is to be exemplary ... I am teaching 21 periods in a cycle so my teachers are not afraid to also do what is expected of them".

Principal A also emphasised his involvement in the coaching and training of different sports codes and the fact that he accompanies the learners and teachers on their extra-mural excursions.

With regard to learner participants, good principalship relates to guardianship and comprehensive support as expressed by one learner now attending school A:

"My principal is very much supportive. Whenever we have problems, whatever kind of problems, he is there for us."

Principalship is also interpreted in terms of the ability to create a vibrant environment of team work in pursuit of excellence. A participant parent whose child is now attending school A explained as follows:

"The principal demonstrates his leadership skills by working with his subordinates as a team and motivating them to become the best of the best".

With regard to the conditions prevailing at school C that relate to principalship, contradictory data was gathered. The interview with parents pointed to an unhealthy organisational climate at school C in which educators do not co-operate due to mutual jealousy and because they perceive the principal as a failure. A participant parent whose child migrated to school A had the following to say about school C:

"The principal is highly qualified, but educators do not support him and due to a lack of commitment on the side of the educators and a lack of will power on the side of the principal to change matter, he becomes a failure."

However, the interview with the SMT and the principal of school C indicated a good working relationship between the educators and the principal. It seems that parents and the SMT of school C do not share the same perceptions regarding the principalship at the school. Parents' perceptions are however most important as they are the ones who opt for migration to arrange the best education possible for their children.

Discussion

Effective principalship is presupposed by all the preceding categories and the ones to follow. As the principalship is the core of school life and essential to all school activities, it is presumably the most significant element in ensuring school excellence and a major factor that motivates any learner migration phenomenon.

Evidence from literature indicates that a positive school climate can be created, developed and nurtured so that teaching and learning can take place (par 3.2). Yet, this is only possible if the principal is a dedicated and exemplary leader. From the interviews with management and staff of schools A and B and parents who enrolled children in these schools, it is clear that the principals of school A and B are leaders who know the way, go the way and show the way. This results in inspired teachers, happy learners and satisfied parents – a key factor influencing the learner migration phenomenon.

5.3.8 Learning opportunities and extra curricular activities

What transpired clearly from the interviews is that quality education should prepare the learner to face challenges in all domains of society. It is expected of the school to offer a comprehensive set of life skills subjects that will enable the learners to face all kinds of challenges in life. What schools offer in terms of the 'menu' of curricular opportunities is as important as the quality of the offerings itself. Schools with extensive 'menus' obviously cater for a larger pool of needs with an impact on learner migration tendencies.

Participants from the two receiving schools revealed how their schools' curricula are diversified and amended to meet the comprehensive and ever-changing community needs. The principal of school A said:

> "We *changed Home Economics to Hotel Management and Catering*
> *and we also replaced History with Tourism so that these learners can*
> *be employed in this town.* "

Tourism has become a major factor in South Africa contributing to economic growth; the replacement of history with tourism as an academic offering would therefore serve as an attractive option for learners and their parents, impacting on learner migration tendencies. Linked to comprehensive and topical curricula is the attractiveness of learner support services in terms of career guidance based on a thorough knowledge of the learner's ability, personality and competencies. In that regard a participant parent whose child is now attending school A had the following to say:

> *"Look at the schools in town. When they see that a learner does not*
> *cope in a subject, they change him/her to another, or they advise you*
> *that it will be best if you take your child to a technical school."*

Another factor impacting on learner migration tendencies relates to the added attraction of eminent educators with many years of teaching experience at receiving schools. In this regard the principal of school A pointed out:

> "If *we look at the staff at this school, it is very much experienced. A*
> *very large percentage of the staff has 20 years experience, and if you*
> *look at what they give to promote teaching and learning in the*
> *classroom, beside the normal textbook, the normal teaching, the*
> *normal equipment ...the sky is the limit.* "

It was clear that dedicated and experienced teachers are inspired to give their best in such well managed environments and want to remain part of such 'winning teams'.

Closely linked to quality learning opportunities are adequate and appropriate teaching aids. In this regard the principal of school B attributed her school's possession of adequate laboratory equipment to the dedicated efforts of all stakeholders to generate additional school funds for those purposes. The principal of school B said:

> *"Many government schools do not have properly developed science laboratories, but we have all the chemicals and facilities to do our practicals, we purchase them from school funds which we generate ourselves."*

In line with the notion of a healthy body housing a healthy mind and the socialising value of sports activities for the individual, learners with their parents place a high value on the provision of sports activities. A wide range of possibilities is an additional motivation for learner migration. One learner now attending school A reported as follows:

> *"I begged my parents for my school because there is a variety of sports in our school. You just choose which one you want to participate in...we love it!"*

Other learner participants confirmed that they enjoy a school which offers different sports opportunities from which they can choose and in which they can compete and excel. The principal of school A confirmed the wide range of sports activities provided at their school as follows:

> *"During the first term we have mainly athletics, and then we start with the winter sports during the second term, namely hockey, netball, rugby, tennis and soccer. Our learners compete and represent the province in different sporting codes."*

Sports activities as extra curricular offerings are handled on a much smaller scale at school C where athletics are only practised a few days before competitions. Soccer and netball are the only sports codes practised when there are matches. In other words, no

preceding preparation takes place. The reason is that sports fields are shared with the local teams in the community because

"we do not have facilities to offer different sporting codes... I think this is one of the reasons learners migrate to town schools". (Principal of school C).

Discussion

Evidence from the empirical investigation indicates that learners migrate to town schools because of extended learning opportunities due to more comprehensive provisioning on account of additional human resources, teaching aids and sports facilities. Linked to this, is the subtle attraction of value added aspects such as expert staff to present these extended offerings. Parents want learners to become skilled as all-rounders and if a school does not cater for such needs, financially able parents arrange for the migration of their children to better schools.

5.3.9 Parent involvement

Parent involvement has widely proved to be a pertinent factor for learner success. Increasingly the value of parent involvement is felt in South Africa and is actively included in Curriculum 2005. Interviews in all three schools in the study showed how parents are involved in the education of their children. The principal of school B concurred that the active motivation of parents to be involved in the learning of their children results in good academic achievements. In her own words:

"Another thing that makes us achieve good results is the continuous pressure on the parents, getting them involved in the education of their children."

Parent involvement is an excellent strategy to improve learning and to reduce behaviour related problems because learners do not want their parents to know that they are misbehaving or under-performing at school. In this regard a participant learner now attending school B confessed that

*"when my parents are called to see my work, I feel very much guilty
more especially if I did not perform well in the tests".*

The SMT and school principal of school C confirmed that they have strategies in place
to get parents involved in the learning of their children. The principal of school C
mentioned that parents are invited through the School Governing Body to attend parent
meetings. Agendas accompany these announcements because

"we inform them what we want to tell them."

Since many parents are reluctant to meet their responsibilities in terms of attending
parents' meetings, buying school uniforms for their children and paying school fees, a
strategy was put in place to counteract this. The principal of school C explained:

*"When learners enrol in the school, parents are called in to sign a
declaration form so that the parent will feel compelled to attend all
the parents' meetings, buy school uniform and pay school fund,
failing which they will face legal action."*

What was clear from the interview with parents is that well planned and well managed
parent involvement opportunities are highly appreciated by parents and they enjoy
attending such meetings. One participant parent whose child is now attending school B
explained:

*"I honour the invitation to the parent's afternoons because it is
always well planned ... every parent gets personal time with each
teacher ... this is where I see how my child is performing and the
teachers tell me what I must do to help my child."*

Discussion

Evidence from the empirical investigation is that parent involvement leads to successful
learning. When there is a good relationship between teachers and parents on account of

constructive parent involvement, the child is less inclined to misbehave. Similarly, parents feel proud when they are recognised by the teachers and they therefore take pride in encouraging and motivating their children to excel in their school work.

5.4   CONCLUSION

From the empirical investigation and the categories that emerged from an analysis of the raw data, it became clear that policy changes in favour of the right of school choice have resulted in learner migration tendencies. These tendencies are motivated by factors such as the premium placed on instruction through the medium of English, a comprehensive and topical menu of curricular and extra curricular offerings, the existence of a culture of teaching and learning that manifests in dedicated teachers and motivated learners and the prevalence of good discipline as inspired by the will and encouragement to achieve optimally. Added to these factors are the high premium placed on the management of safety within the school premises and constructive parent involvement. A key and all-embracing factor motivating learner migration is effective principalship.

Learner migration is a reality that cannot be ignored, whether on account of arranging the best possible education for one's child or for the sake of status and prestige. Thus, it is important for management of schools to be aware of the major factors driving learner migration tendencies. By being aware of the main factors responsible for learner migration, SMTs can assess if they are on the right track or if they should adjust accordingly. Abraham Lincoln once said that one must do what one can with what one has, where one is. If this maxim is dedicatedly applied in the light of factors driving learner migration tendencies, schools can position themselves as receiving schools and ensure that they maintain such positions.

The following chapter will provide a summary of the conducted research which is followed by conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter five the findings of the empirical investigation were discussed. These findings were based on the interpretation of the data gathered during interviews. The purpose of chapter six is to draw key conclusions from the results that emanated from the literature study and the empirical investigation and to suggest guidelines for the improvement of practice. The limitations of the study are identified and suggestions for further research are made.

6.2 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The transformation of education in South Africa since 1994 was given particular impetus by the South African School's Act no. 84 of 1996 (RSA 1996). As a result of the new context created by this legislation, access to all public and independent schools was opened to all learners irrespective of race. As a result considerable numbers of learners have migrated from poorly resourced township schools to former Model C and independent schools (par1.1).

The aim of the study was to identify how the migration of learners could be effectively managed. This was done by disclosing a basic set of factors according to which learner migration tendencies unfolds worldwide with an eventual end focus on the South African context. Major pulling and pushing factors that served as driving forces behind the migration activity were identified (par 2.8). These factors pose a serious challenge to the principal and the School Management Teams.

A review of literature related to the aim of the study was presented in chapters two and three. In chapter two manifestations of learner migration in international context were presented with a final focus on the South African situation. External factors in terms of demographic shifts on account of natural disasters such as hurricane Katrina that hit

New Orleans, Louisiana in 2005, can play a significant role in migration tendencies. In such instances, parents are forced to remove their children from schools damaged by climatic disasters and place them in other schools in different cities (par 2.2; 2.5). External factors relating to socio-economic and political affect also impact on migration tendencies. Political change in favour of human rights that results in the freedom of school choice may cause learners to migrate (par 2.2.1).

The right of school choice allows parents to choose the best school for their children with the only two inhibiting factors parents' social positions and their incomes. These two factors prominently determine the type of school parents choose for their children (par 2.2.1.1). Since education is regarded as a vehicle for transmitting language, culture and religious beliefs from one generation to the next (par 2.3.3; par 2.3.3.1), parents' choice of school may internally be based on linguistic realities, cultural values and religious beliefs (par 2.3.3.2). Other internal factors such as the ethos of the receiving school and the leadership qualities of the principal also contribute to migration tendencies (par 2.4.). Due to government's socio-political responsibility of ensuring that its youth receive the best education possible, the US Government introduced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, which mandates parents to exercise a greater influence on their children's education by encouraging them to transfer their children to performing schools (par 2.7).

South African parents enjoy the possibility of school choice. Pushing factors such as the poor implementation of the new curriculum, teacher strikes, lack of school discipline, learner abuse, overcrowded classrooms, poor infrastructure and ineffective school leadership qualities push learners in poorly resourced township schools to migrate to former Model C and independent schools (par 2.8.2). On the other hand, pulling factors that relate to the overall quality of education in the receiving schools contribute to the migration phenomenon (2.8.1). Quality education is universally a driving force behind the migration tendencies. The effective leadership of the principal, good overall management and a healthy school climate that contributes to a positive school culture are perceived as producing quality education. In the democratic era many South African parents who are socially and financially in a position to do so, seek for better schools that will give their children the best education possible (par 3.1; par 3. 6).

The literature review provided conceptual and theoretical elements, which provided a background to the empirical investigation.

An exploratory qualitative research framework was chosen because it provided a holistic understanding of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders with regard to learner migration (par 4.3). Data were collected using focus groups and in-depth individual interviews (par 4.3.2). The findings indicated that a healthy school climate and a culture of teaching and learning with committed teachers and motivated learners serve as major pulling factors in the migration phenomenon (par 5.3.3; par 5.3.4). Pertinent factors that parents and learners put a high premium on are discipline (par 5.3.5), proper English as medium of instruction (par 5.3.2), a crime free school environment (par 5.3.6) an impressive range of curricular and extra-curricular offerings (par 5.3.8) and the opportunity for constructive parent involvement (par 5.9). An all encompassing factor with regard to the migration phenomenon is identified as the leadership qualities of the principal (par 5.3.7).

6.2.1 Pertinent findings from the literature study

• The responsibility of the government and parents

Consistent with the experience of learner migration internationally, the findings of the study showed that the migration of learners impact on both government and the parents. The responsibility of the government is to enact a plan on school choice that is uniquely configured by its political environment (par 2.6). Parents have the right to make a choice of school according to their values and beliefs and their social and financial capacity. In this regard parents are co-responsible for the teaching/learning opportunities their children receive (par 2.7.1).

• Demographic shifts

Literature confirms that parents are sometimes forced to choose schools for their children due to climatologically changes (par 2.5). The most obvious stimuli for school

choice however relates to socio-economic changes pertaining to the right of school choice that is determined by the parent's financial and social capacity (par 2.2).

- Race

In this study race refers to black and white people. The literature confirms that racial inequality exists in most societies, however, learners' migration to different schools are firstly steered by academic quality with the race and ethnic composition of learner enrolment considered as less important (par 2.3.1).

- Class and economic status

Class is defined as the rank order of the society where people are classified into the upper, middle and lower classes impacting on social and cultural capital that confirms and enhances opportunities for success (par 2.3.2). Coupled with this is economic status in terms of financial capacity, which is the driving force enabling parental school choice (par 2.3.2).

- Cultural aspects and language

Culture is transmitted through language. The use of home language together with the choice of medium of instruction is an important factor in the education of the child. Against the background of globalisation and the high premium placed on English as world market language, parents may choose a school because of the language issue (par 2.3.3).

- Religion

Faith plays an important role in the life of an individual; parents are aware that moral behaviour is shaped by religion. Parents may choose a school where particular religious beliefs are inculcated to prepare their children for adult life (par 2.3.3.2). On account of social capital, tendencies exist that better educated parents make school choices based on the moral quality of teaching/learning activities prevailing at a school (par 2.3.3.2).

- School organisational capacity

Quality education involves both the efforts of the principal, the educators and the learners; a well-resourced school in terms of physical and human capacity presupposes quality education. Parents choose a school because of quality: leadership qualities, teacher qualities, physical and material resources, organisational arrangements in terms of teaching/learning time management and the covering of the curriculum, and the status of the school in terms of academic achievements (par 2.4).

- Community capacity

Communities can play an important role in the education of the child and thus in learner migration tendencies. The introduction of the bussing system in the US, for example, was perceived to expose learners to enabling communities. Parents with the necessary social and financial capital tend to migrate to enabling communities with as major determinant the education of their children (par 2.6.2).

6.2.2   Pertinent findings from the empirical investigation

- Changed policy

New policy on account of political change in South Africa grants educational freedom so that parents have the right to send their children to the school of their choice. Participants in the study confirmed that although the choosing of a school for their children is intrinsically steered by quality education, it is extrinsically also pertinently steered by the striving for status and prestige (par 5.3.1). This is in line with human nature's endeavour for social mobility (par 2.3.2).

- Medium of instruction

English has become the medium of instruction in many black schools. Participants indicated that they were dissatisfied with the use of mother tongue instruction in the township schools; they feel that learners should attend former Model C and independent schools where the language is taught by teachers who are proficient in English to gain a better command of the language (par 5.3.2). A good command of English for the sake of socio-economic mobility was valued extremely high by all participants.

- Matric results

Former Model C and independent schools produce good matric results, unlike many township schools. Participants indicated that these results unlock the future of their children for further education. Moreover, participants are motivated by the commitment and dedication of both educators and learners, which contribute to good matric results (par 2.8.1).

- The culture of teaching and learning

Good academic results are ensured by a healthy school climate and a good culture of teaching and learning. Participants indicated the lack of a culture of teaching and learning in the township school that was exposed by educators' indifference to their teaching task during industrial strike actions (par 5.3.4.1). Participants indicated that learners in township schools are also not committed to teaching and learning even if educators are present in the classroom (par 5.3.4.2). These pushing factors motivated participants to choose another school where there is a culture of teaching and learning, hence the migration tendency.

- Discipline

Parents and learners put a high premium on an orderly and disciplined environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Participants explained that they migrated to the

former Model C and independent schools because they wanted to escape from the harmful environment of misconduct as experienced at the township school. They appreciated the receiving schools' capacity to arrange for viable disciplinary measures developed in line with governmental policy (par 5.3.5).

- Effective leadership qualities of the principal

Participants acknowledged the virtue of a principal with visionary leadership qualities to steer and promote school success. Eminent principalship is a key factor in migration tendencies to receiving schools (par 5.3.7).

- An environment protected from the crime of the external environment

In the face of increasingly out of control crime rates in South Africa, it has become a significant added responsibility of the school principal and the SMT to arrange for a school environment that is safe from armed robberies and other violent crime which could jeopardise learners' safety. Participant parents were concerned about the safety of the learners within the school premises of the township school; hence the desire to migrate to schools with better protected environments (par 5.3.6).

- Curricular and extra-curricular opportunities

Quality education should be able to prepare the learner to face challenges in all domains of the society. Learner migration tendencies are steered by the diversified curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered by the receiving schools (par 5.3.8). The lack of a variety of sporting codes in the township school, for example, motivated parents to enrol their children in the former model C and independent schools where there are extended learning opportunities (par 5.3.8).

- Parent involvement

A learner's success is determined by constructive parent involvement. Participant parents felt honoured by the invitational encouragement of the receiving schools to participate in the learning of their children (par 5.3.9). Participants emphasised that they took pride in motivating their children to learn on account of the encouragement and guidance from the receiving schools for constructive parent involvement; hence a pertinent factor in the learner migration phenomenon.

6.3 CONCLUSION

The general conclusions in this study are as follows:

The main pushing factors behind learner migration tendencies pertain to the following (par 2.8.2; par 5.3):

- ineffective management and leadership of the principal
- an unhealthy school climate contributing to and resulting in a poor culture of teaching and learning with a fermenting effect on a general absence of work ethics amongst educators and learners and a low morale amongst educators
- a lack of discipline
- a lack of protection against crime from the external environment

The pushing factors determined at the school from which learners are migrating are closely related to the general socio-economic capital prevalent in the surrounding community (par 2.6) which inhibits possible pursuits of development to a large extent (par 5.3.5).

The main pulling factors behind the learner migration phenomenon are (par 2.8.1; par 5.3; chapter 3):

- the mutual commitment and responsibility to teaching and learning by all key stakeholders

- the arrangement of viable and constructive disciplinary measures that are in line with the South African Schools' Act

- a school environment that is protected from crime from the external environment

- a principal with good leadership qualities

What manifested as the essence of the pulling factors in the learner migration phenomenon is the interrelatedness of good leadership, a high premium on teaching and learning as the school's core business, purposeful arrangements to achieve teaching/learning success and staff's passion for the teaching profession.

With a consideration of pushing and pulling factors at work in the learner migration phenomenon, parents in the possession of the necessary social and financial capacity continuously seek greener education pastures for their children.

6.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to manage learner migration, the following recommendations are suggested.

- Motivational workshops

Teachers in the township school require motivational workshops to boost their morale so that they can execute their professional duties with pride. Teacher Unions such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the Professional Educators Union should be involved. Topics to be addressed at such motivational workshops should include proper time management, respect on account of code of conduct and dedication to teaching as a self-realisation profession. Principals should focus on motivating teachers and learners by recognising their good work by giving them awards for their achievement.

- School reform

In order to develop social capital, all stakeholders should be involved in school developmental attempts based on teamwork approaches, which should commence with the formulation of a viable mission statement based on a realistic school vision. All stakeholders should be encouraged to develop a sense of ownership for the school and learners and teachers should be involved in decision-making activities.

- School leadership as marketing factor

Schools are compared to businesses in the economic sector in that schools compete with each other for clientele (par 3.5.6). In that regard principals serve as entrepreneurs that should constantly focus on delivering an acceptable product. In the face of socio-economic differences, each school's motto should be to honestly do what is possible with what social and financial capital is available within the specific context. This should ensure gradual development.

- Government intervention

The Department of Education should send officials to schools on a continuous basis to ascertain if they have adequate resources for teaching and learning. At present schools in the Soutpansberg East circuit are grouped into clusters. Against the background of the importance placed on mathematics and physical science education as pertinent to socio-economic development, the researcher believes that if each cluster school is provided with a science laboratory, it will start having a diminishing effect on migration tendencies.

The Department of Education should investigate in realistic and viable possibilities to provide needed classrooms and educators to minimise overcrowded classrooms, which is a serious barrier to effective teaching and learning.

Evidence from literature indicates how learners are matched with schools (par 2.7). On the same lines the South African government could possibly intervene in the migration process by informing parents of possible schools. In that regard governmental arrangement can also be made with the receiving schools where learners are migrating by matching the learner's performance and the school where the child can be admitted. This could result in 'tailor made' good academic achievement.

- Fundraising

Against the background of ever increasing financial constraints, the School Governing Body, the School Management Team and the school principal should continuously investigate and re-design strategies to raise funds for the sake of improved teaching and learning. In that regard there are willing donors who wish to assist in educating the previously disadvantaged.

6.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was conducted in a small sample of selected secondary schools in the Soutpansberg East Circuit of the Limpopo Province; thus, its findings cannot be generalised. However, some findings can apply to similar contexts in other districts and/or provinces.

6.6   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Effective principalship and parent involvement in schools are two excellent strategies to develop and maintain the culture of teaching and learning in schools. A strategy to improve parent involvement in education and strategies to support and train the principals of under resourced township schools are possible topics for future research. The study has proved that the effective leadership qualities of both principals of the receiving schools in the research sample have maintained and further developed a culture of teaching and learning. A full detailed empirical investigation should be conducted to record strategies that they implement in their day to day running of the school. This could purposefully be employed for social capacity building in previously disadvantaged township schools.

6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Through the ages the human right to choose the school of one's choice has implied learner migration. Worldwide parents have always aspired to arrange for the best education possible for their children. Parents' ability to execute school choice is determined by their social and financial capacity. The learner migration tendency in South Africa is similarly steered by parents' desire to arrange for quality education for their children, within the constraints of parents' social and financial capacities. For the South African principals with their school management team's school choice poses a pertinent challenge of providing the best service possible.

Worldwide a good school service relates to the interrelatedness of good leadership, a high premium on teaching and learning as the school's core business, purposeful arrangements to achieve teaching/learning success, and staff's passion for the teaching profession which impacts on learner motivation. These sentiments apply fully to the South African context. Learner migration on account of freedom of school choice will always serve as a realistic indication of clientele perceptions and needs, however always linked to and determined by the social and financial capacity of clientele to execute a choice.

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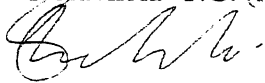
P.O. BOX 1183
LOUIS TRICHARDT
0920
23/04/07

The Circuit Manager
Soutpansberg East Circuit

SIR,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT AN EMPERICAL STUDY

1. The above matter refers:

2. I am a student at the University of South Africa doing a Master's Degree in Educational management. I would like to conduct interviews with the Principals and their School Management Teams after school.

3. The title of my research is as follows: Education Management implications of Learner migration amongst selected secondary schools in Limpopo Province.

4. The following schools fall under the jurisdiction of your circuit :
4.1. Tshiawelo Secondary school
4.2. Emmanuel Christian school
4.3. Hoer Skool Louis Trichardt

5. The interviews will be conducted during the last week of April to the second week May.

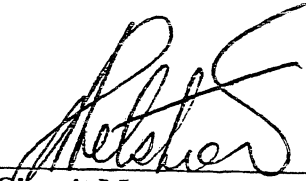Yours faithfully,
Neluvhola T.G. (Mrs)

Ref: 80400922
Enq: P.K.Netshia
Date: 08/05/2007

To Principal of schools

To whom it may concern

1.   This serves to certify that permission has been granted to Neluvhola T.G to conduct her research at your school at the convenient time to be arranged by you and her

The Circuit Manager: Soutpansberg East Circuit
/mar