THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION: WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS?

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, my beloved adorable wife, **Khosi Mirriam,** three lovely daughters, **Thokozile, Zanele and Sibongile,** and my mother, **Mvulazana.** Your support, patience and compassion, but above all, your understanding and prayers during my studies are highly appreciated. It is also dedicated to my late father, **Luthuli**, who could not see the achievement of his son due to his untimely death.

SUMMARY

Key concepts: farm school, farmer, farm workers, principal, educators, learners and parents.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education. In doing so, also to determine possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at farm schools.

This study was prompted by political changes, which took place after the democratic elections of April 1994, impacting on the provisioning of education in South Africa. The South African education system and its institutions were confronted by many laws and policies, including the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (84/1996), the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 (27/1996) and specific obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Through literature and empirical studies it was found that the State's commitment to social justice, especially to education, remains unfulfilled for large numbers of children, youths and adults living in rural areas. Literature revealed that the South African government is failing to protect the right to a primary education for learners living on commercial farms by neither ensuring their access to farm school, nor maintaining the adequacy of learning conditions at these schools.

The research findings revealed that poverty resulting from unemployment or low income on the farms increases the need for teenagers to be in paid employment in the evenings or at the weekend, increasing absenteeism and ultimately resulting in learners dropping out, and an increase in child-labour.

The empirical method, using questionnaires, was successful in obtaining information about what challenges are faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the reasons behind farm school learners dropping-out. It also established how participants felt and thought about their experiences and perceptions on the challenges confronting the right to basic education as well as the reasons behind farm school learners dropping out.

The study established that if the State could respect and fulfil economic and social rights of the farm school community, including the right to basic education, by eradicating measures that deny the enjoyment of the right to education as seen at the farm schools, great progress and sustainability as far as education is concerned could be achieved by these schools.

A number or recommendations were made with regard to the research on findings for the Sedibeng-West District (D8).

OPSOMMING

Kernbegrippe: plaasskool, boer, plaaswerkers, skoolhoof, opveoders, leerders en ouers.

Die doelwit van hierdie studie was om die uitdagings wat plaasskole konfronteer by die toe-eiening van die reg tot basiese onderwys te ondersoek. Dit sou ook moontlike redes bepaal vir leerders se onttrekking aan plaasskole.

Hierdie studie is aangespoor deur politieke veranderinge ná die demokratiese verkiesing van April 1994 wat 'n uitwerking gehad het op die voorsiening van onderwys in Suid-Afrika. Die Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysstelsel en sy instellings is gekonfronteer deur baie wette en beleide, insluitend die Suid-Afrikaanse Skolewet (84/1996), die Nasionale Opvoedingsbeleid Wet 27 van 1996 (27/1996) en spesifieke verpligtinge volgens die Konvensie van die Regte van die Kind.

Deur middel van die literatuur- en empiriese studies is daar bevind dat die staat se verbondenheid tot sosiale geregtigheid, veral ten opsigte van die onderwys, onverwesenlik bly vir groot getalle kniders, jongmense en volwassenes wat op die platteland woon. Die literatuur het onthul dat die Suid-Afrikaanse staat in gebreke bly om die reg tot primêre onderwys vir leerders op kommersiële plase te beskerm, deurdat hulle nie toegang tot plaasskole het nie of dat die doeltreffendheid van leer-omstandighede nie op hierdie skole gehandhaaf word nie.

Die bevindings van die navorsing het aangetoon dat armoede wat ontstaan uit werkloosheid of lae inkomste op die plase die behoefte van tieners om betaalde werk saans of in die naweek te hê, afwesigheid verhoog en uiteindelik uitloop op skoolverlating en vermeerdering van kinderarbeid.

Die empiriese metode, wat vraelyste benut, het daarin geslaag om vas te stel watter uitdagings plaasskole konfronteer in hul beoefening van die reg op basiese onderwys en waarom plaaskoolleerders uitsak uit die skool. Dit het ook bepaal hoe deelnemers voel en dink oor hul ervarings en persepsies van

die uitdagings wat die reg op basiese onderwys knel, sowel as die redes waarom plaasskoolleerders die skool verlaat.

Die studie het vasgestel dat, indien die staat die ekonomiese en sosiale regte van die plaasskoolgemeenskap kan respekteer en vervul, insluitend die reg op basiese onderwys, deur negatiewe optrede (wat die bevrediging weier van die reg op onderwys soos op plaasskole belewe) uit te roei, goeie vordering en volhoubaarheid in die onderwys bereik kan word deur hierdie skole.

'n Aantal aanbevelings is gedoen in verband met die navorsing van bevindings oor Sedibeng-Wes (D8).

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There can be no doubt that the farm school, as stepchild of South African education, merits special investigation and formal assistance. Various documented instances provide indisputable evidence of this, as will be pointed out in the next few paragraphs.

Radebe (1999:14) reports that more than 280 learners faced a bleak future at the Sigabangwane Farm School in Nigel on the East Rand because the farmer had decided to close down the school. This happened because the district office of the Department of Education had failed to find an alternative venue for the learners. The farmer claimed that she had given the department more than enough time for the learners to vacate her premises. In order to make sure that learning would come to a halt, teargas powder was allegedly sprinkled in the classrooms and dogs were apparently set loose.

Radebe (1999:14) explains furthermore that the learners gained entry into classrooms after parents had forced the farm gates open and had instructed their children to go inside. Having inhaled the teargas-fumes, they had to be admitted to hospital.

Molefe (1998:01) tells another story which points to staff implications. According to his account, educators of three farm schools in the Northern Province and in Gauteng face uncertain futures because of the closure of the institutions by farmers. These closures occurred due to the failure of the Department of Education in both provinces to negotiate with farmers as to where public schools were to be situated, as is required by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (hereafter called Schools Act; 84/1996).

In yet another article, Khumalo (2004:14) reports that about 700 parents and learners staged a sit-in on the premises of the Amajuba District Education

Department, protesting the closure of their farm school which accommodated 500 learners.

Khumalo (2004:14) explains that the farmer who closed the school for the fifth time within 2004, stated that the pledge to compensate him had been made in 1996, but was never honoured.

As other farm schools which were run by the church had to be closed down because of the urban sprawl, the Gereformeerde Kerk Noordrand purchased the surrounding seven hectares of land during 1991 and started an expansion programme to cater for children from the closed-down schools (Coetsee, 1994:9). The main problem during this period could be ascribed to the so-called previous Bantu Education System, which discouraged the provision of facilities as these facilities would have encouraged the permanence of black people in white areas (Coetsee, 1994:10).

Another disturbing fact is that, according to Arenstein (2003:9), the most talented and innovated educators were fleeing township and rural schools in search of better salaries and because of a cripping lack of facilities at former black schools.

Pitso (2000:30), who did research on the implementation of Curriculum 2005, states that farm schools have been catering mainly for children of African farm workers. Often the farm schools belonged to the farmer on whose land it was built and up till 1994 farmers received 100% of the building costs and 50% of the maintenance costs (Pitso, 2000:30). Currently the Member of the Executive Council may, with the concurrence of the financial manager, and after giving the owner of a farm school and the School Governing Body concerned a hearing, adjust or withdraw the subsidy given to the farm schools concerned (Gauteng Department, 1995:30). Yet Pitso (2000:30) continues his report by stating that farm schools are the poorest and the most under-resourced schools in the country and cater for the people who are the poorest of the poor.

Reeves (1994:27) states that at most farm schools in the previous dispensation, the school manager was either the farm owner or someone

appointed by the farm owner. Most farm school educators were women, because farm conditions used to be so poor that nobody wanted to live or teach on the farms. There was hardly ever a place for educators to stay and the classrooms were very shabby.

For the purpose of this study, it is important to remember that, according to the National Commission on Education (1996:3; NCOE), educational disadvantage means the denial of equal access to educational opportunities, the tendency to leave education at the first opportunity (learners drop out of the system), and hindrance in achievement caused by social and environmental factors.

Furthermore, the NCOE (1996:3) states that socio-economic and family backgrounds are important influences on learners' educational achievements at all stages of their school careers.

According to Thejane and Muthukrishna (as quoted by Hall, 2002:35), the reality of the socio-economic hardships of the disadvantaged rural community seems prominent in the process of transformation. Most of the households of the targeted rural community experience outright poverty. Furthermore, there is a huge disparity in terms of the distribution of income and wealth in the rural community, and many households have limited access to education, healthcare, proper housing and clean water. The lack of access to basic services affects the learning process and leads to a breakdown in learning or even exclusion.

Van Heerden (1995:347) points out the anomaly that most learners at the farm schools in the small villages of the Northern Cape come to school hungry and barefoot, both in summer and in winter, while neighbouring mining companies have air -conditioning in their offices as a matter of course.

Many farm school learners come from poor home backgrounds and unstable homes where poverty, alcoholism and substance abuse are rife (Muthukrishna, 2001:51). Such a home environment is not conducive to learning and not supportive to learners. Under-development and unemployment are major social problems among such communities. Green

also claims that most families are single-parents, female-headed households. In many homes, children are cared for by grandmothers, as parents are employed in the nearest city which is approximately 400km away.

People in rural areas in South Africa have been less fortunate than their urban counterparts for many years in terms of quality education, access to economic and other resources, and empowerment. These aspects have resulted in many people being in a constant struggle for survival, or ending up in situations in which their environment has been degraded to a point where their health is at risk. There is, therefore, an urgent need to improve the living conditions of rural people (Loubser & Dryer, 2002:151).

According to Ramarumo (as quoted by Kriegler, Ramarumo, Van Niekerk & Van der Ryst, 1992:143), more money should be invested in rural schools so that illiteracy and deprivation in the home may be compensated for as early as possible. Such an investment would help counter the loss caused by early school-leavers.

In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (hereafter called Constitution; 108/1996), everyone has the right to a basic education and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively more available and accessible.

Based on the aforementioned literature findings and the statement of the problem, this study strived to answer the following questions:

- What challenges do farm schools and their learners face in exercising the right to basic education?
- Why do farm school learners drop out?

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

While the overall aim of the study was to do research concerning farm school learners' right to basic education, this aim was operationalized by stating and pursuing the following two objectives:

- To investigate the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education (*cf.* Chapter 2; Chapter 4: Appendix A)

- To determine possible reasons behind learners' dropout rate at farm schools (*cf.* Chapter 2; Chapter 4; Appendix A).

1.3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

1.3.1 Literature study

Primary and secondary literature sources were studied to gather information on the situation of farm school learners in post-1994 and to present a historical overview (*cf.* Chapter 2).

1.3.2 Empirical research

1.3.2.1 Aim

The empirical research phase was conducted to gather information on the present situation of farm school learners, both at school and at home (*cf.* Chapter 3).

1.3.2.2 Experimental design

The researcher used a quantitative design in the sense that answers were sought to the questions that arose about relationships among measured variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94). These answers hoped to help explain the identified phenomena (*cf.* 3.3).

1.3.2.3 Measuring instrument

Information gathered from the literature study was used to develop and design four questionnaires to gather information from farm school principals, educators, learners and parents in Sedibeng-West (D8) in the Gauteng Department of Education (*cf.* Appendix A; 3.4.3).

1.3.2.4 Population and sampling

The target population consisted of both secondary and primary farm school principals, educators, learners and parents in Sedibeng West (D8) of the Gauteng Department of Education. The target population comprised of 3236 learners, 106 educators, 12 principals and 324 parents.

A random sample was selected (*cf.* 3.5): farm school principals (n=10), educators (n=74), learners at primary school in grades 6 and 7 (n=325) and at secondary school (n=325), and the parents (n=104).

1.3.2.5 Pilot survey

The questionnaires were pre-tested with a selected number of respondents from the target population regarding their qualities of measurement and appropriateness, and to review them for clarity (*cf.* 3.4.4.1).

1.3.2.6 Statistical techniques

The Statistical Services of the North West University (Vaal Triangle Campus) was approached for assistance in the analysis and interpretation of data collected. The SPSS and SAS-Programmes were employed to process the data by computer (*cf.* Chapter 4).

1.4 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

The study was feasible in that:

- the study was conducted at the farm schools in the Sedibeng-West (D8) area of the Gauteng Department of Education, which were accessible to the researcher;
- literature resources to be used for information gathering were sufficiently available; and
- the study was relevant to the situation at farm schools regarding South African education transformation. It hoped to elicit important and purposeful responses from the study population.

1.5 ETHICAL ASPECTS

The following aspects were adhered to with reference to looking out for the ethical handling of the study:

- Permission for the research was asked from and granted by the Gauteng Department of Education (*cf.* Appendix D).
- A letter was written to the principals requesting their participation in the research study, including educators, learners and parents (*cf.* Appendix E).
- The questionnaires were completed anonymously, looking after the right to privacy of all the participants (*cf.* Appendix A).
- Only the researcher, the study leader and the data analyst worked with the data. The data sets were used only for the purposes of this study.

1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

This chapter looks at presenting an overview of what was done in this study.

CHAPTER 2: CHALLENGES FACED BY FARM SCHOOLS AND THEIR LEARNERS

In this chapter, the researcher presents the relevant literature study which also formed the background to the developing of the questionnaires.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL DESIGN

Chapter 3 describes the research plan and what it comprised of in this study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the data that were gathered by means of the questionnaires, as well as the analysis thereof. Finally, the chapter ends with an attempt at pointing out the most obvious similarities and differences between the participants' responses.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the final analysis, Chapter 5 attempts to tie the study into one whole from beginning to end.

1.7 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an orientation to the research, defining the problem, determining the objectives and demarcating the research method to reach these objectives. The chapter division was also determined.

The next chapter will focus on the challenges faced by the farm school learners in exercising the right to basic education.

CHAPTER TWO

CHALLENGES FACED BY FARM SCHOOLS AND THEIR LEARNERS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In terms of section 29(1) of the Constitution (108/1996), everyone has a right to a basic education, including adult basic education, and to further education, which the state, in reasonable measure, must make progressively available and accessible.

Furthermore, section (1) of the Schools Act (84/1996) maintains that subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, every parent must cause every learner for whom he/she is responsible to attend school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of six years until the last school day of the year in which such a learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.

Subsection (6) gives guidelines on the consequences of the contravention of the Schools Act. Any parent who, without just cause and after a written notice from the Head of Department, fails to comply with Subsection (1), is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months; or any other person who, without just cause, prevents, a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance from attending school is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

Furthermore, the preamble of the Schools Act (84/1996) states that South Africa has a new national school system to redress past injustices in education, to provide education of high quality, and to lay a strong foundation for :

- developing all people's talents and capabilities;
- transforming society democratically;

- combating racism, sexism and all other forms of discrimination and intolerance;
- eradicating poverty and improving the economic well-being of society;
- protecting and advancing our diverse cultures and languages;
- upholding the rights of all learners, parents and educators; and
- promoting people's acceptance of responsibility for schools in partnership with the state.

2.2 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The focus in this chapter will therefore be on the historical perspective, compulsory attendance, parental involvement, a culture of teaching and learning and socio-economic factors that deter education at farm schools.

Reflecting back on the past injustices in education, one may realize that education was used as a tool for politicians and it became a facet of their strategy. Graff and Gordon (1992:216) affirm this statement by stating that, when the National Party came into power in 1948, the predominant views held by whites with regard to black education were that education would act as a means of securing a docile labour force to comply with the growing economy of South Africa, aid in the process of keeping the race separate, and ensure that the education prepared the black child for a life of subordination. These values and beliefs became interwoven into the fabric of the school structures.

Graff and Gordon (1992:216) declare that the central innovation introduced by the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (hereafter called the Act; SA, 1953) was the system of control for farm schools. These schools would be registered as state-aided schools, subsidized by the state. In theory, the state and the farmers were dual managers of schools, but in practice, the farmer as the owner of the land had the power to open or close the schools and to evict educators and learners from his/her property.

Coutts (1996:19) declares that the Act (SA, 1953) set out to bring Africans' education under centralized government control, a move that was aimed at undermining the role played by the mission schools and the provinces, to whom they were immediately accountable. Furthermore, Coutts (1996:19) claims that the missionaries had made the cardinal error of educating Africans for equality with whites, something which, according to the nationalists, was totally unacceptable.

Coutts (1996:19) also mentions that Verwoerd, who became minister of "Bantu" education after the passage of the Act (SA, 1953), accused the missionaries of trying to produce "little black English." Coutts (1996:19) maintains that Verwoerd argued that it was more honest and morally correct to accept the differences between the races and to educate people accordingly. Fully aware that mission schools would never voluntarily implement the education they would regard as limiting of human potential, Verwoerd became determined to assume full control over black education, its provision and curriculum.

Coutts (1996:19-20) goes on to state that through such Act, tribal origins would be emphasized. African children would be educated deliberately to assume limited roles in the world of work. Whites, by sharp contrast, would have resources lavished on them and their education would prepare them to assume leadership roles in society, meeting most professional and labour requirements of the growing economy. Whites would also be united through this conscious policy, and it would ensure that even those Whites who were not Afrikaners or nationalist supporters, would come to see the benefits of apartheid.

The effects of the Act (SA, 1953) became apparent almost immediately. Most missions closed their schools and curtailed their educative efforts, while others lost their subsidies. White educators were withdrawn from mission schools as part of Verwoerd's separate cultures policy, resulting in sharp increases in educator-learner ratios. The school curriculum was altered to become less academic (Coutts, 1996:20).

Coutts (1996:20) maintains that African educators who replaced White educators were deliberately given inferior training, so that through no fault of their own, academic standards began to decline. This position was exacerbated by the ever-increasing learner enrolment. Although it was government policy to extend educational provision to Africans as part of its endeavour to control Africans more effectively, such control necessitated the limiting of African enrolment to the lower standards only.

The policy of deliberate neglect was largely achieved through the introduction of double sessions which, because they were not introduced in the higher standards, created a bottleneck effect, thereby forcing the majority of learners to leave school prematurely (Coutts, 1996:20).

According to Collins (1998:27), racial policies were naturally responsible for some major educational disadvantages. Collins goes on to state that learners were limited by financial constraints, and lacked access to basic education tools such as textbooks. Yet, aside from the fragmented education departments and the racial imbalances, the old system reflected an explicit academic bias, centring on the retention of information and theory, rather than the application and practical use of such knowledge and skills (Collins, 1998:27).

The Department of Education (2004:1) states that South Africa's democratic government inherited a divided and unequal system of education. Under apartheid, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments separated by race, geography and ideology. The Department of Education (2004:1) reiterates the fact that this education system prepared learners in different ways for the positions they were expected to occupy in social, economic and political life under apartheid. In each department, the curriculum played a powerful role in reinforcing inequality (Department of Education 2004:1).

Curriculum change in post apartheid South Africa started immediately after the election in 1994 when the National Education and Training Forum began a process of syllabus revision and subject rationalization (Department of

Education, 2004:1). The purpose of this process was mainly to lay the foundations for a single national core syllabus. In addition to the rationalization and consolidation of existing syllabi, the National Education and Training Forum curriculum developers removed overtly racist and other insensitive language from existing syllabi. For the first time, curriculum decisions were made in a participatory and representative manner (Department of Education, 2004:1).

The Department of Education (2004:1) asserts that the Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework document (1996) is the first major curriculum statement of a democratic South Africa. It is informed by principles derived from the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), the South African Qualifications Act (No 58 of 1995) and the National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996). In terms of White Paper (No 6 of 1995), it emphasizes the need for major changes in education and training in South Africa in order to normalize and transform teaching and learning in South Africa. It also stresses the need for a shift from the traditional aims-and-objectives approach to Outcomes-Based Education.

2.3 COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

The Schools Act (84/1996) declares as its aim to get every child to go to school and learn. According to section 29(1) (a) of the Constitution (1996), all South Africans have a constitutional right to education. In the case of children, parents, educators and the State are charged with delivering this right.

It is the responsibility of the parents, as stipulated in the Schools Act (84/1996), to ensure that their children attend school every term day from the year in which the child turns six until the year the child turns fifteen or completes the ninth grade, whichever happens first.

The provincial MEC will determine, by notice, the ages of compulsory attendance for learners with special education needs. The MEC is responsible for ensuring that there are enough school venues, so that every learner has a school to go to.

Following the Schools Act (84/1996), Provincial MECs who are unable to offer a place to every learner because of the lack of capacity must actively take steps to remedy the situation as soon as possible, and must report yearly to the Minister of Education on progress. If a learner is not enrolled at a school, or fails to attend, the provincial Head of Department may:

- investigate the circumstances;
- take action to remedy the situation; or
- if the remedy fails, issue a written notice to the learner's parents insisting on school attendance.

Section 3(6)(b) of the Schools Act (84/1996) maintains that parents who, without just cause, fail to comply with the notice will be guilty of an offence and can be fined or jailed for up to six months. The same applies to anybody else who prevents a learner from attending school. The Schools Act also obliges every provincial Head of Department to keep a register of learners exempted from compulsory school attendance.

Vos and Brits (1990:98) argue that compulsory education for Africans has yet to be generally implemented. They bring forth two dimensions affecting compulsory education and school attendance in their views as the dropout rate and the presence of over-age learners. Vos and Brits (1990:98) go on to state that of all learners who voluntarily commence schooling in Grade one, only 54% complete four years of lower primary education and only 28% complete the higher primary course. They cite that before introducing compulsory school attendance for non-schoolgoing children, a means of encouraging those attending school on a voluntary basis to complete their schooling should be devised. Investment in education where almost half of the school entrants drop out before they have obtained functional literacy seems a waste of both capital and human resources.

2.3.1 The situation at rural schools

It is necessary to turn the focus to the learners in rural areas specifically. Of those who commented on the compulsory school attendance of the farm school learner some were adamant about its possible failure at an implementation level (Botha, Unterhalter & Wolpe, 1991:91). One notable point they make in their critique of compulsory school attendance is that farm school learners do not leave because they fail exams, as it may seem to be in other areas such as urban or township. They leave because there is simply not enough space to accommodate them and because their parents and their parents' employers, will not or cannot afford school costs. A farm school is more about available classroom space than about pass rate.

According to News (2004:1), the Schools Act (84/1996) makes provision for two types of schools which are is the public school which is run by the State and the private school which is independent. News (2004:1) states that the farm schools have a hybrid status, being deemed to be public schools on private property.

Section 14(1) of the Schools Act (84/1996) states that a public school may be provided on private property only in terms of an agreement between the member of the executive (hereafter called the MEC for education) and the owner of the private property. According to section 14 (5) of the Schools Act (84/1996) such an agreement must provide for:

- provision of education and the performance of the normal functions of a public school;
- governance of the school, including the relationship between the governing body of the school and the owner;
- access by all interested parties to the property of the school;
- maintenance and improvement of the school buildings and the property on which the school stands and the supply of necessary services; and

- protection of the owner's rights in respect of the property occupied, affected or used by the school.

Section 56 of the Schools Act (84/1996) declares that if an agreement contemplated in section 14 does not exist at the commencement of this Act in respect of a school, standing on a private property and which is deemed to be a public school in terms of section 52 (1), the MEC for education must take reasonable measures to conclude such an agreement within six months of the commencement of the Schools Act (84/1996).

Despite these laws that have been put in place by the State to ensure that all the citizens of South Africa receive education without hindrances, the right to education is still a dream that has not yet come true to many farm school learners.

These expressions are supported by MacFarlane (2005:4) in his report which states that rural schooling experiences a crisis and rural education should be resourced and organized differently from that in urban areas. The State's commitment to social justice in all matters and especially to universal access to education remains unfulfilled for large numbers of children, youths and adults living in rural areas. The relative scarcity of resources and in some cases the resolution and poverty of rural communities, seriously limit the development possibilities that might be achieved through education.

Bolowana (2004:1) reports that progress in education in South African's rural area schools has been slow and that democracy appears to have done little for the learners at the farm schools, where the education provided has been minimal. Furthermore, Bolowana (2004:1) alleges that the South African government is failing to protect the right to a primary education for learners living on commercial farms by neither ensuring their access to farm schools nor maintaining the adequacy of learning conditions at these schools, and this violates the Schools Act (84/1996), the National Education Policy Act (27/1996) and their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

According to Bolowana (2004:1), many learners in rural areas have dropped out of school because of issues that could be resolved through good management. Approximately 19% of learners in rural areas, which includes commercial farm areas and former homelands, were not at school as opposed to 11% in urban areas. Bolowana (2004:1) maintains that the learners were not attending school because of, among other aspects, lack of access to schools, labour disputes between the farmers and their parents, threats of closure of farm schools and lack of transport. Lack of transport has an impact on truancy, non-attendance and dropout rates, about 188000 learners had dropped out of school and worked on farms. Educators also experience transport problems (Bolowana, 2004:1).

News (2004:4) declares that the Transvaal Agricultural Union which represents approximately 6,000 farm owners has raised a number of concerns relating to the management and governance of farm schools, the dilapidated state of schools, and the general standard of education at farm schools. In terms of contractual agreement between the owner and provincial department of education, the union proposes that the school be available for educational purposes. The provincial department of education should be responsible for maintaining the school premises. Thus, for example, the farm owner would make water available to the school and the water pipes would run up to the school fence, but it would be the responsibility of the provincial department of education to get that water pipe to the school premises.

The article by News (2004:5) furthermore states that the Transvaal Agricultural Union suggests that the provincial department should pay a nominal rent of R1 per leaner per year. Should the school shut down, the buildings and any improvements made would be the property of the farm owner. This is because in the experience of the farm owners, the school functions for a couple of years, it falls apart, learners leave and the facilities remain. It is on these terms that the Union has supported its members in the signing of the contractual agreements.

Agriculture South Africa, which represents approximately 62,000 commercial and emerging farmers, has indicated that it is committed to the conclusion of

the agreements in order to promote and support the education and development of learners at farm schools. However, it confirmed that landowners who have schools with fewer than ten learners did not sign the contracts as they believed that it was not in their interest to retain the schools (News, 2004:5).

According to News (2004:5), the South African Democratic Teachers Union (hereafter, called SADTU) acknowledged that farm schools are neglected and that as an organization it needs to address the plight of learners and educators at farm schools. The lack of transportation and insufficient resources are some of the concerns raised by the organization. In essence, the organization believes that clarity on the legal status of farm schools is important for the transformation of these schools.

Khumalo (2004:6) emphasizes the need for classrooms when indicating that around five hundred school children were left stranded after a farmer ejected them from his land because education authorities owed him an amount of fifty thousand rands.

2.3.2 The predicament of primary schools

Vos and Brits (1990:99) declare that a disturbing feature of primary school enrolment is the presence of over-aged learners. These two authors claim that in the year 1984 the age of Grade 1 learners ranged from 6-17, and thát of Grade 7 learners from 11-22 years of age. Taking these factors into consideration, it would be very difficult to implement a national, compulsory education programme for African learners, on the farms especially, all at once (Vos & Brits, 1990:90). It must be borne in mind that compulsory education is concomitant with punitive measures. The systematic lowering of the learner-educator ratio, supplying free books, eliminating double sessions, providing more educational facilities and training more and better qualified educators are all preliminary measures for the introduction of compulsory education (Vos & Brits, 1990:99).

According to News (2004:6), the South African Education for All Assessment published in 2000, states that approximately 25% of primary and combined

schools had no access to water within walking distance. Access to adequate drinking water is still a problem at some farm schools, even where there is a source of water on the farm. In cases where there is a good relationship between the farm owner and the school, the provision of water does not seem to be a problem. In general, problems were experienced at those schools where there is no contractual agreement between the farm owner and the provincial department of education. In other cases educators were unaware of whether such an agreement in fact existed. Furthermore, News (2004:6) declares that in both instances, entrance to the school for the purposes of installing water pipes requires the co-operation of a farm owner, which is not always forthcoming.

News (2004:5) maintains that the farm school community is denied access to water. Not only are there hygienic and health care reasons for water, but school buildings also need to be kept clean to maintain an adequate learning environment.

As pointed out by News (2004:7), farm schools are rarely connected to a power supply, whether the national grid, a generator or solar power. The lack of some form of energy limits the teaching and learning that can take place at a school. Administrative activities can also be impaired. Learners are excluded from accessing information technology systems either donated or provided by the provincial departmental, other than learners in urban and wealthier areas who have greater access to these resources. No power affects the usage of visual teaching methods, administering school business or visibility in the classroom where a school is located in a forested area and advances learner education such as computer training.

The situation worsens during inclement weather when light quality within the classroom is severely diminished. The use of visual media to teach or access to photocopiers to supplement learning materials is impossible. These problems affect the education received by learners at the farm school (News, 2004:7).

45% of farm schools in South Africa continue to have pit latrines, and a small number are still using the bucket system. Regulation 7(1) of the Schools Act (84/1996) states that toilets must be provided at schools. News (2004:7) declares that pit latrines are in various degrees of repair and generally unhygienic at most schools. At some schools there are no sanitation facilities and learners are using the bush.

News (2004:8) states that the National Department of Education has reported that the condition of all farm school buildings in South Africa have notably deteriorated from 1996 to 2000. 26% of all school buildings were considered "weak" and 8.4% "very weak" (meaning dilapidated and unsuitable for educational purposes). At some schools, windowpanes need replacing, ceilings are collapsing, floors need finishing and there is no heating. The lack of a telephone at a school nearby hinders the ability of educators to contact provincial authorities when repairs and services are needed or when there is an emergency at school.

2.4 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

According to Mathonsi (2001:1), the underpinning of the Schools Act (84/1996) is that schools are encouraged to become self-managed as well as self-reliant. The principal is no longer expected to carry the burden of managing the school alone. In terms of the amended provision of section 16 of the Schools Act (84/1996), a School Management Team (hereafter SMT) must be informed to assume responsibility for the day to day running of the school and for the implementation of the school's policies. Mathonsi (2001:1) goes on to mention that it is the task of the School Governing Body (hereafter SGB) to determine such policies and it is the new understanding of governance that is at the centre of the reorganization of the school system.

Rugh and Bossert (1998:166) mention that parents send their children to school with the expectations that they would receive quality education in order to secure their future with a decent vocation. Policy-makers and school administrators take for granted that schools will provide this quality education.

Frequently, education policy designers view community participation as a panacea for whatever is going wrong or missing in education delivery.

Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:231) point out that parents need to be involved in their children's education and this involvement must include insight into their children's progress, participation in decision-making and being critical of information on educational issues. Furthermore, they argue that parents who respect diversity and are willing to become involved in education can influence a community in how it supports its institutions

However, parental involvement in education is beset with problems because it is influenced by a number of factors that include the parents' social class. According to McGrath and Kuriloff (1999:604), parental involvement in educational matters can be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents. The two authors point out that policy-makers and school administrators cannot be indifferent to the effects of socio-economic status on parental involvement in education.

Furthermore, McGrath and Kuriloff (1999:604) state that efforts to involve parents may be biased by giving further advantage to wealthier parents while creating hindrances to the involvement of the working class. Such an imbalance in parental involvement in education is clearly identified in historically disadvantaged schools where most of the parents lack the required literacy levels of participation. In addition, many of these parents are unemployed, consequently reducing their role in negotiating from a point of strength.

Section 23(9) of the Schools Act (84/1996) stipulates that there must be one parent more in an SGB than the combined total of other members with voting rights (Department of Education, 1997a:25). Throughout the world there are efforts to involve parents in education as schools strive to improve quality.

Mbokodi, Msila and Singh (2004:303) point out that the Schools Act (84/1996) proposes decentralized school management. They affirm the views above that parents need to be involved in the education of their children. Furthermore, Mbokodi, Msila and Singh (2004:303) assert that in the introduction of the new

system of education, Outcomes-Based Education, in 1997 it appeared that attention was frequently focused on educator and learner empowerment.

It appears that there has been less emphasis and focus on parental empowerment. Community involvement was not a priority then (Mbokodi, Msila & Singh, 2004: 303).

2.4.1 The importance of parental involvement

According to Nixon *et al.* (1996:95), parents play a central role in the education of their children. Within the school they are valued as complementary educators and encouraged to participate fully in the education of their children. Parents are respected as having the best interests of their children at heart. Their experience is important and diverse.

Section (1) of the Schools Act (84/1996) stipulates the responsibilities of the parents as people who must ensure that their children attend school every day of the term, who play an active role in supporting a positive learning environment at their child's school, who help the school decide if it should charge school fees and who must pay school fees if they are set, if possible and unless they are exempted.

Steyn (2003:24) emphasizes the importance of parental participation in education. These authors stress that the education system is inevitably linked to parents and communities. Communities value education for themselves and for the future of their children's education. Parents and communities need to understand what the school is trying to achieve and to support these goals. On the other hand, it is also true that the school needs to be more responsive to the needs and goals of the larger society. Parental involvement can range from occasional attendance of school functions to partnership through parent-teacher organizations and parent management bodies.

Moreover, Steyn (2003:24) raises the point that education systems which succeed generally have a strong community, parental and learner identification with school objectives and school processes. The school needs

to embody the community's aspirations for the future so that both parents and learners see the school as instrumental in the achievement of their life goals.

Parental involvement is central in the learning process of learners. The contact between schools and parents provides parents with better information and improved understanding about school expectations of learners' performance (Freire & Macedo, 1987:42). The same authors argue that school community relationships assist parents in being aware of the importance of encouraging and supporting the learning process. However, the problems related to the community such as transport and illiteracy need to be addressed. A number of parents in historically African communities find it difficult to attend meetings at school or to visit the school, because transport is sometimes unavailable (Freire & Macedo, 1987:42).

This is particularly the case in rural areas and in any area if the meetings are held at night. Failure to visit the school or to attend meetings deprives parents of the opportunity to build relationships with the school and to get the necessary information which will enable them to understand what goes on at the school. Furthermore, since most Blacks live far from their places of work, time to visit school or to attend meetings often becomes a problem (Freire & Macedo, 1987:42).

According to the Department of Education (1997a:27), parents and guardians have a very important role to play in the new education system. They are required to share the responsibility of the education of their children with the state. Parents are also encouraged to further their own education and use any knowledge gained to build and develop their own community.

Parental involvement in school activities, according to Van Schalkwyk (1990:1), is important because parents have fundamental rights and interests in the education of their children. A family as a primary institution has an obligation of supporting a child so that he can do well at school. Barnard (1990:2) supports the above notion by stating that education starts at home. This implies that education which is conducted at school is a continuation of

the aspirations of parents at home, aiming at making the children self-sufficient.

Van Wyk (1991:11) argues that parents are involved in school activities because they are intimately attached to their children. It is this relation that compels parents to ensure that their children receive only the best education. It is therefore on these grounds that, even if children are later referred to school, parents fail to divorce themselves completely from their educative task (Lynch, 1992:304).

Parental involvement in South Africa has been receiving attention since 1652 (Van der Linde, 1993:12). Parents may be organized into school committees, management councils or governing councils. In these bodies, parents are expected to determine the standard of education, determine the curriculum, recommend the appointment or dismissal of staff, supervise the spirit and character of education, maintain and manage school buildings and finances or make demands concerning the education of their children (Van Schalkwyk, 1991:78).

Freire and Macedo (1987:43) state that illiteracy of the parents is the other problem and a number of parents in Black communities have, as a result of the oppressive previous governments in South Africa, been subjugated to illiteracy. Furthermore, these two authors declare that the parents have, in addition, not had the opportunity to be able to read and write. Thus, as a result of illiteracy, Black parents have not had the benefit of active involvement in the education of their children. They have also been deprived of the opportunity of making a significant contribution to their children's education. This problem is likely to affect their input in community-school relationships. Coupled with other problems such as an inadequate transport system in Black communities, parents experience difficulty communicating with the school (Freire & Macedo, 1987:43).

2.4.2 Involvement of parents of learners at farm schools

Parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education due to their previous background. Some have never been at school while

others were forced to drop out, that is to leave school at an early age. This matter results in parents having less knowledge about and confidence in the education service (NCS, 1996:32).

Graff and Gordon (1992:229) point out that the Education Regulations Act 70 of 1988 provided for a farm SGB, comprising the owner of the school or his/her representative and elected parents of learners. These two authors immediately raise three concerns. Firstly, the farmer is still in a commanding position in the governance of the school, particularly if the parents are also his/her own employees. Such an SGB runs the risk of having little impact on the farmer's authority. Secondly, it lies within the farmer's discretion whether to set up an SGB or not. Thirdly, there are no educator representatives on this body (Graff & Gordon, 1992:229).

However, Graff and Gordon (1992:229) argue that unless farm populations can organize and mobilize on their own behalf, both education and socio-economic conditions which feed into it will be seriously neglected.

Graff and Gordon (1992:210-211) declare that organizing farm workers is difficult even without the legal immunity which farmers have enjoyed. In general, farm workers live scattered over great distances. Time-consuming work leaves very little space for organizational activities. In addition, farm workers suffer from attitudes of deference and self-effacement bred of decades of harsh and paternalistic treatment. Furthermore, Graff and Gordon (1992:210-211) declare that, despite resistance in various forms in the past, farm workers today lack the self-confidence, organizational ability, educational qualifications and initiative to launch and sustain organizations. They have also suffered brutality and violence from farmers who have gone virtually unpunished.

There are various factors that may retard the parental involvement at the farm school as pointed out by NCS (1996:32). NCS (1996:32) states that parents on the farm are more likely to have lower levels of education due to their previous background. Some have never been at school while others were forced to drop-out. This may generally result in parents having less knowledge

about and confidence in the education service, and therefore they exclude themselves from education matters, hence also from participation (NCS, 1996:32).

Furthermore, Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1995:484) argue that at the onset of the democratic era, the important role of parents was recognized in various education Acts for the different racial groups. However, for a large part, lip service has been paid to this principle. For example, at the majority of African schools, the Governing Bodies exist in name only. Management councils and School Governing Bodies operate with limited effect in traditionally white schools (Dekker & Van Schalkwyk, 1995:484).

2.4.3 Challenges of parental involvement as experienced by schools

Weeto (1997:55) asserts that school principals can create numerous hindrances for parents to be meaningfully involved in school activities. These impediments may dishearten parents to such an extent that they may not see any valid reason why they should be associated with the school and its activities. Weeto (1997:55) goes on to claim that if the principal adopts negative attitudes towards parents, the parents' contribution to school activities would be trivial.

Van der Linde (1993:39) states that school principals should admit that they have inspired parents to be effectively involved in school activities. Most schools prefer to handle issues alone without the involvement of parents as such parents no longer feature in school activities. Van der Linde (1993:39) stresses the fact that school principals should not complain that parents are no longer interested in the education of their children, because they are the cause of this tendency. It therefore seems to be too demanding to expect parents to feature in school issues when they are not afforded the chance to decide with the school on matters that effect the education of their children.

Goldring (1993:96) asserts that every school's functioning is determined by the nature of its tasks, the people within it and the interpersonal relationships. A school climate presupposes that the vision and mission are known and accepted by the people who are serving it. The vision and mission make one

school different from the other. Furthermore, Goldring (1993:96) declares that a school principal and the community it is serving have to ensure that the following prerequisites are met:

- knowledge of parental involvement in school activities;
- effective communications with parents; and
- confidence in the parents of the learners.

Goldring (1993:96) suggests that the above-mentioned basic factors be met before an attempt could be made to optimize parental involvement in school activities.

Goldring (1993:116) also states that the principal, as school manager, is the most important person who determines how and what should be done at school. However, some view problems with apprehension and consider themselves as outsiders and also as problems to the school. It is this attitude that hinders parents from being associated with the school and its activities.

The educative task is based on the vision and mission that are supposed to be achieved within the school. The attainment of the vision and mission rests on the aim of teaching, the choice of teaching methods and the manner in which the evaluation of work is conducted in order to assess if the target has been accomplished (Goldring, 1991:96). Weeto (1997:57) confirms the notion that if the school does not view parents as a vital element in the determination of the school vision and mission, the parents would in turn view education as the sphere of educators only.

Wagstaff and Gallagher (1990:111) argue that the absence of parents from school activities arise from the absence of a vision and mission that a school has set as an institution. Therefore, the reason for the absence of parents from school activities could be due to the fact that:

- a school has its mission to accomplish that does not require parents to be directly involved in school activities; and

- parents believe that a school is an independent institution that has no dealing with the parents because it is self-sufficient.

Basson (1999:78) affirms the above notion by stating that the research has revealed that 68% of principals determine the school policies without considering the involvement of parents who are the primary educators. However, the African National Congress (1994:61) cautions that it is imperative that structures of governance of institutions should by all means reflect the interest of all stakeholders and the community that are being served by the institutions concerned. Whether this is in fact the case, is questionnable.

Oosthuizen (1992:61) states that the principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable in school committees or councils because they could perhaps look up to the principal for guidance and leadership. Bastiani (1993:109) also argues that the principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable in school communities or councils because they will always look up to the principal for guidance and leadership. Schools that fail to train parents adequately in how its affairs should be run will have problems with parents not honouring their educational obligations in respect of their children (Oosthuizen, 1992:61).

Bastiani (1993:109) maintains that some educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities. Principals maintain that parents can only feature in a representative nature and not as individuals because they will be failing to acknowledge the educator's professional area. Educators feel that they are better qualified than parents to handle their work without interference. The above notion is contested by Steyn and Van der Westhuizen (1993:36) who indicate that the high failure rate among Blacks can be attributed to the attitude, commitment and irresponsible actions by both the school principals and educators. The two authors further claim that some Black parents are not very eager to be involved in school activities.

Educators have been trained not to view parents as a component of an education system (Fisher, 1994:72). This implies that parents cannot claim a

say in education and therefore should not interfere in issues that are not theirs. Because of the perception that teaching is the task of educators and not of parents, educators do everything possible to discourage parents from being involved in school activities. However, Keyter (1995:14) warns that it should be borne in mind that parents have the right to determine the ethos of a school and therefore the school cannot decide by itself what is good for the education of the children alone. He further feels that it is their right to be a component of an education system.

Greyffenberg (1991:45) states that educators are trained to handle learners, not parents. This seems to be the reason why they fail to accommodate parents in school activities and as a result are facing serious problems of trying to involve parents in school activities. Oosthuizen (1992:62) maintains that some principals believe that a parents' meeting is the only way in which they can optimize parental involvement in school activities. Yet, Oosthuizen (1992:62) also maintains that these meetings usually do not address the problems of parents as individuals.

Some educators use highly technical language that parents fail to understand when communicating with them on the following issues: examinations, sports, school functions, assessment of learners, learners' behaviour, learning areas to be offered at school, policy matters, staff changes, etc. (Barnard, 1996:430-431). The reality is that parents are likely to interpret the message wrongly or that they may not understand the aim of the school principal at all and as such will not be able to contribute properly to the development of education. Instead of committing themselves to matters they are not sure about, parents would rather stay away from school activities (D'Angelo & Adler, 1991:350). Greyffenberg (1991:43) further maintains that school principals succeed only in impressing parents, but fail to communicate with them. If parents are not explicitly sure what the school requires of them, they could have difficulty in being associated with the school.

2.5 CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to Baker and Oakes (1992:477) in 1976, and again in 1980, Black schools became a flash point for revolt against the apartheid system. Youngsters, who had grown up under a system that many of their parents had accepted as a permanent part of their lives, wanted nothing to do with apartheid and were ripe for the kind of rhetoric that flared up under the Azanian Students' Movement, the students wing of the Azanian People's Organization (hereafter called AZAPO) and the United Democratic Front (hereafter called UDF), the affiliated Congress of South African Students (hereafter called COSAS).While violence became an everyday occurrence, work stoppages were organized and school boycotts ensued which grounded the DET system to a halt. Africans were particularly bitter that in many areas their education system was still rooted in the Verwoerdian theory of preparing them only for manual work (Baker & Oakes, 1992:477).

It is because of this background that the culture of learning and teaching was advocated. McGregor (1997:2) reports that building classrooms, restructuring the school system and improving resources are all vital to South Africa's attempts to deliver equal opportunity and quality education to all. The former State President, Nelson Mandela, launched a national campaign on 20 February 1997 appealing to all South Africans for help in creating a culture of learning and teaching, especially in devastated Black schools. The campaign identified discipline, application, determination to succeed, mutual support and community ownership as some of the key values of education, in a national effort to improve education at all levels.

2.5.1 Challenges facing farm schools

Mbelle (2004:15) states that the challenges facing farm schools are multifaceted. Some of these challenges are, the location of the school, closure of schools, dismissals and evictions, changing the nature of business, sale of farms, poverty, health problems, housing problems, children's environment, crime and drugs, family disruptions, lower levels of education and mastering and understanding the language of instruction.

Ngema (2005:9) writes that about 500 learners were left without classrooms because of the raging veld fires in the Kwazulu-Natal province. He states that lightning and hot and windy weather could have been responsible. In Hlabisa, the Nomaganga Primary School was gutted by fire, and one classroom and several toilets were damaged at Ntamine Midwa Secondary School. He goes on to say that fire razed eight classrooms at Bhekumkonto Primary School in Ubombo, four at KwaNdonsa Primary School and two classrooms each at Ben Jobe Primary School and Uphande Primary School to the ground. These are all examples of the challenges that farm schools face.

During the winter recess, Deo Gloria Primary School in Thabazimbe suffered a setback when a wild fire gutted the school building, reducing it to a mere rubble. During police investigations, the cause of fire could not be established (Kgosana, 2005:33).

At times a farm school is at risk of being moved to another place due to the development of the area by the owner. In most cases, the owner's interest is on the wealth that he/she may accumulate out of the intended project and, through this, compromising and sacrificing the education of farm school learners.

360 learners from Blair Atholl School, which was founded by the Gary Player Foundation, were moved to St Ansgar because the Blair Atholl property and others inside the Cradle of Humankind world heritage site had been bought to be developed as a golf estate (Anon., 2005:4).

Kgosana (2005:33) maintains that Johan Pienaar bought the land in Thabazimbe on which Deo Gloria Primary school is situated and immediately declared the school a nuisance. He made it clear to the principal and his educators that the school and its learners were not welcome on his land.

Although the Limpopo Department of Education took the farmer to court in defense of the school, it did not deter the farmer from his mission to evict the school from his ground and in November 2004 he cut off the water supply and took over the school's sportsfield. He also refused to allow the educators

the school grounds and draped it in a rough green net. Somehow, it appeared as if learners and their educators posed a danger to him (Kgosana, 2005:33).

Molefe (1998:01) states that Rusoord Intermediate School at Blesbokspruit farm in the Vaal Triangle faced closure. The owner of the property on which the school stands instructed the principal to vacate the school by the end of 1998. According to Molefe (1998:01), the principal indicated that the closure of the school would spell disaster for the education of the 219 learners attending, as it was the only learning institution within 50 km. The closure would also bring misery to the staff of eight educators.

In another incident of school closure, parents threatened to occupy the school by force if the Department of Education failed to resolve the dispute with the owner. But the Nigel / Springs director of education, advised that it was not a good idea to use the farm school against the owner's will (Radebe, 1999:14). The question still arises: What about the farm school learners and their right to basic education?

Under these conditions, there is the risk of an education collapse at the schools directly affected and those associated or who see themselves in the same situation. When the farm owner threatens to close the school, the educators, as adults and first stakeholders to experience these attacks on the ground, are the first to be affected because they see themselves as victims, targeted by the farmer (Radebe, 1999:14).

Educators regard the important work they do in that particular community of educating, developing, parenting and guiding; as well as their sacrifice, commitment and mentoring as worthless because of the actions of the farm owner. In this way the performance of the educators is likely to be affected negatively, which in turn reflects negatively on the performance of the innocent farm school learners (Dladla, 2000:35-37).

According to Dladla (2000:36), the fundamental values of the Constitution (as embedded in the curriculum) which educators need to cascade to farm school learners such as democracy, social justice and equity, freedom of person, belief and expression, non-racism and non-sexism, human dignity or ubuntu,

an open society, responsibility and accountability, mutual respect, the rule of law and reconciliation are under the constraints of threats of expelling or closing the school which originate from the farm owner.

For example, the school may have the feeling that the attack by the owner originates from racism and, as a result, the mutual respect which is espoused as a value by the Constitution and embedded in the curriculum, is then not practised. It remains just a theory, which in reality does not benefit the citizens of South Africa, in particular the farm school learners who are affected (Booysen, 1995:34).

It is crucial at this point for one to outline the role of educators as key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa which, in turn, will benefit the learners including farm school learners (Department of Education, 1995b:27).

2.5.2 The role of the educators

The educator is seen as learning mediator; interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials; learning area, subject, discipline or phase specialist; assessor, leader, administrator and manager; a scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; and lastly as the educator's community, citizenship and pastoral role model. He/she will be expected to practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others, one that upholds the constitution and promotes democratic values and practices at schools and in society at large (Department of Education, 2004:14).

The Department of Education (1995b:28) goes on to state that the educator within the school should demonstrate the ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner, respond to the educational and other needs of the learner, and fellow educators and develop supportive relationships with the parents and other key persons in the community, based on a critical understanding of community development issues.

If the learning environment does not permit the educator to practise and develop freely a sense of respect and responsibility due to disputes between the farm owner and the department of education, it becomes more complicated for learning to take place and as a result, farm school learners suffer a serious setback.

Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1995:483) argue that the inequalities in the provision of education and training are most acute in rural communities. Rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment. Educators in rural and farm schools are more likely to be unqualified and under-qualified. Mecoamere (2004:7) states that, at one school among 481 schools in Mpumalanga, one person was both principal and teacher and handled up to five primary school grades.

Kgosana (2005:33) maintains that, in Limpopo, 236 learners are crammed into four classrooms while learners receive instructions under trees at ten schools. Seventy-five schools were identified in 2001 where learners were being taught under unsuitable conditions. These conditions are not conducive to the culture of teaching and learning being promoted at the farm school.

2.6 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Baker and Oakes (1992:477) declare that although state spending on African education increased dramatically under the Botha administration, that is, from R68,84 million in 1978 to R237 million by mid-1985, the Institute of Race Relations reported that in the period 1982 to 1983, R1385 was spent on the education of every white learner, compared with R871 for every Indian learner, R593 for every coloured learner and R192 for every African schoolchild. Africans were particularly bitter that in many areas their education system was still rooted in the Verwoerdian theory of preparing them only for manual work.

The careers of farm school learners are generally determined when they walk through the classroom door. Their academic performance partly depends on the nutrition, stimulation and support which their parents can give them. Often

farm workers are unable to provide these (Botha, Unterhalter & Wolpe, 1991:221).

2.6.1 Wages

Furthermore, Botha, Unterhalter and Wolpe (1991:225) argue that some farmers, by contrast, pay very low wages, provide ramshackle houses with pit latrines, outside water taps and no electricity. These conditions are accompanied by physical assault on the workers, who are frequently heavily in debt to the farmers. African farm schools are more likely to be exposed to the whim of farmer control, since farmers own the school and the land on which it is built. It is also noted, as declared by Botha, Unterhalter and Wolpe (1991:231), that on South African farms, farmers often use schools to supply their own labour needs. Child labour is common, although section 28(e) specifically protects children from exploitative labour practices (SA, 1996a).

Molema (2005:2) also upholds these allegations by stating further that a home of three farm school learners that she visited is a three-roomed shack which they share with their grandmother, brother and their two uncles. There are gaping holes in the roof, a sand floor, and no electricity or running water. The few possessions they own include six plates, two pots, two make-shift beds and a few worn-out pieces of clothing.

Although there have been significant improvements in both wages and schooling for urban Africans, these changes have bypassed the rural population. For farm workers this has meant an ongoing deterioration of real wages and living conditions (Botha, Unterhalter & Wolpe, 1991:231).

2.6.2 Poverty

Poverty resulting from unemployment or low incomes on the farms results in stress and reduces or precludes money from being spent by families on learning resources such as books, or learning opportunities such as outings and holidays. It also increases the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment, in the evenings and at weekends, reducing time for homework

and in some cases, during the day, causing absenteeism. This can also result in learners dropping out, and an increase in child-labour (NCS, 1996:32).

A number of community members may want to support schools financially through funding projects, for example. But many are not able to do so because of poverty (Freire & Macedo, 1987:43). Poverty may rob parents and communities of an opportunity to be active participants at the school. In this way, scope for the development of positive school community relations is reduced.

2.6.3 Dismissals

Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers from the farms also reduce active participation of parents and community at the farm school. Grogan (2002:104) explains that dismissal means that an employer has terminated a contract of employment with or without notice; an employee reasonably expected the employer to renew a fixed-term contract of employment on the same or similar terms, but the employer offered to renew it on less favourable terms, or did not renew it; an employer refused to allow an employee to resume work after she took maternity leave in terms of any law, collective agreement or her contract of employment; or was absent from work for up to four weeks before the expected date, and up to eight weeks after the actual date of the birth of her child; an employer who dismissed a number of employees for the same or similar reasons has offered to re-employ one or more of them, but has refused to re-employ another; or an employee terminated a contract of employment with or without notice because the employer made continued employment intolerable for the employee (Grogan, 2002:104).

In the researcher's opinion, it is evident that only the interests of the employer and employee are accounted for. But what about the right to basic education of the farm school learner? Dismissal of the parent means eviction of the family from the farm and the learner will then no longer be able to attend the school which is on that particular farm. At times, the termination of the

relationship between the employer and employee takes place in what one may describe as bad faith, involving the use of force between the parties.

Kgosana (2005:26) reports that an employee was dismissed from a farm and barred from entering the premises by the farmer. On January 2003 an employee defied the order and entered the premises to collect his pots and pans, but never anticipated what was going to happen to him. His former colleagues apprehended him and assaulted him with pangas. Allegedly they were instructed by the farmer. Later that night, the wounded former employee was driven in a bakkie to the Mokwalo Lion Enclosure where he was thrown into the enclosure and was mauled to death by the lions (Kgosana, 2005:26).

Section 7.1 of the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997 (62/1997; hereafter called Act 62 of 1997) defines eviction as a means to deprive a person, against his/her will; of residence on land; of use of land which is linked to the right of residence; of access to water which is linked to the right of residence. It goes on to explain that eviction includes removing occupiers from land, forcing them off the land, threatening them so that they leave, stopping them from coming back onto the land if they left with the plan to return, or stopping them from using water or from using land that was linked to their right to stay on the land.

2.6.4 Housing conditions

Housing problems are likely to occur, especially where the farmer builds small houses with three or fewer rooms for his/her employees (NCS, 1996:32). Overcrowding, bed-sharing, lack of a quiet space for homework, and a greater chance of household accidents, can cause serious disturbance to the education of the farm school learner. Learners are less likely to gain a secure mastery and understanding of language due to the fact that they do not have enough opportunities to read at home, to have high self-esteem or to be subject to peer-group pressure to succeed at school (NSC, 1996:32).

Children's environment is less likely to be conducive to their development, for example, where there is greater pollution, limited access to gardens and other places to play or even restrictions on attending school. Mokoena (2004:5)

reports that a father of four has spent twenty lonely years at a cattle post on a remote Free State farm. His four children have never had contact with the outside world and other people before they were discovered by social workers at Totokshia farm in the Theunissen district earlier in 2004. The children displayed animalistic tendencies and all of them, including their mother could not communicate in an understandable language. They communicate with each other and their father in sign language and with noises. The eldest walked on all fours. It is the challenge of the school to ensure that when such children join the stream, they adjust properly, following the inclusion programme (Mokoena, 2004:5).

2.6.5 Operational changes on the farm

Mbelle (2004:15) declares that landowners or farmers who change the nature of their business from livestock to game farming, suddenly require fewer workers. Mbelle (2004:5) furthermore states that the change forces the farmer to retrench some of his/her employees due to operational reasons. To the employees affected it means that they will have to look for new employment and accommodation. If the family relocates to an area far from the current one, learners could be withdrawn from the school at times without proper consultation with the school authorities and ultimately without the necessary school documents. The school will be faced with the challenge of dropping numbers of learners, forcing the school to redeploy excess educators, at times losing those educators with potential, depending on the criteria used, for example, last in first out (LIFO). This is confirmed by Hlongwa (2007a:4) when he claims that a father of 15 children is forced to sleep in his car while the rest of his family share a shack that he built shortly after eviction.

Hlongwa (2007b:28) maintains that hundreds of commercial farmers have evicted their workers and converted to game farming, turning vast tracts of prime cattle and arable land into fenced wilderness areas for rhino, lion and other game.

2.6.6 Crime at farm level

Haffejee (2005:10) states that crime that takes place on the farms threatens the continuation of farming as farmers become despondent of their security. This compels some farmers to abandon their farms to relocate to urban areas while farm employees lose their employment as well as accommodation.

The Sedibeng mayor indicates that agriculture is not immune to security issues that include farm killings, mostly driven by former farm workers and explains that workers who felt exploited or who were unreasonably dismissed, first target the area they know best to take revenge, which in this case is the farms they worked on (Haffejee, 2005:10).

Mdletshe (2007:6) reports that about 200 learners at Khethifundo Primary School in Eshowe, on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast, have been forced to study under the trees after their school was demolished because of the death of the farm manager, killed by the workers.

2.6.7 Scholar transport

Kgosana (2005:1) asserts that the Gauteng Department of Education (hereafter called GDE) initiated scholar transport to transport needy learners, mostly those who attend farm schools and walk long distances to school. The policy stipulates that learners who walk to school more than five kilometers be provided with free transport. Nkotoe (2002:2) affirms this notion by stating that the provision of scholar transport was born out of the need to address the following aspects:

- providing access to education to learners that reside in farm, rural and informal settlements where the nearest ordinary public school is more than five kilometers from the place of residence;
- improving attendance at schools by learners of farm, rural and informal communities living more than five kilometers from schools; and

- improving the culture of learning and teaching as transported learners will not be tired on arrival at school, as was previously the case (Nkotoe, 2002:2).

Although the scheme brought much relief to those farm school learners who used to walk long distances to school, arriving late and tired at school, there were also flaws that have infested the scheme, as Kgosana (2005:1) declares that the GDE has been losing millions, estimated to be as much as fifty million rands annually, as a result of fraudulent claims by bus operators contracted to transport needy learners.

According to Nkotoe (2002:3&4), the subsidization of the scholar transport is based on the following:

- the subsidy is only applicable to learners that reside in farm, rural or informal settlements;
- each learner is subsidized to a maximum of 30 kilometers per day, so subsidization for any additional kilometers must be motivated by the district senior manager;
- the service provider is to be paid R0.15 per kilometer, but the service provider may charge the learner an additional amount per trip, representing the unsubsidized part of the scholar transport;
- the service provider will sign a contract to perform the service for three years, renewable annually, subject to a performance review;
- a seat must be provided for every travelling learner and no learner must be required to stand for the duration of the journey; with the exemption of learners from primary schools, only the maximum number of learners (passengers) for which the vehicle has been licensed and for which the appropriate certificates and permits have been issued may be transported;
- except for short routes (with a total single distance of 8 km), learners must be transported simultaneously, so a contractor may not transport one

group of learners and then return with the same vehicle to transport a second group of learners;

- learners may only be transported in vehicles specifically designed to carry passengers;
- the vehicle used to transport learners must at all times during the contract period be in roadworthy condition;
- should the contractor fail to withdraw the unroadworthy vehicle, the GDE reserves the right to make suitable alternative arrangements and claim the expenditure so incurred from the contractor;
- should the contractor, for whatever reason, fail to transport on particular days, the GDE reserves the right to refuse to pay the contractor for the number of days he neglected to transport the learners;
- the transport service must be maintained on every school day and provide for the school times of the relevant schools, providing ample time for learners to board and to alight from the vehicle(s); and
- changes / alterations / extensions to the route may be affected in the persuance of the objective the Rural Education Development Project (Nkotoe, 2002:3&4).

Kgosana (2005:1) claims that the GDE forensic report into the activities of bus operators has unearthed widespread fraud, including bus operators inflating their kilometer claims, the GDE paying for ghost learners, a duplication of routes, the transportation of learners who should not be in the system and even an educator who privately operates buses and is benefiting from the scheme. In another incident a bus operator was found to have been charging parents an additional forty rand per learner, while claiming from the GDE for providing transportation services. However there are also challenges such as late arrival of buses at school and bus strikes by bus operators that prevent the scheme from operating harmoniously.

From the above comments, it appears that the right to basic education of the farm school learners is beset with a number of problems. This point is also raised by Taunyane (2005:21) concerning a dispute between bus operators and the GDE that led bus operators to strike over a 15 cent increase in bus subsidy, leaving farm school learners stranded and exposed to dangers such as road accidents and rape. Taunyane (2005:21) further states that the most affected learners are those residing in the Vaal Triangle area.

Kgosana (2005:1) alleges that scores of learners attending farm schools suffered another setback as bus operators affiliated with the South African Bus Operators' Association (hereafter called SABOA) stopped transporting learners. Kgosana (2005:1) goes on to state that SABOA decries the fact that the GDE has failed to meet its obligation of remunerating its members with an amount of twenty million rands which is a backlog resulting from the year 2005, including January to March 2006.

2.7 SUMMARY

This chapter mainly focused on the challenges faced by farm schools to exercise the right to a basic education. The factors influencing these challenges were identified and discussed.

The role of stakeholders in farm school education was highlighted. The stand-point of the constitution and other laws concerning a right to a basic education was deliberated.

This chapter concludes the literature study and opens the way for the empirical research of this study.

In the next chapter, the focus will be on the research design and methodology used to answer the research question.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a literature study has revealed what challenges are faced by the farm schools in exercising the right to basic education, and possible reasons behind learners' drop-out. In this chapter the empirical research design is discussed. Firstly the purpose of empirical research is looked into. Thereafter, the research instrument and the design of a questionnaire are discussed, as well as the population and sample, including administrative procedures. In conclusion the discussion will be on the statistical techniques with regard to the interpretation of data.

3.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The specific aim of the empirical research was highlighted in Chapter 1 (*cf.* 1.3.2.1), namely to investigate the challenges faced by farm school learners in exercising the right to basic education and to determine possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at farm schools.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD

As mentioned before (*cf.* 1.3.2.2), this dissertation followed the line of quantitative research. The latter aims at collecting data in order to quantify the results in some form or another (Verma & Mallick, 1999:26).

3.4 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

According to Gall, Borg and Gall (1996:246), the choice of the research instrument for quantitative research depends on the purpose of the study. For the purpose of this study, the structured questionnaire was selected as the research tool, as:

- it is the best tool to provide the necessary information to answer the research question;

- it is cost and time-effective; and
- it is a study gathering existing quantitative information regarding principals, educators, learners and parents of farm schools (Creswell, 2005:156).

According to Creswell (2005:156), closed questions enable the participants to choose from a list of provided responses, because of the following reasons:

- It facilitates the tasks of participants, thus minimizing the reasons for not responding.
- The researcher is interested in the attitudes and knowledge of the participants.
- It is anticipated that many participants will not want to complete a questionnaire that requires a lot of writing and time.

In the following section, the discussion will indicate why a questionnaire was chosen for this purpose.

3.4.1 The questionnaire as a research tool

According to Gall *et al.* (1996:291), the questionnaire is a document completed by the participants during their own time. Neuman (1997:331) declares that there are two types of questionnaires, open and closed questionnaires. The open-form questionnaire allows participants to respond freely and fully in their own words and according to their frame of reference. The closed-form questionnaire consists of a prepared list of questions and a choice of possible answers, thus restricting the answers that may be given by participants.

A survey questionnaire is one of the tools used in the collection of research data and is ultimately dependent on the purpose of the study (Tuckman, 1994:216). Following Gall *et al.* (1996:289), the questionnaire is a self-report instrument used for gathering data about variables of interest to the researcher and consists of a number of questions or items that a respondent reads and answers.

Tuckman (1994:230) favours the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert directly the information given by people in data. In this sense, the questionnaire becomes appropriate to gather data for this research in that it would elicit factual data about the challenges experienced by farm schools in practising the basic right to education and the reasons behind the drop-out rate currently prevailing at Gauteng farm schools in the Sedibeng-West District (D8).

The questionnaire allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data in a relatively short amount of time (Mills, 2007:67). In this study, it was easy to administer the questionnaires since the researcher used contact persons and also personally distributed and collected the questionnaires according to the division of schools for the purpose of the research.

The use of questionnaires in this research was based on the following assumptions (Wolf, 1997:422):

- That the participants can read and understand the questions.
- That the participants are in the position to supply the information to answer the questions.
- That the participants are willing to answer the questions.

The appropriateness of the questionnaires used in this study was basically premised on the fact that participants were educators, principals, learners and parents at public farm schools. Hence it was assumed that participants would be interested in taking part in the research process so that they could play a role towards the final outcome of the research and its findings for the betterment of their education environment.

Though questionnaires are easier to distribute and collect, their results depend on self-assessment by the individual, which may be incorrect or invalid (Ahmed & Wallace, 2004:155-173). Firstly, the discussion below will be on the advantages, followed by the disadvantages.

3.4.2 The advantages of questionnaires

According to Van der Westhuizen (1994:56), a questionnaire has the following advantages:

- It saves time. A questionnaire can easily be distributed among participants and collected by the researcher on the agreed date.
- Responses can be easily analysed. Once a questionnaire has been skillfully constructed, the researcher can request anybody (for example the principal) to administer it on his/her behalf.
- It is more efficient and practical. Due to the vast area to be covered, a questionnaire allows the researcher to make use of a bigger sample.
- Participants remain anonymous. The participants are not required to give their name and that of the school, while personal contact between the researcher and respondents is minimized.
- A questionnaire is reliable, because the personal judgment of the researcher is minimized and the participants are allowed to use their own judgment in completing a questionnaire.
- A questionnaire is relatively inexpensive as it can easily be reproduced.

Some of the advantages of the questionnaire as used in this study are (Tuckman, 1994:216):

- Since the questions are phrased identically, the questionnaire allows for uniformity and elicits more comparable data. Therefore the stimuli for responses are the same.
- The questionnaire was relatively easy to plan, construct and administer.
- Participants could answer the questionnaire at their leisure without any pressure for an immediate response.

- Permission from the education authorities was obtained easily, since the contents of the questionnaire could be previewed.

- Processing was made less complicated by the questionnaire being piloted.

3.4.3 The disadvantages of questionnaires

Despite the advantages of the questionnaire as stated above (*cf.* 3.3.2), however, there are some criticisms against the use of a questionnaire as measuring instrument in a research project. According to Burns and Grove (1997:358-359), because of the anonymity, the participant is protected and the non-responding individuals cannot be traced and this can lead to poor feedback from the participants.

The following are some of the disadvantages of the questionnaires:

- Since participants take part voluntarily in the research, some participants may not complete or return the questionnaire. Thus a questionnaire could be characterized by an excessive non-response rate (Van der Westhuizen, 1994:56)

- Correctness of the answers is difficult to determine (Burns & Grove, 1997:358-359)

- Participants can interpret questions differently. There is a possibility that the participants may interpret the questions wrongly, and as a result fail to give an appropriate response to the question (Burns & Grove, 1997:358-359).

- There is always the possibility of poor feedback to respondents, except on an official basis. The results of a questionnaire are usually not communicated to the participants (Van der Westhuizen, 1994:56).

Furthermore a questionnaire has the following limitations (Tuckman, 1994:216):

- The motivation of participants may be difficult to check, which may lead to misleading responses.
- Questionnaires can frustrate participants who may feel that their personal options are left out.
- Participants may be unwilling to respond to questions bordering on private matters or controversial issues and may consequently give what they believe to be socially desirable responses.
- Questionnaires may not probe deep enough to reveal a true picture of opinions and feelings.
- The participants may have little interest in a particular problem and may therefore answer the questionnaire indiscriminately.
- Because of its apparent simplicity, a questionnaire might appeal to the amateur investigator and may be abused.

Despite these limitations, a questionnaire is still a valid instrument for data collection and is still commonly and widely used. Wolf (1997:4) argues that careful and sensitive development work would help to identify and make full provision for these limitations.

In using a questionnaire, the researcher must be satisfied that the questions are stated with sufficient clarity to function effectively in an impersonal interaction. According to Bourque (1995:3), the questionnaire is completed by the participant without the presence of the researcher and is either sent by mail or delivered and the administration of its completion is unsupervised.

3.5 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Tuckman (1994:230) espouses the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert the information directly given by participants into data. In this sense the questionnaire becomes appropriate to gather data for this research in that it would elicit factual data about the challenges experienced

by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education, the reason behind farm school learners dropping-out and the possible strategies.

As the questionnaires were personally delivered to the participants with the assistant of the principals and/or delegates, no written introduction was necessary. The study was introduced verbally by prior notification of its purpose through making an appointment with the principal and/or delegate of each school.

3.5.1 Preparing the questionnaire

Moloko (1996:90) cites Sidhu's exposition that a well-designed and administered questionnaire could serve as an appropriate and useful data-gathering device and could boost the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Consequently, the objectivity of the questionnaire would be increased (McMillan & Schumacher 2001:11).

According to Gall *et al.* (1996:294), the following factors need to be considered in preparing a questionnaire:

- Participants must be competent to answer the questionnaire.
- The questionnaire should be kept as brief as possible so that answering it requires the minimum of a participant's time. All unnecessary items, especially those of which answers are available from other sources, should be eliminated.
- Items in the questionnaire should be phrased in a way that would elicit unambiguous responses. Words such as *often*, *few* and *sometimes* should be avoided as they mean different things to different people.
- Questionnaire items should be phrased in such a way that every participant can understand them. It would be best to construct simple and short sentences. Jargon and complex sentences should be avoided.
- Items should be phrased so as to avoid bias or prejudice that might predetermine participants' answers.

- Questions that might elicit embarrassment, suspicion or even hostility in the participants should be avoided if possible.

- Double-barreled questions should be avoided. Questions or statements should be limited to a single idea or concept.

- Alternatives to items should be exhaustive, for example: What is your marital status? This item's possible resonse categories should include not only the alternatives married or single, but also widowed, divorced and separated.

- Questionnaire items should not be misread because of unstated assumptions. The frame of reference for answering questions should be clear and consistent for all participants.

- The questionnaire should be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly printed and duplicated.

- Questions should be relevant. In other words they should have to do with something, which interests participants or is important to the participants.

- Avoid or minimize negative items. These should be avoided because they are easy to misinterpret. If negative items are used, they should be underlined or capitalized to draw the attention of the participant.

According to McMmillan and Schumacher (2001:238-249), questions should permit participants to review their own relevant experiences thoroughly. They should also elicit accurate and complete responses and should communicate some rules about the process of question answering by providing participants with the necessary rules so as to reduce complexities.

3.5.2 Construction of the questionnaire

Considerable time, planning and thought are needed when constructing a questionnaire. Questionnaires can use statements or questions, but in all cases the subject is responding to something written (McMillan, 2001:238). According to Tuckman (1994:225), questionnaire items must be developed

carefully so that they measure specific aspects of the study's objectives or hypotheses.

The content of the questionnaire must succeed in covering the field that concerns the researcher or the study. Importantly, the researcher must ascertain which specific aspects of the research need to be tested. Bassey (2000:67) states that a research question is the engine which drives the train of enquiry. It should be formulated in such a way that it sets the immediate agenda for research, enables data to be collected, permits analysis to get started, and also establish the boundaries of space and time within which it will operate.

The following guidelines need to be taken into consideration during the construction of a questionnaire (Gall *et al.*, 1996: 430-431):

- Questions should be organized and outlined in such a way that the questionnaire can be completed as easily as possible.
- Questions should be grouped according to subject or heading.
- Items that require similar responses should be grouped together.

Based on the guidelines when designing a questionnaire, the researcher can report the following aspects concerning the questionnaires of this study:

- The questions in the questionnaire are clear, brief and straightforward.
- Only items that are directly related to the objectives of the research were included.
- Questions were limited to a single idea (i.e. avoiding double-barrel questions).
- Preferably, short items were used.
- Biased questions were avoided.

- Questions were drawn up in such a way that they were easy to answer for this study (by educators, principals, learners and parents).

The questionnaire items for the questionnaires in this study were carefully constructed. The aim of the study was taken into consideration. The measuring instruments were not adapted from anywhere, but were newly prepared questionnaires. The literature study (*cf.* Chapter 2) was the basis from which the questionnaires were designed (*cf.* Appendix A).

The study intended to investigate the challenges experienced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the reasons behind farm school learners dropping-out.

3.5.3 The format of the questionnaire

Each questionnaire was sub-divided into two main sections, namely Section A and Section B (*cf.* Appendix A).

Section A

The questionnaire for principals in this section has 9 questions which determine biographic and demographic details of the principal. While the questionnaire for parents and educators has four questions each on biographic details, the learners' questionnaire has only three questions on biographic details.

Section B

For this section, a total of 26 questions were formulated for the principals and educators respectively. The parents' questionnaire contains a total of 20 questions and learners have 16 questions to respond to. For each factor, participants were asked to indicate their opinion by making a cross (x) in the block on a six-point scale:

1= Strongly disagree

2= Disagree

3= Partially disagree

4= Partially agree

5= Agree

6= Strongly agree

The format of the questionnaire is discussed in full in the subsequent paragraphs

3.5.3.1 Section A

3.5.3.1.1 Question A1-A9 Principal questionnaire

These questions were aimed at gathering biographical and demographical information about the principals and their schools.

- Age: The aim of the question was to arrange the principals according to the range of age into which they fall (*cf.* Appendix A Question A1). This information might assist the researcher to relate how principals in various age groups view the concept of the implementation of the right to basic education at farm schools.

- Experience as principals: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A2) was aimed at determining the experience of the principals. The finding might assist the researcher to assess whether the experienced principal has the same view about the implementation of the right to basic education at the farm school as the novice.

- Academic qualification: This question was formulated to find out whether the principals were improving their qualifications (*cf.* Appendix A Question A3). The information might assist the researcher to detect whether the principals were appointed with relevant qualifications.

- Professional qualifications: The objective of this question was to ascertain if the principals have the minimum required qualifications to teach in South Africa (*cf.* Appendix A Question A4). The information might assist the researcher to find out whether the farm school principals were qualified as required by the Employment of Educators Act (76/1998).

- School population: The aim of the question was to determine the size of the school (*cf.* Appendix A Question A5). This question might be useful to determine whether participants at small schools experience the same challenges as those at the larger schools.

- Grading of school: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A6) was aimed at determining the grading of the school. The findings might assist the researcher to assess whether the principals of large schools share the same views about the implementation of the right to basic education at the farm school as those of small schools.

- Predominant socio-economic status of the area: The aim of the question was to establish the socio-economic status of the area where the school is situated (*cf.* Appendix A Question A7). This question would be useful to determine the quintile of the school.

- School type: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A8) was aimed at determining the type of school. This information might assist the research to relate how participants at different types of schools view the concept of the implementation of the right to basic education at the farm school.

- Number of educators: The aim of this question was to determine the number of educators at different schools (*cf.* Appendix A Question A9). The information might help the researcher to determine the possibility of multi-grade teaching at farm schools.

3.5.3.1.2 Question A1 – A4 Educator questionnaire

The objective of these questions was to gather biographical information about the educators.

- Age: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question 1) was aimed at arranging the educators according to the age into which they fall. This information might help the researcher to relate how educators in various age groups view the concepts of the implementation of the right to basic education at farm schools.

- Experience as educator: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A2) was aimed at determining how long the educators have been practising as educators. The information might assist the researcher to assess whether the veteran educator has the same view about the implementation of the right to basic education at the farm school as the beginner educator.

- Academic qualifications: The question was formulated to ascertain if educators were improving their qualifications at the farm schools (cf. Appendix A Question A3). This information might help the researcher to find out whether educators at the farm school were in possession of the necessary academic qualifications to teach.

- Professional qualifications: The aim of this question was to determine the professional qualifications of educators (cf. Appendix A Question A4). This information could be useful to determine whether the farm school educators have the minimum required professional qualifications to teach in South Africa.

3.5.3.1.3 Question A1 –A3 Learner questionnaire

These questions were aimed at gathering biographical information about the learners.

- Age: The aim of this question was to determine the age difference of the learners (*cf.* Appendix A Question A1). This information might help the researcher to determine the presence of over-aged learners at the farm schools.

- Grade: The objective of this question was to find out the different grades of the learners (*cf.* Appendix A Question A2). The information might assist the researcher to determine whether learners in different grades have the same views about the concept of the implementation of the right to basic education at the farm schools.

- Residence: This question was developed to ascertain if learners were indeed farm residents (*cf.* Appendix A question A3). This information might

also help the researcher to establish whether the farm schools were catering for only farm learners.

3.5.3.1.4 Question A1- A4 Parent questionnaire

The objective of these questions was to gather biographical information about the parents.

- Age: The aim of the question was to arrange the parents according to different age groups (*cf.* Appendix A Question A1). This information might help the researcher to determine whether farm schools could be phased out or whether farm schools were supported by younger families.

- Qualifications: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A2) was to determine the qualifications of parents. This information might assist the researcher to determine their education levels.

- Number of children at school: The aim of the question was to determine the number of children per family who were attending school (*cf.* Appendix A Question A3). The information might help the researcher to determine the statistics of the learners attending the farm schools who participated in this study.

- Employment history: This question (*cf.* Appendix A Question A4) was developed to ascertain if parents were farm workers. This information might assist the researcher to determine whether parents as farm residents were employed at the farms or whether they only lived there.

3.5.3.2 Section B

The aim of this section was to determine the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education (*cf.* 2.5.1).

The question items correlated with the following determinants:

- Compulsory attendance

- Parental involvement

- Culture of teaching and learning
- Socio-economic factors

3.5.4 Pre-testing versus pilot study

Pre-testing is not exactly the same as a pilot test, because pre-testing does not attempt to make a test run of the entire research procedure, but tries to test the measures that will be used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:138). Regardless of how the procedure would be followed with the actual survey, pre-testing could involve interviewing some of the pre-test participants and some participants may receive part of the final instrument, such as instructions and a few items, whereas others may receive the entire instrument. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:138), pre-test participants should be given a space to write comments about individual items and the question as a whole. This will make the researcher aware, for example, of whether the questionnaire would take long time to complete or whether the directions and items were clear.

Cohen and Manion (1994:83) declare that since pre-testing is the most important phase of survey research, no survey data can be trusted unless it has been established that the participants understood the instrument and had provided appropriate responses. The importance of a pre-test is also espoused by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:245). They maintain that the researcher should have twenty or more subjects, but not fewer than ten subjects for a pre-test, rather than not having a pre-test at all.

The questionnaire of this study was pre-tested with a sample of participants from both primary and secondary schools in Boipatong (n=67) in the Gauteng Province. The principals and educators were requested to answer honestly and note any unclear, confusing and ambiguous statements and to make comments and suggestions, as advised by Wolf (1997:480). They were also requested by the researcher to assist learners and parents where possible.

There is usually no need to conduct a pilot project in addition to pre-testing (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:240). However, for the purpose of this study both pre-testing and a pilot survey were carried out.

3.5.4.1 Pilot study of this research

A pilot survey is viewed as a small-scale administration of the whole research instrument, using the exact procedure planned to be used for the full scale project in the intended target group (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:244).

Following the size of the research area it was decided by the researcher to pilot the questionnaire with a sample of principals (n=2), educators (n=20), learners (n=20) and parents (n=20). The pilot group was drawn from the intended target population, with similar characteristics to the research sample, but they would not be part of the final study sample (Tuckman, 1994:235). The pilot group was composed of participants from both primary and secondary farm schools in the Sedibeng-West District (D8).

The participants in this study's pilot group were requested to comment on the questionnaire as a whole with regard to its length and any unclear or ambiguous questions. They also had to contribute towards possible improvements, as advised by Silverman (2000:94).

Based on the pilot study responses, a few adjustments were made and the questionnaire was finalized and ready to be distributed (*cf.* Appendix A).

A Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for all three questionnaires to determine the internal consistency of Section B before they were administered, as this is a reliability coefficient that calculates the extent to which items, such as those found in a questionnaire, are correlated positively to one another (Akbaba, 2006:13). Sekaran (2000) points out that the internal consistency reliability becomes higher as the Cronbach alpha moves closer to 1.

The calculated values (0.84) for the principal questionnaire, (0.86) for the educator questionnaire, (0.73) for the learner questionnaire and (0.85) for the

parent questionnaire indicated that the questionnaires complied with reliability criteria.

The reliability coefficients calculated to test the internal consistency of Section B of each questionnaire in the actual study are revealed below (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Calculated values for the actual study

Questionnaire section B	Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlation
Principals	0.912444	0.380689
Educators	0.855875	0.187811
Learners	0.783778	0.190892
Parents	0.868923	0.250642

All four reliability coefficients were higher than 0.7, ranging between 0.78 and 0.91. These high values indicated sound internal consistency among the items. The inter-item correlations revealed acceptable results, since they ranged within the parameters of 0.15 – 0.5.

3.5.4.2 Reliability and validity

According to Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:140-143), reliability refers to the consistency of measurement – the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument of data collection. The same authors are of the view that the actual amount of error in test scores, or the reliability, is determined empirically through several types of procedures. Each type of reliability is related to the control of a particular kind of error and is usually reported in the form of a reliability coefficient.

The reliability coefficient is a correlation statistic, comparing two sets of scores from the same individuals (Creswell, 2005:162). The reliability coefficient for this study was calculated by the Statistical Consultancy Services of the Vaal Triangle Campus of the North West University according to the *Cronbach alpha standardized test* (*cf.* 3.4.4.1).

Validity is the extent to which inferences made on the basis of numerical scores are appropriate, meaningful and useful (Creswell, 2005:164). Validity is assessed on the purpose, population and environmental characteristics in which measurement takes place.

In this study, the researcher arrived at validity by considering both content validity and construct validity. The content validity was supported by the fact that the specific questionnaire items were constructed strictly according to the definition of each section. The construct validity was underpinned by the fact that Section B dealt only with aspects that were important in meeting the right to basic education of farm school learners.

3.5.5 Questionnaire distribution

The final questionnaire was distributed to the sample of this study. A covering letter was enclosed (*cf.* Annexure E), requesting principals, educators, learners and parents to take part in the research study, while also assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity (Cohen & Manion, 1994:273).

The researcher distributed and collected the questionnaires in person, although a few challenges were encountered. The researcher personally collected the questionnaires from the school principals or designated officials as per agreement. Some questionnaires were not available on the agreed date with principals or designated officials citing various reasons such as that participants did not have enough time to complete the questionnaire, or they had forgotten to complete them, or they had forgotten to hand them in.

Of the ten schools handed the questionnaires, only seven returned them.

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The target population for the research was identified as principals, educators, learners and parents from both primary and secondary farm schools in the Gauteng Department of Education under the jurisdiction of the Sedibeng-West District (D8).

The first task was to obtain the number of principals, educators, learners and the parents at public schools in the Gauteng Department of Education. The Gauteng Department of Education comprises of 47 357 educators and 1 607 575 learners (GDE, 2007:20 & 22). Since principals are also educators it was understood that they form part of the 47 357 educators. Then the Sedibeng-West district office was requested to provide the statistics of the farm schools in their district, which could not be produced on hard copy due to the process of clustering schools which created errors in the capturing of data.

The data were supplied as a target population (N=3678): school principals (n=12), educators (n=106), learners (n=3236) and the parents (n=324). The statistics for the parents could not be found from either the Gauteng Department of Education or the Sedibeng-West district and the researcher decided to allocate 10% of the number of learners to represent parents. Table 3.2 shows the target population data.

Table 3.2: Target population data

PRINCIPALS	EDUCATORS	LEARNERS	PARENTS
12	106	3236	324

The second step was to determine a sample of the four categories of the target population that would be representative of it. Determining the size of the sample depends on the nature and purpose of the study. Most researchers suggest that at least 10% of the population should be selected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:245). This is not necessary, however, because the accuracy of the data is determined by the absolute size of the sample, rather than by what percentage of the population it is.

The popular and most generally accepted criterion is that the size of the sample should be small, for reasons of time and cost, while being large enough to ensure that it is representative enough (Mills, 2007:67). According to Vermeulen (1998:52), the following should guide the sample size:

- the larger the population, the smaller the percentage of that population the sample needs to be; and

- the size of the sample would be influenced by the relative homogeneity and heterogeneity of the population.

In line with this exposition, a sample (n=838) of the target population was decided upon. The sample was composed of principals, educators, learners and parents.

A list of farm schools in the Sedibeng-West district was obtained from the district office and a random sample was drawn from them. A sample of farm school principals (n=10), farm school educators (n=74), farm school learners (n=650) and parents of farm school learners (n=104) was then selected. This distribution was guided by guidelines of sample sizes (Vermeulen, 1998:52), as well as the discussions with the statistical consultant.

Table 3.3: Sampling the four categories

PARTICIPANTS CATEGORY	POPULATION	SAMPLE
Principals	12	10
Educators	106	74
Learners	3236	650
Parents	324	104

Table 3.3 indicates the sampling of the population under study. This sample of the target population was deemed representative of the target population of farm schools in the Sedibeng-West district.

3.6.1 Response rate

Questionnaires were distributed to the sample population at the farm schools of Sedibeng-West District. Table 3.4 below shows the return rate per participants' category.

Table 3.4: Response rate

PARTICIPANT CATEGORY	QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED	QUESTIONNAIRES RECEIVED	%
Principals	10	7	70
Educators	74	56	76
Learners	650	470	72
Parents	104	75	72

From Table 3.4 it can be deduced that the response rate equalled or exceeded 70% for all participants' categories. The number of questionnaires received back is important, as it affords researchers an opportunity of drawing valid and reliable conclusions in their study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:245), a minimum response rate of 70% is required to draw valid and reliable conclusions. Cohen and Manion (1994:259) also mention that a response rate of 50% is adequate, 60% is good and 70% very good.

The reasons for the positive response in this study can be attributed to the fact that the questionnaires were delivered and collected by the researcher.

3.7 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

This study followed three steps in obtaining the necessary permission to conduct empirical research in the Sedibeng-West District (D8).

3.7.1 Approval from the Gauteng Department of Education

A letter dated 18 April 2005 requesting permission to conduct research in the Gauteng Department of Education, was presented on 19 April 2005 to the office of the District Senior Manager Sedibeng West District by the researcher (*cf.* Appendix B). A response to the request was received on 6 June 2005. In its response, the Policy and Planning Unit provided application forms, stipulating the conditions that had to be met before permission to conduct research could be granted.

The application forms requesting permission to conduct research in the Gauteng Department of Education were delivered to the Policy and Planning Unit on 8 June 2005 by the researcher (*cf.* Appendix C).

3.7.2 Sedibeng-West District

A copy of the letter from the Policy and Planning Unit (GDE) was handed in at the Sedibeng-West District office. Permission to conduct the research was received from Sedibeng-West district (D8) on 8 September 2005 (*cf.* Appendix D).

3.7.3 Letter to principals

Accompanying the questionnaires for all of the selected schools was the permis (*cf.* Appendix E) requesting principals, educators, learners and parents to take part in the research study.

The researcher personally delivered the questionnaire and letters to schools and discussed points that needed clarification. However, a few challenges were encountered in the distribution and collection of questionnaires (*cf.* 3.4.5).

3.8 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The Statistical Consultancy Services of the Vaal Triangle Campus of the North-West University analysed and processed the collected questionnaires by means of the SPSS and SAS programmes. These statistical packages were used for the analysis of this study's data by determining the frequencies and percentages of the participants' responses.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the research design, outlined the research problem and addressed the issue of measurement, as well as the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study. A description was given of how the sample was selected and how the sample size was determined. The questionnaire as data collection method was also discussed.

The data analysis and interpretation will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three, the research design and methodology, and the reliability and validity of the structured questionnaires were discussed.

The main focus of this chapter will be on the interpretation of the data collected through the questionnaires and analysed and processed by the Statistical Consultancy Service of the North-West University, Vaal Triangle Campus. The SPSS 15.0 for Windows 2006 and Statistica 8 Statsoft statistical packages were used for this study in order to analyse the data electronically. In this way averages, Cronbach alpha coefficients, frequencies and percentages of participants' responses were calculated.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

This section of Chapter 4 will firstly present the participants' responses to Section A of the questionnaires: The general biographic data of the participants.

Secondly, for the sake of a logical analysis, the question items in Section B of the questionnaires for principals, educators, learners and parents are grouped together in the following manner for each of the participants' discussion (*cf.* 4.2.2):

- Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support
- Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement
- Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport

At the end of the principals, educators, learners and parents' data analysis, a critical reflection on selected responses of all four questionnaires will be presented.

4.2.1 Section A of the four questionnaires

The general biographic data of the four questionnaires will be presented separately for principals, educators, learners and parents.

4.2.1.1 Biographic and demographic data (Principals)

The first nine question items (i.e. A1-A9) of the questionnaire were aimed at determining the biographic and demographic data of the principals. The principals' responses are outlined in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Biographic and demographic data (Principals)

Question-Item	Variable	Frequency	%
A1: Age	31-40	1	14.29
	41-50	4	57.14
	51+	2	28.57
	TOTAL	7	100
A2: Experience in years	1-3	1	14.29
	4-6	1	14.29
	9+	3	42.86
	Missing responses	2	28.57
	TOTAL	7	100.01
A3: Academic qualifications	Grade12	1	14.29
	Bachelor's degree	1	14.29
	Hons/ B.Ed.	4	57.14
	Master's/ Doctorate	1	14.29
	TOTAL	7	100
A4: Professional qualifications	Education Diploma	6	85.71
	Missing responses	1	14.29
	TOTAL	7	100
A5: School population	Fewer than 300 learners	4	57.14
	301-500	2	28.57
	501-700	1	14.29
	TOTAL	7	100

A6: Grading of school	S9	2	28.57
	S10	2	28.57
	Missing responses	3	42.86
	TOTAL	7	100
A7: Socio-economic status	Lower income group	6	85.71
	Middle income group	1	14.29
	Higher income group	0	0
	TOTAL	7	100
A8: School type	Public school	7	100
	Private school	0	0
	TOTAL	7	100
A9: Number of educators	4-12	5	71.43
	13-24	2	28.57
	TOTAL	7	100

4.2.1.1.1 Age of the principals

From Table 4.1 the following can be deduced:

- 57% of the farm school principals are between 41-50 years of age.
- 29% of the farm school principals are above 51 years of age.
- Only 14% of the farm school principals are between 31-40 years.

This information suggests that the category of younger principals (those between 31-40 years) is not in proportion to that of the principals above 51 years of age. A situation such as this one needs to be attended to, since farm school learners' right to education could be affected negatively if young applicants lose interest in filling these positions at farm schools.

4.2.1.1.2 Experience as principal

- The majority of the farm school principals (i.e. 43%) have more than 9 years' experience as principals.
- 14% of the farm school principals participated in the research have between 1 and 3 years' experience.

- The other 14% of the farm school principals in the area of research have experience of between 4 and 6 years.

These percentages suggest that the majority of farm school principals are experienced in their posts.

4.2.1.1.3 Academic qualifications of the principals

Table 4.1 suggests that:

- 57% of the participants have an Honours Degree in Education (B.Ed.Hons) or an Honours Degree;
- I4.29 % of the participants are in possession of Grade 12;
- 14.29% of the participants have a Bachelor's Degree; and
- the last 14.29% of the farm school principals are in possession of a Masters or/and Doctorate Degree.

Although the majority of the farm school principals have academic qualifications above a Bachelors Degree, it is disconcerting to note that 14% of them have only a Grade 12 certificate. The reason behind the acquisition of higher qualifications by farm school principals could be to secure positions as principals or to effect change to the perception that most farm school educators are unqualified or under-qualified (*cf.* 2.5.2).

4.2.1.1.4 Professional qualifications of the principals

From Table 4.1 it appears that:

- the majority of the farm school principals (85.71%) are in possession of an Education Diploma.

This suggests that farm school principals in the area of research have the minimum requirements for employment as educators in South Africa (REQV 13). This seems to contradict previously mentioned literature (*cf.* 2.5.2).

4.2.1.1.5 School population

The following information may be deduced from Table 4.1:

- The responses concerning school population indicate that 57.14% of the farm schools have fewer than 300 learners.
- 28.57% of the farm schools have between 300 and 500 learners.
- Only 14.29% of the farm schools have more than 500 learners.

This information concurs with farm schools having fewer than 300 learners due to operational changes on the farm (*cf.* 2.6.5) and it also concurs with previous literature (*cf.* 2.5.1).

4.2.1.1.6 Grading of schools

According to Table 4.1:

- 28.57% of the farm schools are graded S9.
- 28.57% of the farm schools are graded S10.

The fact that 42.86% of the participating schools did not indicate their level of grading, raises the concern that the Department of Education is not involved in supporting farm schools on all levels. At the same time, this information is reminiscent of the multi-faceted challenges facing farm schools (*cf.* 2.5.1).

4.2.1.1.7 Predominant socio-economic status of the area

According to Table 4.1, 85.71% of the participants reported that their schools are situated within the lower income group. The above picture depicts the socio-economic problems as mentioned in the literature study (*cf.* 2.6). Of the total number of participants, only 14.29% reported that their schools are located within the middle income group.

4.2.1.1.8 School type

Table 4.1 shows that 100% of farm schools are public schools (*cf.* 2.3.1). Public schools are funded and subsidized by the state. But notably in most farm schools in the area of research this is seldom reflected in terms of infrastructure and other resources. In the literature study (*cf.* 2.3.2), it was mentioned that 25% of the farm schools in South Africa continue to have pit latrines.

4.2.1.1.9 Number of educators

From Table 4.1 it appears that:

- the majority of the farm schools that participated in the research (71.43%) have between 4 and 12 educators, including the principals; and
- only 28.57% of the participating farm schools have between 13 and 24 educators.

This information concurs with the previously mentioned operational changes (*cf.* 2.6.5) that could influence the number of learners to drop out from such farm schools. At the same time, this could lead to educators having to be re-deployed at other schools with larger numbers of learners. If this were to happen, the constancy in the educator-learner relationship would not be guaranteed and this could have a negative effect on farm school learners' right to education.

4.2.1.2 Biographic data (Educators)

The four most relevant question items for educators are presented below. The other information about demographic issues has been covered in the principals' questionnaire.

Table 4.2: Biographic data (Educators)

Question-Item	Variable	Frequency	%
A1: Age	20-30	8	14.28
	31-40	18	32.14
	41-50	18	32.14
	51 and older	11	19.64
	Missing responses	1	1.78
	TOTAL	56	100
A2: Experience	1-3 Years	9	16.07
	4-8 Years	14	25
	9-15 Years	7	12.5
	16 Years and older	24	42.85
	Missing responses	2	3.57
	TOTAL	56	100
A3: Qualifications	Grade 12	20	35.75
	Bachelor's degree	13	23.21
	Hons/B. Ed	4	7.14
	Missing responses	19	33.92
	TOTAL	56	100
A4: Professional qualifications: Education Diploma	Yes:	51	91.07
	No:	3	5.35
	Missing responses	2	3.57
	TOTAL	56	100

4.2.1.2.1 Age

The responses indicate that 64.28% of the participants were aged between 31 and 50 years. This is followed by 19.64% of participants who were aged from

51 years and older. Only 14.28% of the participants were aged between 20 and 30 years.

While it could be seen as positive that only 20% of the educators were older than 50, the 14.28% of the educators who were between 20 and 30 years appear to reflect the reluctance of young educators to take posts at farm schools for various reasons.

If the young educator role models disappear from these schools, it would be to the detriment of farm school learners' right to education.

4.2.1.2.2 Experience

The data reflects that 53.57% of the participants had teaching experience ranging between 0-15 years. 42.85% of the participants had experience of 16 years and more.

This implies that the majority of participants had experience of less than 16 years which could become a cause for concern when these educators leave the teaching profession.

4.2.1.2.3 Qualifications

The largest group of participants (37) responded to the question, while 19 did not respond. About 35.71% of the participants had Grade 12 while 23.21% had a Bachelor's degree and only 7.14% had Honours and/or Bachelor of Education.

The large group of participants (33.92%) who did not respond to this question could possibly be under-qualified or un-qualified as educators (*cf.* 2.5.2).

Qualifications of farm school educators have a bearing on farm school learners' right to basic education and this aspect needs urgent attention.

4.2.1.3 Biographic data (Learners)

From the farm school learners in the area of study, information on biographic data was collected through three question items. It was not necessary to

gather information on demographic data as this has been covered in the principals' questionnaire. The learners' responses are reflected in table 4.3 (i.e. A1-A3).

Table 4.3: Biographic data (Learners)

Question-Item	Variable	Frequency	%
A1: Age	11-13	283	60.21
	15-18	169	35.95
	19 and older	11	2.34
	Missing responses	7	1.48
	TOTAL	470	100
A2: Grade	5-7	327	69.57
	8-10	104	22.12
	11-12	30	6.38
	Missing responses	9	1.91
	TOTAL	470	100
A3: Residence	Farm	260	55.31
	Informal settlement	46	9.78
	Formal settlement	117	24.89
	Other	25	5.31
	Missing responses	22	4.68
	TOTAL	470	100

4.2.1.3.1 Age

The data received indicated that the majority of participants were in the age group 11-13 years (60.21%), followed by the age group 15-18 years (35.95%) and lastly the age group 19 and older (2.34%).

There were 324 learners in Grades 5-7 whose ages ranged between 11-13 years and 278 of these learners were at the right age and grade, whereas 46

learners were over-aged. Of the 104 learners in Grades 8-10, 99 were between 15-18 years and 5 learners were over-aged. In Grades 11-12 there were 30 learners who were over-aged.

In conclusion 82.7% of the learners were in the right grade and at the right age, and 17.3% were over-aged learners. This implies that there are indeed over-aged learners at the farm schools and this is a concern.

The age requirement for admission to an ordinary public school as required by the Schools Act (84/1996) is as follows:

Table 4.4: Age requirement for admission to an ordinary public school

GRADE LEVEL	CORRECT AGE
1	6 or 7
2	7 or 8
3	8 or 9
4	9 or 10
5	10 or 11
6	11 or 12
7	12 or 13
8	13 or 14
9	14 or 15
10	15 or 16
11	16 or 17
12	17 or 18

4.2.1.3.2 Grade

Table 4.3 shows that the majority (69.57%) of farm school learners who took part in the research study, were in Grades 5-7, followed by the 22.12% in Grades 8-10 and lastly the 6.38% in Grades 11-12.

4.2.1.3.3 Residence

According to Table 4.3, the majority of the participants (55.31%) resided on the farm. The second highest percentage (24.89%) resided in formal settlements, while 9.78% resided in informal settlements and 5.31% resided in other settlements. This data could imply that farm schools provide a service to farm communities.

4.2.1.4 Biographic data (Parents)

Data on biographic information for farm school parents were gathered by responding to four questions prepared for them. The demographic information has been catered for in the principals' questionnaire. Table 4.5 shows the farm school parents' responses.

Table 4.5: Biographic data (Parents)

Question Item	Variable	Frequency	%
A1: Age	20-30	20	26.67
	31-40	28	37.33
	41-50	20	26.67
	51 and older	7	9.33
	TOTAL	75	100
A2: Qualifications	Informal-education	8	10.67
	Primary-education	17	22.67
	Secondary-education	38	50.67
	Tertiary-education	9	12
	Missing responses	3	4
	TOTAL	75	100

A3:Children at school	1-3	67	89.33
	4-6	6	8
	Missing responses	2	2.67
	TOTAL	75	100
A4:Employment History	Work on farm	20	26.67
	Work outside the farm	30	40
	Unemployed	22	29.33
	Missing responses	3	4
	TOTAL	75	100

4.2.1.4.1 Age

According to Table 4.5, all participants responded to the questionnaire. 37.33% of the participants were aged between 31 and 40 years. From the table above, 26.67% of the participants were aged between 20 and 30 years and the same percentage was aged between 41 and 50 years. Lastly, 9.33% of the participants were aged 51 years and older.

From the above responses it can be deduced that 64% of the participants were aged between 20 and 40 years which could be seen as an advantage for the farm schools, since young parents could become engaged in various school activities more easily than older parents.

4.2.1.4.2 Qualifications

Table 4.5 shows that 10.67% of the participants had informal education, meaning that they had not received any formal tuition or primary education. Primary education begins from Grade R and for that reason the participant who dropped out in Grade R would also indicate that he/she had a primary education. This is in line with the literature (*cf.* 2.4.2).

There are 50.67% of the participants who had secondary education. It is also important to note that secondary education begins from Grade 7. It is

therefore possible that among the participants who had indicated secondary education, some might have dropped out in Grade 7. The same could be said about the 12% with tertiary education. There are colleges that accept learners without Grade 12 to pursue different careers.

4.2.1.4.3 Children at school

From the table above it is given that 89.33% of the participants had one to three children at school while only 8% of the participants had four to six children at school.

4.2.1.4.4 Employment

Table 4.5 indicates that about 40% of the participants worked outside the farm, followed by 29.33% of the unemployed and 26.67% of the participants who work on the farm. Only 4% did not take part in this question.

This data could imply that parents resorted to work outside the farm to earn better wages or salaries, and also that the change of business is taking place on the farms, as indicated by the literature (*cf.* 2.5.1).

4.2.2 Section B of the four questionnaires

In all questionnaires, Section B aimed at determining participants' perceptions regarding the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to education, possible reasons behind the learner drop-out rate and suggested strategies aimed at protecting the farm school learner's right to education.

Participants were required to indicate their opinion on a six (6) point scale. The scale of 1-6 indicated the following perceptions with regard to the aims of the study (*cf.* 1.2.1):

1= Strongly disagree
2= Disagree
3= Partially disagree
4= Partially agree
5= Agree
6= Strongly agree

A score of 1, for instance, suggests that the participants strongly disagree with the statement and a score of 6 suggests that participants strongly agree with the statement.

As pointed out in 4.2, the question items were grouped together for the sake of logical analysis for each of the participants' discussion.

4.2.2.1 The questionnaire for principals

The table below indicates the responses of the participating farm school principals. These responses will be discussed in subsequent sub-paragraphs.

Table 4.6: The challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate (Principals)

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
No.	**Question/ statement**	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
B1	Most learners in rural areas dropped out of school because of issues that could be resolved through sound management.	3	42.86	2	28.57	0	0	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	0	0
B2	Labour disputes between the farmer and employees may lead to the closure of a farm school.	2	28.57	2	28.57	1	14.29	0	0	2	28.57	0	0	0	0
B3	Lack of scholar transport to farm schools has an impact on non-attendance and drop-out rates.	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	71.43	0	0
B4	The presence of over-aged learners at a farm school is common practice.	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	2	28.57	3	42.86	0	0
B5	Lack of power supply at the farm school impairs learning and administrative activities.	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	1	14.29	2	28.57	2	28.29	0	0
B6	Some farm schools still use pit latrines (toilets).	1	14.29	2	28.57	0	0	0	0	2	28.57	2	28.57	0	0
B7	The School Governing Body (SGB) of the farm school determines the school policies.	0	0	2	28.57	0	0	1	14.29	4	57.14	0	0	0	0

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B8	The parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education.	0	0	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	3	42.86	3	42.86	0	0
B9	Parents who live too far from the school fail to become involved in farm school activities.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14.29	1	14.29	5	71.43	0	0
B10	Illiteracy deprives farm school parents from making a significant contribution to their children's education.	0	0	1	14.29	0	0	1	14.29	3	42.86	2	28.57	0	0
B11	Principals do not inspire parents to be effectively involved in school activities.	4	57.41	2	28.57	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14.29	0	0
B12	The principal determines how and what should be done at school.	1	14.29	1	14.29	1	14.29	1	14.29	2	28.57	1	14.29	0	0
B13	The principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable.	2	28.57	4	57.14	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B14	Some educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities.	1	14.29	4	57 14	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	0	0

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B16	Educators are trained to handle learners, not parents.	0	0	3	42.86	1	14.29	0	0	3	42.86	0	0	0	0
B17	The principal is never informed about the sale of the farm on which the school stands.	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0	4	42.86	1	14.29	1	14.29	0	0
B18	Some rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment.	1	14.29	0	0	0	0	1	14.29	2	28.57	3	42.86	0	0
B19	Child labour is common on farms, and is causing absenteeism.	1	14.29	3	42.86	0	0	2	28.57	1	14.29	0	0	0	0
B20	Low income on farms increases the need for teenagers to be in paid employment.	0	0	3	42.86	0	0	1	14.29	2	28.57	1	14.29	0	0
B21	Learners drop out of school because of the low incomes of their parents.	0	0	1	14.29	0	0	4	57.14	0	0	2	28.57	0	0
B22	Parents remove their children from school without proper consultation with the school authorities.	0	0	2	28.57	0	0	0	0	4	57.14	1	14.29	0	0

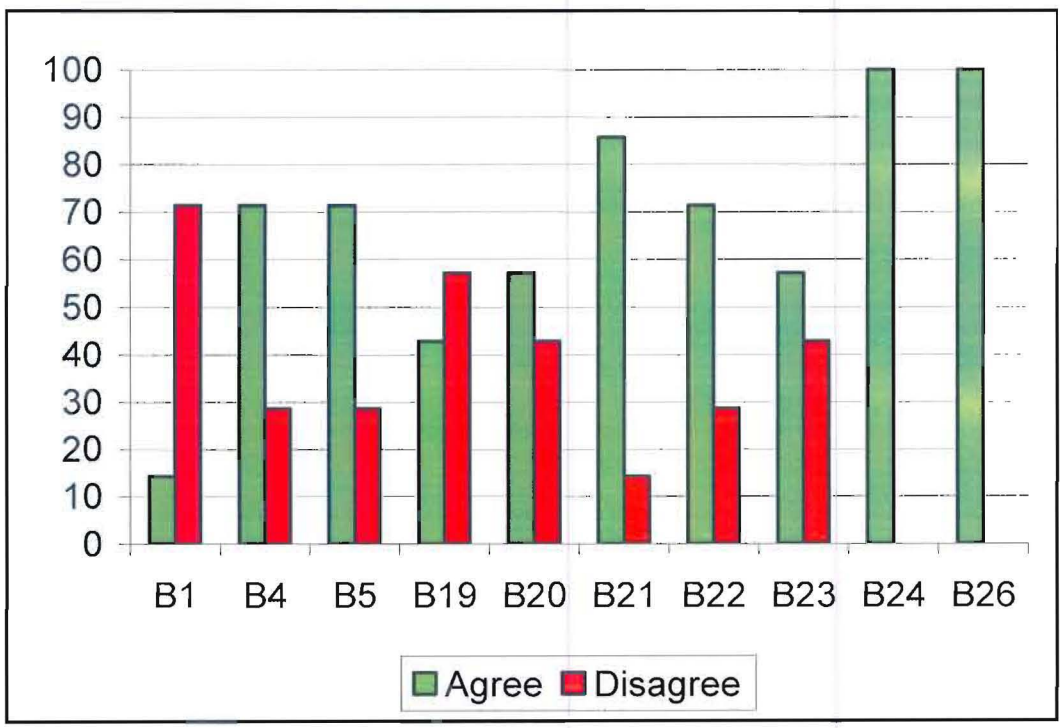
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B23	Farm killings affect the education of the farm school learner.	0	0	3	42.86	0	0	1	14.29	1	14.29	2	28.57	0	0
B24	The dispute between bus operators and GDE results in poor performance of the farm school learner.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14.29	1	14.29	5	71.43	0	0
B25	Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents at the farm school.	0	0	2	28.57	1	14.29	0	0	2	28.57	2	28.57	0	0
B26	The relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	28.57	5	71.43	0	0

The scores of those who either strongly disagree, disagree or partially disagree are combined and those who strongly agree, agree and partially agree are calculated together in order to account for the Table 4.6 data.

4.2.2.1.1 Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support

The responses of participating principals to the ten questionnaire items that focused on learners support are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.1 below:

Figure 4.1: Principals: Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support



Question B1

The above table indicates that the majority of participants (71.36%) disagreed with the notion that most learners in rural areas dropped out of school because of issues that could be resolved through sound management (Table 4.6, B1). Only 28.58% agreed with the statement.

Question B4

Responses in Table 4.6 show that 71.43% of the participants were of the opinion that the presence of over-aged learners at the farm school was common practice. This result confirms the literature finding (*cf.* 2.3.2) that a disturbing feature of primary school enrolment is the presence of over-aged learners and that in the year 1984, the age of Grade 1 learners ranged from 6-17, and that of Grade 7 learners from 11-22 years of age.

Question B15

The responses in Table 4.6 show that 57.15% of the participants were of the opinion that the high failure rate among Blacks cannot be attributed to the attitudes of the school, the principal and educators. This result does not concur with the literature study (*cf.* 2.4.3).

The principals at farm schools appear convinced that different factors need to be blamed for this.

Question B19

Table 4.6 shows that most farm school principals (57.15%) disagreed with the literature (*cf.* 2.6.1) that child labour is common on farms, and is causing absenteeism.

However, there is still a significant number of participants (42.86%) who indicated that they share the sentiment that child labour is common on farms, and is causing absenteeism from school.

It appears that some farms are still guilty of using child labour to get the work done. This does not only contradict section 28 (c) of the Constitution (108/1996), but is also detrimental to the learner's right to education.

Question B20

The data in Table 4.6 reveal that 57.15% of the participants were of the opinion that a low income on farms increased the need for teenagers to be in paid employment. This confirms the contents of the literature study (*cf.* 2.6.2)

that poverty resulting from unemployment or low income on the farms increased the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment, in the evening and at weekends, reducing time for homework and in some cases, during the day, causing absenteeism.

Question B21

Data in Table in 4.6 indicate that most farm school principals in the area of research (85.72%) were of the opinion that learners drop out of school because of the low income of their parents. The literature review (*cf.* 2.6.2) maintains that low income on the farms results in learners dropping out of school.

Question B22

71.43% of the participants in Table 4.6 agreed that parents remove their children from school without proper consultation with the school authorities. The result is in line with the literature (*cf.* 2.6.5) that the relocation of the family to an area far from the current school may result in learners being withdrawn from school without the proper procedure. Ultimately the learner leaves the school without obtaining important documents, such as a transfer and learner profile.

Question B23

Table 4.6 indicates that 57.15% of the participants were of the opinion that farm killings affect the education of the farm school learner. Literature findings (*cf.* 2.6.6) reveal that farm killings are mostly driven by former workers who felt exploited or who were unreasonably dismissed. In one incident, learners were forced to study under the trees after their school was demolished because of the death of the farm manager, allegedly killed by the farm workers.

Question B24

The response to this question (Table 4.6) shows that 100% of the participants agreed that the dispute between bus operators and the GDE results in poor academic performance of the farm school learners.

The result confirms the literature study (*cf.* 2.6.7) which revealed that a dispute between bus operators and the GDE over a 15% increase in bus subsidy left farm school learners stranded and exposed to danger.

Question B26

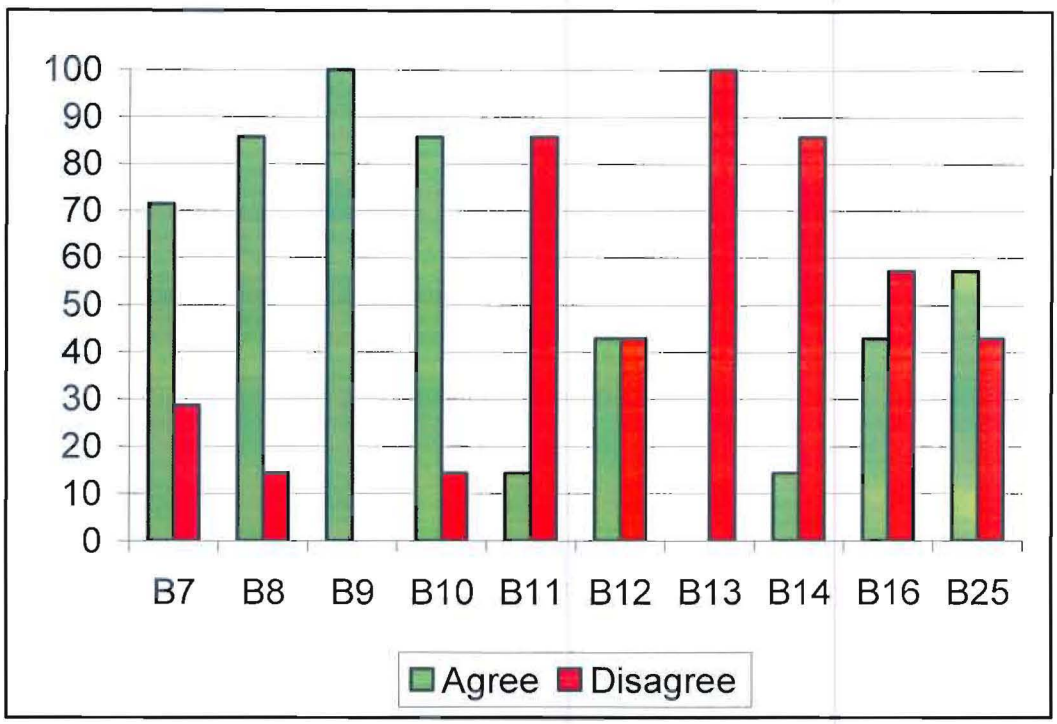
According to Table 4.6 all the participating farm school principals were of the view that the relocation of the learners affects the post-establishment of the school. According to the literature study (*cf.* 2.6.5), the relocation of learners causes the learner numbers to drop and due to that, the school is faced with having to re-deploy educators, at times losing those educators with potential.

This would be to the detriment of farm school learners' right to education.

4.2.2.1.2 Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement

The responses of participating principals to the ten questionnaire items that focused on parental involvement are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.2 below:

Figure 4.2: Principals: Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement



Question B7

In terms of the Schools Act (84/1996), School Governing Bodies (SGBs) are expected to determine the standard of education and the curriculum, recommend the appointment or dismissal of staff, supervise the spirit and character of education, maintain and manage school buildings and finances, and make suggestions concerning the education of their children (*cf.* 2.4.1).

71.53% of the participants shared the same sentiments with the researcher that the SGB of the farm school determines the school policy. However, there are challenges based on this, such as the establishment of the SGB (*cf.* 2.4.2).

Question B8

Table 4.6 reveals that 85.72% of the participants were of the opinion that the parents who live on farms are more likely to have a lower level of education.

This confirms the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education due to their previous background. Some have never been at school while others were forced to drop out. This matter results in parents having less knowledge about and confidence in the education service, which is to the detriment of farm school learners' right to education.

Question B9

All the participating farm school principals agreed that parents who live far from the school fail to become involved in farm school activities. This is echoed by the literature (*cf.* 2.4.1) that for most of these parents who live far from their places of work, time to visit school or to attend meetings often becomes a problem.

Question B10

Table 4.6 shows that 85.72% of the participants agreed that illiteracy deprives farm school parents from making a significant contribution to the education of their children. This supports the literature (*cf.* 2.4.1) that states that black parents have not had the benefit of active involvement in the education of their children because of their own illiteracy.

Question B11

The responses show that 85.75% of the participants thought that principals do inspire parents to be effectively involved in school activities. The result contradicts the literature findings (*cf.* 2.4.3) declaring that principals should admit that they have done nothing to inspire parents to be effectively involved in school activities. It is also stated in the literature findings that school principals succeed only in impressing parents, but fail to communicate with them.

Question B12

Table 4.6 reflects that 57.15% of the participants were of the view that the principal determines how and what should be done at school. The study has

mentioned (*cf.* 2.4.3) that the principal as the school manager is the most important person who determines how and what should be done at school.

This draws a fine line between governance which is mainly the responsibility of the SGB and management as the responsibility of the principal to avoid confusion between these two structures.

Question B13

All participants disagreed that the principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable because parents will always look up to the principal for guidance and leadership (*cf.* 2.4.3).

This response suggests that principals engage parents adequately in school affairs, irrespective of their level of education.

Question B14

According to the responses in Table 4.6, the majority of participants (85.72%) disagreed with the notion that some educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities, as mentioned in the literature study. The majority of the participants were therefore opposed to the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.3) that educators feel they are better qualified than parents to handle their work without interference.

It would thus seem that the principals support parental involvement at farm schools.

Question B16

According to Table 4.6, 42.86% of the participants indicated that educators were trained to handle learners and not parents. The result is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.3).

However 57.15% of the participants disagreed with the notion that educators were trained to handle learners and not parents. This contradicts the literature.

Although the impression is created that educators are trained to handle parents, education training proves the opposite. It could be that these principals feel confident in handling parents.

Question B25

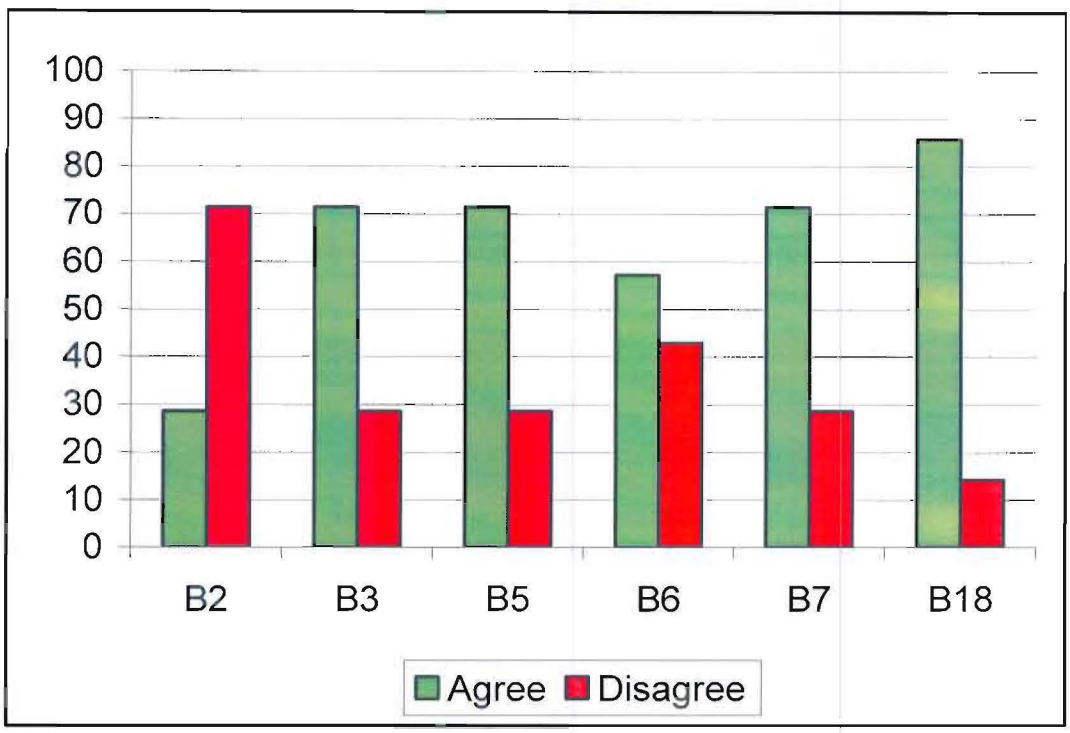
Table 4.6 reflects on 57.15% of the participating farm school principals who agreed that dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents in the farm school.

This issue is affirmed by the literature (*cf.* 2.6.3) in which it was indicated that dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers from the farms reduce active participation of parents and the community in the farm school.

4.2.2.1.3 Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport

The responses of participating principals to the six questionnaire items that focused on facilities and transport are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.3 below:

Figure 4.3: Principals: Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport



Question B2

Table 4.6 reveals that 71.43% of the participants disagreed with the opinion that labour disputes between the farmer and employees may lead to the closure of a farm school. On the other hand, 28.57% of the participants were of the view that labour disputes between the farmer and employees may indeed lead to the closure of a farm school.

Question B3

According to Table 4.6, 71.43% of the participants were of the opinion that a lack of scholar transport to farm schools has an impact on non-attendance and drop- out rates. The result is in line with the literature review (*cf.* 2.6.7) that a dispute between bus operators and the GDE left farm school learners stranded and exposed to dangers such as road accidents and rape.

Question B5

From the responses, 71.43% of the principals of the farm schools in the area of research were of the opinion that a lack of power supply at the farm school impaired learning and administrative activities. The literature findings (*cf.* 2.3.2) revealed, however, that farm schools are rarely connected to any power supply, whether the national grid, a generator or solar power.

The lack of some form of energy limits the teaching and learning that can take place at school. Administrative activities can also be impaired. Farm school learners are therefore excluded from accessing information technology systems either donated or provided by the provincial department. This is different from learners in urban and wealthier areas who have greater access to these resources.

Question B6

57.14% of the participating farm school principals agreed that some farm schools were still using pit latrines (toilets), while 42.86% disagreed with the statement. The reason for that could be that, in some areas of investigation, schools do have running systems.

Nevertheless, the majority of the participants are in line with the literature (*cf.* 2.3.2) that 45% of farm schools in South Africa continue to have pit latrines, and a small number still use the bucket system.

Question B17

Table 4.6 indicates that most participating farm school principals (71.44%) were of the opinion that the principal is never informed about the sale of the farm on which the school stands. This result is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.5.1) that John Pienaar bought the land in Thabazimbe on which the Deo Gloria Primary school lies and immediately declared the school a nuisance. He made it clear to the principal and his educators that the school and its learners were not welcome on his land.

An incident such as this would obviously be detrimental to farm school learners' right to education.

Question B18

According to the responses in Table 4.6, the majority of the participants (85.72%) were of the view that some rural and farm schools were under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment. The result echoes the literature finding (*cf.* 2.3.1) that the relative scarcity of resources and in some cases the resolution and poverty of rural communities, seriously limit the development possibilities of learners that might be achieved through education.

4.2.2.2 The questionnaire for educators

Table 4.7 below shows the responses of the participating farm school educators. These responses will be discussed in the subsequent sub-paragraphs.

Table 4.7: The challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate (Educators)

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
No	**Question/ statement**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
B1	Poverty of rural communities limits the development possibilities that might be achieved through education.	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	16.07	26	46.42	20	35.71	1	1.78
B2	Democracy appears to have done little for the learners at the farm school.	4	7.14	10	17.85	4	7.14	14	25	18	32.14	5	8.92	1	1.78
B3	Educators experience public transport problems to come to school.	2	3.57	2	3.57	1	1.78	5	8.92	14	25	31	55.35	1	1.78
B4	The presence of over-aged learners in the class impedes some of the lesson activities.	0	0	6	10.71	2	3.57	18	32.14	18	32.14	11	19.64	1	1.78
B5	No electricity affects the usage of visual teaching methods.	4	7.14	9	16.07	5	8.92	5	8.92	20	35.71	12	21.42	1	1.78
B6	Some of the farm schools are still using pit latrines (toilets).	8	14.28	6	10.71	3	5.35	12	21.42	13	23.21	13	23.21	1	1.78
B7	Lack of telephones at farm schools hinders education.	5	8.92	9	16.07	1	1.78	12	21.42	18	32.14	11	19.64	0	0

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B8	Most parents who reside on farms lack the required literacy levels to participate in farm school activities.	0	0	3	5.35	2	3.57	6	10.71	21	37.5	24	42.85	0	0
B9	Parents exclude themselves from educational matters because they have less knowledge about education service.	0	0	2	3.57	2	3.57	10	17.85	21	37.5	21	37.5	0	0
B10	Parents always liaise with their children's educators.	7	12.5	19	33.92	8	14.28	16	28.57	5	8.92	0	0	1	1.78
B11	A number of parents in historically African communities find it difficult to attend meetings at the farm school because of transport problems.	2	3.57	5	8.92	1	1.78	5	8.92	16	28.57	27	48.21	0	0
B12	Most farm parents live far from their workplace so time to attend meetings often becomes a problem.	2	3.57	3	5.35	1	1.78	7	12.5	21	37.5	22	39.28	0	0
B13	Some farm school principals create hindrances for parents to be meaningfully involved in school activities.	9	16.07	13	23.21	3	5.35	12	21.42	12	21.42	6	10.71	0	0
B14	Most farm schools prefer to handle issues alone without the involvement of parents.	7	12.5	23	41.07	5	8.92	9	16.07	5	8.92	7	12.5	0	0

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B15	Some farm school principals determine the school policies alone.	15	26.78	13	23.21	7	12.5	5	8.92	8	14.28	8	14.28	0	0
B16	Some farm school educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities.	21	37.5	15	26.78	7	12.5	4	7.14	6	10.71	3	5.35	0	0
B17	Most farm school educators feel that they are better qualified than parents to handle their work without interference.	14	25	14	25	5	8.92	8	14.28	12	21.42	3	5.35	0	0
B18	Some farm school educators use highly technical language that parents fail to understand.	16	28.57	13	23.21	8	14.28	5	8.92	12	21.42	2	3.57	0	0
B19	At times a farm school is at risk of being moved to another place due to the development of the area by the owner.	8	14.28	6	10.71	1	1.78	9	16.07	21	37.5	10	17.85	1	1.78
B20	The disputes between the farm owner and the Department of Education impede the farm school learner's right to basic education.	7	12.5	4	7.14	5	8.92	5	8.92	27	48.21	7	12.5	1	1.78
B21	Farm schools are under-resourced.	3	5.35	6	10.71	3	5.35	10	17.85	19	33.92	14	25	1.	1.78

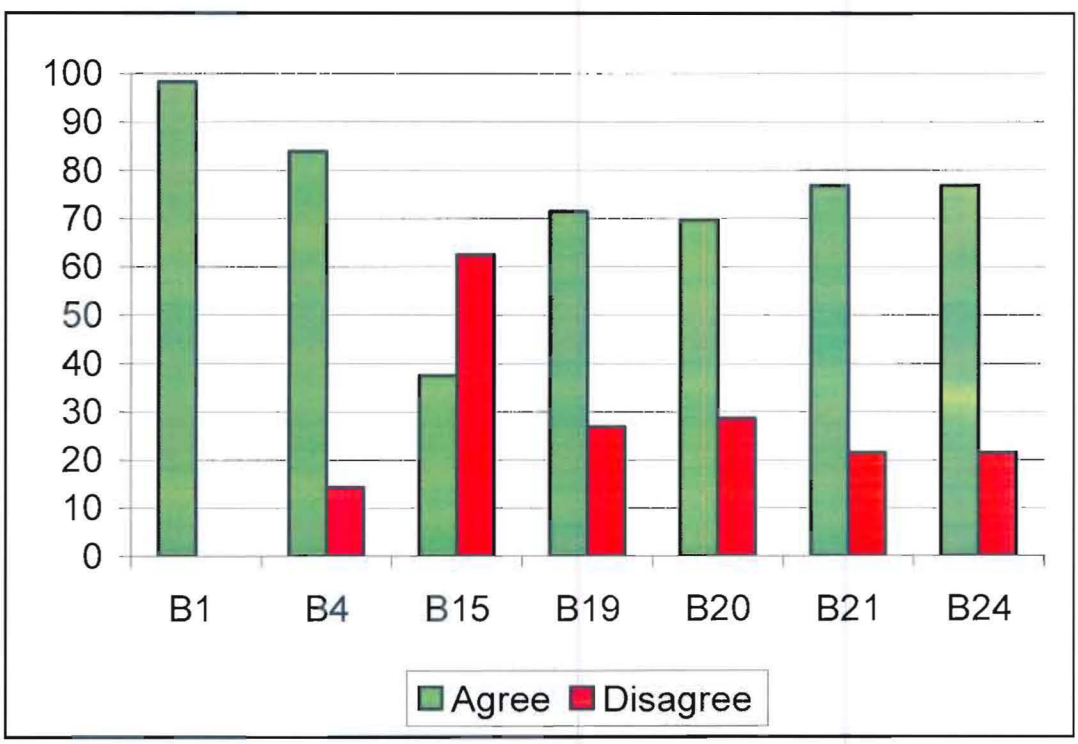
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B22	Educators at farm schools are more likely to be under-qualified.	22	39.28	12	21.42	5	8.92	6	10.71	8	14.28	2	3.57	1	1.78
B23	It is common practice at a farm school to have a person as both principal and educator.	1	1.78	5	8.92	2	3.57	7	12.5	19	33.92	21	37.5	1	1.78
B24	Low incomes on the farms result in learners dropping-out.	3	5.35	3	5.35	6	10.7	9	16.07	19	33.92	15	26.78	1	1.78
B25	Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents in the farm school activities.	3	2.35	7	12.5	3	5.35	9	16.07	16	28.57	17	30.35	1	1.78
B26	Relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school.	1	1.78	3	3.35	3	5.35	3	3.35	17	30.35	28	50	1	1.78

The scores of those who either strongly disagree, disagree or partially disagree are combined and those who strongly agree, agree and partially agree are calculated together in order to account for the Table 4.7 data.

4.2.2.2.1 Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support

The responses of participating educators to the seven questionnaire items that focused on learner support are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.4 below:

Figure 4.4: Educators: Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support



Question B1

Table 4.7 shows that the majority (98.20%) of participating farm school educators agreed that the poverty of rural communities limits the development possibilities that might be achieved through education. The result is in line with the literature study (*cf.* 2.6.2).

Poverty levels need to be addressed urgently if farm school learners' right to education is to be guaranteed.

Question B4

According to Table 4.7, 83.92% of the participants agreed that the presence of over-aged learners at the farm school is common practice. The response is in line with the literature study (*cf.* 2.3.2) that a disturbing feature of primary school enrolment is the presence of over-aged learners.

Question B15

Following the responses in Table 4.7, only 37.48% of the participants were of the view that some farm school principals determine the school policies alone. This does not concur with the literature which revealed that 68% of principals determine the school policies without considering the involvement of parents who are the primary educators (*cf.* 2.4.3).

Question B19

According to the responses in Table 4.7, the majority of participants (71.42%) agreed that at times a farm school is at risk of being moved to another place due to the development of the area by the owner. This implies that the right to basic education for a farm school learner will be affected negatively by this move.

Question B20

The data in Table 4.7 above implies that the majority (69.63%) of the farm school educators were of the view that the disputes between the farm owner and the Department of Education impeded the farm school learner's right to basic education.

Question B21

It is indicated in Table 4.6 above that a significant number (76.77%) of the participants were of the opinion that farm schools were under-resourced.

This would be to the detriment of farm school learners' right to education.

Question B22

The majority of the participants in Table 4.7 (69.62%) disagreed with the notion that educators at farm schools were more likely to be under-qualified. This gives the impression that most educators at the farm schools who participated in the research were qualified, as opposed to 28.56% of those who agreed that educators at farm schools were more likely to be under-qualified.

This result seems to imply that farm school educators view their qualifications in a serious light in order to ensure the delivery of quality education to their learners.

Question B24

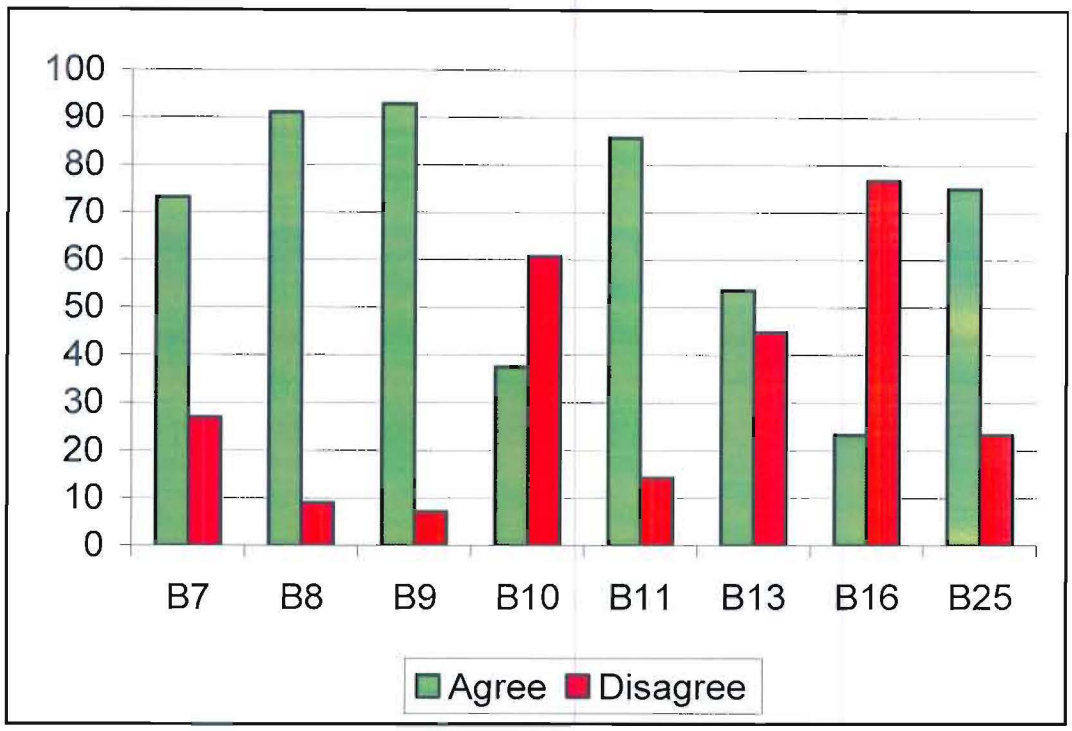
In Table 4.6, the majority of the participating farm school educators (76.77%) were of the view that low incomes on the farms result in learners dropping out.

This implies that teenagers' need to be in paid employment in the evenings and at weekends will increase and affect the learning process, leading towards reduction of time for homework and causing absenteeism.

4.2.2.2.2 Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement

The responses of participating educators to the eight questionnaire items that focused on parental involvement are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.5 below:

Figure 4.5: Educators: Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement



Question B7

According to Table 4.7, 73.20% of the participating farm school educators agreed that a lack of telephones at farm schools hinders education. Following the literature study (*cf.* 2.3.2), the lack of telephones at a school hinders the ability of educators to contact provincial authorities when repairs and services are needed or when there is an emergency at school. This would be to the detriment of farm school learners' right to education.

Question B8

The response to this question in Table 4.7 shows that 91.06% of the participants were of the opinion that most parents who reside on farms lack the required literacy levels to participate in farm school activities.

The result affirms the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that parents on the farm are more likely to have lower levels of education due to their previous

background. Some have never been at school while others were forced to drop out.

Question B9

92.85% of the participants in Table 4.7 were of the view that parents excluded themselves from educational matters because they had lilttle knowledge about the education service.

The result is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that parents who have never been at school or were forced to drop-out may have less knowledge about and confidence in the education service, and therefore exclude themselves from education matters.

Question B10

Data in Table 4.7 indicate that most of the participating farm school educators (60.70%) disagreed with the notion that parents always liaised with their children's educators. However, 37.49% of the participants contradicted the result, by aligning themselves with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.1) that parental involvement in school activities is central in the learning process of learners.

If parents do not consult with the educators, then farm school learners' right to education would not be promoted.

Question B11

The result in Table 4.7 shows that 85.70% of the participants agreed that a number of parents in historically African communities find it difficult to attend meetings at the farm school because of lack of transport.

The response confirms the literature study (*cf.* 2.4.1) that parents in historically African communities in rural areas find it difficult to visit the school because transport is sometimes unavailable, especially if meetings are held at night.

Question B13

Table 4.7 indicates that 53.55% of the participants were of the opinion that some farm school principals created hindrances for parents from being meaningfully involved in school activities.

This opinion is shared in the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.3) that some farm school principals view problems with apprehension and consider parents as outsiders and also as problems for the school.

The learners' right to basic education can only be advanced if parents are involved meaningfully at schools.

Question B16

Data in Table 4.7 reflect that 76.77% of the participants shared the same notion that farm school educators were trained to handle learners and not parents. This is in line with the literature (*cf.* 2.43)

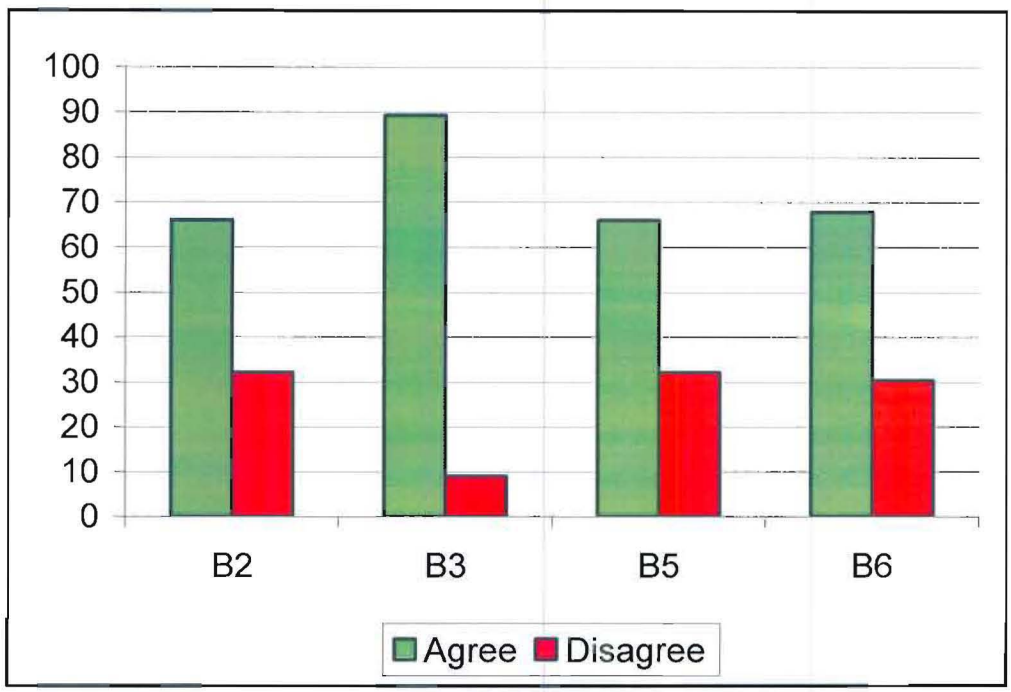
Question B25

Table 4.7 above indicates that 74.99% of the participants were of the opinion that dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents at the farm school. It can be deduced from this notion that once the parent is dismissed, the learner's school attendance ends because the family is obligated to leave the farm. The right to basic education of the learner is thus infringed.

4.2.2.2.3 Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport

The responses of participating educators to the four questionnaire items that focused on facilities and transport support are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.6 below:

Figure 4.6: Educators: Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport



Question B2

Responses in Table 4.7 indicate that 66.06% of the participants were of the opinion that democracy in South Africa appears to have done little for the learners at the farm school. These allegations are upheld in the literature (*cf.* 2.3.1) where it is stated that the State's commitment to social justice in all matters and especially to universal access to education remains unfulfilled for large numbers of children, youths and adults living in rural areas.

This situation does not promote farm school learners' right to basic education.

Question B3

Table 4.7 reflects that 89.27% of the participating farm school educators were of the view that educators experienced public transport problems to come to school.

This statement is confirmed by the literature (*cf.* 2.3.1) which reveals that the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) acknowledged that farm

schools are neglected. To address the plight of learners and educators at farm schools, SADTU identified, as some of its concerns, the lack of transport and insufficient resources. Only when a solution has been reached will farm school learners' right to basic education be advanced.

Question B5

Following Table 4.7, the majority of participants (66.05%) were of the opinion that the lack of electricity affected the usage of visual teaching methods. This view is also contained in the literature finding (*cf.* 2.3.2) that farm schools are rarely connected to power supply.

It is difficult to imagine quality education in the absence of electricity.

Question B6

Table 4.7 indicates that most of the participating farm school educators (67.84%) were of the view that some of the farm schools were still using pit latrines (toilets).

This is the view which is upheld in the literature study (*cf.* 2.3.2) that 45% of farm schools in South Africa continue to use pit latrines, and a small number are still using the bucket system.

Aspects that reflect on personal hygiene need to be addressed for the sake of learners' right to education.

4.2.2.3 The questionnaire for learners

Table 4.8 below indicates the responses of the participating farm school learners. These responses will be discussed in the subsequent sub-paragraphs.

Table 4.8: The challenges experienced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate (Learners)

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
No.	**Question/ statement**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
B1	Many children living on farm areas do not attend school.	105	22.34	66	14.04	60	12.76	58	12.34	98	20.85	75	15.95	8	1.70
B2	Democracy appears to have done little for the learners at the farm schools.	75	15.10	51	10.85	59	12.55	46	9.78	116	24.68	124	26.38	3	0.63
B3	Labour disputes between the farmers and the parents prevent learners from attending school.	109	23.19	50	10.63	38	8.08	53	11.27	137	29.14	78	16.59	5	1.06
B4	Some farmers deliberately prevent learners from coming to school by locking the gates.	161	34.25	101	21.48	41	8.72	44	9.36	65	13.82	51	10.85	7	1.48
B5	Some farm schools are still using pit latrines (toilets).	98	20.85	64	13.61	48	10.21	60	12.76	105	22.34	88	18.72	7	1.48
B6	Dismissals and evictions of parents by farmers, impact negatively on learning.	78	16.59	31	6.59	40	8.51	69	14.68	87	18.51	155	32.97	10	2.12

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B7	Sale of farms affects learning negatively.	52	11.06	76	16.17	45	9.57	45	9.57	114	24.25	126	26.80	12	2.55
B8	Child-labour is still common on farms.	79	16.80	91	19.36	24	5.10	67	14.25	107	22.76	94	20	8	1.70
B9	Low incomes on the farms increase the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment.	44	9.36	27	5.74	36	7.65	62	13.19	122	25.95	171	36.38	8	1.70
B10	Low incomes on the farms result in learners dropping out.	60	12.76	57	12.12	30	6.38	46	9.78	119	25.31	153	32.55	5	1.06
B11	The dismissal of the parent from work on the farm, at its most, means the relocation of the family.	22	4.68	26	5.53	42	8.93	63	13.40	149	31.70	163	34.68	5	1.06
B12	Lack of space at home impedes farm school learners from doing their homework.	77	16.38	58	12.34	40	8.51	68	14.46	93	19.78	130	27.65	4	0.85

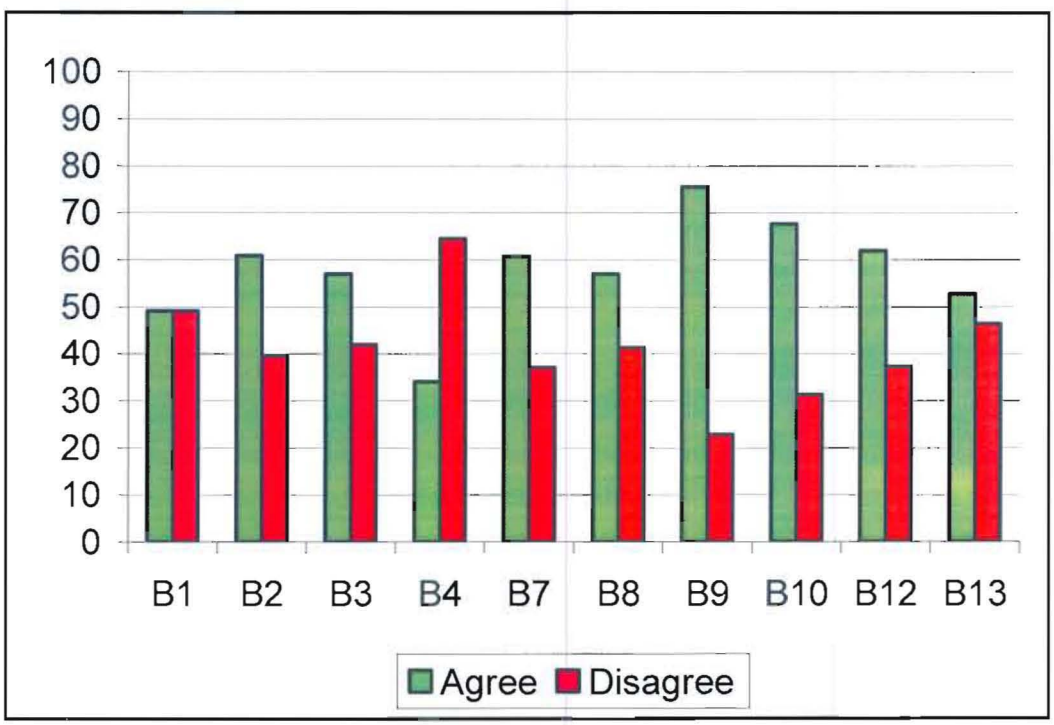
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B13	The death of farmers affects the education of the farm school learners negatively.	72	15.31	62	13.19	84	17.87	54	11.48	108	22.97	86	18.29	4	0.85
B14	Because of the scholar transport, learners travel safely.	80	17.02	88	18.72	26	5.35	37	7.87	83	17.65	150	31.91	6	1.27
B15	Parents pay for scholar transport when used by their children to come to school.	220	46.80	91	19.36	23	4.89	10	2.12	54	11.48	68	14.46	4	0.85
B16	Scholar transport strikes affect the education of a farm school learner negatively.	51	10.85	29	6.17	23	4.89	21	4.46	55	11.70	286	60.85	5	1.06

The scores of those who strongly disagree, disagree or partially disagree are combined and those of who strongly agree, agree and partially agree are calculated together in order to account for the Table 4.8 data.

4.2.2.3.1 Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support

The responses of participating learners to the ten questionnaire items that focused on learner support are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.7 below:

Figure 4.7: Learners: Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support



Question B1

Responses in Table 4.8 indicate that 49.14% of the farm school learners were of the view that many learners in farm areas do not attend school. This result is contradicted by 49.14% of the same participants when declaring that many children in farm areas attend school.

This implies that there is a possibility that some children are not at school, while others are at school.

Question B2

According to Table 4.8, 60.84% of the participants were of the view that democracy appears to have done little for the learners at the farm schools. The result concurs with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.3.1) that the education provided to farm school learners has been minimal.

Question B3

From the response, 57% of the participants were of the opinion that labour disputes between the farmers and the parents prevented learners from attending school. However, 41.90% of the participants disagreed with the notion that labour disputes between the farmers and the parents prevented learners from attending school. This notion contradicts the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.3) that indicates that the dismissal of the parent from the farm means eviction of the family from the farm, therefore the learner will not be allowed to attend school because the school is on the farmer's land.

Question B4

Responses in Table 4.8 show that 34% of the farm school learners had the perception that some farmers deliberately prevented learners from coming to school by locking the gates, while 64.45% of the participants refuted the allegations. It is encouraging to find out that the majority of the respondents disagreed with the notion above.

Question B7

Table 4.8 points out that the majority of the participants (60.62%) concur that the sale of farms affects learning negatively. This is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.5.1) that a farmer bought a farm in Thabazimbi on which a farm school lies and immediately declared the school a nuisance. He made it clear to the principal and his educators that the school and its learners were not welcome on his land.

Question B8

57.01% of the farm school learners indicated that child-labour is still common on farms. This implies that there are farm children who are employed to work at weekends, afternoons after school or during the day as full-time employees. These sentiments are also reflected in the literature study (*cf.* 2.6.1).

Question B9

Low incomes on the farms increase the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment (*cf.* 2.6.2). The perception of 57.01% of the participants in Table 4.8 is that poverty resulting from unemployment or low income on the farms increases the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment.

Question B10

Data in Table 4.8 reveal that 67.64% of the respondents were of the view that low income on the farms results in learners dropping out. The literature review (*cf.* 2.6.2) is in agreement with the statement that learners drop out of school because of the low income of their parents.

Question B12

Table 4.8 reveals that 61.89% of the participants supported the notion that lack of space at home impeded farm school learners from doing their homework. This result concurs with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.4) that lack of quiet space for homework, bed-sharing and overcrowding can cause serious disturbance to the education of the farm school learner.

This negates the right to basic education of the farm school learner.

Question B13

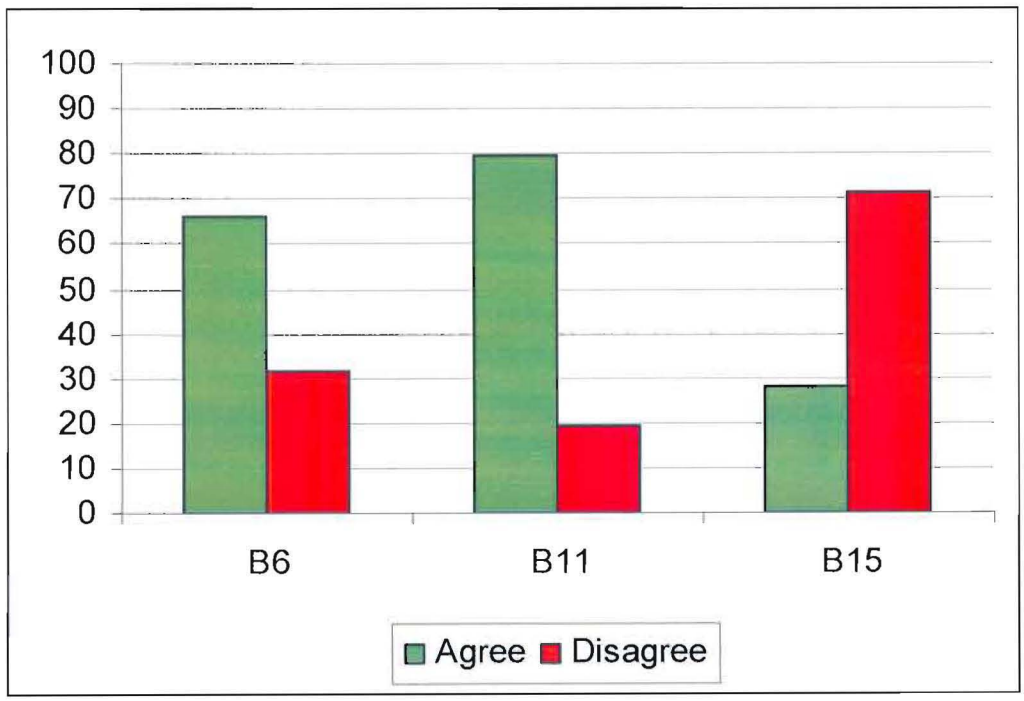
From the responses in Table 4.8, 52.74% of the participants were of the opinion that the death of farmers affected the education of the farm school learners negatively.

This implies that once the farmer passes on, whether through natural death or under any circumstance, there is a greater possibility that an employee may lose employment. The entire family may be compelled to leave the farm, the learner is removed from school or the school is closed. These findings are in agreement with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.6) that about 200 learners in Eshowe have been forced to study under the trees after their school was demolished because of the death of the farm manager, who was killed by farm workers.

4.2.2.3.2 Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement

The responses of participating learners to the three questionnaire items that focused on parental involvement are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.8 below:

Figure 4.8: Learners: Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement



Question B6

The responses show that 66.16% of the participants thought that dismissals and evictions of parents by farmers, impacted negatively on education. The

literature (*cf.* 2.6.3) revealed that dismissals and evictions of employees from farms reduce active participation of parents and the community at farm schools. The learner will then no longer be able to attend the school because of the dismissal of the parent.

Question B11

According to responses in Table 4.8, the majority of the participants (79.78%) were of the opinion that the dismissal of the parent from work on the farm, at most, meant the relocation of the family, whereby the learner would be forced to leave school without proper procedure being followed. This is in line with the literature (*cf.* 2.6.3).

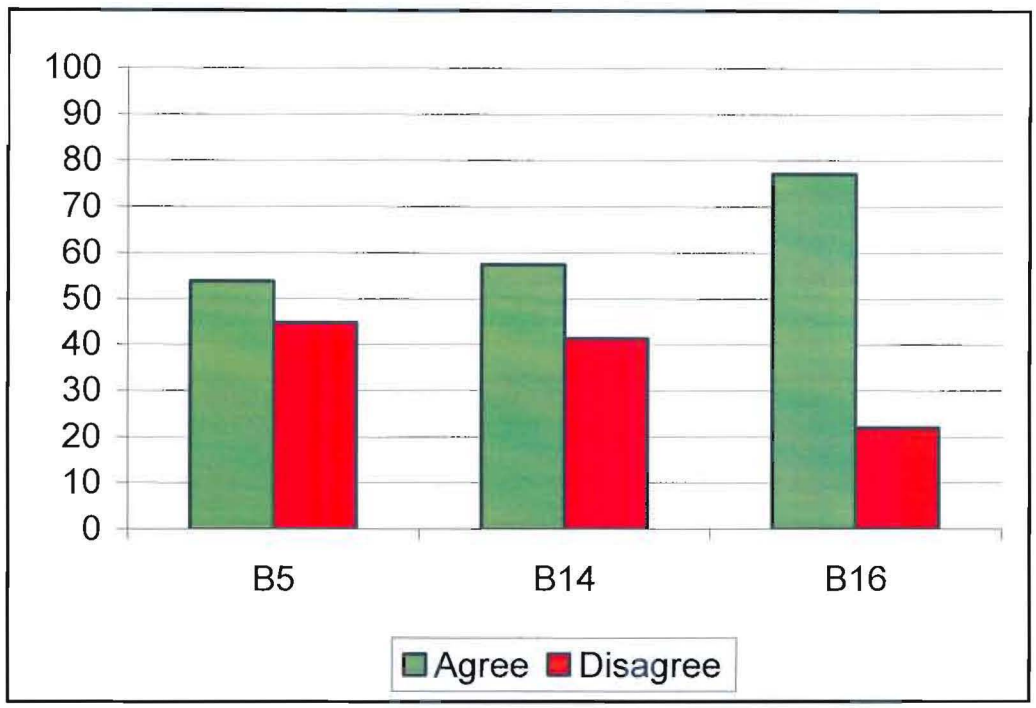
Question B15

The responses in Table 4.8 indicated that the majority of the participants (71.05%) disagreed with the notion that parents pay for scholar transport when used by their children to travel to school. The result is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.7) that the policy stipulates that learners who walk more than five kilometers to school should be provided with free transport.

4.2.2.3.3 Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport

The responses of participating learners to the three questionnaire items that focused on facilities and transport are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.9 below:

Figure 4.9: Learners: Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport



Question B5

Table 4.8 reveals that 53.82% of the participants were of the opinion that some farm schools were still using pit latrines (toilets). This is in agreement with the literature study (*cf.* 2.3.2).

Question B14

Table 4.8 reveals that 57.43% of the participants perceived that farm school learners travelled safely because of scholar transport. It is encouraging to see farm school learners travelling safely to and from school.

Question B16

Table 4.8 shows that 77.01% of the participants were of the opinion that scholar transport strikes affected the education of farm school learners negatively. This statement is echoed by the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.7) that a dispute between bus operators and the GDE that led bus operators to strike

has left farm school learners stranded and exposed to dangers such as road accidents and rape.

4.2.2.4 The questionnaire for parents

Table 4.9 below shows the responses of the farm school parents. These responses will be discussed in the subsequent sub-paragraphs.

Table 4.9: The challenges experienced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate (Parents)

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
No	Question/ statement	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
B1	Parents must ensure that their children attend school every day.	1	1.33	0	0	0	0	1	1.33	3	4	69	92	1	1.33
B2	Farm school learners leave school because there is no space for them.	20	26.67	15	20	6	8.00	3	4.06	6	8	24	32	1	1.33
B3	Parents expect quality education.	0	0	1	1.33	0	0	1	1.33	4	5.33	69	92	0	0
B4	Parental involvement at school can be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents.	8	10.96	3	4.00	4	5.33	5	6.67	23	30.69	32	42.67	0	0
B5	Parents who live on farms have lower levels of education due to their previous background	4	5.33	5	6.67	3	4.00	17	22.67	13	17.33	32	42.67	0	0
B6	Lack of transport prevents parents from attending school meetings.	8	1067	5	6.67	1	1.33	8	10.67	18	24.00	34	45.33	1	1.33

		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B7	Most farm school parents lack the literacy to participate in school activities.	6	8.00	7	9.33	1	1.33	19	25.33	12	16.00	29	38.67	1	1.33
B8	Parents regard school as the sphere of educators only.	10	13.33	10	13.33	5	6.67	10	13.33	18	24.00	21	28.00	1	1.33
B9	Parents believe that the school is an independent institution that has no dealings with parents.	24	32.00	28	37.33	3	4.00	5	6.67	7	9.33	7	9.33	1	1.33
B10	Parents stay away from school activities because they do not want to commit themselves to matters they are not sure about.	10	13.33	9	12.00	5	6.67	10	13.33	19	25.33	21	28.00	1	1.33
B11	Some farm workers suffer physical assaults by their employers.	7	9.33	1	1.33	4	5.33	7	9.33	17	22.67	37	49.33	2	2.67
B12	Some families on a farm live in ramshackle houses.	1	1.33	1	1.33	3	4.00	6	8.00	15	20.00	48	64.00	1	1.33
B13	Houses of some farm workers at times do not have electricity.	4	5.33	1	1.33	0	0	4	5.33	22	29.33	44	58.67	0	0

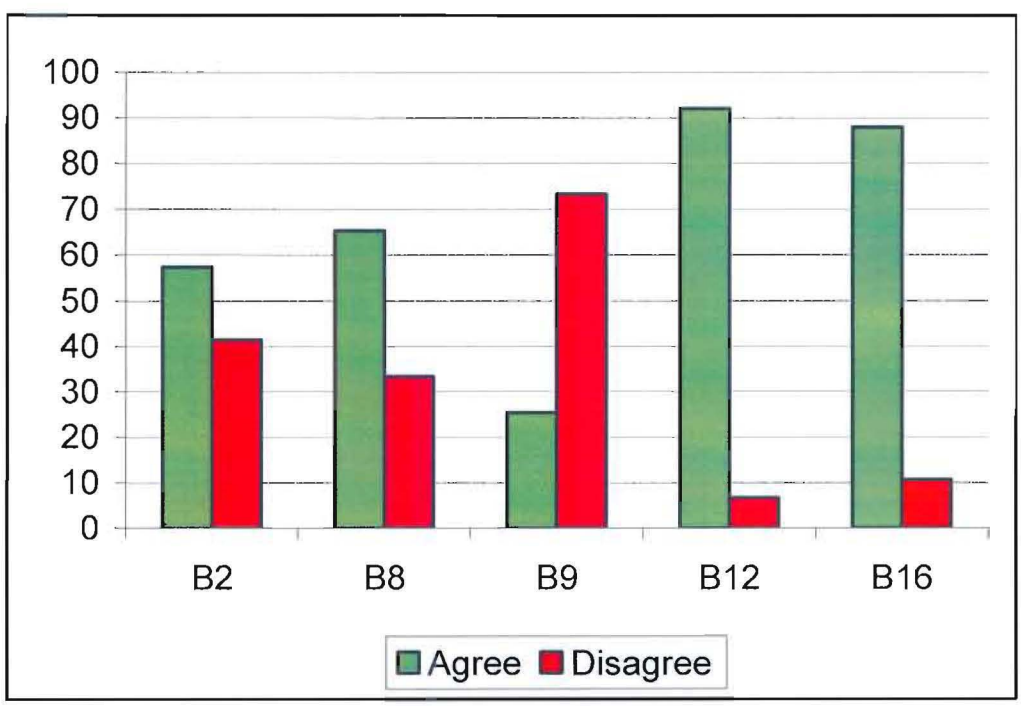
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Partially disagree		Partially Agree		Agree		Strongly agree		No Response	
B14	Most farm workers' houses have water taps outside.	2	2.67	2	2.67	0	0	6	8.00	19	25.33	46	61.33	0	0
B15	Low income may rob parents and communities of an opportunity to be active participants at the school.	4	5.33	4	5.33	7	9.33	4	5.33	18	24.00	38	50.67	0	0
B16	Some families on a farm live in a house with only a few rooms.	0	0	2	2.67	6	8.00	5	6.67	18	24.00	43	57.33	0	0
B17	Farm workers lose their jobs because of the changes effected in their work by farmers.	1	1.33	1	1.33	4	5.33	10	13.33	15	20.00	43	57.33	1	1.33
B18	The relocation of farmers from the farms to urban area affects the work of employees on the farm.	0	0	4	5.33	3	4.00	9	12.00	21	28.00	38	50.67	0	0
B19	Late arrival of buses to farm schools impacts negatively on learning.	1	1.33	6	8.00	1	1.33	5	6.67	16	21.33	46	61.33	0	0
B20	Scholar transport strikes result in poor performance by farm school learners.	6	8.00	5	6.67	0	0	1	1.33	15	20.00	47	62.67	1	1.33

The scores of those who strongly disagree, disagree or partially disagree are combined and those who strongly agree, agree and partially agree are calculated together in order to account for the Table 4.9 data.

4.2.2.4.1 Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support

The responses of participating parents to the five questionnaire items that focused on learner support are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.10 below:

Figure 4.10:Parents: Questionnaire items that reflect on learner support



Question B2

Table 4.9 shows that the majority of the participants (54.67%), disagreed with the notion that farm school learners left school because there is no space for them. Only 44% agreed with the notion.

The response implies that there might be other reasons that could compel farm school learners to leave school, but not space. As mentioned in the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.2), for example, low incomes on farms resulted in learners dropping out.

Question B8

Data in Table 4.9 indicate that the majority of the participants (65.33%) agreed that parents regarded school as the sphere of educators only.

The result concurs with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that indicates parents who have never been at school or were forced to drop out, possibly regarding school as the sphere of educators only.

Question B9

According to Table 4.9, the majority of the participants (73.33%) disagreed with the notion that parents believed that the school is an independent institution that has no dealings with parents. This implies that the parents embrace the notion of parental involvement in school activities.

Question B12

Responses in Table 4.9 show that 92% of the participants agreed that some families on farms live in ramshackle houses. This allegation is also found in the literature (*cf.* 2.6.1), namely that other farmers by contrast, pay very low wages, are provided ramshackle houses with pit latrines, outside water taps and no electricity.

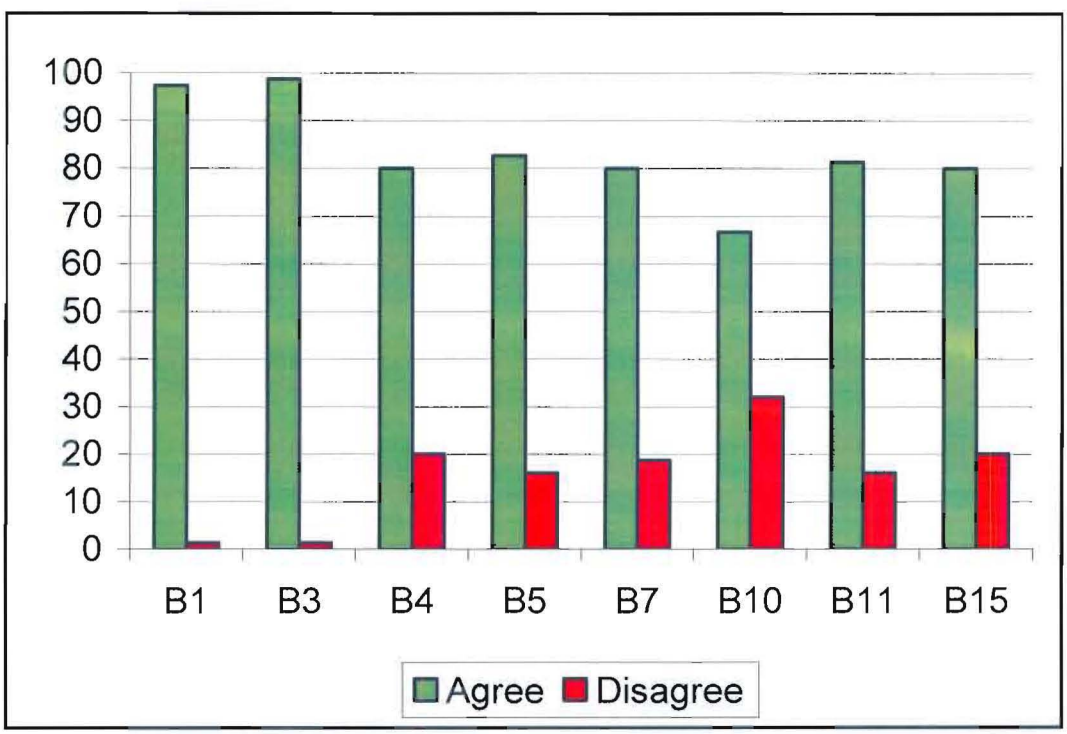
Question B16

According to Table 4.9, 88% of the participants indicated that some families on a farm live in a house with only a few rooms. This is echoed in literature (*cf.* 2.6.1) which relates that a home of three farm school learners is a three-roomed shack which they share with their grandmother, brother and their two uncles. It is also stated that housing problems are likely to occur, especially where the farmer builds small houses with three or fewer rooms for his/her employees.

4.2.2.4.2 Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement

The responses of participating parents to the eight questionnaire items that focused on parental involvement are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.11 below:

Figure 4.11:Parents: Questionnaire items that reflect on parental involvement



Question B1

Responses in Table 4.9 indicate that 97.33% of the farm school parents agreed that parents must ensure that their children attend school every day, with only 1.33% of the participants who disagreed.

The response is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.3) that it is the responsibility of the parents, as stipulated in the Schools Act (84/1996), to ensure that their children attend school every term day from the year in which the child turns six until the year the child turns fifteen or completes the ninth grade, whichever happens first.

Question B3

According to Table 4.9, 98.66% of the participants were of the opinion that parents expected that their children would receive quality education in order to secure their future.

This statement reiterates the literature (*cf.* 2.1) that, in terms of the Constitution (108/1996), everyone has a right to a basic education, including adult basic education, and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

Question B4

According to Table 4.9, 80% of the participants were of the view that parental involvement at school could be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents.

This view is also contained in the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4) that the efforts to involve parents may be biased by giving further advantage to wealthier parents while creating hindrances to the involvement of the working class.

Question B5

Table 4.9 reflects that 82.67% of the farm school parents were of the opinion that parents who lived on farms had lower levels of education, due to their previous background.

This statement is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that some parents have never been at school, while others were forced to drop out. This may result in parents having less knowledge about and confidence in the education service, therefore excluding themselves from education matters.

Question B7

The responses to this question (Table 4.9) show that 80% of the participants were of the opinion that most farm school parents lacked the literacy to participate in school activities.

The responses echo the literature (*cf.* 2.4.2) that parents on the farm are more likely to have lower levels of education, due to their previous background. Some have never been at school, while others were forced to drop out.

Question B10

The results in Table 4.9 show that 66.66% of the participants were of the view that parents stayed away from school activities because they did not want to commit themselves to matters they were not sure about.

The result is affirmed in the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.3) that parents, instead of committing themselves to matters they are not sure about, would rather stay away from school activities.

Question B11

Table 4.9 indicates that 92% of the farm school parents were of the opinion that some farm workers suffered physical assaults by their employers. The result is in agreement with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.2) that farm workers have suffered brutality and violence from farmers who have gone virtually unpunished.

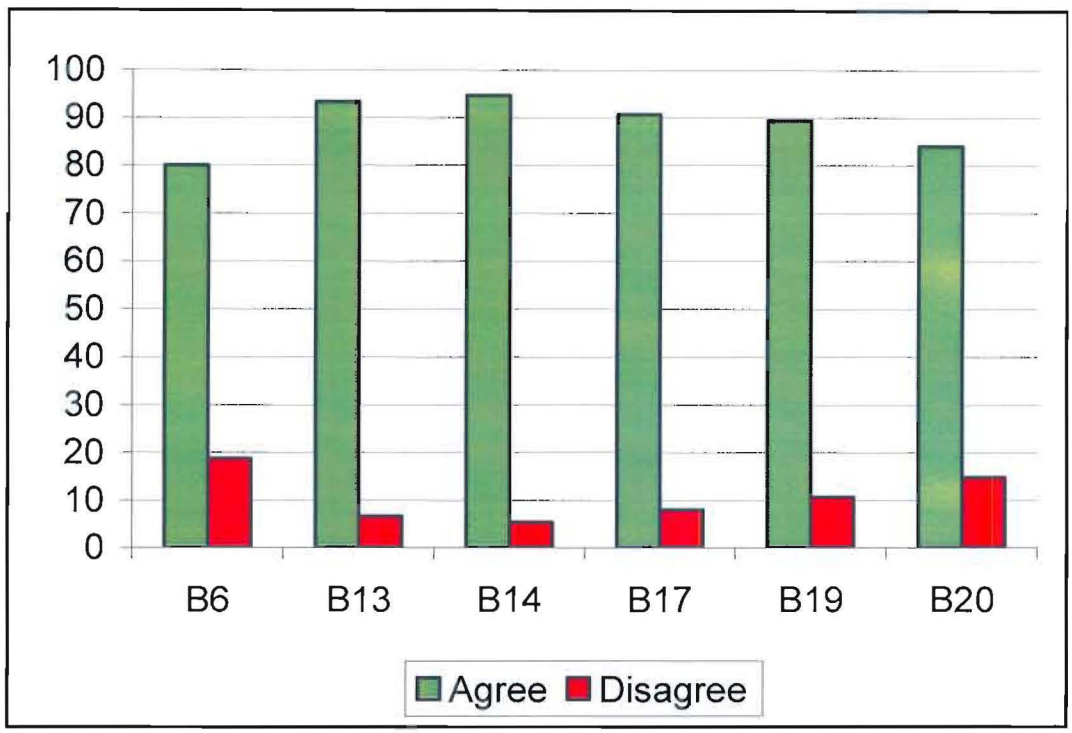
Question B15

The literature (*cf.* 2.4) revealed that parental involvement in educational matters can be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents. Table 4.9 shows that 80% of the farm school parents indicated that low income may rob parents and the community of an opportunity to be active participants in the school activities.

4.2.2.4.3 Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport

The responses of participating parents to the six questionnaire items that focused on facilities and transport are depicted in the graphical representation of Figure 4.12 below:

Figure 4.12: Parents: Questionnaire items that reflect on facilities and transport



Question B6

Responses in Table 4.9 indicate that 80% of the participants agreed that a lack of transport prevented parents from attending school meetings.

The result is in line with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.4.1) that a number of parents in historically African communities find it difficult to attend meetings at school or to visit the school, because transport is sometimes unavailable.

Question B13

The perception of 93.33% of participants was that the houses of some farm workers at times did not have electricity. This result concurs with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.1) that a home of three farm school learners that was visited had no electricity or running water.

Question B14

The responses show that 94.66% of the participants thought that most farm workers' houses had water taps outside. The literature study (*cf.* 2.6.1) revealed that farmers, by contrast, provide ramshackle houses with pit latrines, outside water taps and no electricity.

Question B17

Table 4.9 reveals that 90.66% of the participants were of the opinion that farm workers lost their jobs because of the changes effected in their work by farmers. This outcome concurs with the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.5) which indicated that farmers who change the nature of their business from live stock to game farming suddenly require fewer workers which forces the farmer to retrench some of his/her employees.

Question B19

The responses show that 89.33% of the participants were of the view that late arrival of buses at farm schools impacted negatively on learning. The literature study (*cf.* 2.6.7) states that the late arrival of buses impacts negatively on the right to basic education of a farm school learner.

Question B20

Table 4.9 reveals that 84% of the participants were of the opinion that scholar transport strikes resulted in poor performance by farm school learners. These allegations echoed the literature finding (*cf.* 2.6.7) that a dispute between bus operators and the GDE led to bus operators striking, which left farm school learners stranded and exposed to dangers.

4.3 A CRITICAL REFLECTION: SELECTED RESPONSES

In this section of Chapter 4, the responses for the categories of Partially agree / Agree / Strongly agree are combined for the questions that either correspond well or differ greatly between the groups of participants, which were principals, educators, learners and parents.

4.3.1 Data that correspond (Principals and educators)

In the Table 4.10 below, an attempt is made to reflect the data sets of the principal and educator participants which proved to correspond most.

Table 4.10: Data that correspond well (Principals and educators)

Questions	Principal % for 3 categories	Educator % for 3 categories
B3 Lack of scholoar transport to farm schools has an impact on non-attendance and drop-out rates	71.43	89.27
B4 The presence of over-aged learners at farm schools is common practice	71.43	83.92
B5 Lack of power supply at the farm school impairs learning and administrative activities	71.15	66.05
B6 Some farm schools still use pit latrines (toilets)	57.14	67.84
B18 Some rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment	85.72	76.77
B21 Learners drop out of school because of the loe incomes of their parents	85.72	76.77
B8 The parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education	85.72	91.06
B25 Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents at the farm school	57.14	74.99
B26 The relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school	100	85.70

The aspects which are addressed in the first six questions reflected in Table 4.10 indicate that immediate relief is necessary: aspects such as the lack of scholar transport, which cripples the learner attendance resulting on the long run in learners dropping out and the presence of over-aged learners at the

farm schools, a practice which is seen as common and disturbing primary school enrolment.

Furthermore, a lack of power supply frustrates administrative activities; whereas pit toilets represent high risk as far as the health and safety of farm school learners are concerned. Farm school principals and educators shared the same views that learners drop out of school because of the low income of their parents. They both agreed that farm schools are under-resourced, the aspect that impacts negatively on the curriculum.

The last three questions reflected in Table 4.10 address the aspects which indicate a sad situation at the farm schools. Firstly, parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education, are likely to lack confidence and also reserve themselves from participating in school activities. Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents in farm school activities, whereas the relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school. Such a situation leaves much to be desired as far as the implementation of the right to basic education by farm schools is concerned.

4.3.2 Data that correspond (Principals and learners)

In the Table 4.11 below, an attempt is made to reflect the data sets of the principal and learner participants which proved to correspond most.

Table 4.11: Data that correspond well (Principals and learners)

Questions	Principal % for 3 categories	Learner % for 3 categories
B6 Some farm schools still use pit latrines (toilets)	57.14	53.82
B17 The principal is never informed about the sale of the farm school	71.44	60.62
B20 Low income on farms increases the need for teenagers to be in paid employment	57.15	57.01
B21 Learners drop out of school because of the low incomoes of their parents	85.72	67.64
B24 The dispute between bus operators and GDE results in poor performance of the farm school learner	100	77.01
B23 Farm killings affect the education of the farm school learners	57.15	52.74

The first four questions reflected in Table 4.11 indicate the aspects that need immediate relief. The use of pit latrines for the farm schools is a cause for concern; as such facilities are seen as a health risk and compromise the safety of learners. The low income of the parents increases the need for teenagers to be in paid employment and also results in learners dropping out of school. The sale of farms which is mostly unilateral leaves most of the farm schools less prepared to handle new challenges resulting from such a deal. Such aspects frustrate the implementation of the right to basic education.

The last two questions reflected in Table 4.11 give light to the aspects which indicate a sad situation at the farm schools. Farm killings impact negatively on the education of the farm school learners and leave the future of the farm schools unpredictable. The dispute between the bus operators and GDE results in poor academic performance by the farm school learners.

4.3.3 Data that correspond (Principals and parents)

In the Table 4.12 below, an attempt is made to reflect the data sets of the principal and parent participants which proved to correspond most.

Table 4.12: Data that correspond well (Principals and parents)

Questions	Principal % for 3 categories	Parent % for 3 categories
B24 The dispute between bus operators and GDE results in poor performance of the farm school learners	100	84
B8 The parent swho live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education	85.72	82.67
B10 Illiteracy depirves farm school parents from making a significant contribution to their children's education	85.72	80

All three questions reflected in Table 4.12 indicate the aspects that reflect a sad situation at the farm schools. The dispute between bus operators and GDE results in poor performance by the farm school learners. The parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education and lack confidence. Such parents may find it difficult to participate with confidence in school activities and, as such, the implementation of the right to basic education becomes impossible.

4.3.4 Data that differ greatly

In the following paragraphs, an attempt is made to reflect the data sets of the principal / educator / learner participants which proved to differ most.

4.3.4.1 Principals and educators

The responses to question B11 of the principals' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.6) indicated that 85.75% of them inspired parents, whereas the responses to question B13 of the educators' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.7) indicated that

53.55% of the participating farm school principals caused hindrances for the parents of the learners at their schools.

The contradiction in the responses between the two questions (B11 of the farm school principals and B13 of the educators) creates the impression that the principals in their response might try to defend their position while the educators might seem fit to expose the position of the principals.

4.3.4.2 Principals and learners

The response to question B19 of the principals' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.6) indicated that 57.15% of them disagreed with the literature that child labour was common on farms, whereas the responses to question B8 of the learners' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.8) indicated that 57.01% of the participants agreed that child-labour is still common on farms.

The reason for the difference in the responses between the farm school principals and the farm school learners could be that learners are directly affected as they reside on farms and are exposed to the daily life routine taking place around the farm, unlike the principals who are not residents of the farms and only come to farms to work.

4.3.4.3 Principals and parents

The responses to question B13 of the principals' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.6) indicated that 100% of them disagreed that the principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable because parents look up to principal for guidance and leadership, whereas the responses to question B10 of the parents' questionnaire (*cf.* Table 4.9) indicated that 66.66% of the participants were of the opinion that parents stayed away from school activities because they did not want to commit themselves to matters they were not sure about.

The difference in the responses between the two questions (B13 of the farm school principals and B10 of the parents) could originate from the fact that illiterate parents would always withhold themselves from issues dealing with education, and not that the farm school principals would isolate them.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter, an analysis of results and an interpretation of some of the empirical data were undertaken. Most participants presented a well-balanced response following their perceptions on a broader view of the right to basic education of a farm school learner, the reasons behind farm school learner's drop-out and strategies that could assist to overcome this situation.

The next and final chapter of this study (Chapter 5) will focus on the research summary, findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises of a summary of the previous chapters, followed by findings from the research. Finally recommendations based on the findings are made.

5.2 SUMMARY

In Chapter 1, the background of the study was discussed and the research problem was stated. The aim of the study from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective and the methodology of achieving these aims were provided. This chapter focused on the research methodology: the literature study, the measuring instrument, population and sampling procedures and also the pilot survey and statistical techniques. The feasibility of the study was also looked into. Lastly, a division of the chapters was outlined.

Chapter 2 focused on the historical perspective of the study, pointing out compulsory attendance by farm school learners as stipulated by the Schools Act (84/1996). It also attended to parental involvement in school activities, a culture of teaching and learning that prevails at the farm schools and socio-economic factors that deter education at the farm schools. In this chapter, two aims of the study were dealt with: to investigate the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and to determine possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at the farm schools.

The empirical design of the study was presented in Chapter 3. This chapter included a discussion on the design of the empirical part of the study, population and sampling, the method of gathering data, and the advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire as a research instrument. Aspects discussed in this section included the format and content of the questionnaire, the covering letter, the administrative procedure and statistical techniques used in analysing the data.

Chapter 4 comprised the data analysis and interpretation. The responses in Sections A and B were represented in the form of tables indicating frequencies and percentages. The SPSS 15.0 for Windows 2006 and Statistica 8 Statsoft statistical packages were used to interpret and analyse data collected.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.3.1 Findings on research Aim 1: To investigate the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education

Based on the literature study, the following findings were made:

- The State's commitment to social justice, especially to education remains unfulfilled for large numbers of children, youths and adults living in rural areas (*cf.* 2.3.1).

- The South African government is failing to protect the right to a primary education for learners living on commercial farms, by neither ensuring their access to farm schools, nor maintaining the adequacy of learning conditions at these schools, and this violates the Schools Act (84/1996), the National Education Policy Act (27/1996) and their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (*cf.* 2.3.1).

- Access to adequate drinking water is still a problem at some farm schools, even where there is a source of water on the farm (*cf.* 2.3.2).

- Parental involvement is crucial in education and parents should contribute to creating an optimum educational environment at home, at school and in the community (*cf.* 2.4.1).

- The lack of some form of energy limits the teaching and learning that can take place at farm schools. Administrative activities can also be impaired. This type of practice excludes farm school learners from accessing information through technology systems, as compared to learners in urban areas (*cf.* 2.3.2).

- Parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education due to their previous background (*cf.* 2.4.2). Some have never been at school while others were forced to drop out.

- Some rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment. The relative scarcity of resources and, in some cases, the resolution and poverty of rural communities, seriously limit the development possibilities of learners that might be achieved through education (*cf.* 2.3.1).

- Dismissals and evictions of the employees by farmers from the farms reduce the active participation of parents and community at the farm school (*cf.* 2.6.3).

- The relocation of the learners affects the post-establishment of the farm schools (*cf.* 2.6.5).

- Some farmers build small houses with three or fewer rooms for their employees. Overcrowding, bed-sharing and lack of a quiet space for homework cause a disturbance to the education of the farm school learner (*cf.* 2.6.4).

- Most farm workers lack the self-confidence, organizational ability, educational qualifications and initiative to launch and sustain organization. They have also suffered brutality and violence from farmers who have gone virtually scot-free (*cf.* 2.4.2).

- Poverty may rob parents and the community of an opportunity to be active participants in the farm school activities. This type of situation strains the possible development of positive school community relations (*cf.* 2.6.2).

- Educators experience public transport problems to reach school. This state of affairs contributes to late coming and incomplete work as far as the curriculum is concerned. Educators struggle to reach workshops organized by both the District and Department of Education, and which are scheduled for attendance after contact hours (*cf.* 2.3.1).

5.3.2 Findings on research Aim 2: To determine possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at the farm schools

Based on the empirical research findings, the following points emerged:

- Lack of scholar transport to farm schools has an impact on non-attendance and the drop-out rate (*cf.* 2.6.7). Most parents fail to attend school meetings, whereas most of the learners absent themselves from school and at times play truant which ultimately leads to a higher drop-out rate at farm schools (*cf.* 4.2.2.2.3).

- The presence of over-aged learners is common practice at the farm schools (*cf.* 4.2.2.1.1). The predicament of these learners is perpetuated by, among other things, relocation of parents, which in most cases is forced by conditions of employment (*cf.* 2.3.2). At times, due to their age, they become shy to continue with their education and resort to dropping out.

- Some farm schools are still using pit latrines (toilets) (*cf.* 4.2.2.3.3). There is a greater possibility of health risk under such conditions. Such a situation might influence irregular attendance of learners due to ill-health. Some parents might realize that their children become ill while at school and decide to keep them home.

- Poverty resulting from unemployment or low incomes on the farms increases the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment in the evenings and on weekends, reducing time for homework and, in some cases, causing absenteeism during the day (*cf.* 4.2.2.3.1). This may also result in learners dropping out, and an increase in child-labour (*cf.* 2.6.2).

- The crime that takes place on the farms threatens the continuation of farming as farmers become despondent of their security (*cf.* 4.2.2.1.1). This compels some farmers to abandon their farms to relocate to urban areas while farm employees lose their employment as well as their accommodation and learners' chances of dropping out increase (*cf.* 2.6.2).

- Strikes by scholar transport create problems for scores of farm school learners such as absenteeism which may lead to drop-out (*cf.* 2.6.7). Disputes between bus operators and GDE leave farm school learners exposed to dangers such as road accidents and rape (*cf.* 4.2.2.4.3).

5.4 RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made on the challenges faced by farm schools in exercising the right to basic education and the reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at the farm schools:

- The State should respect, and fulfil economic and social rights of the farm school community, including the right to basic education, by eradicating measures that cancel the enjoyment of the right to education, as seen at farm schools (*cf.* 2.3.1).

- It is important that education in South Africa should be compulsory for learners in Grade R through to Grade 9 or from age 7 to 15, whichever happens first (*cf.* 2.1). For the State to ensure that this rule is observed by all stakeholders in education, law enforcement agents should be hired to implement the rule in order to avoid drop-outs. Data analysis and interpretation (*cf.* 4.2.2.4.2) show that it is the responsibility of the parents, as stipulated in the Schools Act (84/1996), to ensure that their children attend school every term day from the year in which the child turns six until the year the child turns fifteen or completes the ninth grade, whichever happens first.

- Sound relationships between farmers and farm employees, including the farm school community, should be encouraged by having in place publications that would capture and publish good interaction among all role-players. The radio station should be on the ground to report on all activities that take place on farms. Such activities might assist in the eradication of farm killings (*cf.* 2.6.6). Table 4.6 indicates that farm killings affect the education of the farm school learner.

- Educators serving on the farm schools should receive compensation or incentives to boost their morale for serving under unfavourable conditions. Some rural and farm schools are under-resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment (*cf.* 2.3.1). Both the data analysis and interpretation (*cf.* 4.2.2.1.3) echo the literature study findings that the relative scarcity of resources limits the development possibilities of learners that might be achieved through education.

- Transport should be made available for parents wishing to visit or attend school meetings and this should be free of charge. Educators too should be assisted as far as transport to and from school is concerned, including being transported for the sake of attending workshops (*cf.* 2.3.1). Table 4.7 showed that educators experienced public transport difficulties to reach the farm schools and this frustrates the implementation of the curriculum due to the late arrival of educators. Their assistance might bring about improvement in the implementation of the curriculum.

- Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) should be established at each farm school for adults living on farms. These centres should run from the morning till the evening, depending on the availability of adults. Newly graduated educators between the ages of 22 and 35 should be employed at farm schools and those from 36 years and over be taken to ABET centres. Transport should be freely available to adults.

- It was indicated in the literature (*cf.* 2.4.2) that some parents have never been to school, while others were forced to drop out. Table 4.6 reveals that due to illiteracy, parents end up having less knowledge about and confidence in the education service, which is to the detriment of the farm school learners' right to education. The ABET facility might help to change the situation at the farms

- Farmers should be encouraged to adhere to the Basic Conditions of Employment, which would include the issues of paying living wages for employees and abiding by fair conditions of employment. Policy compliance inspectors should have a register that must be signed by the

farmer and the area councillor to acknowledge the visit of such an inspector. The routine should be monthly. This might limit the dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers as stated in the literature (*cf.* 2.6.3).

Table 4.6 reflected that these dismissals and evictions of farm employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents and the community in the farm school, but if both parties could comply and adhere to the policy, incidents such as these could be minimized.

- Police forums should be established and be active and visible to prevent farm killings (*cf.* 2.6.6). These structures should meet weekly to give reports on developments. They should meet with the residents at least monthly to give feedback and evaluate the mandate. Table 4.6 indicated that farm killings affected the education of the farm school learner.

- Farm workers should be given training about their work and be skilled in communications. The fact that parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education, as stated in the literature study (*cf.* 2.4.2), suggests that training might help to develop them and enhance their potential.

- Sportsfields, parks and community halls should be constructed for youths and adults. Table 4.7 showed that the poverty of rural communities limits the development possibilities that might be achieved through education. It is stated in the literature (*cf.* 2.6.2) that poverty reduces or precludes money from being spent by family on learning resources such as books or learning opportunities such as outings and holidays. Poverty may rob parents and the community of an opportunity to be active participants at the school. The construction of the sportsfields, parks and community halls might assist in the reduction of farm killings (2.6.6).

- The Department of Housing should consider negotiations with the farmers to build proper houses with basic amenities for farm workers. Table 4.9 indicated that some farm employees live in houses with only a few rooms. In the literature (*cf.* 2.6.1) it was stated that housing problems were likely

to occur especially where the farmer builds small houses with three or fewer rooms for his/her employees. The intervention of the Housing Department might give positive results.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEACH

Acknowledging possible limitations of this research, the following recommendations are made for further research:

- The research was confined to farm schools in Sedibeng-West. It could be extended to include farm schools in other areas.

- The empirical research used a quantitative research instrument to gather data on the challenges faced by farm schools when exercising the right to basic education, as well as the possible reasons behind learners' drop-out rate at the farm schools. This instrument cannot claim to be flawless. Therefore, further research may be conducted, using alternative instruments of collecting data.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The research proved that the farm schools that participated in this study were faced with specific challenges that need to be eradicated in order to enable the learners to enjoy the right to basic education fully. Many farm schools still suffer because of the legacy of deplorable physical conditions and the scarcity of learning resources and are still expected to achieve the same levels of learning and teaching as schools that are in a better position.

This inequality of social conditions and school conditions, unequal administration and differing capabilities of SGBs all need to be considered for redress and equity in order to promote education at farm schools.

In the final analysis, it is the young people of today who need to become the leaders of tomorrow.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS

QUESTIONNAIRE EDUCATORS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION: WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS?

This questionnaire must be completed by educators only.

Kindly answer these questions by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

A1	Your age	20-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	50 and older
A2	Your experience as educator	1 - 3 years	4 - 8 years	9 - 15 years	16 years and more
A3	Your qualifications	Grade 12	Bachelor's degree	Hons B Ed	Master's Doctorate

A4	Professional qualifications: Education Diploma	Yes	No

SECTION B

Read each of the following statements and indicate your opinion by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Poverty of rural communities limits the development possibilities that might be achieved through education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Democracy appears to have done little for the learners at the farm school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Educators experience public transport problems, to come to school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	The presence of over-aged learners in the class impedes some of the lesson activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
5	No electricity affects the usage of visual teaching methods.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Some of the farm schools are still using pit latrines (toilets).	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Lack of telephones at farm schools hinders education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Most parents who reside on farms lack the required literacy levels to participate in farm school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Parents exclude themselves from educational matters because they have less knowledge about education service.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Parents always liaise with their children's educators.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	A number of parents in historically African communities find it difficult to attend meetings at the farm school because of transport problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Most farm parents live far from their workplace time to attend meetings often becomes a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	Some farm school principals create hindrances for parents to be meaningfully involved in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Most farm schools prefer to handle issues alone without the involvement of parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	Some farm school principals determine the school policies alone.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	Some farm school educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
17	Most farm school educators feel that they are better qualified than parents to handle their work without interference.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	Some farm school educators use highly technical language that parents fail to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	At times a farm school is at risk of being moved to another place due to the development of the area by the owner.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	The disputes between the farm owner and the Department of Education impede the farm school learner's right to basic education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	Farm schools are under-resourced.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	Educators at farm schools are more likely to be under qualified.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	It is common practice on a farm school to have a person as both principal and educator.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	Low incomes on the farms result in learners dropping-out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents in the farm school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	Relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

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QUESTIONNAIRE LEARNERS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION: WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS?

This questionnaire must be completed by learners only.

Kindly answer these questions by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

A1	Your age	11-13 years	15-18 years	19 years and older

A2	Your grade	5 – 7	8 – 10	11 – 12

A3	Residence	Farm	Informal settlement	Formal settlement	Other

SECTION B

Read each of the following statements and indicate your opinion by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Many children living on farm areas, do not attend school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Democracy appears to have done little for the learners in the farm schools.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Labour disputes between the farmers and the parents prevent learners from attending school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Some farmers deliberately prevent learners from coming to school by locking the gates.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
5	Some farm schools are still using pit latrines (toilets).	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Dismissals and evictions of parents by farmers, impact negatively on the learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Sale of farms affects learning negatively.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Child-labour is still common on farms.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Low incomes on the farms increase the need for the teenagers to be in paid employment.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Low incomes on the farms result in learners dropping-out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	The dismissal of the parent from work on the farm, at the most, means the relocation of the family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Lack of space at home impedes farm school learners from doing their homework.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The death of farmers, affect the education of the farm school learners negatively.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Because of the scholar transport learners travel safely.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	Parents pay for scholar transport when used by their children, to come to school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	Scholar transport strikes affect the education of a farm school learner negatively.	1	2	3	4	5	6

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QUESTIONNAIRE PARENTS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION: WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS?

This questionnaire must be completed by parents only.

Kindly answer these questions by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

A1	Your age	20-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	50 and older
A2	Your qualifications	Matric	Bachelor's degree	Hons Bed	Master's Doctorate
A3	Number of children at school	1-3	4-6	7 and beyond	
A4	Employment history	Work on farm	Work outside the farm	Unemployed	

SECTION B

Read each of the following statements and indicate your opinion by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Parents must ensure that their children attend school every day.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Farm school learners leave school because there is no space for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Parents expect quality education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Parental involvement at school can be influenced by the socio-economic status of parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
5	Parents who live on farms have lower levels of education due to their previous background	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Lack of transport prevents parents from attending school meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	Most farm school parents lack the literacy to participate in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	Parents regard school as the sphere of educators only.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Parents believe that the school is an independent institution that has no dealings with parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Parents stay away from school activities because they do not want to commit themselves to matters they are not sure about.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Some farm workers suffer physical assaults by their employers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	Some families on a farm live in ramshackle houses.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	Houses of some farm workers at times do not have electricity.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Most farm workers' houses have water taps outside.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	Low income may rob parents and community of an opportunity to be active participants in the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	Some families on a farm live in a house only a few rooms.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
17	Farm workers lose their jobs because of the changes effected in their work by farmers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	The relocation of farmers from the farms the urban area affects the work of employees on the farm.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	Late arrival of buses to farm schools impacts learning negatively.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	Scholar transport strikes result in poor performance by farm school learners.	1	2	3	4	5	6

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS

QUESTIONNAIRE PRINCIPALS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION: WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS?

This questionnaire must be completed by principals only.

Kindly answer these questions by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

A1	Your age	20-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	50 and older
A2	Your experience as principal	1 - 3 years	4 - 6 years	6 - 8 years	9 years and more
A3	Your qualifications	Grade 12	Bachelor's degree	Hons B Ed	Master's Doctorate
A4	Professional qualifications: Education Diploma		Yes		No

Demographic Information

A5	School population	Fewer than 300 learners	301-500 learners	501-700 learners	More than 700 learners		
A6	Grading of school	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12
A7	Predominant socio-economic status of area	Lower income group		Middle income group		Higher income group	
A8	School type			Public		Private	
A9	Number of educators	1	2-3	4-12	13-24	25-45	46+

SECTION B

Read each of the following statements and indicate your opinion by making a cross (x) in the appropriate block:

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Most learners in rural areas dropped out of school because of issues that could be resolved through sound management.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Labour disputes between the farmer and employees may lead to the closure of a farm school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Lack of scholar transport to farm schools has an impact on, non-attendance and drop-out rates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	The presence of over-age learners at the farm school is common practice.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Lack of power supply at the farm school impairs learning and administrative activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Some farm schools still use pit latrines (toilets).	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	The School Governing Body (SGB) of the farm school determines the school policies.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	The parents who live on farms are more likely to have lower levels of education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Parents who live too far from the school fail to become involved in farm school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Illiteracy deprives farm school parents from making a significant contribution to their children's education.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Principals do not inspire parents to be effectively involved in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
12	The principal determines how and what should be done at school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The principal can make untrained parents feel uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	Some educators feel that parents have no right to be involved in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	The high failure rate among Blacks can be attributed to the attitudes, the school, the principals and educators.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	Educators are trained to handle learners not parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	The principal is never informed about the sale of the farm on which the school stands.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	Some rural and farm schools are under resourced in terms of buildings, electricity, books and equipment.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	Child labour is common on farms, and is causing absenteeism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	Low income on farms increases the need for teenagers to be in paid employment.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	Learners drop out of school because of the low incomes of their parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	Parents remove their children from school without proper consultation with the school authorities.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	Farm killings affect the education of the farm school learner.	1	2	3	4	5	6

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partially disagree	Partially Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
24	The dispute between bus operators and GDE results in poor performance of the farm school learner.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	Dismissals and evictions of employees by farmers reduce active participation of parents in the farm school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	The relocation of learners affects the post-establishment of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX B

REQUEST TO DISTRICT

8 Hobhouse Street
SE2
Vanderbijlpark
1900
18 April 2005

The District Senior Manager
Sedibeng West District (D8)
Goodyear Building
Vanderbijlpark
1900

Dear Sir

RE: Research Project

I am currently involved in a research project for my Masters of Education in policy, planning and management at North West University (Vaal Campus). I would highly appreciate your assistance. I am gathering information on the effects of the right to basic education of the farm school learner.

I would appreciate it if I could conduct direct observation of its implementation in farm schools and interview the principals, educators, learners and parents in your schools.

After writing the report, all the notes collected will be destroyed to ensure anonymity. I would love to let you have a copy of the project once it is completed.

Thank you for your assistance

Yours Faithfully

M.J Tshabalala
(016) 982-3347(h)
072 547 4310 (cell)
(016) 987-3492(office)

APPENDIX C

GAUTENG: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH

For Official Use	
Ref. No.	

GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN INSTITUTIONS AND/OR OFFICES OF THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. PARTICULARS OF THE RESEARCHER

1.1	Details of the Researcher
Surname and Initials:	TSHABALALA M J
First Name/s:	MOLOMBI JOHANNES
Title (Prof / Dr / Mr / Mrs / Ms):	Mr
Student Number (if relevant):	10821481
ID Number:	5410185684087

1.2	Private Contact Details	
Home Address		*Postal Address (if different)*
8 HOBHOUSE STR		P O BOX 6032
SEZ		VANDERBIJLPARK
VANDERBIJLPARK		
Postal Code 1911		*Postal Code* 1900
Tel: (016) 982-3347		
Cell: 072 547 4310		
Fax: (016) 927-3492		
E-mail:		

2. PURPOSE & DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

2.1	Purpose of the Research (Place cross where appropriate)
Undergraduate Study - Self	
Postgraduate Study - Self	X
Private Company – Commissioned by Provincial Government or Department	
Private Research by Independent Researcher	
Non-Governmental Organisation	
National Department of Education	
Commissions and Committees	
Independent Research Agencies	
Statutory Research Agencies	
Higher Education Institutions	

2.2	Full title of Thesis / Dissertation / Research Project
THE RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION : WHAT ABOUT FARM SCHOOL LEARNERS ?	

2.3	Value of the Research to Education (Attach Research Proposal)

2.5	Student and Postgraduate Enrolment Particulars (if applicable)
Name of institution where enrolled:	NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
Degree / Qualification:	M.ED.
Faculty and Discipline / Area of Study:	MANAGEMENT
Name of Supervisor / Promoter:	Dr. ELDA de WAAL

2.6	Employer (where applicable)
Name of Organisation:	SIMONKENG PRIMARY SCHOOL
Position in Organisation:	PRINCIPAL (MANAGER)
Head of Organisation:	MR M.J. TSHABALALA
Street Address:	581 MARICRANK ROAD DIEPKUILEN FARM VANDERBIJLPARK
Postal Code:	1900
Telephone Number (Code + Ext):	(016) 927-3492
Fax Number:	(016) 927-3492
E-mail:	

2.7	PERSAL Number (where applicable)

1	1	1	7	9	7	4	1

3. PROPOSED RESEARCH METHOD/S

(Please indicate by placing a cross in the appropriate block whether the following modes would be adopted)

3.1 *Questionnaire/s (If Yes, supply copies of each to be used)*

YES	X	NO	

3.2 *Interview/s (If Yes, provide copies of each schedule)*

YES		NO	

3.3 *Use of official documents*

YES	Y	NO	
If Yes, please specify the document/s:			
SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA, RNCS & CDE NEWS LETTER.			

3.4 *Workshop/s / Group Discussions (If Yes, Supply details)*

YES		NO	

3.5 *Standardised Tests (e.g. Psychometric Tests)*

YES		NO	
If Yes, please specify the test/s to be used and provide a copy/ies			

4. INSTITUTIONS TO BE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH

4.1 *Type of Institutions (Please indicate by placing a cross alongside all types of institutions to be researched)*

Primary Schools	X
Secondary Schools	X
ABET Centres	
ECD Sites	
LSEN Schools	
Further Education & Training Institutions	
Other	

4.2 *Number of institution/s involved in the study (Kindly place a sum and the total in the spaces provided)*

Type of Institution	Total
Primary Schools	9
Secondary Schools	3
ABET Centres	
ECD Sites	
LSEN Schools	
Further Education & Training Institutions	
Other	
GRAND TOTAL	12

4.3 *Name/s of institutions to be researched (Please complete on a separate sheet if space is found to be insufficient)*

Name/s of Institution/s
Ramosukula Secondary School
Ramolelle Secondary School
Dinokaneng Secondary School
Borage Primary School
Dinaledi Primary School
Katang - Thuto Primary School
Mmaditha Primary School
Radipere Primary School
Ikaang - Mokgopi Primary School
Vaal River Primary School
Kulabaz Primary School
Dinokaneng Primary School

4.4 District/s and other GDE Offices where the study is to be conducted. *(Please indicate by placing a cross alongside on all districts to be canvassed)*

District	
Johannesburg East	
Johannesburg South	
Johannesburg West	
Johannesburg North	
Gauteng North	
Gauteng West	
Tshwane North	
Tshwane South	
Ekhuruleni East	
Ekhuruleni West	
Sedibeng East	
Sedibeng West	X

Office/s (Please indicate)

NOTE:

If you have not as yet identified your sample/s, a list of the names and addresses of all the institutions and districts under the jurisdiction of the GDE is available from the department at a small fee.

4.5 Number of pupils to be involved per school

Grade	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Gender	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Number											15	15

Grade	7		8		9		10		11		12	
Gender	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Number	15	15					15	15			15	15

4.6 Number of educators/officials involved in the study

Type of staff	Teachers	HODs	Deputy Principals	Principal	Lecturers	Office Based Officials
Number	10			10		

4.7 *Are the participants to be involved in groups or individually?*

Participation	
Groups	
Individually	X

4.8 *Average period of time each participant will be involved in the test or other research activities (Please indicate time in minutes)*

Participant/s	Activity	Time
PRINCIPALS	QUESTIONNAIRE	30
EDUCATORS	"	30
LEARNERS	"	30

4.9 *Time of day that you propose to conduct your test/research.*

School Hours	During Break	After School Hours
		X

4.10 *School term during which the research would be undertaken*

First Term	Second Term	Third Term
		X

DECLARATION BY THE RESEARCHER	
1. *I declare that all statements made by myself in this application are true and accurate.*	
2. *I have taken note of all the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.*	
Signature:	
Date:	6 June 2005.

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR / PROMOTER / LECTURER	
I declare that: -	
1. *The applicant is enrolled at the institution ~~/ employed by the organisation~~ to which the undersigned is attached.*	
2. *The questionnaires ~~/ structured interviews / tests~~ meet the criteria of:* • *Educational Accountability* • *Proper Research Design* • *Sensitivity towards Participants* • *Correct Content and Terminology* • *Acceptable Grammar* • *Absence of Non-essential / Superfluous items*	
Surname:	de Waal
First Name/s:	Elda
Institution / Organisation:	North-West University Vaal Triangle faculty
Faculty / Department (where relevant):	School for Educational Sciences
Telephone:	072 480 7971
Fax:	016 910 3060
E-mail:	opvieldw@puknet.puk.ac.za
Signature:	EldedeWaal
Date:	7 June 2005

N.B. This form (and all other relevant documentation where available) may be completed and forwarded electronically to either Ntombi Maswanganyi (violetm@gpg.gov.za) or Nomvula Ubisi (nomvulau@gpg.gov.za). The last 2 pages of this document must however contain the original signatures of both the researcher and his/her supervisor or promoter. These pages may therefore be faxed or hand delivered. Please mark fax - For Attention: Ntombi Maswanganyi at 011 355 0512 (fax) or hand deliver (in closed envelope) to Ntombi Maswanganyi (Room 910) or Nomvula Ubisi (Room 914), 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg.

APPENDIX D

GAUTENG PERMISSION

Gauteng Provincial Government
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Department van Onderwys

Date:	02 September 2009
Name of Researcher:	Tshabalala Moloadi
Address of Researcher:	8 Hobhouse Street Section 2 Vanderbijlpark 1911
Telephone Number:	(016) 9625347
Fax Number:	(016) 9873492
Research Topic:	The right to basic education: What about farm school learners?
Number and type of schools:	6 Primary 7 3 Secondary Schools
District/s/RIO	Sedibeng West

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the schools and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School Governing Body (SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Managers concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Managers must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researchers have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
4. *A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and institutions respectively.*
5. *The researcher will make every effort obtain the consent and co-operation of the relevant officials, principals, chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.*
6. *Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (or a school senior Senior Manager of the district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.*
7. *Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be completed before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.*
8. *Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken by Senior Managers of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.*
9. *It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.*
10. *The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own resources such as stationery, photocopies, transport, telephones and facilities. Unless otherwise indicated in the proposal, the researcher is not permitted to make use of the Department's resources in conducting his/her research.*
11. *The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.*
12. *On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Senior Manager: Strategic Policy Development, Management & Research Coordination with one hard cover bound and one loose bound copy of the final approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research report in pdf and/or word format.*
13. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.*
14. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or district/head office level, the Senior Manager concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in the pursuit of your studies. We look forward to examining the outcome of your research study.

Kind regards,

[illegible]
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR: MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.

Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	2 Sept 2009

Office of the Senior Manager: Strategic Policy Research & Development
Room 15, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel (011) 355-0488 Fax 0866, xxx xxxx

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

8 Hobhouse Street
SE2
Vanderbijlpark
1900
12 September 2005

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Research Project

I am currently involved in a research project for my Masters of Education in policy, planning and management at North West University (Vaal Campus). I would highly appreciate your assistance. I am gathering information on the effects of the right to basic education of the farm school learner.

I would appreciate it if I could conduct direct observation of its implementation in farm schools and interview the principal, educators, learners and parents in your school.

After writing the report, all the notes collected will be destroyed to ensure anonymity.

Thank you for your assistance

Yours Faithfully

M.J Tshabalala
(016) 982-3347(h)
072 547 4310 (cell)
(016) 987-3492(office)