

**AN INVESTIGATION OF LEARNERS' ENROLMENT IN BELA-BELA FARM SCHOOLS:  
A PERSPECTIVE IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT.**

by

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“I declare that **AN INVESTIGATION OF LEARNERS’ ENROLMENT IN BEL-BELA FARM SCHOOLS – A PERSPECTIVE IN EDUCATION**, is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.”

.....  
Signature  
(Maponya S.H)

.....  
Date

**THIS IS DEDICATED TO:**

My wife, Matilda,  
Our beautiful daughters, Molebogeng, Sarah,  
Amogelang and Catherine,  
For their tolerance, love and support.

My mother, sister and brothers,  
For their continuous inspiration.

My friends and colleagues,  
For their support and encouragement.

My Creator, All Mighty God,  
For Blessing me, and letting my dreams come true.

## **ABSTRACT**

An investigation of learners' enrolment in Bela-Bela farm schools is a study focused on the challenges encountered by farm schools. These challenges result in the decline of learners' enrolment. The researcher has put more emphasis on the history of farm schools, legislation and policy, and socio-economic conditions of farm societies. The research method is qualitative in nature and it includes literature study, observations and semi-structured interviews.

It has been discovered from the data that families working on the farms migrate a lot, and this result in decline of learners' enrolment in farm schools. Based on the findings, recommendations were made for improvements to assist in addressing problems faced by farm schools.

### Key terms:

Educators, farm schools, work load, multi-grade classes, multi-cultural education, inclusive education, child labour, Bill of Rights, legislation, policy, farm society, socio-economic conditions, interviews, qualitative research, teenage pregnancy, deplorable conditions, enrolment.

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## **ACRONYMS.**

ABET - Adult Basic Education and Training.

CM - Circuit Manager.

LTS - Learner teaching support material.

MEC - Member of Executive Council.

NCS - National Curriculum Statement.

OBE - Out Comes Based Education.

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

RDP - Reconstruction and Development Programme.

SMT - School Management Team.

UNESCO - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

U.S.S.R - Union Soviet Socialist Republic

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **ORIENTATION TO THE PROBLEM.**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION.**

Enrolment of farm school learners appears to be declining in most farm schools. Farm school educators face challenges such as migrating of learners to urban area schools because of inadequate sports facilities and lack of educational resources. It is against this background that the present study has been undertaken. The aim of the study is to investigate learners' enrolment in Bela - Bela farm schools.

The method of investigation will include observation and interviews. Three schools will be purposefully selected for this investigation. Three principals, three School Management Team members (SMT) of purposefully selected schools as well as the Circuit Manager (CM) will take part in the research.

In this chapter, the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, definition or clarification of concepts, delimitation of the study, the method of the investigation and chapter division are presented.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.**

The literature study is the main method of research used in the investigation, and is undertaken in fulfilment of all aims stated in paragraph 1.4.

### 1.2.1 Administration of farm schools.

Recently most of the Bela - Bela farm schools have low enrolment as compared to the past decade. The number of learners range from 6 to 20 as the school enrolment. This situation is similar with the one in the Russian Federation, according to data of the State Committee for the statistics of the Russian

Federation, the predominant size of enrolment in primary rural schools these days is 10 students or fewer (Gur'ianova 2006:71).

Gur'ianova (2006:68) further points out that farm schools in Russian Federation have a great deal of attention to organise work activities for the students, for example, they have carpentry shops and mechanic shops, many of them keep live stock facilities and have teaching plots and subsidiary farm operations. These types of practical situations are not prevailing in Bela – Bela farm schools. The reality in Bela -Bela farm schools is that general education is based on the system of the advanced regions without any reference to local conditions, as a dispenser of book learning which is doing nothing to prepare farm school learners for the real working world but accelerate the drift from the country side to towns (UNESCO 1980:17). The matter is supported by Ponder and Straham (2005:231) by citing that farm schools offer extremely limited educational opportunities and the education provided for the children is often inadequate and sub-standard.

One serious problem of farm schools is that they have limited pedagogical resources for organising the process of education. According to Leeb and Aitchison (1990:3) there is little academic activities and non-extramural curricular activities in the farm school, the matter is further stipulated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1994:10) by emphasising that farm school education is a matter of particular concern, as there is shortage of physical facilities and lack of equipment and resources. In terms of Christie and Gordon (1992:413) an adolescent who had not been

able to stay at school blamed school for their failure because they felt dejected and exploited and could have completed their schooling if they had had sufficient resources.

The researcher believe that once the learners feel that the schools had failed them, for example, because of poor management, they are likely to develop anti-school attitude, rather than those who see the school as providing the with skill and knowledge that will help them later on life. Benskin (1994:180) points out that, children do develop anti-school attitude if they feel that their teachers are not co-operative with them, and such learners are likely to drop out of school.

Constant absenteeism, early dropouts, regular late coming, limited participation in recreational and extra-curricular activities and poor academic performance is some of the features of farm school learners. The farm school administrators should get parents involvement together with other stake holders and nurture ties with community to improve and provide good education programmes in rural schools (Lawrence 2007:72). The administration of farm schools is more elaborated in chapter 2.

### **1.2.2 Financing of farm schools.**

The Department of Education is currently subsidising farm schools; however, the subsidy is limited because farm schools enrolments are very low. As Kollie (2007:55) mentioned that there is a vast difference in the amount receives by the rural schools when compared with town schools. Further more, Alan (2004:1) emphasises that there are drastic measures, which follow years of state budget cuts along with dropping enrolments in some rural schools. As long as the enrolment is low the state budget will remain being limited, this declining enrolment together with limited revenue forces some of the farm schools to close. Financing of farm schools is more emphasised in chapter 2.

### 1.2.3 Social structures of farm schools.

Social structure in this regard refers to social units, which co-operate in bringing about effective and efficient learning in farm schools. It is assumed that farm population are low-income group and assumed to be heterogeneous, and represents multiple problems such as poverty.

The social and cultural base of the small farm communities is inadequate to serve as a support for the proper school. When the farm school closes due to the low enrolments, the farm community members hardly show concern for the fate of the closed school or the fact that their children's education is suddenly interrupted (Duma 1995:1). Parents become disillusioned and the children's future is jeopardised by the fact that they are going to work on the farms instead of attending school. Auret, Mc Ivor, Chifunyise and Mc Cartney

(2000:48) indicate that many farm children drop out of school to take up the opportunity of working on the farms. This shows that the parents in the farms do not take the education of their children very serious.

Parents with little or no education often do not perceive the value of sending their children to school, and even such children begin school, they tend to drop out after a year or two. This is because of the lack of parental support and encouragement. As Auret et al (2000:16) indicate that parent in the farm do not know the right and the wrong of not going to school, they expect their children to contribute to the family's livelihood, to bring food home to eat fulfils a tangible and immediate need unlike education.

According to Auret et al (2000:13) some families do not send their children to farm schools because the quality and the value of what their children derive from such experience does not appear to benefit them directly. The education, which is received by the children from farm schools, should be qualitative and relevant to their needs,

because after grade seven children have nowhere to go except to follow their parents' footsteps in the farmers' field.

In contrary with the situation prevailing in Bela - Bela farm schools with regard to the needs and relevant education, Gur'ianova (2000:73) emphasises that rural schools require comprehensive analysis of the school internal characteristics and their socio-cultural and productive environment, taking account of the educational needs of the individual who lives in a particular environment. The productive environment should be included in the general education of the farm schools in order to address the issue of relevant education.

The mobility through education is a possibility for the parents to create a critical pathway to opportunity for their children born into poor families and those who are marginalised because of the environment (Fram, Miller-Gribbs & Van Horn 2007:310). The matter is further stipulated by Schafft (2006: 214) that the student mobility from farm schools to state schools is approaching or even exceeding 40%. This indicates the high degree of migration from farm schools to urban areas. The issue of social structures of farm schools is more clarified in chapter2.

### **1.3 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.**

In the context of educational management option proposed for dropping enrolment of farm school learners in Bela - Bela district. What are the needs for increasing enrolment of learners in farm schools? In order to answer this, the following questions need to be answered.

- What are the causes of learners migrating to township schools?
- How is the Government financing farm schools?

The research problem of the study is: Enrolment of learners in Bela - Bela farm schools.

Research sub-headings are:

- Enrolment of farm schools seems to be declining.
- Bela - Bela farm schools have enough educational resources or not.
- Whether, the social life on farm schools has impact on the education of the learners.

#### **1.4 THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH.**

The aim of the research is to investigate the declining of learners' enrolment in Bela – Bela farm schools.

Research sub-aims are:

- To investigate if the administration of farm schools causes learners to migrate to township schools.
- To investigate the financing of farm schools by Government.
- To investigate the social structure of farm schools.

#### **1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS.**

1.5.1. Education is a human act directed at a fellow human being who meaningfully designs his own world by means of particular norms (Griessel, Louw & Swart 1989:6).

1.5.2 Education management is an interactive, interrelated process used by educational leaders who manage learning and teaching in schools (van Deventer et al 2003:65)

1.5.3 Farm school, Gaganakis and Chewe (1987:3) describe farm school as school that cater for Black children residing on White farms. Since these schools are on private land, the initiative for establishing them rests entirely on the owner of the farm.



- On the other hand, Nasson (1984:1) defines a farm school as a structure for formal school education in White agricultural areas located in the context of the disciplinary social order which farm life produces.

- 1.5.4 Social structure, in this study social structure refers to social units, which co-operate in bringing about effective teaching and efficient learning in the farm schools in Bela - Bela district.
- 1.5.5 Inclusive education, this is about accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and all learners can learn and need support (White Paper5 1997:16).
- 1.5.6 Multi-cultural education, this is education through many cultures (Leicester 1989:24).
- 1.5.7 Multi-grade classes, two or more grade taught at the same time in one classroom.
- 1.5.8 Education, is a human act directed at a fellow human being who meaningfully designs his own world by means of particular norms (Griessel, Louw & Swart 1989:6)

## **1.6 DELIMITATION OF RESEARCH.**

The researcher has realised that educating farm school-children involves problems in which few people are interested. As Duma (1995:3) indicates that a cross section of field of comparative education reveals that very little research has been conducted on farm schools, as such there is relatively unavailability of recent literature on farm schools, particularly within the context of South African farm schools education.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.**

### **1.7.1 Introduction.**

Glesne (1999:26) suggests that qualitative research depends on variety of methods for gathering information. As Burgess (1985:4) cites that researchers who utilise a qualitative research method in their investigations have tended to use a range of methods such as

observation of people, situations and events, formal and informal interviews, and analysis of human artifacts.

### **1.7.2 Design.**

According to Meloy (1994:68) qualitative research requires personal rather than detached engagement in context, it requires multiple, simultaneous actions and reactions from human being who is the researcher instrument. As such, the researcher will use the qualitative design as is suitable for this study and will permit insight into the perceptions, attitude and feelings of the respondents (Blauw 1998:35). In this case the researcher will observe, classify and conclude seeking whenever possible, to capture the reality of the situation and not his or her own reality (Lancy 1993:9).

### **1.7.3 Approaches.**

The researcher proposes to use case study and phenomenology as the approaches. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:135) case study is a particular individual or event studied in-depth for a defined period of time. DeVos, Srydom, Fouche' and Delport (2005:275) further emphasise that the exploration and description of the case take place through detailed, in-depth data collection method, involving multiple resources of information that are rich in context whereby they include interviews, documents, observation or artifacts.

Phenomenology is defined by Leedy and Ormrod (2005:139) as a person's perception of meaning of event, and in cases, the researcher has had personal experience related to the phenomenon in question and want to gain better understanding of experience of others. De Vos et al (2005:273) cite that the researcher should be able to enter subject's life or life settings and places him/herself in the shoes of the subjects. The researcher has personal experience of the phenomenon as the farm school educator.

#### **1.7.4 Sampling and selection of participants.**

As noted by Johnson and Christensen (2000:156), sampling is selecting representative individual from a population. For this study, a combination of convenience and purposeful sampling will be used. The research site chosen for this study will be three farm schools in Bela -Bela district. The principal, the chairperson of the school governing body (SGB), the School Management Team (SMT) as well as the Circuit Manager (CM) will take part in the research.

#### **1.7.5 Research methods.**

The following methods will be used to gather information in order to realise the aim of the research.

##### **1.7.5.1 Interviews.**

The researcher will use semi-structured one to one interviewing as an information collection method. With semi-structured interviews, the researcher will use a set of predetermined questions on an interview schedule (De Vos et al 2005:302).

- *Interview process.*

A permission will be requested from the participants to use a tape-recorder. The participants will be informed in advance about the day and time when the interview would be conducted. The interviewer will first visit the principals at schools to introduce himself. The second visit will be when interviews are to be conducted.

Ten open-ended questions will be listed for the interviews. The tape recorder will be used during the interview process. It will be explained to the interviewees that no names

of schools or people will be used, but only the relevant information the study. This will foster a climate of trust (Mothobi 2001 :44). All the respondents will be asked the same questions in the same order and if probes are anticipated, they too will be standardised (Coetz & Le Compte 1984:119). The tape will later be transcribed verbatim for close analysis. The researcher will always sit down immediately after an interview and jot down his impression of the interview.

#### **1.7.5.2 Documents study.**

In order to gather more information, the researcher will in his settings request the official documents that are formal and structured, such documents will include minutes and agendas of meetings, statistical reports, annual reports and summary registers (De Vos et al 2005:321).

#### **1.7.6 Data analysis.**

According to Mc Millan and Schumacher, (2001:461) qualitative analysis is a relatively systematic process of selecting, categorising and interpreting to provide explanation of the single phenomenon of interest. As O'Sullivan, Owen, Rothwell and Saunders (1990:121) cite that as part of the process the researcher may find that it is useful to make summaries of each interview noting major themes across the interviews as conducted. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990:389) further point out that fieldwork, interview and observation should be reviewed daily. Incidents and bits of information will first be coded into tentative conceptual categories by the researcher. Analysis will start as soon as the first set of data is gathered and will run parallel with collection because each activity ( data collection and interim analysis ) informs and derives the other activity (Mc Millan & Schumacher 2001:464).

The researcher will use the combination of the template analytical style and an editing analytical style, as these are the techniques of comparing and contrasting in practically intellectual task during analysis: identifying data segments, naming a topic or category and classifying. In this way, the category will be tentative in the beginning, and remain flexible rather than rigid by so doing the researcher will be identifying similarities (Mc Millan & Schumacher 2001:464).

## **1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION.**

Chapter 1, is an orientation to the problem and deals with the introduction, motivation, background to the study, problem formulation and the aim of the study.

Chapter 2, in this chapter the literature study will concentrate on a wide review of relevant writings such as books, periodicals, reports, documents and newspaper articles that will give a broad background of farm schools management including learners' enrolment as well as farm schools social structures.

Chapter 3, includes the research design and a brief explanation of the theory underpinning the methodology, as well as the way in which the researcher has planned to do the research. The combination of template and editing styles will be used to analyse the data.

Chapter 4, this chapter sets out the result of the research.

Chapter 5, includes the summary, conclusion and recommendation.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION.**

In this chapter, the researcher focuses on the literature study, which concentrates on work load of educators (school base), the history of farm schools, legislation and policy, socio-economic conditions of farm societies, challenges of principals and some possible solutions.

The literature review will serve as a framework for the empirical part of an investigation of the learners' enrolment in farm schools. Informed by the research sub-headings of the study, namely: Enrolment of farm schools seem to be declining, Bela – Bela farm schools have enough educational resources or not, and whether the social life on farms has impact on the education of learners, the emphasis on literature review is on the social-economic conditions of farm societies and administration of farm schools. However, the effect of low enrolment and merger of small schools as they form part of the administration are briefly discussed.

### **2.2 THE WORKLOAD OF EDUCATORS (SCHOOL BASED).**

#### **2.2.1 Schedule teaching time per post level (Primary schools).**

In terms of Education Labour Relation Council (1999:3c-7) the work done by educators includes the core duties covered during a formal day (with or without contact with the pupils) and outside the formal school day. Each post level within the school has different duties and responsibilities, encompassing the core duties but to a varying degrees.

According to Education Labour Relation Council (1999: 3C-8) the allocation of schedules teaching time should be done in such a manner that it maximises the individual abilities of all educators and maximises the individual abilities of all educators and optimises teaching and learning at the institutional level. It further stipulates that, the scheduled teaching time for post level 1 should be between 85% and 92%, but because the farm schools educators face more than one grade in one classroom at the same time with all the learning areas of the particular grades, as such scheduled teaching time is 100%, there are no free periods.

In terms of Education Labour Relation Council (1999 : 3c-8) the scheduled teaching time for principal is between 10% and 92%, depending on which post appointed to. The farm school principals' appointments range from post level 1 to post level 3. According to Education Labour Relation Council, the principal at post level 1 has 100% teaching time and it is like that in farm schools, but then principals at post levels 2 and 3 also have 100% teaching time because they teach multi-grade classes with no free periods and this is not in line with what the Act says, which is between 10% and 92%.

### **2.2.2 Schedule teaching time per post level. ( Secondary schools )**

In terms of the Education Labour Relation Council (1999:3c-9) the schedule teaching time per post level at Secondary schools are as follows:

Post level 1 is between 85% and 90%, post level 2 is 85%, deputy principal is 60% and principal is between 5% and 60%, depending on which post level appointed to. It is further stipulated that principals appointed at post level 1 be expected to teach 100% of the scheduled time. In farm schools 100% teaching time, affect all educators irrespective of post level in which the educator is appointed to, because of the multi-grade classes, as there is no free periods.

### **2.2.3 Duties and responsibilities of educators.**

In terms of the Education Labour Relation Council (1999:3c-14) educators at post level 1, their duties and responsibilities are individual and varied depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school. Their duties are class teaching including academic, administrative, educational and disciplinary aspects, and to organise extra and co-curricular activities in order to ensure that the education of learners is promoted in a proper manner.

Educators in post level 2 are engaged in class teaching, be responsible for the effective functioning of the department and to organise extra-curricular activities so as to ensure that the subject, learning area or phase and the education of the learner is promoted in a proper manner ( Education Labour Relation Council 1999 : 3c-12 ). But then, in case of farm schools, post 2 and 3 are occupied by the principals depending on the size of the school, because it is assumed that the post establishment of farm school does not exceed five educators.

Principals appointed at post level 1,2,3 or 4 their core duties and responsibilities are general administration, professional leadership to personnel, engage in class teaching as per work load, promote extra and co-curricular activities in the school, interact with stake holders and the school community.

## **2.3 THE HISTORY OF FARM SCHOOLS.**

According to Stuart (2002:2), the establishment of farm schools was an arrangement between the former state and the farm owners. The farmer provided the land, half of the building costs and either managed the school himself or nominated someone else to do so, whereas the state subsidised the farmer and the school.

In terms of Stuart (2002:2), the arrangement mentioned in the above paragraph benefited both the state and the farm owner. According to Stuart (2002:2) the Government and the farmer alike, also hoped that establishing farm schools would



give African labourers an incentives to remain in rural areas rather than trying to move to the cities in search of better living conditions and high wages.

### **2.3.1 Multi grade classes.**

Bratcher (1973:284 – 285) cites that the Minister of education in U.S.S.R reported that the quality of education at the small schools is lower, and the material conditions of such schools is worse than in the city schools. The main reason is that teachers work with two or more grades in one class-room at the same time.

According to Bratcher (1973:285) classes are usually scheduled in the following order:

The first two class periods are devoted entirely to the first and second grades. Working simultaneously with these two grades, the teacher assigns independent work to one while working directly with the other. This procedure is alternated every 15 to 20 minutes. The learners of the third grade arrive at school at the beginning of the third period, and then the two class periods are conducted with all the three grades. At the end of the fourth period , the first and the second grades are dismissed, and the two remaining periods are devoted to the third grade. Within this extremely tight schedule, the teacher is required to provide adequate time to the direction and correction of independent work and to the explanation of homework and assignments. The scheduled teaching time in U.S.S.R on farm schools is similar with the one in South African farm schools as both conduct multi-grade classes.

### **2.3.2 Child labour and teenage pregnancy.**

According to Stuart (2002:3) child labour is the most disturbing and insidious practice associated with farm schooling. Stuart (2002:3) further cites that there is much evidence to suggest that farm school children are being systematically exploited. Despite that child labour is now illegal, the practice still continues.

Stuart (2002:3) indicates that there are evidence from Fairleigh Farm School in Camperdown district of Kwa-Zulu Natal that learners have been routinely forced to assist in harvesting crops, and that SANGOCO Poverty Hearings also heard account of learners in

North West Province being taken out of school to help with harvests. According to Stuart (2002:3) recent investigations by the Northern Cape Department of Labour suggests that child labour is still common on many farms.

Auret et al (2000:48) indicate that many farm school children drop out of school to take up the opportunity of working on the farms. This shows that parents on the farms do not take the education of their children very serious. The research conducted by Auret et al (2000:14) found the following difficulties that inhibit schooling.

- Lack of interest on the part of children.
- No money for the school uniforms.
- Becoming an orphan.
- Food shortages.
- Walking long distance to school.
- Early marriages (girls).
- Desire to work on the farms.
- Teenage pregnancies.
- Families too large to afford fees.
- Looking after siblings.
- Parental illness.
- Lack of parental support for education.

In most cases the number of children attending school falls as the term progress, because at the beginning of the term children come to live with their relatives who are

close to a school, but with time the children cannot tolerate the treatment they get from their relatives so they leave and some drop-out of schools.

### **2.3.3 Deplorable condition.**

According to Ndandani (2001:380) there is inequality in the standard of education received by rural and urban pupils and consequently, in their future opportunities. Bratcher (1973:284) concurs with the above statement that the quality of the farm schools is lower, and the material conditions of such schools is worse than in the city schools. Ndandani (2001:380) further points that most small rural communities in South Africa have no schools and children from such villages have to walk or travel relatively long distances to reach schools in the neighbouring villages.

According to Stuart (2002:12) all schools are likely to require well maintained buildings. Basic sanitation, appropriately trained teachers and sufficient quantities of teaching materials, but all these essentials appear to lack in varying degrees across the farm school sector.

In terms of section 12 of the Constitution of South Africa (1996:9) education should be carried on free from unlawful or illegitimate interference, children should be safe from all forms of harassment when in schools, but in some instances learners found themselves in unfavourable learning conditions ,as Hans (2007:2) points out that the farm owner has put a fence around the school, closing the gate to vehicle entry and barring teachers and education officials from accessing the school premises.

Msomi (2007:2) indicates that the MEC for Education in Kwa-Zulu Natal has said that, they will not tolerate the fact that some children are being denied the right to education, because of the closure of four farm schools by the farmers due to various problems.

According to Duma (1995:1) the social and cultural base of the small farm communities is inadequate to serve as a support for the proper school. When the farm school closes due to the low enrolment, the farm community members hardly show concern for the fate of the closed school or the fact that their children's education is suddenly interrupted.

Auret et al (2007:13) cite that most farm school teachers complain that low enrolment, the unwillingness of parents to pay fees, their lack of interest in raising funds for the school is due to community ignorance. Thus, farm schools community have limited opportunity for organising the process of education because of this type of social isolation, which is a significant structural barrier to academic success. Fram et al (2000:313) emphasises that parents act as resources for their children's learning by sharing their knowledge, investing time and energy, and acquiring materials and opportunities that can optimize child development.

Parents may be better positioned to enhance their child learning when they have more education and economic resources and the added parent-child time is often possible in two-parent household. Then, the culture of poverty inhibits academic success in ethnic minority communities (Fram et al 2007:310). In comparison with American South, Fram et al (2007:310) state that a high level of poverty, especially in a large black population there is generally poor performance in most domains of education quality.

Parents with little or no education, often do not perceive the value of sending their children to school, and even when such children begin school, they tend to drop-out of school after a year or two (Auret et al 2000:15). This is because of the lack of parental support and encouragement. As Auret et al (2000:16) indicate that parent in the farm do not know the right and the wrong of going to school, they expect their children to contribute to the family's livelihood, to bring food home to eat fulfils a tangible and immediate need unlike education.

According to Auret et al (2000:16) the lack of conducive home environment militates against children benefiting adequately from their schooling. Children find it extremely difficult to do home-works, as one child explains: “We do not have adequate accommodation , the boys have to use dining room as their bedroom and it is difficult to study at night because our father comes back from the beer hall drunk and makes a lot of noise. This situation is worsened by the neighbours who open their radios loudly so that one can hardly concentrate”. As Auret et al (2000:17) conducted a research and found that most of the farm parents drink a lot, the little they earn is spent on beer. They think primary school is enough for their children.

One other problem of rural parents in their children’s education as noted by Auret et al (2000:22) is the extended families or polygamy. In most polygamous marriages, it would seem that the children of the youngest wife attend school, as sometimes do the older boys. In such situation, the girls feel resentful because invariably their education has to be stopped.

However, not all the farm parents are negligent to their children’s education, as one of the parents indicates that the education their children receive is not relevant because after grade four they have nowhere to go (Auret et al 2000 : 13) this shows eagerness of parent to the child’s education.

#### **2.4 LEGISLATION AND POLICY.**

According to Newton and Tarrant (1992:125) policies outline a framework of law, and state how organisation will discharge legal responsibilities. They all expect and require certain key actions to be undertaken, levels of awareness and knowledge to exist, and responsibilities to be undertaken. In this section, concentration is based on the Bill of Rights, multi-cultural education and inclusive education.

### **2.4.1 Bill of Rights.**

In terms of the Constitution of South Africa (1996:15) every child has the right to be protected from exploitative labour practices and every child has the right not to be required to perform work or provide services that are inappropriate for a person of that child's age. According to Stuart (2002:3) there are some farmers who contravene this Act, because learners in some farm schools are routinely forced to assist in harvesting crops, which implies that the Rights of those children are not respected.

Stuart (2002:11) cites that education in all levels shall exhibit the following interrelated and essential features:

- Availability, functioning educational institution and programmes have to be available in sufficient quantity within the jurisdiction of the state property.
- Accessibility, educational institutions and programmes have to be accessible to everyone without discrimination within the jurisdiction of the state property.
- Acceptability, the form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods have to be acceptable.
- Adaptability, education should be flexible so it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities to the needs of learners within their adverse.

According to Stuart (2002:11) it is unlikely that the state could point to any law of general application that justified withholding the resources necessary to give effect to basic education for learners in a poverty stricken farm schools. The education of farm schools is not flexible to the needs of the changing society, its curricula are unacceptable and there is a great shortage of proper educational resources.

#### **2.4.2 Multicultural education.**

According to Leicester (1989:24) multicultural education is sometimes used to mean education through many cultures in the sense that the educative process makes use of multicultural elements. The curricula should incorporate a variety of cultural traditions in such a way that the teachers basic educational aims and objectives are achievable. Multicultural education is therefore about eliminating ethnocentricity from our teaching by getting rid of ethnic bias from lesson content, teaching approaches and learning materials. Then in farm schools, a culturally plural dimension does not permeate the curriculum. There is still untouched deep-seated racial prejudices and unfair discrimination built into the farm school societies, as there are no white children in these small farm schools. The reason might be that the farm school curriculum is still addressing mono-cultural education where it deprives children of much that is value and interest.

According to the Education White Paper 2 (1996:36) if South Africa has to develop an internationally competitive agricultural production capacity, the farm school system should create a supportive education system to ensure that learners who wish to follow an agricultural career have the requisite education and skills to meet these demands. It further stipulates that the current education system, with its high dropout rate of learners, cannot meet the required curriculum demands.

Sharma (2008:297) cites that learners in government-run schools in rural India possess much experiential knowledge of the world around them. In support of the statement, Southworth (1999:29) emphasises that working in the garden, taking care of animals and repairing things are pretty typical farm activities. At the farm school they become teaching moments, tightly focused lessons about making sense of the world and person's place in it. The learners' efforts actually affect the farm's continue success, and

their work has tangible purpose and product. The curriculum standards are supported in ways that fit naturally into a larger, more holistic scheme.

Gur'ianova (2006:68) further points out that farm schools in Russian Federation have great deal of attention to organise work activities for the students, for example, they have carpentry shops and mechanic shops, many of them keep live stock facilities and have teaching plots and subsidiary farm operations. These types of practical situation are not prevailing in Bela - Bela farm schools. The reality in Bela -Bela farm schools is that general education is based on the system of the advanced regions without any reference to local conditions, as a dispenser of book learning that is doing nothing to prepare farm school learners for the real working world but accelerate the drift from the countryside to towns (UNESCO 1980:17).

According to Brewton (1939:401) small schools never have been given a chance to develop a real educational program. Brewton (1939:400) further points out those rural schools are divorced from their communities by consolidation, use of textbooks and courses of study designed primarily to meet the needs of graded urban schools, these are some of the evidences of urban practices being imposed upon rural schools.

In terms of Leeb and Aitchison (1990:3) there is little academic activities and non-extramural curricular activities in farm schools. In support of the above statement, Gullford (1996:119) cites that because of the isolation, rural schools have little opportunity to participate in organised sports.

### **2.4.3 Inclusive education.**

According to White Paper 5 (1997:10) the National Disability Strategy condemns the segregation of persons with disabilities from the mainstream of society. It emphasises the need for including persons with disabilities in the work place, social environment,



political sphere and sports arenas. It further indicates that the Ministry sees the establishment of an inclusive education as a cornerstone of an intergraded and caring society, and an education and training for 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The nature and condition of South African farm schools with great lack of resources as indicated by Education White Paper 2 (1996:3) the capacity of offering inclusive education as required. According to White Paper 5 (1997:24 ) establishing an inclusive education require changes to mainstream education so that learners experiencing learning barriers to learning can be identified early and appropriate support provided.

In contrary, the White Paper 2 (1996:36) elaborates that the current farm school system with the lack of resources to implement an appropriate mainstream curriculum cannot meet the required demands. Then how can such a system offer inclusive education?

Limited pedagogical resources for organising the process of education is a serious problem of farm schools, the matter is further stipulated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1994:10) by emphasising that farm school education is a matter of particular concern, as there is shortage of physical facilities and lack of equipment and resources. Roemer (1928:41) stipulates that small school means practically no working library, very poor science equipment, if any usually no playground equipment, usually no gymnasium or auditorium. There is no sign that resources for disabled learners will be distributed to farm schools.

According to Gullford (1996:118), many farm schools have difficulties of attracting well-qualified teachers, as noted by Fram et al (2007:312) that high poverty and high minority schools, on average, have teachers with less experience, less education and lower level of credentials.

Bray (1987:30) emphasises that teachers in rural areas have fewer formal qualifications because remote areas are sometimes used as dumping grounds for teachers who are incompetent, thus having the negative effect on the performance of learners. He further indicates that the smallest schools have only one teacher who only offers what he/she can teach. In this instance, some learners develop an anti-school attitude if they think that their teacher is not co-operative with them and such learners are likely to drop out of school (Benskim 1994:180). If learners feel that the school has failed them, they are more likely to develop anti-school attitude, rather than those who see the school as providing them with the skills and knowledge that will help them later on in life.

Mentz (2001:3) points out that teachers in farm schools have a negative attitude towards their work and they are of the opinion that they have less opportunities than their colleagues in urban schools. He further alludes that teachers in farm schools are academically not as well qualified as teachers in urban schools as such for inclusive education it will be worse.

According to Keith (1989:2) the farm schools are widely dispersed, making it difficult for teachers to interact with each other professionally in order to share ideas, experiences, success and failures. Professional exchange remains at a minimum. Bray (1987:31) emphasises that small schools are also criticised for their restricted internal social environment, because some are one-teacher school, whereby if a pupil may suffer personal clashes with the teacher, this will unfortunately be for the entire schooling, unless a learner drop out or go to another school.

Auret et al (2000:13) mentions that there is a high level of teacher absenteeism in farm schools, which means that classes are left unattended or supervised by someone who does not have time to offer any useful education, and this de-motivate learners and ultimately they dropout of school.

## **2.5 SOCIO – ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF FARM SOCIETIES.**

It is assumed that farm population are low-income group and to be heterogeneous and represents multiple problems such as poverty. According to Stuart (2002:4) transforming farm school education is as much about addressing rural poverty as improving farm school facilities and educator training.

Most farm school learners come from labouring families. Stuart (2002:4) alludes that living conditions on the farms are harsh, and farm labourers have little access to the outside world, therefore there is no standards of comparison that would allow them to become conscious of the hardships they endure. These hardships include very low wages, poor living conditions and often-violent relationship with their employer.

The conditions on commercial farms remain desperate for most farm labourers, and eviction is an ever-present threat, this is proved by the testimony given to the 1998 SANGOCO Poverty Hearing, which bears out: “The forced eviction of farm dwellers has a serious impact on the education of their children. Martha Mothantau and Pikiini Nameka told the Free State hearings of nine families being thrown off the farm where they have been working for no apparent reason. They were dumped along the side of the tar road and the women were forced to sleep in a local police station that evening. Because of eviction, they were forced to ask people living on other farms to assist with their children schooling “(Stuart 2002:4).

According to Ngwenya (1988:1) farm schools are schools for Black children on white owned farms, jointly controlled by farmers and the Department of Education, which simply shows that the social structure of farm schools in South Africa is constituted by teachers, learners, parents, farm owners and the nearby community (farm labourers ).The image of farm schools in terms of the South African context as defined by Ngwenya (1988:1) above, is more different as compared to farm schools in the Russian

Federation, according to Gur'ianova (2006:68) farm schools in the Russian Federation serves as educational, social and cultural institutions. As a rule, they serve as the basis for the functioning of various educational, cultural, social and public units.

## **2.6 CHALLENGES FOR THE PRINCIPALS.**

The principals come across different challenges in respect of the size and the environment in which the school is situated. The farm school principals have different challenges as compared with the urban school principals. Hereunder follow some farm school principals' challenges.

- Kampol (1994:87) points out that the notion of the individual that justifies actual teacher routines, which include intentional teacher resistance to authority and defiance of the structural imitation. These resistance and accommodation allow teachers to suit their own personal needs and alleviate their occupational frustrations. However, this type of challenge is not deep-rooted at the farm schools.
- Bray (1987:30) cites that teachers in rural areas have fewer formal qualifications because remote area are sometimes used as dumping grounds for teachers who are incompetent, thus having negative effect on the performance of learners. According to Newton and Tarrant (199: 15) it is the duty of the principal to see to it that the under-qualified teachers undergo In-service Training with the intention to improve skills in relation to communicating, counselling and problem solving.
- Auret et al (2000:13) mentions that there is a high level of teacher absenteeism at farm schools and this leads to poor performance. Gullford (1996:118) concurs that rural children pass through school more slowly and score lower on standard

tests, and when a pupil moves from a farm school to a school in town the principal may require the pupil to repeat a standard because of the generally low quality of farm school education.

- Inadequate funding and limited educational resources, according to Kollie (2000:55) there is a vast difference in amount receiving by rural schools when compared with urban schools and the MEC of Limpopo Department of Education (2008:15) further elaborates that in small schools, the no fee status does not help them in any way because the amount is awarded per learner.
- Learners drop out of school, there are various reasons here, it might be because of the eviction of the family of the children from the farm by the farm owner as noted by Stuart (2002:4) or the closure of school by the farmer as noted by Msomi (2007:2) or teenage pregnancy.
- According to Newton and Tarrant (1992:51) changes coming from outside have been viewed as challenges to which the organisation must respond, he further indicates that most of the major problems faced by the principals are thus usually seen as stemming from changes in the environment, like the Department policies and curriculum in which the school should implement, parents choice, the nature of the pupils' attendance and so on.

## **2.7 SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS.**

According to Glasman (1994:9) the emphasises is to generate several possible alternate solution before arriving at the final solutions. In this section, the possible solution to address the problem of decline learners' enrolment in Bela - Bela farm schools.

- Merging of neighbouring schools, according to Alan (2004:1) even having several new students in the school, enrolment will continue to dwindle whereby some schools are faced with the possibility of being forced to close or merge.
- Government to expropriate land occupied by farm schools so to renovate and sustain them.
- Changing the curriculum of the farm schools from the main stream to specific specialisation, for example, agricultural schools.
- Government to transport learners from overcrowded nearby urban schools to farm schools in order to use the dysfunctional buildings.

## **2.7 SUMMARY.**

In this chapter, the researcher presents an overview of the literature on farm schools to put the research problem into perspective. According to Limpopo Department of Education (2008:15) the MEC for education points out that a school with low enrolment is very difficult to manage on the basis that :

- The staff establishment is educationally unsound and teachers are always unhappy.
- Multi-grade teaching is enforced, compromising curriculum delivery.
- While learner numbers are low, teachers still feel over-burdened with work because of the many subject areas and multi-grade teaching.
- Logistical supplies such as books and food are a nightmare. Just imagine a tender to deliver one loaf of bread to a school because there are only three learners.

In terms of Limpopo Department of Education (2008:15) the MEC cites that they have decided to merge some schools in the province to eliminate negative factors affecting the enrolment of small schools. He further elaborates that it is important to note that even a school with five learners still requires two teachers because in terms of the law, no school

must have less than two teachers. It is logical that all neighbouring small schools should be merged into one.

According to Blaine (2007:4) the North West Department of Education concurs with Limpopo Department of Education as they too wants to merge the small schools to deal with the plight of children attending farm schools, with the largest challenge being the sustainability of small schools. Simpkins, Thomas and Thomas (1987:105) further elaborate that the demographic pressure on farm schools had driven them to the point of collapse.

## **CHAPTER 3.**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION.**

The literature review in chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework for the empirical part of an investigation of the learners' enrolment in farm schools. This chapter will present a detailed research design and methodology of this study. This will include data collection and data analysis procedures.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:33) research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions. The design describes the procedure for conducting the study, including when, from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained. In other words, design indicates how the research is set up, what happens to the subjects and the how methods of data collection are used. The researcher will use the qualitative design for the following reasons:

Qualitative design typically investigate behaviour as it occurs naturally in non-contrived situations and there is no manipulation of conditions or experience (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:40). Qualitative method is important for this study because it will capture the richness and complexity of behaviour that occurs in natural settings from the participants' perspective (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:46).

In order for the researcher to discover the natural flow of events and processes, and how participants interpret them, a qualitative research as a naturalistic inquiry is a very important non-interfering data collection strategy. The researcher will collect data in the



form of words rather than numbers through recorded interviews, observations and document analysis, however numerical data will be used to elaborate the findings identified in the qualitative analysis (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:391). Reality is viewed as multilayered, interactive, and a shared social experience interpreted by individuals. There is in-depth verbal description of phenomena. (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:392).

Qualitative method is important for this study because is concerned with understanding of the social phenomenon from the participants' perspective. Understanding is acquired by analysing the many contexts of the participants and by narrating participants' meanings for their situations and events, these includes their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions concerning their social life in the farms (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 373).

The researcher uses a qualitative design because he wants to obtain a more holistic picture of what goes on in a particular situation or settings, in this study the settings are three farm schools in Bela-Bela district (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:391).

### **3.2.1 Population.**

It is important for researchers to carefully and completely define both target population and the sampling frame. This begins with the research problem and the review of literature, through which a population is described conceptually or in broad terms (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:169). Hereunder follows more description of population.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:169) a population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events that confirm to specific criteria and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research. In this study, the research population is the farm schools at Bela-Bela District in Limpopo Province.

### **3.2.2 Literature review.**

A literature review is not a summary of various studies, but rather an integration of reviewed sources around particular trends and themes (Glesne 1999:21).

According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1994: 10) and Education White Paper 2 (1996:36) farm school education is a matter of particular concern, because there is shortage of physical facilities and lack of equipment and resources. Gulford (1996:118) argues that many farm schools have difficulties of attracting well-qualified teachers, as noted by Fram et al (2007:312) that high poverty and minority schools on average have less experience, less education and lower level of credentials. Bray (1987:30) concurs that teachers in rural areas have fewer formal qualifications because remote areas are sometimes used as dumping grounds for teachers who are incompetent, thus having negative effect on the performance of learners.

According to Department of Education-Education White Paper 2 (1996:36) the current education system with its high drop-out rate of learners cannot meet the required curricula demands. South Africa has to develop an internationally competitive agricultural production capacity. The farm school education system should be a supportive system that will ensure learners who wish to follow an agricultural career have the requisite education and skills to meet the necessary demands.

The South African farm school curriculum is based on the general education system without any reference to local conditions, as a dispenser of book learning which is doing nothing to prepare farm school learners for the real working world but accelerate the drift from the country side to towns (UNESCO 1980:17). In contrary, Sharma (2008:297) cites that learners in government run schools in rural India possess much experiential knowledge of the world around them. Southworth (1999: 29) alludes that working in

garden, taking care of animals and repairing things are pretty typical farm activities. Gu'rianova (2006:68) further elaborates that farm schools in Russian Federation have great deal of attention to organise work activities for the students, for example, many of them keep live stock facilities and have teaching plots and subsidiary farm operations.

According to Stuart (2002:4) and Msomi (2007:2) the eviction of the family of the learners from the farms by the farm owners, the closure of schools by the farm owners and teenage pregnancy contribute to a high level of learner dropout, and this bears negative impact on the farm schools enrolment.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.**

According to Cohen and Manion (1994:38) research methodology means the range of approaches used in the educational research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction. de Marrais and Lapan (2004:5) describe methodology as the theory of how inquiry should proceed. That involves analysis of the principles and procedures in particular field of inquiry. Much more than just methods or tools of research, methodology involves the researchers' assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of knowing and knowledge.

Glesne (1999:3) define research as a careful and diligent search. Glesne (1999: 3) further cites that quantitative and qualitative researchers use similar elements in their work. They state a purpose, pose a problem or raise a question, define a research population, develop a time frame, collect and analyse data and present outcomes. Nonetheless, how researchers go about putting these elements together makes distinctive differences in both the research process and final product. According to Glesne (1999:5) qualitative researchers interact and talk with participants about their perceptions in order to understand the nature of constructed realities.

This study on the decline of learners in farm schools is qualitative, exploratory and descriptive. According to Melody (1994:68) qualitative research requires personal rather than detached engagement in context, it requires multiple, simultaneous actions and reactions from human being who is the researcher instrument. As De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2005: 273) cite that the researcher should be able to enter subjects life or life settings and places himself/herself in the shoes of the subjects.

In this research, a qualitative approach is deemed most suitable, as it provides school managers and teachers the opportunity to define their own perceptions and problems. The study is designed to be exploratory and descriptive. Data will be analyzed using methods typical of qualitative methodology. The following methods will be employed to collect and analyze data.

### **3.3.1 Sampling procedure.**

As noted by Johnson and Christensen (2000:156) sampling is selecting representative individual from a population, De Vos et al (2005:199) further cite that a sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study or it can be viewed as a subset of measurement drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:393) the primary purpose of qualitative research is not to generalise the findings, but to collect data in specific cases, events or documents that clarify the researcher's understanding of research participants' experiences and responses to such experiences.

For this study, a combination of convenience and purposive sampling will be used. A convenience sample is a group of subject selected because of availability, for this study, the educators in the three-selected farm schools are available (McMillan & Schumacher 1992:74). In purposive sampling, the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic. In this

study, the farm school educators and the Circuit Manager (CM) are selected (McMillan & Schumacher 1992:74).

### **3.3.2 Sample size.**

Three farm schools were selected from the nine in Bela-Bela District. The principal, one member of the School Management Team (SMT) for each school, as well as the Circuit Manager (CM) will take part in the research.

## **3.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES.**

This is the varieties of observational and interviewing methods and data recording techniques with the circumstances and processes to assure accurate records. How different strategies were employed is noted. In this study, semi-structure interviews, observations and documents analysis will serve as corroborative data collection strategies (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:413).

### **3.4.1 Semi structure interview.**

The researcher will use the semi-structured one to one interviewing as an information collection method. With semi-structured interviews, the researcher will use a set of predetermined questions on an interview schedule (De Vos et al 2005:302).

#### **3.4.1.1 Conducting the semi-structure interviews.**

According to Lancy (1993:18) qualitative researchers use the open ended questionnaire where respondents have a great deal of latitudes in composing their responses. In this study, all the respondents will be asked the same questions in the same order which is a

semi-structured one to one interviewing, and if probes are anticipated, they too will be standardised (Coetz & Le Compte 1984:119).

#### 3.4.1.2 Field notes.

According to De Vos et al (2005:304) field notes are written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks about in the course of interview. Flick (2006:285) further maintained that the notes taken in interviews should contain the essentials of the interviewee's answers and information about the proceeding of the interview. The researcher will always sit down immediately after an interview and jot down his impression of the interview.

#### 3.4.1.3 Key informant interviewing.

Key informants are individuals who possess special knowledge, status or communication skills and willing to share that knowledge and skills with the researcher, in this instance the respondents are the Circuit Manager of Bela – Bela circuit, the principals of the three farm schools and one SMT member of each particular farm school (Coetz & Le Compte 1984:119).

### **3.4.2 Observation.**

According to Hopkins (1976:88) the educational researcher uses observation to identify problem areas. He/ She use observation to acquire a background of knowledge pertaining to the problem and use this knowledge to develop a hypothesis. He/ She uses observation to gather data that can be used to test the hypothesis and conclusions are developed after observing the result of the data collections.

In this study, the researcher is a participant observer because he had been a farm school educator for seventeen years. As Glesne (1999:44) cites that as a participants observer, the researcher remains primarily an observer but has some interaction with study participants.

The researcher will observe the arrival of learners in the morning, so to have a picture of what type of transport do the learners use to come to school, whether there are late arrivals or not. This will also assist in finding out if the learners walk long distances to school or not.

### **3.4.3 Piloting.**

The researcher will use piloting in order to grip with some practical aspects of establishing access, making contact and conducting the interview as well as becoming alert of own level of interviewing skills (De Vos et al 2005:300). The researcher will conduct a pilot interview prior to the real interview with two respondents. The researcher will use questions which are the same as the one which will be used in the study. The researcher wants to know whether it takes too long to complete, whether the directions and the items are clear.

Glesne (1999:5) cites that qualitative researchers must gain access to the multiple perspectives of the participants. Qualitative researchers focus on in-depth, long-term interaction with relevant people in one or several sites. Glesne (1999:5) further stipulates that the researcher becomes the main research instrument as he/she observes, asks questions, and interacts with participants.

#### **3.4.4 Documents analysis.**

The researcher will in his settings requests the official documents that are formal and structured, such documents will include minutes and agendas of meetings, statistical reports, annual reports, summary registers and process reports (De Vos et al 2005:321). According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:413) the purpose of comparison is to eliminate researcher bias, as the researcher will compare the observations, response from interviews to what is contained in the documents.

#### **3.5 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS.**

De Vos et al (2005:339) define data analysis as the process of bringing order , structure and meaning to the mass of collected data, whereas, at the other hand McMillan and Schumacher (2001:461) cite that qualitative analysis is a relatively systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting to provide explanation of the single phenomenon of interest. As part of the process, the researcher will find it useful to make summaries of each interview (O' Sullivan et al 1996:121).

Fraenkel and Wallen (1990:389) point out that fieldwork, interview and observation should be reviewed daily. Incidents and bits of information will first be coded into tentative conceptual categories by the researcher. Analysis will start as soon as the first set of data is gathered and will run parallel with collection of data because each activity ( data collection and interim analysis ) informs and drives the other activity (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:464).

The researcher will use the combination of the template analytical style and an editing analytical style, as these are the techniques of comparing and contrasting in practically intellectual task during analysis. In this way the category will be tentative in the



beginning, and remain flexible rather than rigid, by so doing the researcher will be identifying similarities (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:464).

### **3.5.1 Ethical issues.**

The researcher will request permission from the participants to use a tape-recorder. The participants will be informed in advance (a week before) about the day and time when the interview would be conducted including the duration of the interview. The interviewer will first visit the principals at schools to introduce himself. The second visit will be when interviews are to be conducted.

In obtaining permission to enter the field, the researcher will give assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, and will describe the intended use of the data. Privacy and confidentiality will be protected. The respondents and the schools will be coded rather than being referred to by names (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 421-422).

The participants voluntary consent to participate in research and they have the right to refuse and withdraw from research participation without penalty. The result of the research will be made available to participants should they desire it (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 421-422).

### **3. 6 TRUSTWORTHINESS.**

The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is how an inquirer can persuade his or her audience (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth (Bryman & Burgess 1999:398). The researcher links trustworthiness with the project to the extend to which independent researchers could discover the same phenomena and to which there is agreement on the description of the phenomena between the researcher and the

participants. Hence, the researcher will strive for consistency within strategy used (McMillan and Schumacher 1993: 388)

Credibility will be obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants. The interpretation will be from the view point of someone who lives in a particular environment (farms). Data obtained from interviews will be compared to data collected from literature and recorded documents (Fraenkel and Wallen 1990: 400).

### **3.6.1 Validity.**

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inference the researchers make based on the data they collect (Fraenkel & Wallen 1990:400). In order to enhance validity, the researcher will draw conclusion supported by data collected from a number of different instruments.

### **3.6.2 Reliability.**

According to Bryman and Burgess (1999:399) reliability is typically held to be synonymous with dependability, consistency, stability, predictability and accuracy. The researcher will maintain reliability by repeating the same type of questions to individual respondents as possible.

### **3.6.3 Objectivity.**

Bryman and Burgess (1999:400) maintain that objectivity is usually played off against subjectivity. The researcher will try to find interactive agreement among the multiple interviewers on a phenomenon in order to have a conclusion that is objective. The

researcher will avoid engaging in inquiry with an openly ideological purpose or relying exclusively on the data provided by a single observer (Bryman & Burgess 1999:400).

### **3.7 Summary.**

The chapter concentrates on the research design, which outlines research methodology, population and samples, ethical issues, trustworthiness and data analysis that in their characters render the study beyond contamination by human foibles whereby various instruments of collecting data were mentioned.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION.**

In chapter 1, the investigator stated that the main aim of the study was to explore the decline of learners' enrolment in Bela – Bela farm schools. In order to achieve this aim the investigator felt it necessary that relevant literature should be reviewed extensively. Apart from literature review, interviews were held with educators from Bela – Bela farm schools around the same subject.

In this chapter, the collected data will be presented and analysed.

#### **4.2 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.**

The researcher has read 'carefully' through all the transcripts to get a sense the whole. 'Carefully' means to read and reread the transcripts and listen and listen again and again to the tape recording of the interviews in order to formulate reality from them (Brown 2004:104).

From the readings, the researcher identified 'units of information' that served as the basis for defining or representing categories. A 'unit of information' refers to a sentence or paragraph that has the following two characteristics: (a) Is aimed at the understanding that the researcher needs to have, (b) is the smallest piece of information about something that can stand by itself (Brown 2004 : 104).

The researcher coded all units identified and placed them into major categories and subcategories. Units applicable to each category had been compared constantly, to generate theoretical properties of the category, which can describe it. Both emerging and

constructed categories appeared from constant comparison of the coded units (Brown 2004:104).

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:461), qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. Most categories and patterns emerge from the data prior to the data collection. In this study the data was managed manually using predetermined categories.

#### **4.2.1 Creating indexing category.**

According to Mason (2002:160) the researcher may start creating categories before generating any data or when the researcher has few data. In this research the researcher has formed categories which were clearly informed by the literature review and research questions, and it had been reworked in the light of the further generation of data.

The researcher has done a pilot study with two respondents. The pilot process has assisted in the generation of data, and it was a good time to start creating indexing categories. The pilot study provided the researcher with a practice of interviewing techniques and the corrections of some mistakes in the interview questions and further more gave a preliminary analysis of data (Mason 2002:160).

#### **4.2.2 The method followed regarding the gathering of data.**

The researcher visited three farm schools in Bela-Bela area. Data was recorded and analysed each day before the next school was interviewed.

The researcher visited the sites and the respondents were interviewed in the settings. The researcher first interviewed the SMT member and the principal of each school (school A, B & C) and then finally the Circuit Manager ( CM ). Observation was done earlier before the school start, so to have the picture of learners transport together with late coming.

After an interview at a particular setting, the following documents were requested for more data collection: Summary register, attendance register and annual report, each document's information was perused based on the past three consecutive years. The data of each group was collected, analysed and interpreted before interviews were conducted with the next group of respondents.

#### **4.2.3 Integrating categories and their properties.**

After tentative categories and their properties had been identified, the researcher compared units within the same categories with the properties that describe them, to integrate and make a more comparison and stable category set (Brown 2004:105).

### **4.3 IMPORTANT FINDINGS.**

For this study, in each of the three selected schools, one school manager and one SMT member who had taught at least ten years in farm schools were purposefully selected to ensure information rich-participation, who then participated in answering the semi-structured interview questions. The total number of participants is seven including the Circuit Manager.

The gender, age group and experience of the respondents are given in table A, while the number of educators and learners' enrolment for the past three consecutive years for each school are shown in the following table B.

**Table A. Gender, age group and experience.**

School	Respondents	Gender	Age group				Experience in years		
			M/F	20-29	30-39	40-49	50 +	1-9	10-19
A	Principal	M			*				*
	SMT	M		*				*	
B	Principal	F		*				*	
	SMT	F		*				*	
c	Principal	F			*			*	
	SMT	M				*			*
Circuit Office	Circuit manager	M				*			*

**Table B. Decrease of learners' enrolment for the past three years.**

School	Number of educators			Learners' enrolment		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
A	6	4	4	111	73	69
B	2	2	2	50	45	25
C	5	3	2	78	65	40

### 4.3.1 Social structure.

The questions under social structure were aimed at finding out the relationship between the school (educators and learners) and the nearby society (parents and farm owners).

#### Finding 1.

Within the school vicinity, are there any school-going children who do not attend school?

In answering this question, five out of the six respondents indicated that there are children who do not attend school. The main reason is that people living on the farms migrate a lot. As one of the respondents answered:

*“Yes there are, but ...eh ... the department is a bit strict about that, they enforce that learners should go to school and ...mm... they encourage parents to send learners to school. So very few of them don’t attend ...”*

Probe: Those who are not attending, according to you, what might be the cause.

*“It is because of migration. The parents move from one farm to another, as such they arrive at the next farm at around ... the end of the year or September, and they cannot send their children to school. The following year instead of sending their children to school, they migrate again to another farm, you see, there is a lot of movement, so, that disturb learners to attend school” (principal).*

*“....life on the farm is to go school to a certain age and then go to work on the farm because of poverty...”(SMT member).*

#### Finding 2.

Do parents properly attend school gatherings? E.g. parents meetings.



Four out of six respondents indicated that parents do attend, but not as much as they expected. They usually have plus or minus 60% of attendance, they never had 100%. They sometimes struggle to form a quorum. Two other respondents felt negative about parents attendance, here follows the comment:

*“No, there is a problem,... meetings, parents really don’t attend. The reason being that they work until late and our meetings normally are in the evenings, transport problem, and others really don’t just care, and even if we organise the meetings on the week-ends very few parents attend. I can conclude by saying, there are very few parents who take their children’s education very serious...some of them don’t care whether a child goes to school or not...the life here, you know, they indulge themselves very much in activities like liquor drinking and so they don’t care,...”(principal).*

The statement above is supported by the literature review in section 2.3.3, according to Auret et al (2000:16) parents on the farms do not know the right and the wrong of going to school..... “And it is difficult to study at night because our father comes back from the beer hall drunk and makes a lot of noise.”

### Finding 3.

Do parents/guardians of learners check and sign activity books of the learners? If no, why?

Three respondents indicated that parents do check and sign activity books of their children. However, the other three respondents highlighted that parents do not check the activity books of their children, because most of the parents are illiterate. They echoed typical views as:

*“No, they seldom do. We are always in the opinion that most parents here, don’t care about the progress of their children at school, very few parents show their concern about their*

*children performance. It seems that 1% of the parents are concerned the other 99% don't care" (SMT member).*

*"That is very rear in our place, due to some reasons, most of the parents can't read and write, and this is the problem" (principal).*

The above response corroborate with the view shared earlier in the literature review, section 2.3.3 stating that parents with little or no education, often do not perceive the value of sending their children to school ...(Auret et al 2000 : 5).

#### Finding 4.

How does the farm owner encourage or discourage the school going children to go to school?

All the seven respondents mentioned that most of the farm owners encourage learners to attend school, particularly those farms where the schools are situated. However some farmers who do not have schools on their farms do not care whether the children on the farms do attend school or not. A comment from a respondent:

*"... even in the holidays learners will be working, but when the school re-opens they don't encourage learners to come to school on time. They will concentrate on what learners will be doing and let them finish the project before they could allow them to come to school "(SMT member).*

The statement is in line with the literature review section 2.3.2 where Stuart (2002:3) cites that there is much evidence to suggests that farm school children are being systematically exploited, despite the fact that child labour is illegal.

Some farm owners, especially the new owners do not want the schools on their properties; some evacuate the farm dwellers in order to use the school buildings for other reasons. To support the statement, here follows the respondents comment:

*“...the new owner comes into the farm with a new force and as a result, you find people who were dwelling on the farm for years are evacuated from the farm, now as a result we see learner statistics dwindling on the farm schools”(CM).*

The above sentiment is corroborated by literature review in section 2.5 where Stuart (2002:4) cites that the forced eviction of farm dwellers has a serious impact on the education of their children.

#### **4.3.2 Transport.**

This section is intended to find out the type of transport used by farm school learners to and from school.

Finding 5.

According to your experience, what are the consequences of learners travelling long distance to school?

Five out of six respondents experienced the lack of learners transport as a big problem on the farms, because learners get to school late, being tired and hungry. Most of the learners who are walking long distance to school drop out of school before they finish schooling. The typical comments are:

*“There is a problem, obviously a learner travelling long distance to school is always tired ... eh... he arrive at school being tired and hungry as well. At least now is better because the department has arranged transport and also food scheme at school. Is much better, but not*

*all the learners are covered in transport, some are still travelling about 4km to 5km on foot”(principal).*

*“... When you give them home-works or assignments it becomes a problem for learners maybe to carry some books for a long distance... and that results on work not been done on time ... You find that you have ten kids travelling the same distance living in a certain area, at the end of the year you will find that you remain with plus or minus four learners. The other six or five could not continue through out of the year, they dropped out ...” (SMT member).*

#### **4.3.3 Finance and resources.**

The objective of this section is to determine the sources of fund which provide farm schools with finance and resources.

##### **Finding 6.**

From which source does the school receive its finance?

All the respondents expressed their satisfaction of receiving their finance from the department of education. They further indicated that they had been categorised as quintile one schools and that they are not allowed to charge school fees. However, money from department comes late in the year. Most of the participants are dissatisfied with the quintile system which is used by the department of education to fund schools, because is based on the enrolment of learners at a particular school.

All the learners of the schools under quintile 1, receive the same amount of money irrespective of being a farm school or township school, but because of learners enrolment, farm schools will always receive little amount of money. Respondent comment noted:

*“Yes, in terms of learners enrolment...because enrolment of farm schools is low then they will receive lesser amount, but per capita allocations are exactly the same with all the quintile of other areas”(CM).*

*“... the department is trying its best to provide quality education in terms of supplying LTSM (Learner teaching support materials) in smaller schools”(CM).*

Probe: How does the school generate more finance for its survival?

*“It is difficult in the farm schools, because trying to raise fund is problematic. The other bit of money which is very small come from donations, sometimes we do get donations from the grandchildren of the farm owner. Those are our only sources of income”(principal).*

#### **4.3.4 Curriculum.**

The aim of this section is to determine the impact of the curriculum used in farm schools and the teachers' work load.

Finding 7.

What challenges do educators face in implementing National Curriculum Statement?

All the respondents were concerned about the manner in which educators are trained. Their concern was that the time which is used to train educators is too short, for example, per learning area an educator will attend a course of two to three hours per year. It would be better if a course may take one week or a month. One other thing is that some of the course facilitators are not sure of the curriculum. The most challenging problem is teaching multi-grade classes. These views are supported by the following comment:

*“The challenges we are facing are multi-grade classes when implementing NCS. One teacher has to teach every learning area from grade 1 to grade 3, and from grade 4 to grade 9. You will find that the Maths teacher is teaching Maths from grade 4 to grade 9 and Natural Science from grade 4 to grade 9. It is a challenge for us”(SMT member).*

#### Finding 8.

According to your knowledge, is the curriculum offered at the farm schools in relation with the environment and the life style of the farm people?

Two of the respondents felt that there is nothing wrong with the curriculum, whereas five of the respondents viewed the curriculum as developed for the town or city schools. The respondents noted:

*“No the curriculum is universal. The curricula developers ...eh... maybe they did not take the farm schools into consideration, they concentrated in...in fact they generalised. Yes, the education offered on the farms is the same one with the one offered in the towns and big cities and so on... The conditions just differ, so sometimes you find difficulties because the things mentioned in the text-books are not found on the farms. Eh...sometimes you will be forced to transport learners to the town in order for them to see the things you taught about, but for the learners in the towns, the things in the text-books are their daily bread ...”(principal).*

To indicate their frustrations one of the educators further emphasised that:

*“... at the end of the day I teach pupils in grade 9 about tobacco, but when the question paper comes, is about Johannesburg, now where is...because I tried to embrace farm environment ...let’s say I speak about farming, vegetables, crops or other things around here, but ...”(SMT member)*

Finding 9.

How do you feel about the quality of education offered by farm schools and why do you feel so?

Generally, the respondents felt that the quality of education offered by farm schools is low. Their argument is based on the multi-grade classes, and also where one teacher is supposed to teach all the learning areas. This view is reflected in the following responses:

*“I would say the quality of education offered by farm schools is very low in standard, in the sense that if you teach three grades in one class, the scope of work you are able to cover in a particular time is less than the scope of work that the teacher who teaches a single grade in a single class is able to cover. Let’s say, I have 30 minutes period with grade 7,8 and 9 in a particular class, it simply means that I am going to attend each grade for 10 minutes, whereas, the teacher in another situation spends 30 minutes for that particular grade ” (SMT member).*

*“The quality of education in farm schools is of low standard, because of multi-grade classes. You have to teach three grades at the same time and I as the principal, I have to do office work” (Principal).*

The literature review in section 2.3.1 supports the above view, Bratcher (1973 : 284 – 288) cites that the Minister of education in U.S.S.R reports that the quality of education at the farm schools is lower, and the natural condition of such schools is worse than in the city schools. The main reason is that the teachers work with two or more grades in one classroom at the same time.

Finding 10.

According to Department of Education White Paper 5 (1997:10) all public schools should implement inclusive education; there will be no more special schools. Will the farm schools be in the position of implementing inclusive education? Expand your answer.

All the six respondents elaborated that farm schools will not be in a position of implementing inclusive education because of their situation and conditions. Here follows the view expressed by the respondent:

*“Eh... no, it will be a problem, well the White Paper says that, and then we are open. We think, when a learner comes with special needs, we will accommodate him or her, but the problem as I indicated earlier ... quality education, will we offer what that learner needs? The learner will come here and go home with nothing”(principal).*

Finding 11.

What is the attitude of educators including your-self towards the work load?

In terms of the workload, all the respondents felt that they are over loaded with work. The reasons are based on the multi-grade classes including other school activities. Here follow their captured views:

*“Yes, that one is a problem, because as an educator you have to teach all the grades starting from grade 4 to 6, and teaching all the learning areas...”(SMT member).*

*“Yes, ...I would be fair, ...all teachers, if they have a choice, they would leave now, nobody like to be here, ...is only that when you leave, where do you go...but they all want to leave...Work load is a problem here, because you don't concentrate on what you are doing, you want to cover all the learning areas, which means you concentrate on quantity...”(Principal).*



#### 4.3.5 Administration.

According to van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 223) school administration refers to management of various administrative matters. The administrative structure or system of the school should form a supportive structure in which educators can perform their duties with confidence.

##### Finding 12.

Will you please explain in your own words, problems that you experience in connection with learners' attendance at school?

It was clearly indicated by all respondents that absenteeism in farm schools is a problem. According to them, there is a pattern of absenteeism, learners absent themselves during the days where the parents or guardians are going to receive the grants from government and also on month endings. Respondents noted:

*"Yes ... that one is a problem,... when ever parents are suppose not to be at home, maybe going to the doctor ... you will find that one learner will have to remain at home so to look after the young ones. Even if they are going to receive the grants and so on, that is a problem" (Principal).*

*"Is just a question that a learner is willing to come to school or not, if a learner stays at home, no parents will try to find out why, so that is a problem we experience"(SMT member).*

##### Finding 13.

Based on your experience as a farm principal/educator, is the learners' enrolment for the past three years decreasing or increasing and what is the reason thereof?

All seven respondents, including the Circuit Manager, alluded that the enrolment of learners in farm schools is declining. Table B on page 4, clearly indicate the gradual decline of learners enrolment in the three sample schools. Comments from respondents:

*“I would say it is decreasing, if I have to take it from the year in which I started, that is 1994, the school had an enrolment of over 300 learners, but at the present moment we have less than 80 learners, therefore it means that the enrolment of learners is declining”*(SMT member).

Probe: According to you, what makes it to decline?

*“There are many factors, but mostly, the socio-economic factor. People had been living on the farms, now that the political situation has changed ... they do try to find other places for dwelling outside the farms... that will make them to settle... when they settle they do take their children to attend school where they had settled”*(SMT member).

#### **4.3.6 Projection.**

In your opinion, how do you foresee the future of farm schools?

One out of the seven respondents felt that there is a chance for farm schools to survive, but, however the survival is based on the willingness of the farm owners to give them support. In contrary, the remaining six respondents felt that it is the end of the farm schools error. Their views are based on the followings: firstly most farmers no longer want schools on their farms, secondly, most of the farm schools are dysfunctional or closed and lastly, most of the parents are moving from the farms to RDP settlements. They echoed their views as:

*“I should think farm schools do not have the future, because in reality, people are moving from farm, that is the first point, and as a result they take their children. What is going to*

*happen, you will find that at the ultimate end, eh... you are remaining with about eight learners..."(Principal).*

*"Yes ... farm schools are gradually dying, eh... most of them are already closed, and they are dysfunctional. Eh ... so, I wouldn't say there is no future for farm schools, yes, ... because of learners enrolment that is going down and the working conditions also in farm schools... so what I see eventually in the long run...they will all be closed..."(Principal).*

*"Yes, currently the schools in the farms are dying out, partly because of a movement from the farms to urban areas, that is urbanisation and the other thing is ...eh... changing of ownership... new owners don't want schools in their lands"(CM)*

#### **4.4 SUMMARY.**

This chapter has attempted to highlight the important findings in the research, whereby the analysis and interpretation of data were extensively reviewed.

The following chapter presents conclusion, recommendations and other themes for further research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEMES FOR FURTHER STUDIES.**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION.**

The preceding chapter explored some important findings of the data collection in the context of the challenges and concerns expressed by the principals and the SMT members including the Circuit Manager in the three sample farm schools with regard to the learners' enrolment, which seems to be declining. In this chapter, conclusions are drawn and recommendations made emanating from the body of the study. Furthermore, themes for further research are suggested.

#### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM DATA.**

The following conclusions are drawn from the analysis and interpretations of data collected during the study and are given as the answers to the questions posed at the start of the study in section 1.3.

##### **5.2.1 History of farm schools.**

The literature has revealed that the establishment of farm schools was a joint venture between the former government and the farm owners (Section 2.3). Both parties hoped that establishing farm schools would assist in keeping African labourers in rural areas rather than trying to move to the cities (Section 2.3).

###### **5.2.1.1 Multi-grade classes.**

In section 2.3.1, it has emerged that, generally, in farm schools teachers do work with two or more grades in one classroom at the same time. It was also discovered that educators in farm schools are faced with the challenges of implementing NCS because of multi-grade classes. This implies that one teacher has to teach three grades in one class-room simultaneously. The literature also indicates that in U.S.S.R alike with South Africa, they conduct multi-grade classes in farm schools. Bratcher (1973: 284-285) argues that multi-grade classes result in low quality of education.

#### 5.2.1.2 Child labour and teenage pregnancy.

In section 2.3.2, there are several indicators of child labour which shows that child labour is practised on the farms. According to Stuart (2002:3) there are evidence from Fairleigh Farm School in Comperdown district of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Section 2.3.2),SANGOCO Poverty Hearing also heard account of learners in North West being taken out of schools (Section 2.3.2) and also the Northern Cape Department of Labour suggests that child labour is still common on many farms. Auret et al (2000:13) highlighted that this practice of children working on the farms had the consequences of school children dropping out of schools. Other dilemmas, which exert more pressure on farm children are early marriages for girls and teenage pregnancies, all these have negative impact on their schooling as they do dropout.

#### 5.2.1.3 Deplorable conditions.

Section 2.3.3 revealed the point of inequality between the standard of education received by rural and urban pupils. The quality of education in the farm schools is lower, and material conditions of such schools are worse than in the city schools.

The literature in section 2.3.3 emphasis that some farm school learners are being denied the right to education due to the point that some farmers had closed schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal. The fact that farm societies are heterogeneous poses a threat, because they have limited opportunities for organizing a process of education. It has been indicated (section 2.3.3) that parents are better positioned to enhance their children learning when they have more education and economic resources. Fram et al (2007:310) in section 2.3.3 argue that the culture of poverty inhibits academic success in ethnic minority communities.

It has been revealed in section 2.3.3 that the home environment on the farms is not conducive for the children to learn properly, as one learner echoed: *“We do not have adequate accommodation... the situation is worsened by the neighbours who open their radios loudly so that we can hardly concentrate”*. Auret et al (2000:17) in section 2.3.3 revealed that most of the farm parents drink a lot, the little they earn is spent on beer.

#### 5.2.1.4 The work-load of educators.

The research has revealed that in farm schools 100% teaching time affect all educators irrespective of post level in which the educator is appointed to, because of the multi-grade classes as there is no free periods (section 2.2.2). The time mentioned above excludes administration and extra curricular activities, which are also part of educator's duties. This is the indication of how farm school educators are over-loaded with work.

#### 5.2.2 **Legislation and policy.**

Literature review concentrated on the Bill of Rights, multi-cultural education and inclusive education.

##### 5.2.2.1 Bill of Rights

The literature in section 2.4.1 revealed that every child has the right to be protected from exploitive labour practices, but according to Stuart (2002:3) in section 2.4.1, there are some farmers who convene this Act. The literature elaborates that the education of farm schools is not flexible to the needs of the changing society as there is a great shortage of proper educational resources.

##### 5.2.2.2 Multi-cultural education.

In section 2.4.2, it has emerged that multi-cultural education is about eliminating ethnocentricity from our teaching by getting rid of ethnic bias from lesson content, teaching approaches and learning materials, but then in farm schools a cultural plural dimension does not permeate the curricula.

The literature revealed that if South Africa has to develop an internationally competitive agricultural production capacity, the farm school education system should create a supportive education system to ensure that learners who wish to follow an agricultural career have the requisite education and skills to meet these demands. It is further stipulated that the current education system with its high dropout rate of learners, cannot meet the required curricula demands (Section 2.4.2).

Sharma (2008:297) as well as Southworth (1999:29) emphasize that working in the garden, taking care of animals and repairing things is typical farm activities (Section 2.4.2). According to Gur'ianova (2006:68) farm schools in Russian Federation have great deal of attention to organize work activities for the students, for example, they have carpentry shops and mechanic shops, many of them keep live stock facilities and have teaching plots and subsidiary farm operations (Section 2.4.2).

### 5.2.2.3 Inclusive education.

The literature in section 2.4.3 has revealed that the Ministry sees the establishment of inclusive education as a corner stone of intergraded and caring society. But according to Education White Paper 5 (1997:24) establishing an inclusive education requires changes to mainstream education so that learners experiencing learning barriers to learning can be identified early and appropriate support provided (Section 2.4.3). In contrary, the Education White Paper 2 (1996:36) elaborates that the current farm school system with lack of resources to implement an appropriate mainstream curriculum cannot meet the required demands. Then, how can such a system be able to offer an inclusive education? (Section 2.4.3).

In section 4.3.4, the respondents have indicated that inclusive education in farm schools will not function because of various factors such as multi-grade classes, inadequate of learning and teaching support materials, and bad conditions.

### 5.2.3 Socio-economic conditions of farm society.

In section 2.5, it is revealed that farm populations are low-income group and are heterogeneous and represents multiple problems such as poverty. It has been derived from data in section 4.3.1, that the families working on the farm migrate a lot. This type of movement from one farm to the other causes children not to attend school normally. However, there are reasons, which cause the farm labourers to migrate a lot, some are:

- The unbearable working conditions on the farms.
- The political conditions that has changed in the country, which allows them to find other places for dwelling outside the farms of which mostly, are RDP settlements.

In this instance, when the parents move away from the farms they take their children along, and this results in decrease of learners' enrolment in the farm schools.

It has discerned from the data that some farm owners do employ school children on their farms and this is because of the high level of poverty in which the children find themselves, and as such they leave schooling. It was also discovered that most of the farm owners, especially the new ones, do not want schools on their farms (Section 4.3.1). Generally, the living conditions on the farms are harsh, and farm labourers have little access to the outside world, and as such there is no standards of comparison that would allow them to become conscious of the hardship they endure (Stuart 2002: 4).

#### **5.2.4 Finance and resources.**

It has been revealed in section 2.6 that inadequate funding and limited educational resources are some of the challenges faced by the farm schools. According to Kollie (2007:55) there is a vast difference in amount receiving by farm schools and urban schools. In section 4.3.3, it had been pointed out that farm schools receive their finance mainly from Department of Education. However, the money for farm schools is so very little to maintain the needs for proper education, because it is determined by the enrolment of the school. This view had been supported by the MEC of Limpopo Department of Education (2008: 25) when he alludes that in small schools, the no fee status does not assists in any way because the amount is awarded per learner.

#### **5.2.5 Learners' transport.**

It has been clear from the data collections that learners' transport is a big problem on the farms, despite the fact that Department of Education is providing free transport for learners. It was discovered that the transport, which is provided by the Department of Education, does not cover all the learners. There are learners who still walk long distances to school and some do dropout of school before they finish schooling. In some instances, school transport did not turn-up for some weeks and learners were left stranded.



### **5.2.6 Administration.**

The general feelings among the educators is that farm schools are unable to control absenteeism of learners, because when parents are held somewhere or are supposed to attend some family matters somewhere, one learner should absent him/herself in order to look after the young ones at home. It was also discovered in section 4.3.4 that parents had the tendency of letting their children accompany them to receive government grants.

The data in section 4.3.5 supports the view that the learners' enrolment in farm schools is gradually declining, table B also corroborate with this view.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations that may be addressed by the Ministry of Department of Basic Education are made:

### **5.3.1 Merging of neighbouring schools.**

In order for Department of Education to eliminate negative factors affecting the enrolment of farm schools, merging of neighbouring schools should be considered. The merging will assist in the increase of learners' enrolment that will result in more finance and adequate resources.

### **5.3.2 Farm school curricula.**

Department of Education should change the curricula of farm schools from mainstream curricula to specific specialization curricula, for example, agricultural schools whereby land and stock farming are practiced. These types of schools will prepare farm school learners for real working world.

### **5.3.3 Expropriation of land.**

One other recommendation is that Department of Education should expropriate the pieces of land occupied by the farm schools in order to renovate and sustain them.

#### **5.3.4 Learners' transportation.**

Department of Education should insist on transporting learners from overcrowded nearby township schools to farm schools in order to utilize the dysfunctional school buildings that are left unused.

#### **5.3.5 Quality of education in farm schools.**

The data has indicated that farm schools face the problem of low quality of education (Sections 2.3.3 and 4.3.4). It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education should provide farm schools with specific learning and teaching resources, which will cater the needs of farm societies. Educators should be provided with suitable time (more than a week) to attend courses in order to enhance their skills of teaching which will be in line with NCS.

#### **5.3.6 Introducing ABET centres in farm societies.**

Parents' lack of interest in the education of their children is the consequences of illiteracy. Department of Education should introduce ABET centres in farm communities so that parents must be involved in the home-based school activities initiated by the teachers. Teachers will be able to organize workshops for parents at a time convenient for all where parents will be taught to supervise home-works and help with school activities.

### **5.4 THEMES FOR FURTHER STUDIES.**

#### **5.4.1 Impact of farm schools.**

Farm schools have indeed improved the lives of some of the people living on the rural areas, but schooling is not an end on itself, rather is a means of employment or professional training. To asses the full impact of farm schools, a tracer study maybe conducted to see how graduate from farm schools have fitted into the economy and life in general.

#### **5.4.2 Effectiveness of social structures.**

Successful learning is not determined by individual learner factor alone, there are social structures which explore the challenges of learning. Learning requires involvement in communities. A study may be conducted to investigate the degree of the impact of the social structures in farm schools for learners' education.

#### **5.4.3 Implementation of NCS.**

Imparting knowledge, skills, and values to learners is one of the objectives of NCS. Educators have to apply certain learning and teaching techniques and methods to reach the objectives of NCS. A research study may be conducted to investigate how effective are the in-service training provided by the Department of Education for educators in assisting them to apply the required techniques and methods.

### **5.5 FINAL SUMMARY.**

In this section, conclusions from the main findings were discussed. Recommendations concerning the farm schools and themes for further studies were also made.

It was discovered through the analysis and interpretations of data that farm schools face the problem of low quality of education (Section 2.3.3 and section 4.3.4), accessibility of the schools due to long distance that the learners walk to school (Section 2.3.3 and section 4.3.2) and the closure of some schools by farm owners and the curricula dilemma (Section 4.3.4). Hence, the farm workers are the low-income group and represent multiple problems such as poverty.

There is also a problem of limited financial support (Section 2.6 and section 4.3.3) this is due to the quintile system which cater each learner with the same amount of money irrespective of how small or big the school is, and further the inadequate resources (section 2.6).

It had been discovered from data that there is a great migration of farm workers to urban areas (urbanization) or to RDP settlement; this is because of exploitations, practices of child labour (section 2.3.2), deplorable conditions (Section 2.3.3) and the change of political

situations. All the above-mentioned factors have a great negative impact on the enrolment of learners in the farm schools. The Department of Education had tried to put some programmes in place, such as Feeding Schemes in primary schools and transport for learners. However, this was not enough to sustain the convincing enrolments in farm schools. Consequently, there is a gradual decline of learners' enrolment in farm schools (See table B).

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# APPENDIX A

## PRINCIPALS' AND SMT'S QUESTIONS.

### A. SOCIAL STRUCTURE

1. Within the school vicinity, are there any school going children who do not attend school? If yes, what do you think the reason may be?
2. Do parents encourage their school-going pupils to attend school and how do they do that?
3. Do parents/guardians of the learners check and sign activity books of the learners? If no, why?
4. According to your experience what are the consequences of walking long distance by learners to school?
5. What challenges do you think that learners on the farms face which tamper with their education?
6. How does the farm owner encourage or discourage the school going pupils to attend school?

### B. FINANCE.

7. According to your knowledge what support system does the school receive from the farm owner and how does it benefit the learner in their education?
8. From which resource/s does the school receive its finance?
9. How does the school generate more finance for its survival?

### C. ADMINISTRATION.

10. Will you please explain in your own words, problems that you experience in connection with learners' attendance at school?
11. According to your knowledge, is the curricular offered at the farm schools in relation with the environment and the life style of the farm people? If no, how should it be?

- 12 What challenges do educators face in implementing National Curriculum Statement through the approach of OBE?
- 13 How do you feel about the quality of education offered by farm schools and why?
- 14 According to White Paper 5 of 1998, all public schools should implement inclusive education, there will be no more special schools. Will the farm schools be in the position of implementing inclusive education? Expansiate your answer.
- 15 Based on your experience as a farm school principal / SMT, is the learners' enrolment for the past three years increasing or decreasing and what is the reason thereof?
- 16 What do you feel is the general attitude of the staff and parents towards the learners' enrolment?
- 17 What measures do the school management take to improve the learners' enrolment?
- 18 What is the general attitude of the staff and parents on the general condition of the farm schools?
- 19 What is the attitude of the educators including yourself towards the work load?
- 20 In managing farm schools, what do you think are the most challenging things?
- 21 In your opinion how do you foresee the future of farm schools and why do you think so?

## **APPENDIX B.**

### **CIRCUIT MANAGER'S QUESTIONS.**

1. Do farm schools receive the same finance as compared with other public schools in the townships? If no, why?
2. Is the farm school curriculum cater the needs of the people living on the farms?
3. How is the Department of Education enhancing the quality of education on the farm schools?
4. According to your experience, is the learners' enrolment on the farm schools decreasing or increasing and what is the reason thereof?
5. Are there any dysfunctional farm school or any closed farm school in your circuit? If any, what is the reason of the closure ?
6. According to your opinion what is the future of the farm schools?

# APPENDIX C.

## APPLICATION LETTER TO SCHOOLS.

Enq: Maponya S.H  
Contact no. 072 1717 225

P. O. Box 43890  
Theresa Park  
0155  
. .....

The Principal  
.....  
.....

Dear Sir/Madam

## REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL.

I hereby request to conduct research at your institution. I am the UNISA student who studies MED in Education Management. The title for my research is “ AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LEARNERS’ ENROLMENT IN BELA-BELA FARM SCHOOLS: A PERSPECTIVE IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT.

In order for me to attain the objective of my study I need your assistance by permitting me to conduct research at your institution. The research will be conducted through interviews, document analysis and observation.

Here follows the procedure for interviews:

- Interviews will be conducted after learners contact time.
- No school name or respondents name will be identified.
- The interview will be conducted through open-ended questions.
- The respondents will be the principal and one SMT member.
- I will also request to use the tape recorder for recording the interviews.
- The interview will take plus or minus 30 minutes per respondent.

I guarantee that all the data will be treated with complete confidentiality and the respondents will remain anonymous.

I hope my request will be considered.

Yours faithfully

Maponya S.H (student no. 0687-146-1)

.....

Consent of the school to participate.

.....Authorized signature .....Date

# APPENDIX D

## APPLICATION LETTER TO CIRCUIT OFFICE.

Enq: Maponya

Cell: 072 1717 225

P. O. Box 43890

Theresa Park

0155

2009-05-14

The Circuit Manager  
Warmbaths Circuit  
P. O. Box  
WARMBATHS

Dear Sir or Madam:

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR CIRCUIT OFFICE.

I hereby request to conduct research at your Circuit Office. I am the UNISA student who studies MED in Education Management. The title for my research is “ AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LEARNERS’ ENROLMENT IN BELA-BELA FARM SCHOOLS: A PERSPECTIVE IN EDUCATION MANAGEMENT”.

In order for me to attain the objective of my study, I need your assistance by permitting me to conduct research at your office as the key-informant interviewee.

Procedure for interviews:

- Interview will be conducted in the office.
- No office or respondents’ name will be disclosed.
- A request will be made to use a tape- recorder for recording interviews.
- The respondents will have access to the findings upon request.
- The interview will take plus or minus 30 minutes.

I guarantee that all the data collected will be treated with complete confidentiality and the respondents will remain anonymous.

I hope my request will be considered.

With kind regards

Maponya S.H. (Student no. 0687-146-1)

.....  
Consent of the Circuit Manager

.....  
Authorized signature.