

**School Marketing and School Choice: A Marketing
Programme for Schools in the North West Province**

by

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B.A.; B. Ed (UNISA); M. Ed (UNW)

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**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree
of Doctor of Education in the School of Postgraduate
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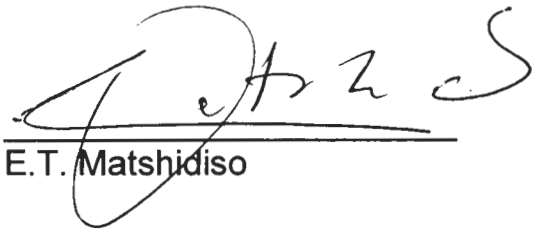
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DECLARATION

I, ***Ephraim Thakadu Matshidiso*** declare that the thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Education at the North West University (Mafikeng Campus) hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that, it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

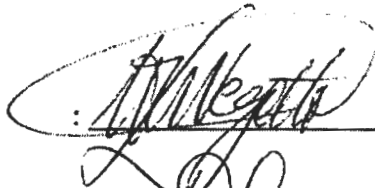


E.T. Matshidiso

Certificate of Acceptance

This Thesis entitled **"School Marketing and School Choice: A Marketing Programme for Schools in the North West Province"** written by **Ephraim Thakadu Matshidiso** (Student No. 1635 0707) of the School of Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Education, North West University (Mafikeng Campus), is hereby recommended for examination.

Supervisors: Prof. M. W. Legotlo

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: 

Dr. M. C. Teu

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Above all, I thank God, the Almighty, for giving me the strength, will and power to complete my studies.

DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate this study to my father, Nthaudi, my children Oarabile, Boipelo, Rebaabetswe, Reneilwe and Kopo and also to my late brother Tebogo Ramoithui and my late mother-in-law Mmadikata Anna Letshwiti who passed away during the execution of this study.

ABSTRACT

School Marketing and School Choice: A Marketing Programme for Schools in the North West Province

The purpose of this study was to determine from the literature, the nature and scope of school marketing and school choice, and to determine the different marketing strategies used by schools, and furthermore, to empirically determine the factors that influence parental or student choice of schools with the ultimate aim of developing a school marketing programme for schools in the North West Province.

The study was conducted in the Central and Bojanala West regions of the North West Province. Out of a total population of about ($n = 761$) schools in the two Regions, a sample of ($n = 500$) schools were randomly selected (that is 250 schools per region). Of the 500 schools sampled, fifty (50) were private or independent schools. A questionnaire was developed and administered to all the principals of the sampled schools. A total of 416 usable questionnaires were returned. Furthermore, the researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews with sixty (60) parents, twenty (20) school principals, five (5) Area Project Managers (APM) and ten (10) Institutional Support Co-ordinators (ISCs or former circuit managers). The aim of such interviews was to gather more information on school marketing and reasons for parental school choice.

The literature revealed that in South Africa little is documented on the strategies that could be used by the schools in marketing themselves in order to attract as many learners as possible and retain such learners in big numbers. The literature also revealed that school marketing and invitational education are closely related and interdependent.

It was evident from the literature that parents are less consistent in their reasons for making a positive choice of schools. Most important reasons are academic

criteria, situational or convenience criteria, security criteria and voice and exit options. But parents are more consistent on reasons why they reject or avoid some schools. The most common reasons obtained from the literature are transport or distance to and from the school, school reputation, ethnic composition, school environment and the behaviour of learners attending the school concerned (cf. 3.4.2).

From the quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the following emerged as major reasons for parental school choice; good academic results, schools with resources that match the individual children's needs, schools in close proximity to their homes and with a good reputation (cf. 7.3.3). It was also evident that parents tend to reject schools with bad reputation, schools where learners' appearance is unacceptable, where educators lack enthusiasm and commitment and learners are ill-disciplined.

It was evident during the interviews with school principals and officials of the Department that school principals need training in school marketing. As a result, this study recommends that a training programme on school marketing should be developed for all stakeholders (cf. 7.4). The study further recommends that school principals should be trained on strategic planning.

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CHAPTER 1

1. ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

Recent changes in government policies in South Africa have been designed to establish a market in education because educational marketing is certain to be an important aspect of educational management. The introduction of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 was to bring about reform in the South African education by developing market mechanisms, which are believed to foster educational excellence over a long period of time. Act No. 84 gives parents the right to choose the school they would like their children to attend and according to this Act no child may be refused admission to any public school.

Parents and/or learners seem to choose schools far from their domicile and this has resulted in many children commuting long distances to schools and some walking long distances in the quest for quality (Holland, 2003:1). When choosing schools, parents or learners seem to choose schools in townships, urban and/or peri-urban areas leaving rural schools under-subscribed. The data in Table 1.1 show school enrolment in a few schools for 2002 – 2004 in the Bojanala West region which reflects that there is a movement of learners from rural to urban schools. In Rustenburg, which is the biggest city in this region, two new schools were to be built in 2005, while two schools in the rural areas of the same region were to be closed and some schools had to be merged, because of the low number of learners at such schools.

TABLE 1.1: School enrolment

Urban schools				Rural schools			
School	Enrolment			School	Enrolment		
	2002	2003	2004		2002	2003	2004
A	547	637	715	F	161	121	67
B	597	581	605	G	213	181	157
C	541	557	560	H	47	33	28
D	631	681	726	I	167	186	161
E	491	531	489	J	47	42	38

Source: Department of Education (2004: 4)

Within the context of this chapter, a statement of the problem is provided to facilitate an understanding of the problem under investigation. The discussion also reflects the research methodology used in the study and the definition of terms relevant to the study.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although the objectives of business are different from those of an educational institution such as a school, university, college or technikon (profit versus teaching and the advancement of knowledge), it is evident that educational institutions face business oriented challenges (Cort, Pairan and Ryans, 2004:82). Like a bank, such institutions marshal assets to maximise returns, and like a retail store, they position themselves in the learner or student recruitment marketplace (Fram, 1996:3). Furthermore, Brooks (1995:22) argues that there are significant areas of comparability in the operations and problems of the public school and private business sector. A few schools actually do operate in accordance with the marketing concept. They identify

their specific purpose and objectives, conduct needs assessment of their target populations, prepare programmes based on their findings and affirmatively communicate with parents and other members of the community.

Prior to 1994, school statutes in South Africa were based on the principle of racial segregation that regulated admission to schools (Maile, 2004:111). Admission was also determined by defined geographical zones which further limited the choice of schooling (Maile, 2004:111). Factors like availability of places or accommodation in schools, accessibility, transport and finances also influenced school attendance. After 1991, schools determined their own admission policies. On the one hand, this enabled schools to become non-racial and, for the first time, granted parents a say over their school admission policy and choice of school. However, schools became selective and access was restricted.

Schools were thus, within the framework of the law, empowered to determine their admission criteria. For many, this included introducing school admission tests which allowed schools to select learners who they felt would benefit most from the school, who would fit into the ethos of the school, and who would be in a position to meet the financial demands of the school (Maile, 2004:113).

The market philosophy of educational institutions means that an educational institution like a school can no longer accept that it has control over a particular group of learners (Gerard, 1990:34). The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act no. 84 of 1996 Section 9 (ss 4) provides that no person shall be unfairly discriminated against, whether directly or indirectly, on one or more grounds, including: race, gender, ethnicity, social origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, culture or language. This means that schools can no longer be allowed to establish admission criteria that can be construed to be selective and discriminatory, or which conflict with the general

tenor of the Constitution, in particular the Bill of Rights, as well as the South African Schools Act no. 108 of 1996 as amended. The introduction of the "open admission system" by the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 allows free movement of students from one school to the other. Reynolds, Bollen, Creemers, Hopkins, Stoll and Lagerweij (1996:67) state that, in the United States of America, educational institutions are compelled to increase their catchment area by satisfying and ensuring success in their educational endeavours.

Tanner and Griffith (1992:30) state that interest in choice of primary and secondary schooling is increasing in the United States of America. As a result, parents have a wide choice of public schools as well as an expanding variety of private schools. In South Africa, rural schools are becoming depopulated because of the free movement of students from rural to urban schools. This free movement of learners makes some schools to be oversubscribed (having more choosers than places) and others to be under-subscribed (having more places than choosers). Fowler (1996:519) in this regard states that in Ohio in the United States of America, low enrolment and rural location are closely connected. Almost all the districts with low enrolment are rural. Similarly, in South Africa rural schools are faced with a serious challenge of marketing themselves in order to retain an appropriate number of learners for the schools to survive.

The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 and other public school-choice-laws give families or parents access to an ever-wider range of educational options. Consequently, it seems many schools are scrambling to find creative ways to attract and keep learners, as well as the government funding to educate them. In the United States of America, according to the Mackinac Center for Public Policy (1999:3) administrators in school Districts of Kalamazoo, Jackson and Royal Oak meet this competitive challenge head on. They do this by contracting with private advertising and marketing

professionals. Jackson was a district struggling with decreasing enrolment and lost about 900 learners in four years. According to Mackinac Center for Public Policy (MCPPE), Jackson promoted itself by using conventional media, including cable access television, news releases and school newsletters. The school district then contracted with a local private public relations firm to help market the district's programmes through less traditional media, such as billboards. This new marketing campaign had a positive effect on the learner enrolment in the district. Drysdale (1999:1) argues that schools must face the needs of their customers while learners are still enrolled and not wait for learners to leave before taking a competitive approach. She further contends that professional advertising and marketing techniques currently appear to be appropriate for schools to increase their levels of complexity and competition. Thus schools should understand that, in an era of expanded educational freedom, parents must be treated as customers with choices and not as captive audiences.

According to Hanson (1992:81), public educational institutions should not regret using complicated marketing techniques because these resolve most of the same types of problems found in private sector organizations, for example, personnel employment, client satisfaction, community goodwill and support, resource mobilisation, reputation building, programme development and public political support. The survival of all public schools depends, to a great extent, on the ability of the school to recruit and retain learners in big numbers and to preserve their existing staff levels (Fitz, Halpin and Power, 1993:23). Ball and Gewirtz (1996:153) state that the demand for school places in the United Kingdom is inelastic and the survival can only be ensured by attracting learners away from other schools. Furthermore, in order to survive in future, schools will have to attract learners by providing them with what they require and keep on meeting those requirements (Ball and Gewirtz, 1996:154). Such requirements may and often do change, so the adoption of marketing is critical to the school's long-term survival. Therefore, educational

institutions are forced to compete for learners (that is, to attract more learners) because if their enrolment drops, they will have to lose some of their teachers through the process of redeployment.

On the other hand, it seems that the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for public school funding in terms of the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 by the South African public schools at the beginning of 2000, also intensified student recruitment in all educational institutions. According to these standards or measures, schools are being funded or subsidised by the number of learners and categories or grading of schools. Wragg and Partington (1995:112) contend that an educational institution that attracts many customers or consumers, learners or parents, will have money whether it is a public or private school, college, technikon or university. In addition, Fowler (1996:521) states that schools that cannot attract and keep learners in big numbers will be forced to close and will be replaced by schools that are able to satisfy parents' needs and wants.

Davies and Ellison (1997:197) state that in the United States, the open admission policy has opened a debate of whether it is the school that chooses learners and parents, or the learners and parents who choose the schools. Walford (1996:144) argues that the government should not deny choice to those who want it, unless there are powerful, reasonable and well documented grounds (arguments and evidence) for doing so. His argument is firmly grounded in the United Nation's universal declaration of human rights, where it is asserted that parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. The customer, that is, the parent and/or student has to choose where to go – but after taking into consideration what the particular school offers or has offered to other customers in terms of quality, transport to and from the school (Walford, 1996:146).

In the United States of America, parents are more inconsistent in their reasons for choosing schools than in their reasons for rejecting schools (Smedley, 1995:99). In general, parents want their children to go to schools where they will be happy. They choose schools for reasons that are based on 'process' criteria, which has to do with human relationships rather than 'product' criteria such as examination results. But this does not mean that academic standards and results are unimportant. It appears to be a threshold variable factor rather than something parents look for to discriminate between schools (Coldron and Boulton, 1991:27). According to Smedley (1995:99), there is a group of parents, especially the middle-group, to whom academic standards are an over-riding concern rendering parents "active choosers".

In this study, the following research questions arose on the basis of the argument presented as research problem:

- What does school marketing mean?;
- What is school and parental choice ?;
- Which factors influence parental school choice ?;
- What strategies do schools employ in marketing themselves?;
- Why are marketing techniques applied in education?; and
- Why do parents choose certain schools ?

• Hypothesis

The researcher assumed that there would be no statistically significant difference between the views of urban and rural school principals who serve rural and urban schools on the reasons for parents to choose and reject some schools

1.3 Research aims

The researcher conducted this study with the following main aims or purposes in mind:

- Aim 1: To determine from literature the nature and scope of school marketing and school choice.
- Aim 2: To determine from the literature different school marketing programmes or techniques used by the schools.
- Aim 3: To empirically determine factors that influence parental choice of schools for their children.
- Aim 4 : To empirically determine strategies schools employ to market themselves.
- Aim 5: To develop a school marketing programme for the North West Province public schools.

1.4 Research design

This research was conducted by employing the following research strategies:

1.4.1 Literature study

A thorough study of primary and secondary sources was conducted. The literature focused on the different school marketing techniques employed by developed and developing countries. The literature focused on the factors which influence parental choice of schools.

1.4.2 Empirical design

1.4.2.1 Questionnaire

The primary tool for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. A structured questionnaire was developed and pre-tested. It was further administered to principals of educational institutions or schools in two of the five Regions of the North West Province, the Bojanala West and the Central Region. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to determine strategies employed by different schools in marketing themselves. The questionnaire was also meant to determine from the respondents the reasons they thought customers (learners and parents) chose their schools and avoided others.

1.4.2.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 60 parents, 20 school principals, five (5) Area Project Leaders and ten (10) Institutional Support Co-ordinators (ISC's or former circuit managers). The aim of such interviews was to gather in-depth information on school marketing and reasons for parental school choice.

1.4.2.3 Population and sampling

Out of a total population of about (N = 761) schools in the Bojanala West and the Central Region of North West Province, a sample of (n = 500) schools or educational institutions was randomly selected (that is about 250 educational institutions per region). Of the 500 schools sampled, fifty (50) of these were private or independent schools (cf. Table 4.1). The target population was mainly parents of learners and school principals of both public and private schools. A list of all the

schools was obtained with the assistance of the Provincial Department of Education in Potchefstroom.

1.4.2.4 *Ethical aspects*

Permission to access schools in the two regions (Bojanala West and Central) was obtained from the Regional Directors (cf. Appendix E). A list of all the schools was obtained from the two Regional Educational and Management Information System (EMIS) sections. Thereafter, different Area Project Managers and Institutional Support Coordinators, in whose jurisdiction the schools were located, were further requested to allow school principals to participate in the research by completing questionnaires and also to be interviewed. Participation in the study was completely voluntary. No school or individual was identified in the process and the results of the research will be shared with the Provincial Department of Education and the schools on an anonymous basis.

1.4.2.5 *Data analysis*

A computer-aided statistical analysis was employed. The computation of frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation and chi-square tests were conducted in order to compare views of different participants or respondents in this study. Content analysis was employed to analyze qualitative data collected through semi structured interviews. The details are provided in Chapter 5

1.5 Significance of the study

There are several reasons that justify the importance of this study. Amongst others, this research envisages extending the knowledge-base with regard to school marketing and school choice in South Africa. For one to be able to formulate future policies on any education system, one needs to have extensive knowledge of what has happened in the past about a particular issue.

The research is also aimed at contributing towards a better understanding of the nature and scope of school marketing and school choice. It is hoped that the findings of the study will contribute to the country and the rest of the world in that the study will be able to do the following:

- Shed light on the educational transformation in South Africa;
- Briefly indicate the history of school choice in the country prior to and after 1994;
- Show the importance of school marketing and invitational education; and
- Indicate reasons for school choice in South Africa, with specific reference to the North West province.

The research will further enable policymakers involved in education transformation to be better informed and be able to formulate relevant policies for South African citizens with regard to school choice and school marketing.

1.6 Limitations of the study

This research was conducted in the two regions of the North West Province, namely the Bojanala West and the Central region. These two regions were chosen because they have almost an equal number of rural and urban schools. When this research was conducted, the researcher was not aware that there were no fixed programmes or strategies used by the schools for recruiting learners or marketing themselves. One of the aims of this research is to develop a marketing programme that could be used by the schools in order to recruit and retain learners. It is the researcher's belief that the programme would benefit schools in increasing their enrolment, thus reducing the number of educators declared in excess and boosting the morale of the staff.

1.7 Definition of terms

The definition of the following key concepts was necessary for providing directions or clarifications for the line of discussion in the study.

1.7.1 Marketing

*The basic idea of **marketing** is that "I've got something you want, you've got something I want, so let's make a deal"* (Brassington and Pettitt, 1997:239).

According to Brassington and Pettitt (1997:247) of the UK's Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably. The American Marketing Association (AMA) (1985:1) defines marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and

services, to create, exchange and satisfy individual and organisational objectives.

These two definitions regard marketing as a management process and task. Thus, marketing needs to be thoroughly planned, analyzed and the resources allocated, controlled, monitored and evaluated. Marketing is about giving customers what they want at the right place at the right time and at the right price. Brassington and Pettitt (1997:249) state that if requirements are not satisfactorily fulfilled or if customers do not receive what they want, then marketing has failed both the customer and the institution.

The idea of profitability in the CIM definition is questionable, because it is applicable to profit-making organisations only since they exist to make profit. Thus, non profit-making organisations would certainly accept the need to manage themselves efficiently and cost-effectively (Brassington and Pettitt, 1997:240). Non profit-making organisations need to think not only about efficiency and cost-effectiveness, but also about what their customers need and want and how they can provide such service better than other competitors.

- **School marketing**

On the basis of the above definitions of marketing, **school marketing** in this study should be seen as a programme or process by which a school actively communicates its aims, values and product to its customers, namely parents, learners/students, staff-members and the society – to the mutual benefit of both the school and the customer.

1.7.2 Customers and consumers

The concept 'customer' has been used in the business world to refer specifically to someone who buys a product from a specific source. Foskett (1992:47) distinguishes between the concepts consumer and customer in educational or school marketing. Foskett argues that parents are customers because they pay for the services rendered by the school to their children and the learners, pupils or students are the direct consumers because they attend the school and directly benefit from such services. He further states that, in post-school education, it may well be that the customer, the one who decides to 'buy' a particular programme, is also the consumer in that he or she will actually attend the programme and directly benefit from it.

Davies and Ellison (1997:201) argue that it does not matter which terminology the school uses as long as there is an understanding that it is the beneficiary of the product and service who should be at the top of the organisational chart rather than those who offer the product and service. Thus, in this study, the two concepts are used interchangeably or synonymously to refer to both learners and parents. Furthermore, in this study, learners and parents are regarded as the primary customers for schools.

1.8 Chapter division

This study is divided into seven (7) chapters as indicated below:

Chapter 1: Orientation

Chapter 2: The nature and scope of school marketing

Chapter 3: School choice

Chapter 4: Method of research

Chapter 5: Analysis and interpretation of data

Chapter 6: A school marketing programme for public schools

Chapter 7: Summary, findings, recommendations and
Conclusion

1.9 Summary

This introductory chapter reflects the orientation or overview of the study, the problem to be investigated and the main purpose of the study. The main focus of this study is to determine how schools market themselves to the public or communities around them. The ultimate aim is to develop a marketing programme showing how schools can market themselves.

The following chapter focuses on the nature and scope of school marketing and the link between school marketing and invitational education.

1.10. Key concepts

Marketing; school marketing; invitational education; parental choice; school choice; student choice; theories of school choice; open enrolment; relationship marketing; internal marketing; admission policy; open admission policy and factors affecting school choice.

CHAPTER 2

2. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF SCHOOL MARKETING

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 outlined the problem to be investigated and the main purpose of the study.

Schools can no longer operate in isolation. The expectations of the society, whether expressed by individual parents, identifiable groups or government legislation, mean that schools need to be aware of views being expressed. Schools must take into account the public perceptions of how well they perform and be prepared to respond to those articulated concerns which are genuinely representative. Marketing is about this kind of responsiveness just as much as it is about responsibility to lead and educate the public view. Where marketing becomes integrated as a central aspect of school management, the other elements of management are improved. In turn, this will improve the range and quality of the institution's educational provision.

Most of the concepts of marketing originated in their application in the world of business. This chapter focuses on in-depth definitions of concepts, justification for marketing strategies in schools, the marketing plan and the relationship between school marketing and Invitational Education.

2.2 Further definition of concepts.

Most of the definitions of marketing originated in their application in the world of business. Therefore this section attempts to define some major concepts used in marketing in educational contexts and explore some myths held about marketing.

2.2.1 Marketing

Evans (1995:15) states that one commonly held myth in schools is that marketing is the same as selling. Hansen (1985:85) argues that there is a difference between marketing and sales. Traditionally sales are defined as the act of getting a customer to meet the need of the provider, that is, to buy what the provider has to offer.

Bruwer (1996:122) and Stott (1991:8) define marketing as a matching process. Thus, it means that the school, as the supplier or provider of an educational service, provides something that the customer needs and wants, that is a product. Bruwer (1996:123) states that it further involves identifying the societal wants and needs and matching them to the organisational capabilities and objectives. That is what the organisation wants to be and what it can be. This has not been the traditional way of doing things in education. There has generally been a self-righteous complacency in the education service that educators or teachers are the trained experts and customers do not really know what they want. Stott (1991:8) argues that schools have been designing and developing the product in isolation from their customers and adopted a "take it or leave it" attitude. If choice does not exist, some schools will continue this approach and will not succeed. But, if choice exists, then the school will need to ensure that the matching process is done and managed effectively.

Furthermore, according to Stott (1991:9), matching is a way of conducting the school's business so that the customers are at the centre of strategic decision. Thus, this can only be effective if the provider (school) is able to provide what the customer wants and demands to a sufficient degree of quality. This means that the provider/school has to make an accurate assessment of what the potential customer wants and demands. For instance, if the school assumes that customers want good examination results and strong discipline, the school may be concentrating its efforts in the wrong direction. Thus, there is a possibility that

the provision could be at a tangent to the demands and expectations of the customers.

Davies and Ellison (1997:199) on the other hand, define marketing as the means by which the school actively communicates and promotes its purpose, values and product to the learners, parents, staff and the wider community. This definition seeks to move the concept of marketing away from merely selling the school. The school needs to define clearly its aims and values and develop effective strategies of promoting itself.

The United Kingdom Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), as quoted by Brassington and Pettitt (1997:223), defines marketing as a management process, which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements effectively and profitably. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services, to create, exchange and satisfy individual and organisational objectives (Brassington and Pettitt, 1997:223). In a broader sense, marketing is seen as the management process responsible for anticipating, identifying and satisfying customers' needs in a way that is to the mutual benefit of both the provider (school) and the customers. Furthermore, according to the marketing concept, the primary task of the school is to determine the needs, desires and values of the target group and to make the necessary adjustment to satisfy the customers' needs more effectively and efficiently than other competitors.

The following deductions or inferences can be made from the definitions of marketing discussed so far:

- **Marketing is a management process.**

Marketing requires thorough planning and analysis, resource allocation, control, monitoring and evaluation, skilled personnel and physical resources. Like any other management task, it can be carried out efficiently and successfully or it can be done poorly, resulting in a failure. Gray (1991:33) argues that if marketing is to be effective, it must be closely integrated with other elements of management – such as staff or personnel provisioning and management, curricular management and resource management. Thus, marketing is a central aspect of institutional management.

- **Marketing is about giving someone what he or she wants.**

All marketing activities must be geared towards giving someone what he or she wants (Brassington and Pettitt, 1997:224). The transaction can only be successful if the supplier (school) is able to provide, in a satisfactory way, what the customer requires. If the customer requirements are not satisfactorily met and/or fulfilled, or if customers do not obtain what they want and need, then marketing would have failed both the customer and the school as the provider.

- **Marketing identifies and anticipates customer requirements.**

The provider (school), before making any offer, has to research the market and pinpoint exactly what the customer wants and needs. For instance, the school has to identify whether customers want good results and/or disciplined learners. Thus, the school must realise that gratifying desires and identifying needs require an active market research programme. This would enable the school to estimate the potential customers' needs and wants accurately.

- **Marketing fulfils customer requirements efficiently and profitably.**

It should be borne in mind that no organisation in the real world has pleased all the people all the time. Efficiency implies working within the resource capabilities of a school. Thus, the school has to work within the agreed budget and performance target set for the marketing function (Brassington and Pettitt, 1997:229). The notion of profit is not one that fits in comfortably with a public sector service or is even questionable. Brassington and Pettitt (1997:229) state that even though the marketing philosophy is accepted in the non-profit-making organisation, these organisations would accept the need to manage themselves efficiently and cost-effectively, but certainly not profitably. The school must believe that by satisfying the needs of the target group, it will gain their loyalty, encourage further business and customers will probably put in a good word for the school. Customers, above all, are decisive in realising the objectives of the school.

- **The convergence of marketing and planning.**

One of the most important components of the overall marketing process is planning. Weingand (1995:296) argues that these two processes, marketing and planning have an intrinsic value and that one is incomplete without the other. Each amplifies the power of the other and provides a wholeness of purpose and application. Furthermore, the rationale for incorporating formal planning into the marketing process, lies in the need for making decisions within an organised frame that has been developed logically over a period of time with input from stakeholders (Weingand, 1995:296). Thus, when deciding on a marketing strategy for a school, the management needs

to consult with all its stakeholders so that their inputs can be reflected in the marketing process.

Different stakeholders need to own the marketing strategy or plan. If they own it, they will be able to implement it with ease. Thus, planning and marketing in the merged form can be considered as a framework upon which to hang thoughts, ideas and decisions. Weingand (1995:297) argues that when these two processes are merged, they provide a strong and comprehensive structure with which to support the various decision and implementation activities.

2.2.2 Customers and consumers

As stated in the preceding discussion, most of the marketing concepts are derived from business. It was noted from the literature that there was no agreement about the distinction between customers and consumers in the education sector or public sector. The term customer refers to someone who purchases a product from a specific source while consumer refers to someone who uses the product. Evans (1995:15) states that the consumer may or may not be the customer. The customer is defined in terms of the specific seller and the consumer refers to any potential user of the product. Thus, parents are customers because they decide on the primary school to be attended by their children, the consumers (Gray, 1991:42). Foskett (1992:48) regards parents as customers because they pay for the services rendered by the school to their children while learners are considered as direct consumers because they attend the school and directly benefit from the services provided by the school. Evans (1995:17) concurs with Foskett, he also regards learners as the direct consumers because they receive the knowledge and experience from the school. Evans further states that the secondary consumers also benefit from such consumption. The following are the secondary consumers:

- Industry which benefits from the knowledge acquired by the direct consumers by gaining skilled workers; and
- The government and the country which gain from the industry.

Hansen (1985:85) argues that even though students may be the ultimate consumers of a marketing effort, they are not the customers. Legotlo and Matshidiso (1999: 9) argue that students or learners are primary customers. The reason advanced is that learners do not buy new educational programmes but politicians and taxpayers do. Gray (1991:44) on the other hand, argues that even if parents decide on the primary school to be attended by their children, this is not always true for children especially those who are 11 or 12 years old, who usually have a say in the decision about which secondary school to attend. He further states that it is even less true for those who are aged 16 or 18 when decisions regarding further and higher education are made. According to Foskett (1992:51) in post-school education the student may well be the customer, the one who decides to buy a particular programme and the consumer in that he/she is the one who will actually attend the programme and directly benefit from it. Evans (1995:17) argues that whatever definition is used, it has to recognise that the school must respond to the needs and demands of a variety of stakeholders, although the learner is the primary consumer.

Thus, to avoid confusion, in this study the term “customer” is used throughout to refer to students or learners and those acting on their behalf, normally, parents and the industry, the community and even the government since each of them has to be satisfied by what the school can offer. The term consumer is used in this study occasionally where it seems appropriate.

Davies and Ellison (1997:201), Bagley (1996:270), Dean (1993:71), and Gray (1991:24) identify the following as customers for the school:

- **Present parents**

The parents of present learners are a significant customer group. If parents are satisfied that their children receive a good education, they will obviously be able to influence and recruit other parents, thus becoming the school's ambassadors for external customers. Parents are a very important customer group.

- **Present learners**

Present learners can be the school's main ambassadors – they convey explicit and implicit messages to the community. They will be able to influence and recruit other learners, if they are also satisfied with the quality of the product offered to them. What interests learners most at a school is the variety of sporting and cultural activities being offered.

- **Teaching and administrative personnel**

The teaching and administrative personnel can also play an important role in the reputation of the school in implementing its role and communicating outside its boundaries.

- **School governing body members**

School governing body members can play an important role in the marketing of the school if they work in partnership with the school's senior management team.

- **Regular visitors to the school**

Regular visitors to the school in this instance, refer to people like the circuit managers and other departmental officials, insurance agents and company sales agents. These groups of customers visit the school for short periods during the year. Thus, they could see how good quality and commitment contribute to the effective teaching of learners.

Therefore, they could go away with such an impression and inform other parents about the school.

- **Prospective customers (namely prospective parents and learners)**

The aim of school marketing is to attract as many customers as possible within and outside the catchment area of the school. If meetings for prospective parents are organised, such meetings need to be well organised and parents can also be put into small groups with an educator to answer questions in each group. In big schools, tours of the school may be undertaken with senior members of the Learners' Representative Council so that parents can talk to young people who actually experience what the school can offer.

- **Prospective staff**

Many schools, especially in the rural areas, are unable to recruit the desired quality and quantity of staff. Thus, it is important for the school to communicate its clear and positive image to the prospective staff so that they can apply and accept the posts offered to them.

- **The private sector**

The private sector can contribute in the form of sponsorships or by helping learners to obtain posts once they have left the school. Good relations between the private sector and schools can foster a mutually beneficial relationship.

- **Members of the local community**

Members of the local community are difficult to satisfy, as they tend to have differing views about the function of education. Schools must keep in mind that it takes a long time to build a good reputation and only a moment to lose it. Key members of local communities can be

used to make sure that news of all positive developments in the school is circulated.

2.2.3 Product and service in the school

Although it is difficult to define the product in education, this is important from a marketing point of view. James and Phillips (2000:76) state that the product in education has been consistently described as the range of services provided by the school, college or university. Primarily the services provided by the school are the courses offered to learners but the services will extend beyond the curricular. A product is anything that can be offered to the market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need (Kotler, 1994:121). Thus, Kotler regards the following as an example of a product, namely physical objects, services, persons, places, organisations and ideas. Evans (1995:17) defines a product as any physical good or service, which is capable of satisfying the needs and wants of the customers. Evans regards the following as the school's products; buildings, laboratory equipment, playing fields and swimming pools. Thus, Evans (1995:18) uses the concept "product" in a generic sense.

Pardey (1991:97) distinguishes between a core product and an augmented product, and further states that it is difficult to distinguish between the two in education. The core product is regarded as the knowledge and skills acquired by learners while the "packaging" or augmented product includes the variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities and the ethos of the school. Stott (1991:19) and Stott and Parr (1991:131) define the product in education as the "service" that is rendered as a whole. Pardey's special mention of learners acquiring knowledge and skills as the core product of education is upheld. This is because schools are indeed instituted to afford children the opportunity of learning and developing by means of a variety of programmes. Curricular and

extra-curricular programmes, co-operation with parents, the ethos of the school, are examples of the “packaging” of the product.

Dibbs, Simpkin, Pride and Ferrell, (1991:101) define a service as an intangible product involving a deed, a performance or an effect that cannot be physically possessed. Kotler as quoted by Evans (1995:22) regards a service as any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Brassington and Pettitt (1997:231) argue that a service represents an intangible, product comprising activities, benefits or satisfactions that are not embodied in physical products. These definitions regard a service as intangible, not physical, and cannot be owned.

Levas and Hughes (1999:57) identify the following characteristics that can be used to describe education service as a marketable service:

- **The nature of the service act**

The education act is directed at people – it is directed at their minds rather than at their bodies. It is principally "people-based" rather than "equipment-based" and it involves largely intangible actions;

- **The relationship with the customer**

The education act involves a lengthy but also a formal relationship with the customer and continuous delivery of the service. Levas and Hughes (1999:57) argue that this relationship offers the service provider a chance to develop strong client loyalty and enhanced client service features;

- **The level of customisation and judgement in service delivery**

The extent to which education services are customised is variable. Small classes or individual supervision are obviously more customised than mass lectures. Thus, the extent to which the service provider

exercises judgement in meeting the needs of individual learners is high. However, there is a possibility that quality can be affected due to the variability of service delivery;

- **The nature of demand relative to supply**

A service can involve a wide spread demand, for instance electricity, or a narrow demand, for an example an insurance. The ability of services to be increased rapidly to meet fluctuations in demand can vary. In education, the demand is subjected to relatively narrow fluctuations over time, yet supply is sometimes difficult to manage, with limitations placed on the availability of staff and places in schools or courses in universities, technikons and colleges; and

- **The method of service delivery**

Customers may either move to the service provider or the service provider can move to meet the customers. International education services traditionally involve the learners coming to the institution to complete their programmes/courses. Levas and Hughes (1999:58) argue that this is presently changing, with the establishment of offshore teaching programmes and distance education. Modern technologies have also enabled remote service delivery.

Mazzarol and Soutar (1999:288) and Evans (1995:22) cite the following attributes, which distinguish a service from a physical product:

- **Intangibility**

According to Mazzarol and Soutar (1999:289) one of the effects of intangibility is that services cannot be stored. Thus, intangibility makes it difficult to easily display or communicate services to the customers. The setting of prices in many service industries is made more difficult

and complex by intangibility. Not surprisingly, therefore, fee setting within international education has been one of the many contentious issues. Education as a service cannot be assessed by the use of the five senses and be displayed on something like a shelf for inspection before purchase. The purchaser only comes to know the nature of the service after the service has been performed. Thus, he/she should exercise faith in the ability and willingness of the provider to deliver that service – education. But, a school's buyers will look for signs of quality education by drawing inferences from the place, people, equipment, materials and symbols they see;

- **Inseparability**

Mazzarol (1998:164) states that one of the major outcomes of this attribute of service is the need to involve the customer in the production of the service. This is particularly the case in education, where learner participation in the learning process is a critical factor in determining success. These attributes affect the staff of the school, in the sense that they cannot be separated from education (service). Thus, the educator becomes a part of the service, which is produced at the same time as it is consumed. This is because learners are expected to, and to a large extent, do learn on their own, but they do so under the guidance and instruction of the educator. The learner also becomes an integral part of the performance of the service unlike a physical product that can be folded and stored in a storeroom;

- **Ownership**

The ownership of a physical good is easy to identify, but that of knowledge or an experience is less simple. Each learner will have a unique experience, but do they own their knowledge or do others also

have a share in its ownership ? Thus, it is the main task of the school to demonstrate that each learner owns his or her own unique piece of knowledge and experience;

- **Heterogeneity**

According to Mazzarol (1998:165), this attribute poses significant problems in the area of quality control and standardisation; and

- **Perishability**

Mazzarol (1998:166) states that the perishability of services means that they cannot be placed into inventory and thereby create the problem of under or over supply. This is true for education, although some aspects of modern technology may reduce perishability.

2.3 The market theory

The following section explains the market theory in education, the reasons marketing strategies should be applied in schools, market driven schools and the school marketing plans.

2.3.1 Market theory in education

Choice in education is a critical issue, whether it is opposed or advocated. According to Smith (1995:148), there are a number of theories that could be used in the educational choice. Although the theories differ, the mechanism for results is the same of choice

▪ **Market theory**

The market theory is based on the assumption that market pressure will cause an individual school to improve or close. The Public Policy Forum (2000:2) and Smith (1995:148) state that, according to the market theory, better schools will thrive or be able to survive while customers (parents and learners) will compel poor schools to improve or to close their doors. So, the market theory is about 'improvement'. With respect to improvement, Smith (1995:149) states that schools may try to improve and meet the needs of the parents rather than those of the learners in order to attract 'business'. This is because parents sometimes make choices based on non-academic reasons, for instance because a school is located closer to the workplace, it offers before and after - school care, soccer practice, after school piano lessons and other endless possibilities.

The Public Policy Forum (2000:3) states that the market theory relies on an assumption that policy-makers will not insulate public schools from competition. Thus, the government should afford parents the right to choose where their children should attend school. According to this theory, the purpose of education is to benefit the individual child and perhaps for the benefit of the family and not the society as a whole (Smith, 1995:167).

The market theory is in direct opposition to the idea of educational equity. In the business sector, if demand is higher than supply, then there is a likelihood that the price may increase. In the same vein, preferred schools may increase their fees if they are in high demand. As a result, not all parents would be able to access and have opportunity for their children to attend these schools, more especially persons of low socio-economic status. According to the market theory, some schools will deteriorate and ultimately close, if they fail to improve. The learners who attend these deteriorating schools would receive an 'inferior' education during the time in which the market 'naturally' works and takes its toll (Smith, 1995:171). On the other hand, not all parents are on the same footing to

know exactly how to evaluate schools to determine which are better than others. It should be borne in mind that schools are established to benefit the public and to create a literate, participatory citizenry.

The key to improving education is to move away from public provision to a decentralised competitive market. The reason is that in a competitive market, parents can choose between competing, specialised and autonomous suppliers, that is schools. A market system would overcome many of the problems with public provision (Merrifield, 2005:318).

The market-based approach relies on choice and competition to increase incentives to perform, improve and change. The market harnesses self-interest and coordinates widespread knowledge, to deliver better service at a lower cost than government provision (Finn and Kanstoroom, 2000:3). Market accountability means that parents would determine the menu of education options, but control over individual schools would be in the hands of the school management. Schools would have both the autonomy and incentives to dramatically improve schooling. In a market system, schools are free to experiment, they can spend more, rely on outside experts, or even adopt standards if they think that would improve performance and attract more learners (Merrifield, 2005:320).

Competing schools of choice must attract learners to survive, and their viability would depend on seeking out and satisfying market demands. Schools running on their own and being directly accountable to parents, would lead to the best results for children. Parents know their children best, care the most, and bear the cost of bad decisions. The most important aspects of schools, such as the general school atmosphere, the nature of its discipline and the quality of teaching, can only be assessed at the school level. Such assessments will vary from parent to parent and learner to learner. What works well is when parents continually monitor and receive feedback on the effect of a particular school or type of schooling (Walberg, 2000:47).

Market theory goes back to the American Founding Fathers' insistence on the citizens' freedom to choose. Freedom to choose checks the power of the state, allows for diversity and encourages suppliers to develop and adopt innovation that customers value (Walberg, 2000:47). In a market system, innovations must meet the market test. Innovations will only survive if they are better than the alternatives for at least some customers.

- **The market encourages good teaching**

A competitive market is likely to change the structure of pay and the type of person attracted to the teaching profession. Schools that are faced with stronger competition would favour educators who raised the schools' ability to attract more learners (Hoxby, 2001:57). It is obvious then that the market theory encourages performance-related pay for educators. It is demoralising for a hard-working and accomplished educator to see a lazy and incompetent colleague earning the same salary – as is the case under the new democratic order in South Africa. In the United States, more competition between public schools tends to increase teacher quality, particularly schools serving predominantly low-income learners. This is evident because private schools in South Africa have better educators than public schools despite being paid less and not being unionised (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2001:4).

- **Market accountability helps the poor**

Even the defenders of public education admit that many disadvantaged learners are trapped in failed schools. Unsuccessful schools are unlikely to survive in the market since it is not market profitable to run schools that no one wants to attend. The market will cater for any group of learners if it is profitable to do so, something the government can guarantee with financial support for school choices. It would extend all the kinds of choices the rich take for granted, which

will benefit the poor. Resources will be much useful to poor parents if schools are directly accountable to parents.

Extending school choice to the poor would likely promote social integration and reduce social polarisation. In the early 1990s, the choice among government schools in New Zealand, England and Wales, reduced student segregation by socio-economic status (Harrison, 2004:11). The market system provides more diversity so that less emphasis is placed on the socio-economic status and race. Parents will choose schools where other parents have similar tastes. If parents care about social mixing and diversity, they will deliberately choose schools that offer a diverse student body and the opportunity for their children to mix with different types of students (Ferris and West, 2000:3).

- **Market accountability boosts parental involvement**

Education is a partnership between family and school. Like any partnership, it works better if the parties choose each other. Parents of children in school choice programmes in the United States of America (USA) are more involved with their children's academic programmes, participate more in school activities, volunteer more in their children's school, communicate more with teachers and help more with homework. Greater choice in the USA also makes parents more interested in their child's school (Vassallo, 2000:6 and Hoxby, 2001:60).

When parents choose to send their children to a school, it implies a level of commitment since seeking out a suitable school engages parents. Furthermore, paying fees, encourages parents to monitor schools more closely. People pay for what they value and value what they pay for. Greater involvement by parents makes their children perform better (Morse, 2002:67). Parental involvement can also mean exchanging information with educators and monitoring their performance. It can also mean letting their children know that they are expected to learn and to behave themselves.

In summary, when the government runs schools, issues that are properly internal management issues are, instead, decided through political process. In a market system, autonomous school management will make these decisions itself. Success is judged by customers on the basis of results rather than through the political process. Competition drives schools to satisfy customers and improve something that no amount of tinkering with a public system will provide.

2.3.2 Justification for applying marketing strategies in schools

Since the 1980s, several changes have occurred in society and schools were compelled to deal with such changes. According to Evans (1995:28), one such drastic change in the USA has been the decline in the birth rate. This is because most Health Departments all over the world, emphasise the use of contraceptives and reduced family size. Citizens have been requested by their governments to reduce their number of children to two or three. This has resulted in a reduced number of children attending school. Evans (1995:30) states that in the UK, between the mid 1970s and the mid 1980s, the number of children attending the maintained primary school sector, reduced by almost 25%. This demographic change has led to the need for a reduced number of schools in the UK. Therefore schools are forced to attract learners in big numbers because they are funded on the basis of the number of learners they have enrolled. Evans (1995:33) further states that whether schools opt to remain under the Local Education Authority (LEA) control or become grant-maintained, the budget they receive is proportional to the number of learners they attract.

Weingand (1995:301) argues that marketing is essential in order to sustain the mutual benefit between the partnership of the providers and the customers. Therefore, if the school and its community are to be partners, both need to perceive that they derive a benefit from exchange of goods and services (Hoxby, 2001:60). Hanson (1992: 25) states that, central to working relationship, is the

concept of an exchange of valued goods and services between schools and their communities. Morse (2002:69) and Weingand (1995:301) view marketing as a process of exchange and a way to foster the partnership between the school and the community it serves. He further argues that if there is no mutual benefit or if there is no balance in the mutual benefit, then the partnership is in jeopardy. Furthermore, for the exchange to take place, the following conditions must be satisfied (Weingand, 1995:302):

- There must be a minimum of two parties, that is the supplier (school) and the receiver (customers – learners and parents);
- Each party has something that might be of value to the other party;
- Each party is capable of communication and delivery;
- Each party must be free to accept or reject the offer; and
- Each party believes it is appropriate or desirable to deal with the other party.

The partnership therefore needs to be nurtured by applying effective and appropriate marketing strategies. Evans (1995:16) states that marketing is about a series of activities of identifying and satisfying the needs of customers and society in a sustainable way. Thus, a spectrum of planning and marketing efforts carries the process forward. But, Kotler and Andreason (1987:91) argue that the requirement for effective, successful marketing in any organisation is that the organisation, firstly, has a clear, deeply ingrained appreciation of what marketing is and what it can do for the organisation.

Hanson (1992:27) states that one major benefit of educational marketing involves increasing parent participation with the potential for increased student achievement. Hanson further states that researches conducted in the USA on this point, range from one extreme to the other. For instance, Hanson (1992:27) concluded that parent involvement improves student achievement. Thus, when parents are effectively involved, learners do better in schools and attend better

schools. Clark, Lotto and McCarthy as quoted by Hanson concluded that parent involvement on its own, is likely to influence attitudes towards the school, but it is unlikely to affect learner achievement, unless other variables are also manipulated.

There are forms of parent involvement in the school and these have differing impacts on learner learning (Hanson, 1992:28) as indicated below:

- **Parents involved in the classroom** (as volunteers and aides)

If parents work as volunteers and paid aides, they tend to learn about teaching methods, daily homework and the culture of the school. Thus, the information and skills acquired by parents in these roles have a positive input on the learning environment and the level of learning;

- **Learning in the home**

Children and young adults spend most of their time at home rather than at school. Thus, educators should do everything in their power to stimulate the educational environment of home learning because it could have an impact on learner learning;

- **Parents involved in school decision making**

There is little evidence to prove that parent participation in school governance activities, such as holding a leadership role in the Parent Teachers' Association or school advisory committee, can translate into increased levels of learning for their own children; and

- **School visitation**

Parents can visit the school when attending parents' meetings or during sporting activities and functions. According to Hanson (1992:29), even though educators place more emphasis on school

visitation, there is little evidence to suggest that such activities contribute to increased levels of learning.

Hanson (1992:29) further argues that, if the goal of the marketing programme is to make an impact on learner achievement, it must do so by directing its energies towards stimulating increased parent attention to and participation in the home learning environment and, to school governance and visitation activities. Stott (1991:19) also states that marketing can play an important role in the development of schools. He further argues that society has changed tremendously. Parents are currently more knowledgeable, they are able to articulate their demands and there is an outcry from all angles for quality provision of education. Thus, schools need to move away from tightly centralised control, which in many instances, hamper the pursuit of quality.

2.3.3 Market driven schools

Kearney and Arnold (1994:112) argue that the best way to define what market driven schools are, is to understand what is not a market driven school. Non – market driven schools are characterised by (Kearney and Arnold, 1994:113) the following:

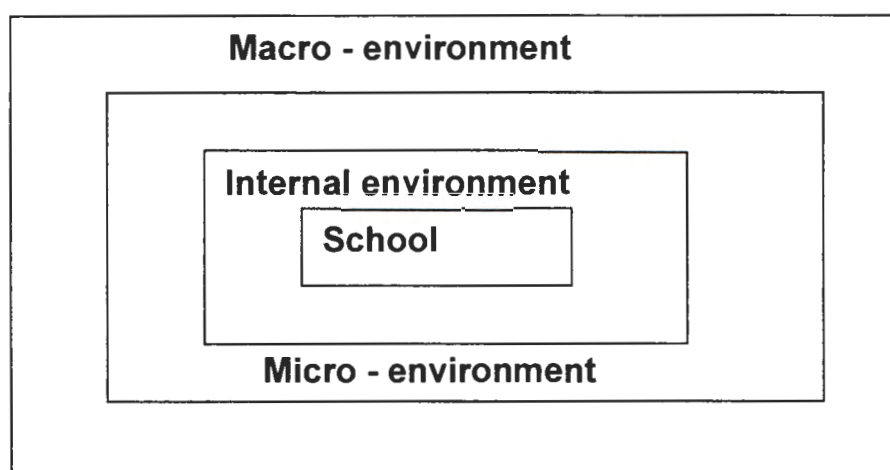
- A continuous flow of resources irrespective of performance;
- They are not driven by the demands of customers but rather by the manager's (principal's) and educators' individual and group welfare concerns;
- They lack quality and most customers become unwilling captives of a monopolistic and inefficient system;
- Reward structure is not oriented towards performance; and
- Lack of connection between the performance of the school and the continuing flow of resources to the school. For instance, principals

receive no reward if the schools perform exceptionally well, and there are no sanctions if they do not meet their stated objectives.

Kearney and Arnold (1994:114) define a market driven school as a school which has a tight connection between itself and the continuing flow of resources. Principals and educators in such schools are held responsible for the performance of their schools. This is the case because of the tight linkage between resources on the one hand, and reward and performance on the other hand. The school becomes more responsive to the external environment and to achieving the stated objectives for which resources are being provided. Thus, the simple rule of “no performance, no resource” is applied. Competition is the central idea in market driven schools, which, in turn, ensures efficiency and quality. The bottom line is, for a market driven school to continue to receive resources, it must respond to the demands and needs of the customers.

2.3.4 The marketing environment

The marketing policy of a school or any other public institution cannot be viewed in isolation. Evans (1995:21) contends that educational institutions operate within a complex and rapidly changing environment, which they must monitor and adapt to, if they are to continue to prosper or even exist. The marketing environment covers all the influences that might provide opportunities or threats to the organisation. As a result, schools need to plan their marketing activities, taking all environmental factors into consideration, not just the most obvious. Evans further states that the marketing environment consists of two distinct areas, the internal and external environments. He further subdivides the external environment into the micro-environment (factors close to the institution) and the macro-environment (the larger societal factors) as illustrated in Fig. 2.1 below.

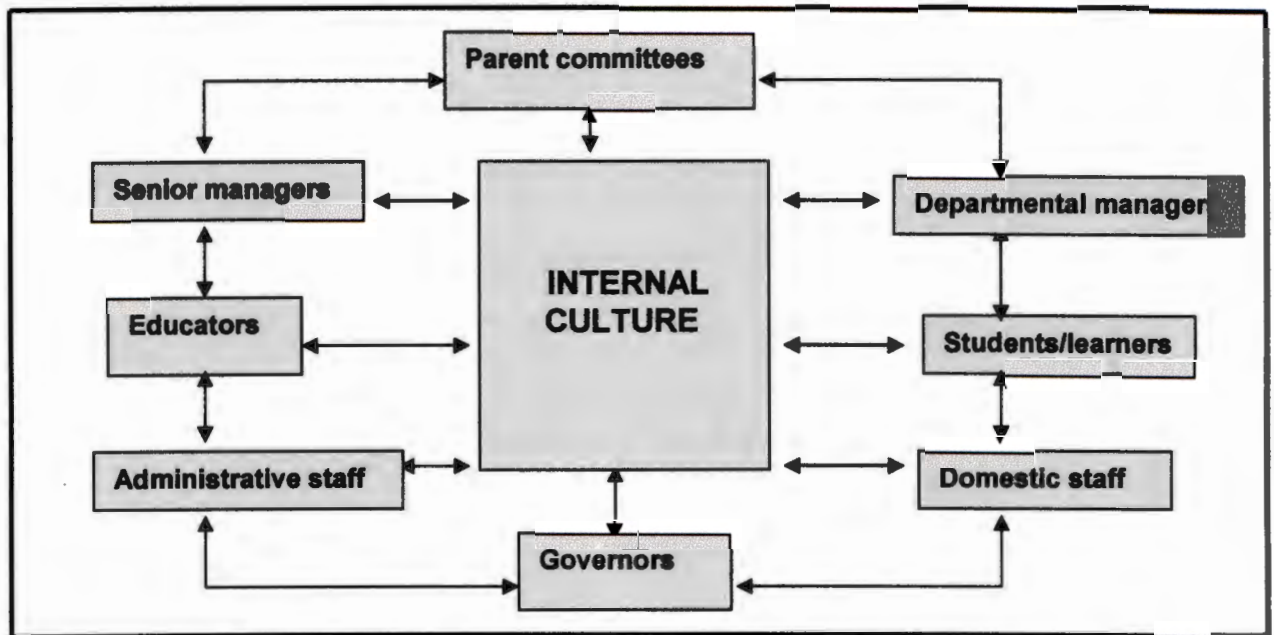
Fig. 2.1 The marketing environment

Source: Evans (1995: 16)

It should be noted that the school does not have direct control over its external environment, but it can only influence some of its elements. Figure 2.1 shows that these elements form a series of shells around the school and each shell impacts on all those within it. Thus, the internal environment does not only influence the school and other schools, but also influence the society as a whole.

2.3.4.1 The internal environment

The internal environment of the school consists of different groupings within the school, such as the school management team (principal, deputy principal and heads of departments), the teaching staff, administrative staff, hostel staff, caretakers and the cleaning staff, depending on the size and type of the school. Evans (1995:18) further states that the learners and the governing bodies and other people who work on a voluntary basis, also form part of the internal environment of the school. Figure 2.2 below shows how all these groups interact to create an internal atmosphere and the unique culture of the school.

Fig. 2.2 Groupings in the internal environment

Source: Evans (1995: 17)

2.3.4.2 The micro – environment

According to Evans (1995:27), the micro – environment is formed by individuals and organisations that have the potential to have immediate impact on the school (Fig.2.1). The individual elements can be divided into competitors, customers, suppliers, intermediaries and the public.

- **Competitors**

Evans (1995:27) defines competitors as another way in which the learner can gain education. Schools compete individually against one other for the learners in direct competition (Powers and Cookson, 1999:105). Therefore, schools are forced to learn the art of public relations. Indirect competition also exists but it is not common, it occurs when parents decide to opt for personal tutoring or to educate their children themselves. Evans (1995:34) argues that the actions of competition may have a positive or negative impact on a school. However, by

understanding the competition, their probable action and potential impact can enable the school to develop strategies in order to gain a strategic advantage (Davies and Ellison, 1997:213).

- **The school's customers**

One of the most important tasks that the school has to perform, is to identify and define its customers. The term customer in this study has been fully defined in par. 2.2 supra.

- **Suppliers or providers**

Suppliers are organisations that provide the school with goods which allow it to carry out its business (Evans, 1995:37). Currently some schools have developed links with outside bodies to receive various forms of sponsorships. For example, there are companies which donate equipment, sports stores that donate balls for soccer, rugby and net-ball as well as sports attire bearing the company logo.

- **Intermediaries**

Intermediaries are individuals who act on behalf of the school to facilitate the activities of the school. Evans (1995:34) states that these are usually school managers of the feeder schools, who act on behalf of senior schools, colleges, universities, technikon and so on, without a conscious effort on their part. These managers act as facilitators by recommending one institution over the other. Current parents, learners or students and past students also act as intermediaries.

- **Publics**

Publics are any person or organisation with actual, or potential impact on the institution. Powers and Cookson (1999:106) regard the following as the school publics; staff, parents of children and their families, colleagues and work-mates, former students, local employers, members of the local community, government agencies, the business community and prospective students.

Each of these publics has the potential to cause the school to take various actions. For example, the business community may exert influence on the school to provide vocational training. These publics need to be recognised and their potential on the institution analysed.

The following section explains the different factors of the macro environment, which are uncontrollable and change constantly.

2.3.4.3 *Macro – environment*

Evans (1995:29) states that the macro – environment consists of a number of forces which impact on all institutions and on all elements of the micro – environment. The following factors are largely uncontrollable and are also constantly changing at a rapid pace:

- **Demographic factors**

Brassington and Pettitt (1997:231) define demographics as the measurable aspects of population structure such as birth rates, age profiles, family structures, occupation, income and expenditure patterns and education levels. For instance, in the UK, due to the declining birth rates, the number of children in the maintained primary sector has dropped by over 25 per cent for the period between the mid – 1970s and the mid – 1980s (Evans, 1995:29). Therefore, if

the birth rate continues to drop, more and more schools will become redundant and will be closed;

- **Economic factors**

The effects of the economic factors are felt by the schools and customers alike and these have a profound effect on their behaviour;

- **Political factors**

Government policies on education have introduced choice for the customers. For instance, in South Africa, the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 states that no learner should be refused admission to any school on the basis of colour, sex or religion. This Act in fact introduced the open – admission policy for South African schools. The implications of such policies or Acts for schools are wide – ranging. Schools need to monitor policy changes and flexibility is currently important. Marketing strategies for schools need to be modified and fine-tuned to adapt to new government directions;

- **Legal requirements**

The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA) gave customers a wide choice for schools, but on the other hand the introduction of the Outcomes Based Education states what subjects or learning areas should be taught at schools. But by teaching all mandatory learning areas in the OBE approach, schools can find that they do not have adequate time and resources to cover other learning areas they consider important. Schools are, therefore, forced to change their traditional product (Evans, 1995:29);

- **Socio – cultural forces**

The implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act no.108 of 1996 and the principles of affirmative action (AA), have changed attitudes towards women in the workplace and caused shifts in the working patterns. Furthermore, what were traditionally regarded as boys' subjects, such as motor mechanics, are currently studied by girls, while many boys study home economics (Evans, 1995:30). The women's place is no longer in the kitchen, as a result schools need to react accordingly; and

- **Geographical factors**

The location of the school can dictate subjects or courses to be offered by the school (Evans, 1995:31). Apart from this, schools in urban centres have more choices than places available because most of them are well equipped and have facilities, unlike schools in remote rural areas that are underscribed.

2.4 The marketing plan of the school

Essential to any understanding of educational marketing is the recognition that it is an important management task. It relates to and also influences other major elements of educational management, such as staff management, resource management and curriculum management. The basic marketing notion of marketing planning, market audit and research and the marketing mix can all contribute to an improved understanding of tasks needed to manage and market schools effectively.

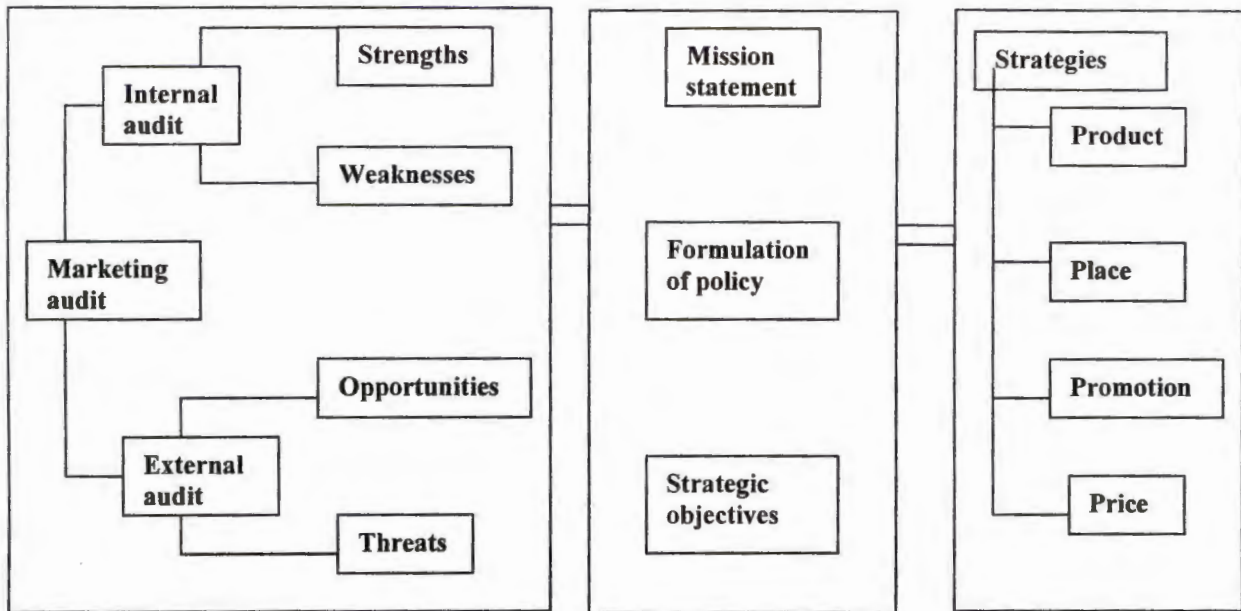
Pardey (1991:54) distinguishes the following three key elements in a marketing plan (Fig. 2.3), discussed below:

- The market audit – situational analysis: Where are we now?;
- Formulation of objectives: Where are we going?; and
- Designing marketing strategies and programmes: How are we going to get there?

Figure 2.3 shows the cohesion between these three elements

2.4.1 The marketing audit – “Where are we now?”

Evans (1995:36) argues that, for an organisation to become marketing-oriented, it should, first and foremost, determine where it is at present. The marketing audit allows the school to determine its current position, both internally and externally, in addition to stating the ultimate position it wishes to achieve in the future. The marketing audit entails determining the internal and external environment of the institution, following which the key market opportunities can be identified. A useful tool in using the present position in relation to internal sources and the outside world, is the SWOT analysis (Fig.2.3). The term SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis is straightforward to carry out and it can be undertaken by a variety of people: educators, school management team, non-teaching staff, governors, learners and parents.

Fig. 2.3: A marketing plan

Adapted from Pardey (1991: 54)

2.4.1.1 The internal audit

According to Evans (1995:38) identifying and analysing what is actually happening inside the school is the prerequisite for solving any problems that may be highlighted. The school has to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The internal environment is directly under the control of the school.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993:47) have identified the following guidelines or questions to be used in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses:

▪ Strengths

- What are the school's resource strengths?;
- What are the strong points of our people?;
- What are the strengths of our management team?;
- What strengths are evident in our relationships with our stakeholders?;

- What are the positive aspects of our school?;
- What strengths derive from our relationship with our provider stakeholders?; and
- Is there a niche focus to our work that is especially strong?

▪ **Weaknesses**

- What is the source of weakness in our school?;
- What weaknesses exist in the management skills within the school?;
- What weaknesses are evident in our relationship with our stakeholders?;
- What weaknesses do we have regarding resources, equipment or management systems, in terms of what we are aiming to achieve?; and
- What do we have in terms of the way provider stakeholders see us?

The school should always strive to turn identified weaknesses into strengths if it is to survive.

2.4.1.2 *The external audit*

According to Evans (1995:38) the school has little or no control over its external environmental factors. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993:48) identify the following guidelines or questions that can be used in this analysis:

- **Opportunities – these are external opportunities that arise out of the school. The school should fully exploit opportunities identified.**

- What opportunities exist for us, given the decisions being made by other schools in this area?;
- What opportunities exist for this school if we change the way we work with our provider stakeholders?;
- What opportunities do our stakeholders want us to pursue?;
- Given our research (and reasonable predictions about resources), what opportunities do we have to make changes in our strategy?;
- Given the people we employ, or could employ, what opportunities can we see arising from the way they work with us?;
- Given our managerial skills and insights, what strategy could we really see as maximising the fit between resources, people, stakeholders and our skills as managers?; and
- What opportunities do our stakeholders present to us if we start to change our relationships with them?

▪ **Threats**

- What obstacles exist from within the school that prevents the effective implementation of strategy?;
- What are the potential danger signs already in the industry environment that could eventually derail the strategy we choose?;
- What actions of government are likely to occur that could pose a unique threat to our school, given the strategy we are looking at?;
- What threats to effective strategy implementation are there from other sources?; and
- What potential threats exist from our provider stakeholders?

When external threats that face the school have been identified, it is important to avoid them at all costs. In addition Davies and Ellison (1991:281) states that threats should be turned into opportunities. In other words, identified threats should be changed so that they can be used to the advantage of the school

Fig. 2.4: SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Adapted from Gray (1991: 30)

In addition to the SWOT analysis, Stott (1992:21) also suggests the following methods for data collection:

- **Qualitative analysis**

Stott (1992:16) states that by talking to parents or briefly interviewing them either telephonically or after meetings, or even visiting them at their homes, one can find out the reasons parents chose a particular school. But he argues that this type of qualitative research is difficult and time-consuming, however, it can yield information of great utility. This type of research is valuable because one can also know the reasons other parents did not choose a particular school. This conveys the message to parents that their opinions are important, but at the same time, important information is collected for the school. Stott further adds that research must not be seen as an isolated activity. It may be tied, for instance, to issues like “quality control” and “after sales service” so that customer-centred monitoring takes place.

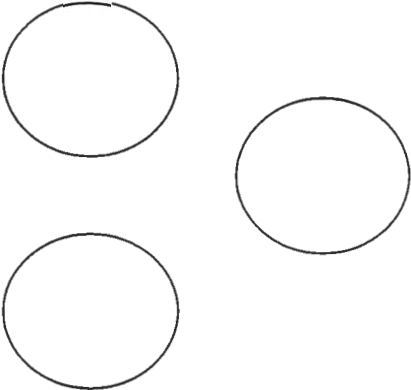
- **School image**

Understanding the image of the school is very important in terms of interpreting customers demands and wants. Renihan and Renihan (1994:82) explain that the

image that clings to the school, may have an impact on expectations of the organisation and performance by the organisation. Stott (1992:30) argues that when requiring information about the school's image, it is best to use a simple and straightforward instrument, which can maximise the response and its quality. An instrument suggested by Stott uses "words", which is simple to process and can be completed in seconds. For instance: untidy, dead, boring, exciting, vibrant, old-fashioned, and so on. Customers use a list of positive and negative words and are asked to write only three words in the three circles (Fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.5 Stott's Word instrument

When you think of our school, what are the words which immediately come to mind? Please write one word in each of the circles which expresses how you feel about the school. Do not be afraid to use words which are critical: you will be helping us by being entirely honest. If you can't think of any words, we have put a few on the right to start you thinking.

Cold Friendly Boring Happy Dead Exciting Attractive Welcoming Unwelcoming Untidy Old-fashioned Disciplined	

Adapted from Stott (1992: 35)

▪ Understanding what is important

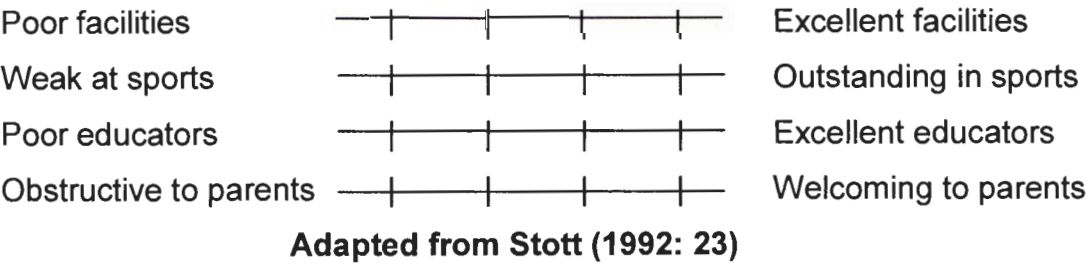
Stott (1992:36) states that the other method, which is addressed profitably, is that of "importance" in which customers (parents and learners) are asked to indicate whether they regard each item as important or unimportant. For example:

	Important	Unimportant
Attractive school uniform	☐	☐
Good examination results	☐	☐
Easy to get to	☐	☐
Teachers are strict	☐	☐

▪ **Semantic differential**

According to Stott (1992:22), a suitable instrument for use in most school situation is the semantic differential. The specimen adapted from Stott is shown in Fig. 2.6 below. But the description can be altered to account for the areas that the school wants to investigate. Furthermore, the number of descriptors will vary from one school to the other.

Fig. 2.6 Semantic differential



If actions are taken in order to improve the situation, the instrument can be re-administered to determine whether the desired effects have been achieved.

▪ **Internal audit**

The top management of the school and all staff members can complete the instrument by determining where the strengths and weaknesses lie. For example:

	Strength	Weakness
Enthusiastic educators with high job satisfaction	☐	☐
Contact with learners	☐	☐
Equipment to do the work	☐	☐

The information acquired about the strengths and weaknesses of the school's work, as perceived by those within it, can be set alongside the impressions of those outside the school.

According to Stott (1992:24), information collected in the ways stated in the preceding discussion, can be applied in various areas. However, from a marketing point of view, it is important to investigate any dissatisfaction among customers and, when possible, something should be done to correct the situation. Research should also be conducted on an ongoing basis, to ensure that progress is being made in areas that need it and also to identify any new customer needs.

2.4.2 Setting objectives

In setting objectives schools must ask the following question:

Where are we going? Or: Where do we want to be?

The function of formulating objectives, as shown in Fig.2.3, is to give direction to the activities of the school. Goals as well as objectives of the school must relate to its mission statement. Objectives are defined as broad abstract statements that discuss ideal outcomes, and they often do not change. For instance, a school formulates the objective of providing primary education to learners (Pardey, 1991:56). From these objectives, goals that must be realised in a certain period are formulated. The requirements to which objectives must adhere to are as follows:

- They must be comprehensible in general;
- They must be concrete and specific;
- They must be acceptable to those involved; and
- They must be attainable.

To ascertain that the mentioned criteria are considered when formulating objectives, it is recommended that the **SMART** criteria be used. This acronym means that objectives must be (Davies and Ellison, 1991:281) as follows:

S Specific, rather than general, ill-defined or theoretical;

M Measurable, so that the progress toward attainment can be monitored, or to determine the success criteria;

A Agreed and Achievable, rather than discouragingly beyond reach;

R Relevant, meeting significant needs, of real consequence; and

T Timed, to be attained in a given period of time and encourage purposeful action.

2.4.3 Formulating strategies

When formulating a strategy or strategies, as indicated in Fig. 2.3, the schools need to bear the following questions in mind:

- How will we get there ?; and
- How will we know whether we have got there ?

Goals and objectives are used in designing marketing strategies and programmes (McCalmon, 1997:115). The more accurate the situational analysis and the institutional objectives are, the greater the likelihood that viable strategies will be developed, to achieve the set objectives. Davies and Ellison (1991:282) state that it is imperative that marketing should be a team effort rather than an individual approach. Thus, it is important that all stakeholders should be taken on board when strategies are developed, so that they own such strategies. Witte (1999:61) also emphasises the importance of a marketing task team, to promote the school's objectives and improve community relations. However, it is important that members of the team should have a common understanding of the school's objectives and goals, so that they should be aware of their roles in communicating messages to the wider group of customers outside the school (Davies and Ellison, 1991:283).

2.4.3.1 The marketing mix

Four key variables are identified by James and Phillips (2000:81) which can change in order to give expression to an organisation's marketing plan or strategy. These variables are regarded as the marketing mix by numerous authors such as Evans (1995:39), Pardey (1991:57), Stott (1991:9) and Gray (1991:29). The elements of the marketing mix are identified as follows:

- Promotion;
- Price;
- Place; and
- Product.

These elements are also referred to as the "four P's" by Evans (1995:40). James and Phillips (2000:82) argue that these elements of the marketing mix are important for an organisation if it wants to make a move from "where it is" to "where it wants to be". In addition, they help an institution to understand how

marketing operates in practice, as opposed to why it is necessary. Thus, Bruwer (1996:123) argues that marketing is mainly about the manipulation of the "four P's" over which the educational institution can exercise control, that is, the marketing mix, consisting of the product (courses), price (tuition fee charged), place (location of the school), and promotion (advertising and public relations.)

2.4.3.1.1 Promotion

According to Pardey (1991:63) many people regard marketing and promotion as synonymous. Simply connecting a promotional strategy to the existing activities and management is the worst possible approach to marketing.

It is fairly easy to offer something that the customers want, but to persuade someone to buy a fork when he or she wants a spade is very difficult. As a result, identifying needs and expressing what the school can offer becomes clear, because the market may perhaps ask for a spade, but in actual fact the benefit of a fork will satisfy their needs (Pardey, 1991:67). Gray (1991:33) argues that a starting point for communicating with the market is a basic marketing model, expressed in the acronym, **AIDA** - **A**ttention, **I**nterest, **D**esire, and **A**ction. The model functions as follows (Gray, 1991:35):

- Attract the **Attention** of potential customers;
- Then hold **Interest** in the product being offered;
- Then arouse a **Desire** for the advantages being offered; and
- Finally, incite those who are convinced of the advantages to **Action** (get action).

Promotion activities fall into one of these four phases. The first phase must be effective, but unless the third phase succeeds, there is little chance for action. Davies and Ellison (1997:211) and Gray (1991:37) identify four basic approaches that can be used for promotional purposes, namely advertising, personal selling,

promotional events and publicity. Principals of schools can utilise one of the stated approaches from the promotional mix (Fig. 2.7), discussed here under.

▪ **Advertising**

Advertising, as indicated in Fig.2.7, costs money but schools usually advertise only to recruit staff. Advertising for learners is a relatively new phenomenon. The main advertising vehicles available to schools are the press, television, radio, the cinema and spaces on buildings, buses and parking meters (Gray, 1991:34).

For advertising to be effective, the following steps may be followed (Gray, 1991:34):

- The aims of an advertising campaign are specified and target market segments identified;
- To identify the advertising medium likely to reach those target groups most effectively; and
- The identified media must be costed and evaluated according to their capacity to penetrate market group.

Figure 2.7: The Promotional Mix

Approach	Examples	Audience	Purpose
Advertising (for learners, staff, events)	Prospectus, brochures, flyers, press advertising and advertorials	Mass	To inform, persuade, remind, condition
Personal selling	Tour of the school, word of mouth, often by parent or learner	Individuals, groups	To condition, inform, remind
Promotional events	Open days, roadshows, events eg. Plays, sports day, vouchers	Interested groups	Goodwill, to motivate, inform, 'spur the sale'
Publicity (no cost)	Press release, media mentions, use of premises by the community	Mass	To inform, educate

Adapted from Davies and Ellison (1991: 277)

Davies and Ellison (1991:221) have identified the following guidelines for advertising:

- An advertisement should look good and attractive;
- An advertisement should indicate the name of the school clearly;
- If an event is being advertised, the date, correct venue, time and entrance fee (if applicable) should be clearly indicated;
- Potential customers should have clarity on how to contact the school for further information - telephone numbers, fax

numbers, e - mail address, school web-site, whatever is applicable, should be provided even for after hours; and

- It should be tasteful and never, even if only by vague implication, harm the image of other competitors (schools).

Advertising is primarily a sales tool intended to get customers to buy a product. Therefore, customers buy benefits, not attributes. Listing attributes of a school, for example small classes, is not adequate. Customers want to know what benefit they will gain from such classes, for instance, more individual attention of learners from educators.

▪ **Personal selling**

This form of promotion is more effective because it promotes the opportunity for the school to communicate face-to-face with the customer(s), either on a one-to-one or group basis. Evans (1995:47) argues that any individual employed by the school is personally selling the institution, whether they are conscious of it or not. Example of personal selling activities include the parents' open evening or parents' open days, informal parent-educator talks, the secretary's or receptionist's greetings.

Stott and Parr (1991:138) argue that exhibitions and special events may also be used. Exhibitions allow the school to have face-to-face contact with potential customers, thus all material, and the arrangement thereof should be of a high quality. Special events, for instance, farewell functions for final year learners and educators, music concerts, sports days should also receive 'VIP treatment' and should be seen from the customers' perspective.

▪ **Publicity**

Publicity as shown in Fig. 2.7 is a form of promotion and includes all material produced for the purpose of communicating with a specific target group or audience (James and Phillips, 2000:85). According to Gray (1991:35), these materials include all printed material such as attractive prospectuses, brochures, direct letter, handbooks, newsletter, badges that carry certain information or message about the school. Material issued should convey a positive and effective message to recipients. All materials leaving the school should be checked for style. For instance, the type-face should be the same, the colours used should be the school colours, the school's logo should be on every article. The impact of these trivial matters should not be underestimated.

Davies and Ellison (1991:278) state that the following points should be considered when a school's prospectus is designed:

- Decide on the purpose – is it for marketing, reference or both;
- It should have a simple, attractive and tasteful cover;
- Decide on the key issues in the prospectus. State the school's mission near the beginning;
- Decide on the strengths to put across;
- Structure it clearly. Bold heading, concise text broken up by appropriate photographs or charts;
- Have the reader in mind. Make use of language and jargon that is common and understood by the wider community;
- Make it easy to read. Make use of short sentences and take the reading age and educational knowledge of your readers into consideration;

- Use high quality illustrations;
- Do not make the prospectus too long;
- Do not normally include material with dates. It would be costly for the school to reset the prospectus each year. Such information could be provided as a loose sheet inside the back cover or as an addendum;
- Ensure that there is a prominent display of how to contact the school. The back page could be used for a map of where the school is situated and for its postal and physical address, telephone number(s), e-mail address and web-site, and if applicable, the contact person; and
- Ensure that the prospectus has a professional appearance.

Gray (1991:38) further states that when designing effective material, it is imperative to identify the following:

- Precisely the service to be promoted;
- The target audience;
- The image to be projected (and the reasons why); and
- The vehicle by which material will be distributed.

The simplest strategy that can be employed by schools to draw the attention of a large number of people or customers is by obtaining the agreement or permission of local supermarkets, banks, libraries and so on, to display leaflets and other publicity material.

- **Public relations**

James and Phillips (2000:86) argue that the use of public relations is cheaper as compared to advertisement. James and Phillips (2000:86) and Stott and Parr (1991:139) distinguish between non-press public relations and press public relations. They further argue that the aim of 'press' public relation is to achieve editorial coverage which can be secured by building up trusting relationships, especially locally. But, this is not always easy and requires good or sound relations between the school and the press. The school will have to appoint someone to act as a contact person with the press, while the non-press public relation include receptions, exhibitions and special events.

Hines (1993:45), on the other hand, argues that the word 'principal' starts with PR – which stands for public relation and ends with 'PAL' which is what the principal should be to everyone in the school. This means to us that the public relations of the school depends greatly on its principal. Furthermore, the image of the school depends greatly on its public relations, and its public relations depend on its principal. It should be the primary concern of the principal to set a climate for the school that would encourage all stakeholders to do their best.

The parents are the most frequent visitors to the school, thus the principal should take the advantage of all opportunities to meet and talk with them (Hines, 1993:46). He further argues that the principal should smile and greet learners as they come to school in the morning. Another sure-fire way for the principal to make children to feel good about coming to school daily, is to learn their names and use them during breaks, sports training and so on. By doing so, the principal gives the impression that he/she is approachable and caring.

2.4.3.1.2 *Price*

According to Gray (1991:40) price consists of two different parts namely, costing and pricing. Costing involves the calculation of the real costs of providing a service, while pricing is about determining the actual amounts to be paid by customers. James and Phillips (2000:87) perceive costing as a task to seek a close match between schools spending and benefits to the customers. Hansen (1985:84) pleads that schools should be realistic about costs. He argues that the public's pocketbook of customers is not bottomless and its contents must be divided among many worthy ventures, each with their own champions. In the business sector, the pricing objective is profit maximisation. But profit is not the main objective of pricing in non-profit sectors, like schools. Geethananda (1993:45) argues that pricing is a dynamic, multistage process in which, theoretically, the pricing objective produces pricing policy which, in turn, is translated into pricing practices.

Parents are increasingly concerned about value for money. It is important for them to know how much school fees are paid and what they are for and also how cost-effective the services at the schools are. According to Evans (1995:48) the price of the product does not only refer to the school fees (Pf) paid, but also to other different prices paid by the customers in order to receive education. He further states that parents have to pay a price for uniform (Pu), travel to school (Pt), school outing (Po), school fund-raising (Pr) and so on. Therefore, the total price of the product can be determined by using the following formula:

$$\text{Price}_{\text{total}} = P_f + P_u + P_t + P_o + P_r + \dots$$

According to Evans (1995:51) and James and Phillips (2000:86) the price will be determined by a number of factors, which are as follows:

- The customer's ability to pay, can be decisive for price;
- Competition will necessarily influence the price, because in cases where the school offers facilities at a lower price, it will be difficult to do business, especially if cost is a decisive factor in the choice of a school; and
- The supply of and demand for a product also influence the price. If the school is the only one in the area offering computer literacy, the demand will be high, thus a higher price can be asked.

2.4.3.1.3 Place

Foskett (1992:53) regards the place as the environment in which the service is delivered. The place consists of the physical environment of the school, its classrooms, hall, library, laboratory, other buildings and grounds. These not only have a practical function, but also act as a promotional element. Although the school is fixed in place, it can be utilised in different ways. Short and long term changes could be made to its physical fabric for its marketing effect.

If the grounds are strewn with litter, the paint on the building is peeling off and the toilets are smelly, surely one can expect the same of the school's policy, programmes and people. As stated in the preceding discussion, the places are possibly the easiest to change because something can be done about them immediately. The principal must examine the school as a whole and determine how inviting it is. For example, a room may be set aside for visitors, with attractive plants, learners' paint works, chairs and a

collection of sports trophies (Gray, 1991:41). This is because parents are looking for a school that is or appears clean, attractive and safe.

2.4.3.1.4 Product

It is difficult to define the product in education or schools. Preedy, Glatter and Levacic (1997:89) define a product as ‘anything that can be offered to the market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, persons, places, institutions and ideas’. According to De J Cronje, Du Toit, Mol, Van Reenen and Motlatla (1997:67) a product can be described as a composition of tangible and intangible need-satisfying utilities offered to customers by an institution, so that they can take note of them, procure them and use them. On the other hand, Pardey (1991:67) distinguishes between a core product and an augmented product. De J Cronje et al., (1997:68) state that a core product can be described in terms of technical and physical qualities. But, in education or schools, it is difficult to define these two types of products.

Pardey (1991:59) regards the core product of the school as the knowledge and skills acquired by the learners. Furthermore, it can be seen as a set of learning experiences which includes the curriculum the school offers. At its narrowest, this can be defined as a list of subjects and the syllabus or learning outcomes of that list of subjects. While the augmented product is the results of the extra features, which marketing adds to the core product. Thus, the augmented product includes the variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities and also the ethos of the school. Preedy et al., (1997:87) regard the product as the range of services provided by the school. Primarily, the services provided by the school are the different courses or subjects offered to learners, but the service will extend beyond the curriculum.

2.5 Relationship Marketing

According to Gorard (1998:250) and Drysdale (1999:1) relationship marketing is a strategy that attempts to establish, develop, evaluate and maintain relations and involve people over the term so that they are loyal and supportive of the organisation. Relationship marketing is based on the realisation that, it is just as important to keep current customers as it is to attract new ones. This is particularly for schools; parents and learners exercise their right to move to a school that achieves their desired outcomes. The goal of a school and its managers then should be to evaluate the value of its relationship. This value will come from enduring relationships not just with customers, but with all those who, together, contribute to the continuity of the customer relationship. The key aspects of relationship marketing revolve around three the following aspects:

- **Building a relationship**

Building a relationship is a component of the relationship marketing. The essence to building relationships is the way the members of an organisation interact with their customers (learners and parents), with the emphasis on relationships as opposed to transaction (Drysdale, 1999:1). The important comparison between marketing as a transaction and marketing as a relationship, is highlighted by Drysdale (1999: 2) in Table 2.1.

- **Retaining customers**

In relationship marketing, keeping customers is just as attracting new ones. It is far most cost effective to look after the customers one has, than to seek new ones, in fact, winning new customers can be far too expensive. Evans (1995:61) observes that it takes five times as much effort, time and money to attract a new customer as to keep existing ones. In relationship building, the focus shifts to building long term

relationships. This is where a customer is encouraged to continue their involvement with the organisation. This provides the opportunity for an institution to maximise its interaction and enhance the opportunities for mutual benefit.

Table 2.1: A comparison between transaction and relationship marketing

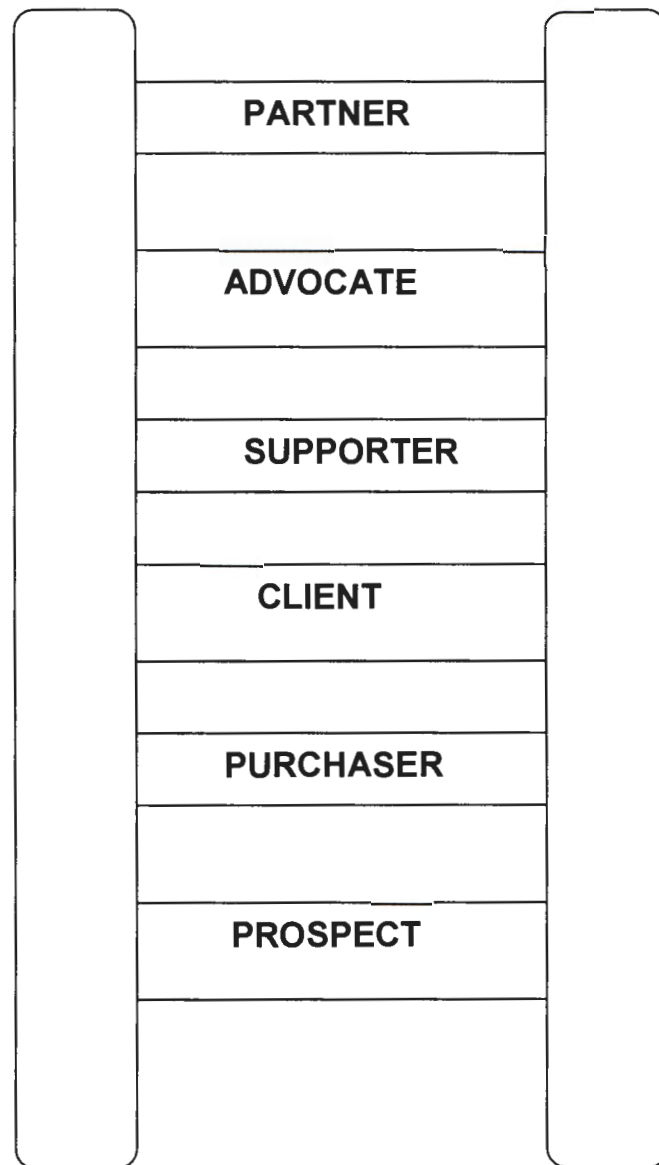
TRANSACTION MARKETING	RELATIONSHIP MARKETING
Focus on single sale	Focus on customer retention
Orientation on product features	Orientation on products benefits
Little emphasis on customer service	High customer service emphasis
Limited customer commitment	High customer commitment
Moderate customer contact	High customer contact
Quality is primary concern of production	Quality is concern of all

Source: Drysdale (1999: 2)

Drysdale (1999:3) states that, today numerous organisations have established a range of loyalty programmes, such as credit points, to obtain discounts to lock people into organisations. To foster this loyalty in schools, requires commitment, trust, diligence, reliability, honesty and benevolence. Yet the pay-offs can be substantial, for example, to build a strong relationship with a current learner can result in that learner becoming a life long customer, adviser, influencer, supporter, life long learner, donor, future parent and candidate for other services offered.

The customer loyalty ladder Fig. 2.8, illustrates the benefits of relationship marketing and the importance of establishing a balance between keeping customers and seeking new ones. The ladder shows how it is possible to turn customers into regular clients and then through building sound relationships, progress up the ladder to where they can become strong advocates who will promote and support the school.

Fig. 2.8 : Relationship marketing ladder of customer loyalty



Source: Drysdale (1999: 6)

The different steps of the ladder are defined below.

Partner

A partner is someone who has the relationship of a partner with you;

Advocate:

An advocate is someone who actively recommends you to others, who does marketing on your behalf;

Supporter

A supporter is someone who likes your organisation, but only supports you passively;

Client

While a client is someone who has done business with you on a repeated basis but may be negative, or at best neutral, towards your organisation;

Purchaser

A purchaser is someone who has done business just once with your organisation; and

Prospect

A prospect is someone whom you believe may be persuaded to do business with you.

- **Internal and external markets**

The component feature of relationship marketing highlights the need to recognise internal and external markets. Relationship building needs to take place at this level on both markets for schools to succeed in the market place. Drysdale (1999:5) has identified and classified external customers as follows:

- **Influencer market**

Influencer markets are people whose comments and advice affect the buying decision directly or indirectly. They usually possess some expert knowledge about the subject and their opinions are respected. For instance, the opinions of teachers in the primary school may be sought and may influence the choice of a secondary school. Some of these people are in political groups, pressure groups, the media, unions, and various associations that have interest in the school;

- **Referral market**

Referral market is another market that may consist of existing customers but can also include people who may steer customers your way such as past students, real estate agents, consultants, local traders, feeder schools and service organisations;

- **Recruitment market**

Recruitment market is often neglected. It may be identified as the scarce resource of highly skilled managers, educators and consultants who are potential employees. To establish and maintain relationships within this market is critical in ensuring the school's success; and

- **Supplier market**

Supplier market refers to the suppliers who, under the principles of cooperation, are often brought into the organisation as partners, collaborators and sometimes joint-ventures; sound relationship building with computer suppliers, clothing manufacturers, sporting goods retailers, service clubs and sponsors and others are vital.

2.6 School marketing and Invitational Education

Invitational Education is defined as a theory of practice that is designed to create a total school environment that intentionally invites people in schools to realise their relatively boundless potential (Purkey, 1999a:1). According to Palmer (1996:2), every person and everything in and around the school, adds to or subtracts from, the process of being a beneficial presence in the lives of human beings. Ideally, the factors of people, places, policies, programmes and processes should be so intentionally inviting as to create an environment in which each individual is cordially summoned to develop intellectually, socially, physically, psychologically and spiritually. Invitational Education provides a framework for making schools more exciting, satisfying and enriching the experience for everyone – all learners, parents and educators (Purkey, 1999b:1). People who apply the principles of invitational theory and practice adhere to the following fundamental beliefs (Purkey, 1999a:3):

- Every person wants to be accepted and affirmed as valuable, capable, responsible and wants to be treated accordingly;
- Every person has the power to create beneficial messages for themselves and others, and because they have this power, they can have responsibility;
- Every person possesses relatively untapped potential in all areas of learning and human development; and
- Human potential is best realised by creating places, programmes, policies, and processes intentionally designed to invite optimal development and encourage people to realise this potential in themselves and others.

2.6.1 The five powerful P's of invitational education

Invitational education is a theory of practice that is designed to transform and energise the five “P’s” of any school culture, namely places, policies, programmes, processes and people (Purkey and Novak, 1996:11). The following discussion illustrates how invitational education is woven into the fabric of the school (Schmidt, 2004:14; Purkey and Novak, 1996:11; Purkey and Strahan, 1995:2):

- **People**

While everything in life adds to or subtracts from success or failure, nothing is more important in life than people;

- **Places**

Careful attention is given to the physical environment of the school, including but not limited to well-maintained buildings and grounds, clean rest rooms, attractive classrooms, displays celebrating learner accomplishments. Ways are found to enhance the physical environment of the school, no matter how old the building. Places that reflect only the dominant culture without recognising the presence of diverse populations practise exclusion rather than inclusion in daily life;

- **Policies**

Refer to the procedures, codes of conduct, rules (written or unwritten), used to regulate the ongoing functions of individuals and organisations. Every school policy should be democratically developed, easy to understand and made available to everyone involved;

- **Programmes**

Invitational theory requires that programmes should be monitored to ensure that they do not detract from the goals for which they were

designed. Programmes that involve parents are encouraged, for example, involving parents in school marketing and policy development. In addition, programmes that neglect or ignore cultural or individual differences or processes adopted for the convenience of an elite few, may disinvite people who feel slighted or set apart from the rest of the population; and

- **Processes**

Process is the way in which things are done in the school. A democratic ethos is valued along with an academic orientation. All activities and procedures are designed to honour and include everyone. Ideas, needs, suggestions, concerns are welcomed in the inviting school.

2.6.2 Guiding principles – invitational education

Invitational Education provides an overarching framework for a variety of educational approaches to school improvement that fit with its four guiding principles (Juhnke and Purkey, 1995:50). Invitational Educational centres around the following four guiding principles of respect, trust, optimism and intentionality, discussed below:

- **Respect**

Everyone in the school is able, valuable and responsible and is to be treated accordingly. When the school conducts a marketing research, the needs, wants and concerns of customers should be respected and be taken into consideration;

- **Trust**

Education is a cooperative, collaborative activity where process is as valuable as the product. Attempting to get others to do what is wanted without involving them in the process, is a lost cause. Thus, trying to

market a product to parents and learners who were not involved in its design is a lost cause;

- Optimism

People possess untapped potential in all areas of human endeavour. It is not enough to be inviting; it is critical to be optimistic about the process. No one can choose a beneficial direction in life without hope that change for the better is possible; and

- Intentionality

Schools of choice are best realised by creating and maintaining inviting places, policies, processes and programmes and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally.

The guiding principles of invitational education offer a consistent 'stance' through which human beings can create and maintain an optimally inviting environment.

2.6.3 Levels of functioning

Furthermore, in addition to centering itself on the four guiding principles of respect, trust, optimism and intentionality, Invitational Education identifies four levels of functioning (Purkey, 1999b:3). Purkey further argues that everyone functions at each level from time to time but it is the level at which one functions that determines his or her approach to life.

Many people think that they already understand the concept of 'inviting' and see it as doing nice things – sharing a smile, giving a hug, saying something nice or buying a gift (Purkey and Stanley, 1991:33). While these may be worthwhile activities when used caringly and appropriately, they are only manifestations of

an invitational stance one takes. This invitational stance determines the level of personal and professional functioning (Schmidt, 2004:27).

The following levels in Fig. 2.9 provide a check system to monitor each of the five powerful P's identified by Schmidt (2004:11) and these are discussed below Fig. 2.9:

Fig. 2.9: Levels of functioning

Intentionally disinviting	Unintentionally disinviting
Unintentionally inviting	Intentionally Inviting

Source: Schmidt (2004: 31)

- **Intentionally disinviting**

People who behave in purposefully hurtful and harmful ways towards either themselves or other people, function at the lowest desirable level. Less intentionally “disinviting” could be an unfriendly in which a secretary answers a phone or when offices closed during lunch time. Furthermore, messages that tell learners they are not liked undermine the educators’ best efforts to teach and retain them (Palmer, 1996:3). This is the most negative and toxic level of human functioning that involves those actions, policies, programmes, places and processes that are deliberately designed to demean, discourage, defeat and destroy (Schmidt, 2004:12). In a school situation, intentionally disinviting functioning might be seen in

an educator who is purposely insulting learners or parents, a learners' code of conduct that is intentionally discriminatory, a programme that purposely demeans learners, or an environment intentionally left unpleasant and unattractive. Racism, sexism, homophobia, religious intolerance and other oppressive beliefs, when intentionally acted upon, demonstrate this level of functioning. This could negatively affect the school initiatives to market itself (Schmidt, 2004:13).

- **Unintentionally disinviting**

Purkey (1999b:2) states that people who function at this level do not intend to be hurtful or harmful, because they lack consistency in direction and purpose, they act in disinviting ways (Purkey, 1999b: 3). Though these people do not intend to hurt anyone, they do a lot of damage which is nonetheless hurtful, counter-productive and, sometimes, irreparable to the organisation or institution. It is like being run over by a truck, intended or not, the victim is still dead, customers are gone, they have withdrawn their children or they have chosen another school.

- **Unintentionally inviting**

Educators or schools that function at the unintentionally inviting level stumble accidentally into ways of functioning which are effective (Purkey, 1999a:3). However, such schools or educators encounter difficulty when asked to explain why they are successful. They can describe in good or loving details what they do, but not why. An example of this is the 'natural born' educator. Such a person may be successful in teaching because he or she exhibits many of the trusting, respecting and optimistic qualities associated with invitational theory. But because they lack the fourth critical element, intentionality, they lack consistency in and dependability on the actions they exhibit (Schmidt, 2004: 20).

According to Purkey and Schimdt (1990:27), the only weakness in functioning at the unintentionally inviting level, is the inability to identify the reasons for success or failure. Most people know whether something is working or not, but when it stops working, they puzzle about how to start it up again.

- **Intentionally inviting**

When educators function at the intentionally inviting level, they seek to consistently exhibit the assumptions of Invitational Education. Intentionality can be a tremendous asset for educators and school principals because it is a constant reminder of what is truly important in education. In Invitational Education, everybody and everything adds to, or subtracts from, connecting with learners. Ideally, the factors of people, places, policies, programmes and processes, should be so intentionally inviting as to create a situation where each individual is cordially invited to develop physically and emotionally (Schmidt, 2004:27).

It can deduced from the preceding discussion that one way in which school principals can apply marketing elements in their schools is by accepting the assumptions of invitational theory. Furthermore, rather than relying on one programme, one policy or one process, Invitational Education addresses the *zeitgeist*, the spirit within a school (Cloer and Alexandra, 1992:35). Invitational Education is concerned with more grades, attendance, academic achievement, discipline and even learner self-esteem. It is also concerned with the skills of becoming a decent and productive citizen in a democratic society. For schools to be able to attract and retain learners, they should make conscious efforts to be intentionally inviting. Invitational education cannot be divorced from school marketing, the two are intertwined, inseparable and each depends on the other. Different marketing models are discussed in the subsequent paragraph.

2.7 Marketing models in education

There are limited marketing models or strategies in the literature that can be employed or used by schools for marketing themselves. Furthermore, there is no consensus in the literature on a specific model or strategy for schools to use. Thus, this section aims at discussing and critically analysing some of the available models found in the literature.

2.7.1 Weingand's model

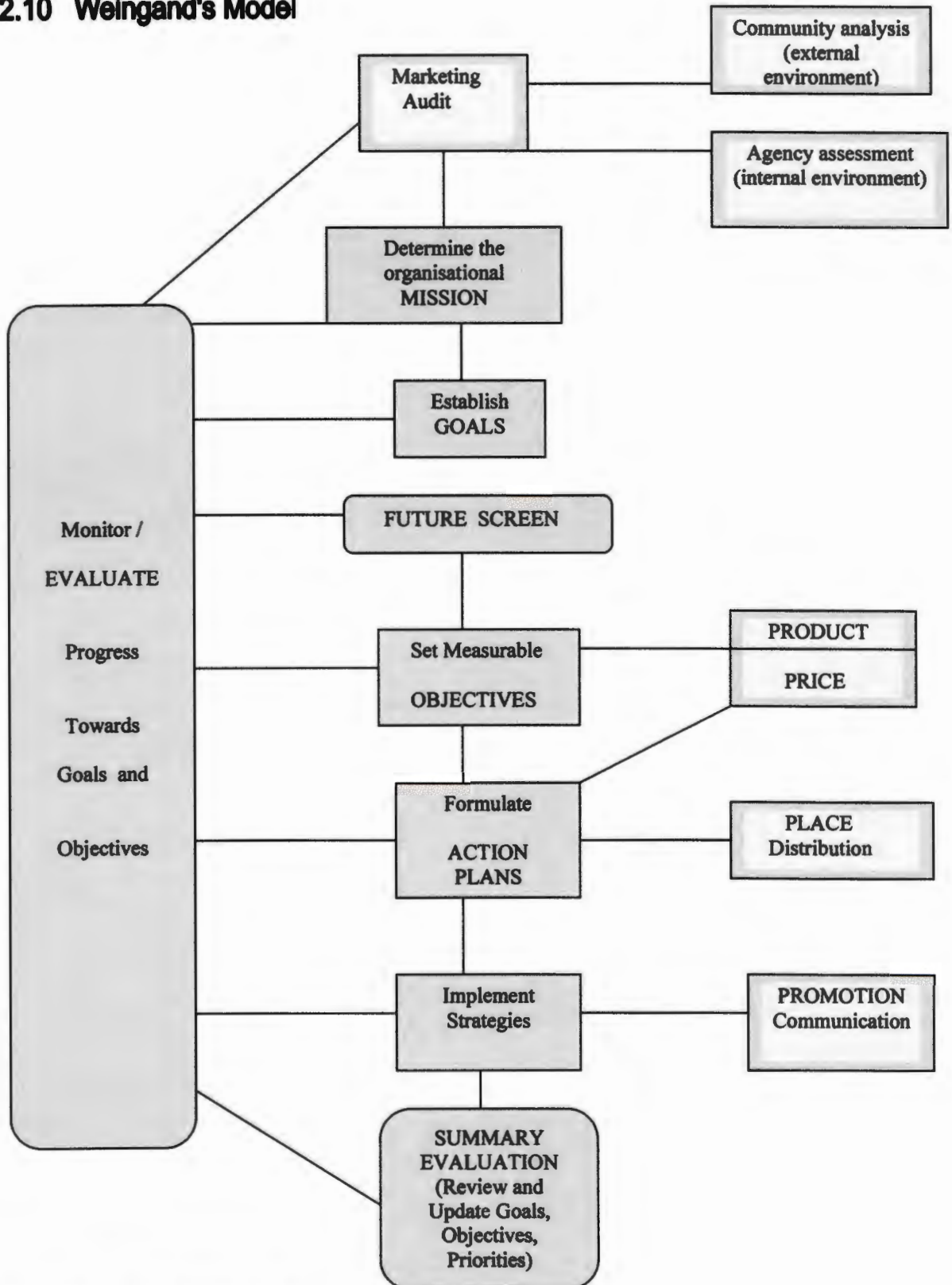
Weingand's model, shown by Fig.2.10, is a convergence of marketing and planning. Who argues that the two are incomplete without the other in the sense that each amplifies the power of the other and provides a wholeness of purpose and application. Planning sets the conceptual framework; marketing implements the planning directives and creates an environment conducive to an effective exchange process.

Step 1: The planning team

Weingand (1995:305) states that, at first, a planning or working team must be created or established and the team must consist of all stakeholders. The team must, therefore, be constituted by members of both the internal environment, that is, educators, support staff and parents and the external environment, to include funders or donors, policymakers and politicians. Long-range benefits can accrue when those to be affected by decisions, have been part of the decision-making process as they will also develop a sense of ownership.

Once the working team has been established, there needs to be consideration of the planning cycle or how often the process comes full circle and begins to repeat.

Fig. 2.10 Weingand's Model



Adapted: Weingand (1995: 312)

Step 2: The marketing audit

Fig. 2.10 shows that the marketing audit covers both the internal and external environment. A marketing audit is defined as a comprehensive, systematic, independent and periodic examination of an organisation's marketing environment, objectives, strategies, activities, with a view of determining problem areas and opportunities, and recommending a plan of action (Weingand, 1995:309).

Weingand (1995:309) suggests that when an external environment audit is done, the following elements may be appraised:

- Demographics – What are the attributes of the community in terms of population, gender, race, income, educational background and so forth ?;
- Geography : What constitute the physical landscape and climate ?;
- Sociology and psychology: Who are the individuals and groups comprising the target market ? Where is the power in the community and how does it flow ?;
- Economics: What major businesses or industries are presently in place or about to leave or enter the community?;
- Technology: What is the status of cable TV, satellite dishes, computer networks?;
- Politics: How does political power flow, how does it relate to societal power ?;
- Culture: Are there gaps that the school should attempt to fill?; and
- Competition: What areas of possible cooperation exist ? Where do areas of duplication exist ?

Weingand (1995:311) argues that it is important for environmental analysis to be a collective effort of the staff, learners, governing body members and representatives of the target market in the community. He further suggests that the following strategies can be employed in collecting primary source data (Weingand, 1995:314):

- The telephone survey – he regards it as one of the easiest methods to be used;
- The mail survey – it differs from telephone survey in language and the structure of the responses;
- The interview – Weingand regards this method as staff time-intensive in that a designated and trained member (paid or unpaid), conducts each in-depth interview; and
- Community meeting – participants in such a meeting or hearing should be regarded as ‘interested parties’ since they made the effort to attend.

Weingand (1995:314) argues that a combination of these methods may be very effective. But each school decides on what seems both reasonable and appropriate to its local situation.

Step 3: Defining the school’s market

After the marketing audit, Fig. 2.10 above, shows that the school’s mission and vision need to be re-assessed. The mission will assist the school to determine the customers to be served. The mission states what will and what will not be done in the context of community needs and available resources. Furthermore, the market consists of many segments. Market segmentation is the process of dividing customers into groups with unique characteristics and needs – it is necessary for the school to define its market.

Step 4: Developing goals, objectives and actions

Weingand (1995:314) defines goals as statements of purpose or intent which are written in global terms. It can be deduced from this definition that goals, while fluid, are reasonably constant:

- well-written goals frequently adapt well to changing situations;
- they may or may not be fully attainable, and
- they serve as a focus for directed activity.

He further states that objectives are written in language that is both measurable and attainable and which move an institution towards a stated goal. Thus, objectives are tools that can respond to changing environmental conditions.

The development of action statements is the final step in the developmental phase of the planning process. Each objective, in order to be accomplished, requires a series of completed actions. Action statements provide the working time frame of specific tasks which must be executed before the objective is realised.

It is argued that during the marketing audit, the analysis may only centre around the present issues, with little or no thought, of what rapid change might dictate. Thus, it is the responsibility of the planning team to become knowledgeable about the trends and probabilities that may have an impact upon the institution's operations. This information be used as a screen through which the collected data are passed.

Step 5: Developing products that meet community needs

Weingand (1995:315) states that once the needs of the school's community have been identified through the marketing audit, it is time to look critically at the school's product. This concept has been fully discussed in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.2.3 and 2.4.3.1.4) of this study. Weingand argues that in this time of rapid change, it is important for school managers and staff, to continually assess the products currently being offered in the light of the community needs, developing technologies and societal shifts. Therefore, it is crucial that products be regularly evaluated during the annual planning cycle.

Step 6: Identifying the cost of the product

To Weingand, the primary interpretation of the concept 'price' should be cost. According to Weingand (1995:315), every business and school should be considered a business – both have direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are those items that can be attributed to specific products, while indirect costs cover factors that relate to the school's total operations. For instance, direct costs include rental of space or equipment, salaries of personnel and others.

Weingand contends that it is important to break down and arrange costs by programme (product) – known as a programme budget. The following are the reasons for the creation of a programme budget:

- The ability to assess different products by comparing costs;
- The ability to demonstrate exactly how the money will be spent;
- The ability to document that products might decline or be eliminated if funding were reduced; and

- The ability to illustrate what products could be provided to the community if sufficient additional monies are to become available.

Step 7: Determining channels of distribution

Weingand regards distribution as 'place' – a term that is relatively straight forward when the product is available through a single location. It becomes more complex when there are multiple access points, including both physical sites and other delivery alternative systems (for instance universities with multiple campuses – like the University of South Africa - UNISA). Therefore, the place needs to be examined in the context of the product distribution and channels of connection between the product and customers with an emphasis on access.

Step 8: Promotion and communication

Promotion is that set of activities which are set in motion once all other marketing and planning components have been completed. Weingand (1995:315) states that the actual definition of 'promotion' is 'communication' – communicating to the community and to present to potential customers that the school has identified community needs and has developed both cost-effective products and methods of distribution that respond to those needs.

According to Weingand (1995:315) the following promotional aspects may be used:

- **Public relations**
Public relations incorporate the overall interaction between the organisation and its current and potential customers. Public

relations influence perceptions, attitudes and opinions by transmitting information concerning the benefits of using the present and/or proposed products;

- **Publicity**

Possible publicity efforts include press releases, newsletters, columns in local newsletters, media interviews, posters and displays; and

- **Advertising**

Weingand states that when publicity is paid for, it is generally considered to be advertising. Even though it is not commonly used, it could certainly be the most appropriate vehicle in some instances.

Step 9 – The final step: Evaluation

Fig.2.10 indicates that evaluation is an integral component of the planning process, it is also a complement to marketing. Weingand states that both formative (monitoring) and summary (final assessment) evaluation are required, if marketing and planning are to be effective and meaningful management functions. Furthermore, the end process must be evaluated to check on its effectiveness by collection of data. Appropriate data collection should be correlated to the desired outcome and must be linked directly to the question: What do we need or want to know to make informed and intelligent decisions? Weingand further argues that because this is an era of accountability, the requirement of hard data substantiation is becoming an absolute mandate.

2.7.2 The Hanson and Henry's model

According to Hanson and Henry (1993:79), strategic marketing must be viewed as a system with a beginning, middle, end and a new beginning. Like Weingand, their model is also linked to strategic planning, to ensure that as the ship leaves the pier, it knows where it is going and specially trained people are assigned to get it there.

The Hanson and Henry's model is a process that involves a sequence of co-ordinated research steps and operational steps.

Market analysis: Research step

According to Hanson and Henry (1993:80), this step is meant to get an understanding of the needs and expectations of the community. Market analysis must also incorporate the task of understanding the current perceptions the community holds of the school system and the quality of its programmes. They further argue that in education, doing needs assessment, fulfils a number of the requirements of a market analysis. But a needs assessment must move beyond gathering information on needs identification into the complexities of problem evaluation and priority setting.

Many methods can be employed to collect information for market analysis. Hanson and Henry (1993:80) state that, the focus group is currently the most common method in the private sector, and it is also starting to see some use in education. They further argue that a survey provides at least two sets of data, that is, demographic and opinion. The demographic data (age, gender, occupation) helps one to classify the opinions according to their respective community segments. The surveys used are conducted

regularly, to enable the school system to identify shifts in historical patterns.

Establish organisational objectives: Operational step

Hanson and Henry (1993:81) state that, once the market analysis has identified the needs and expectations of the community, it remains the responsibility of the school to evaluate them against the current programme offering. Gaps must be identified. The school needs also to determine to what extent the unmet needs are real or imagined. Lastly, the school needs to establish additional organisational objectives that will address those real needs judged to be unmet.

Define new offerings: Research step

Once organisational objectives are established, the school needs to identify new programmes or to modify the existing ones, in order to respond to the newly or current defined community needs. Hanson and Henry further argue that the school needs to conduct an internal evaluation, to determine its strengths and weaknesses, to see if it can respond to such needs.

Develop programme and policies: Operational Step

Hanson and Henry (1993:82) state that after the new programme and programme modification have been identified, new policies and activity guidelines must be established.

Define the marketing mission: Research step

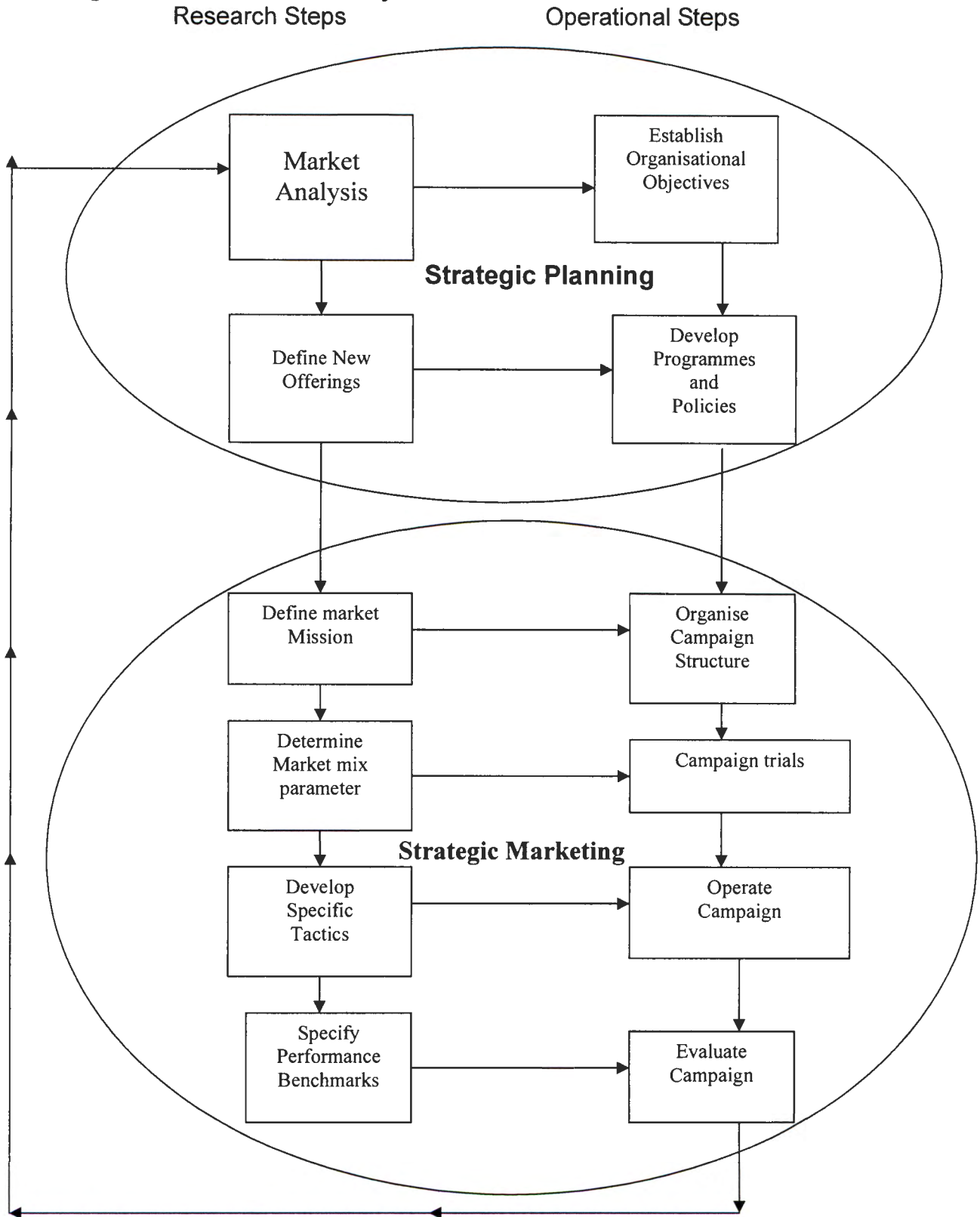
The objectives of the marketing mix must be clearly and realistically outlined. The planning at this stage is typically broad and directional in scope. During this stage, support for new programmes must be sought, the gap between the desired and current image must be reduced.

Organise campaign structure – Operational Step

According to Hanson and Henry (1993:83), a strategic marketing programme is a series of well-planned and coordinated campaigns. A leadership structure is key to organising the strategic marketing programme. This team includes a combination of school management team members and representatives of various segments of the community. Hanson and Henry (1993:83) further state that this team should compose of people who have certain expertise on politics, fund-raising, advertising, volunteerism and demographics. The team has a task of defining what should be done, when, how, at what cost and with what objective in mind.

Campaign planning market mix

A strategic marketing programme requires the creation of a marketing mix. It consists of a controllable variable that can be broken down using a classification scheme called the Four P's, namely product, place, price and promotion.

Fig. 2.11: Hanson and Henry's Model

Source: Hanson and Henry (1993: 82)

Campaign trial – operational step

Hanson and Henry (1993:84) recognise that pre-testing the campaign component on the market segments, is vital. The trial examines those entities upon which the entire campaign is premised. They further state that, if the trial does not work on a representative small sample, it would not work on the parent population.

Define specific tactics

According to Hanson and Henry (1993:84), at one point or the other, specific tasks must be carried out by specific individuals. This allows planning to shift from macro to micro level as the tactics and details of who does what, when and how are scripted.

Carry out the campaign – Operational step

At this stage, the coordinated components of the strategic plan are implemented.

Determine performance benchmarks – research step

Benchmarks at various points in the campaign may include, for example, the number of radio spots broadcasted, brochures distributed and community meetings held. Benchmarks are also important in guiding any necessary mid-course corrections.

Evaluate the plan and the campaign – operational step

During this stage, the impact analysis of the audience response audience coverage, environmental mediation and campaign impact is important.

Furthermore, the evaluation of all research and operational steps carried out within the strategic marketing framework, is also vital. Such an evaluation is essential in order to prepare for the next cycle of events in the continuous process.

2.8 Summary

The following major findings could be made from this chapter:

- School marketing is mainly about identifying and satisfying the needs and wants of parents and/or learners better than any other competitor (that is any other school in the neighbourhood) [cf. 2.2.1];
- Marketing is a management process and task (cf. 2.2.1);
- Marketing mix; the four (4) P's place, price, product and promotion; plays an important role in school marketing;
- Marketing is essential for schools in order to sustain the mutual benefit between the partnership of the school as providers of service and the customers (that is parents and learners);
- A school marketing plan consists of the following components:
 - Marketing audit;
 - Formation of objectives; and
 - Designing marketing strategies and programme.
- School marketing and Invitational Education are closely related and interdependent;
- It was further evident from the literature that there are very few marketing models or strategies available for school principals to use in marketing their schools. Only two of the available models were discussed in this chapter, that is, Weingand's model and the Hanson and Henry's model.

The following chapter focuses on parental school choice and research findings on studies already conducted about school or parental choice.

CHAPTER 3

3. SCHOOL CHOICE

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 focused on the nature and scope of school marketing and the link between school marketing and invitational education. Furthermore, marketing models in education were discussed.

The starting point for any discussion of parental choice of public schools should not be that it is a dim future prospect, for the pros and cons to be debated. It is already with us. Principals and other educational managers are aware that school choice is exercised primarily by parents who can afford to choose where they want their children to receive education.

This chapter therefore focuses on the definition of school choice, aims and limits of school choice and the reasons school choice is rejected by some researchers. It also examines the reasons parents choose and reject some public schools. Furthermore, it reveals the relationship between school choice and school marketing as well as the Constitutional and legal issues of school choice in South Africa. School choice in other countries is also discussed.

3.2 School choice: Defining school choice

School choice is an educational policy that provides a broad spectrum of options whereby parents can select the schools their children attend (Shumow, Vandell and Kang, 2002:1). These options include open-enrolment in public as well as in independent schools. Open-enrolment in the United States of America and elsewhere, involves children crossing attendance boundaries or catchment areas

to attend in neighbourhoods other than the ones in which they reside. Independent schools are another form of school choice (Shumow et al.,2002:1).

Heymeman (1997:333) argues that it is a mistake to assume that school choice implies that a family should have sole authority over educational decisions. He states that it has long been recognised in democracies that the selection of public or private schooling is a balance of equally legitimate interests. Heymeman (1997:334) further states that there are three communities, namely the state community, professional community and the family community. If the state community were to have hegemony over the others, it may lead to ideological oppression and deflation of professional integrity. If the professional community were to acquire hegemony, it would lead to an absence of civic duty and would abrogate the right of parents to choose moral principles for their children (Heymeman, 1997:336). But, also if the family community were to acquire hegemony, it could lead to an equally problematic conclusion which is the teaching of ethnocentric interests. This would create multiple professional standards without the necessary minimum required by the society and the economy.

School choice is explicitly designed to shift power to parents, empowering them to shop around for the schools their children will attend (Schneider, Schiller and Coleman, 1998:20). Parents must, therefore, have a set of preferences that they wish to realise. They must also gather information about the set of alternative schools available to their children, they must have trade-offs between the attributes of the alternative schools. Lastly, they must monitor the performance of the school to ensure that their choice was, in fact, a good one, given their preferences. Lee, Croninger and Smith (1994:434) state that the term 'choice' is a rather amorphous term, describing a situation in which parents can choose the school their children attend, regardless of where they live. Lee et al. (1994:435) further argue that in theory, school choice allows parents to influence the quality of their children's education.

A fundamental feature of school choice is its voluntary nature. Lee et al. (1994:437) state that even though choice is available to everyone, experience has shown that only a few families choose to send their children to schools (presumably better) outside their residential areas. They argue that the reason is because access and action is not one and the same thing – they are completely different.

In this study, school choice is seen as an opportunity afforded to parents to have more say in which primary and/or secondary schools their children should attend. The researcher hopes that this opportunity will increase choice and cause more fierce competition between different schools and, thereby, raise the overall quality of education.

The following discussion focuses on the Constitutional and legal issues on school choice in South Africa.

3.3 Constitutional and legal issues on school choice in South Africa

The study of Black education in South Africa is very complex and therefore the researcher has made a careful selection of material relevant to this research in temporal and spatial terms. The historical background of school choice in South Africa is discussed below:

3.3.1 Historical background of school choice in South Africa

Before the advent of apartheid, African schooling was under the authority of the missionaries (Sturm, Groenendijk, Kruithof and Rens, 1998:281). The majority of the National Party members, regarded this as a threat to their quest for supremacy. Therefore one of the first things that the National Party Government did on coming to power in 1948, was to remove Black education from church

control. Black education was then restructured within the parameters of the new apartheid society. The Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 was introduced in order to condition the African people to a pre-determined position of subordination.

The National Party used its control as a government to fulfil Afrikaner ethnic goals as well as White racial goals. Without compromise, the National Party gave fierce expression to its determination, to maintain White supremacy by coordinating and extending racial laws and tightening their enforcement (KaChoeu, 1991:72). By the 1990s black schools were still serving the aims and purposes that the Minister of Native Affairs Dr. Hendrick Verwoerd had stated: that he would reform Bantu Education so that the natives will be taught to realise that equality with Europeans is not their business (KaChoeu, 1991:72).

There were widespread protests against the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and other racist laws, because amongst others, these laws restricted movements of students or learners and choice of schools. Furthermore, African students or learners could not move or attend white schools where better education was offered. In addition, African students were not allowed at all to use facilities declared for white students. More laws, like the Group Areas Act of 1950, which set aside separate areas where each racial group could live, Prevention of Illegal squatters Act of 1951, the Urban Areas Act of 1954, the Natives Resettlement Act of 1954 and others were passed, to regulate the influx of blacks or non-whites to white areas. Thus, since 1948, the National Party made its mission very clear that Black people were inferior and as a result, shaped legislation and policies with regard to Black people in that direction.

White schools had the lowest student:teacher ratios and at the bottom of the list with the highest student:teacher ratios and large class sizes were African schools. Ratios were even higher in rural schools where teaching mostly took place in multigrade classes, church buildings, under the trees and in poorly-built

community schools. The number of African students/learners was increasing, but funding, on the other hand, was drastically reduced and more funding was directed towards White education (Sedibe, 1998:269).

There was much resistance to apartheid and its laws. The Southern Western Townships (Soweto) uprising of 1976 is a good example of such resistance. Amongst other reasons, the Soweto uprising broke out because of the following reasons:

- The State was spending approximately fifteen times more on White students than on Black students;
- The rejection of the expansion of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction into black schools;
- A severe shortage of classrooms and teachers resulted in overcrowding and high student:teacher ratio; and
- There were high failure rates resulting from poorly qualified teachers and poor resources.

The De Lange's Report of 1981 recommended that education should be administered through the three "own affairs" houses and the general affairs sub-cluster (Sedibe, 1998:270). The Whites, Indians and Coloured people were represented in parliament in the House of Assembly, House of Delegates and the House of Representatives, respectively. Black people had no direct representation in parliament, their education was clustered with the government's General Affairs together with defence and health – and was under the Central management of the National Department of Education through the Department of Education and Training. Education in South Africa was then administered by nineteen departments of education, that is, the three houses, the Department of Education and Training, self-governing territories and the so-called independent states (TVBC, that is, Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei) (Sedibe, 1998:270).

Until 1990, schools were either public or private, however, at the beginning of 1990, many House of Assembly schools were under-utilised (Sedibe, 1998:271). The options available to these schools were to open for people of colour or face closure. During this period, the four Clase Models were introduced. The first was for a school to retain the status quo, or by majority vote, to opt for one of the following three models (Sedibe, 1998:271):

- Model A: conversion to a private school;
- Model B: conversion to a state school with the parents' right to determine admission policy while ensuring that a majority (60 %) of the learner population remained white; or
- Model C: conversion to a state-aided (semi-private) school under the control of the school governing body.

The Conservative Party campaigned to indoctrinate Afrikaners to reject Model B schools (open-door schools). This campaign led to the founding of Christian People's Education, that opened a new separate school in Pretoria in 1992 with only 36 learners and which grew by mid-1993 to 13 schools. In 1992 it was announced that all status quo schools, should convert to Model C, many of the House of Assembly schools converted but a few retained the status of Model B (Adbi, 2001).

3.3.2 School choice in the Democratic South Africa

A few years after the Soweto uprisings of 1976, changes were introduced and apartheid laws were relaxed. More pressure was exerted on the State and ultimately a democratic order was instituted in 1994. However, the legacy of the struggle still remains in most schools. For instance, schools in rural areas and townships, are still inadequately resourced despite equity laws that have been introduced. Resources at some schools are still limited, such as, shortage of

textbooks, classrooms that are overcrowded and, in some areas, learners attend classes under the trees (Sedibe, 1998:268).

Furthermore, in 1994 the map of South Africa was redrawn and the four provinces, six self-governing territories and the four TVBC states were replaced by nine provinces. The advent of democracy in South Africa has led to the restructuring and transformation of the education system. The nineteen departments of education were merged into one national ministry and nine departments of education (Sturm et al., 1998:283).

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa Act no. 108 of 1996 establishes rights for the citizens of this country. Section 29 of this Constitution gives the citizen the right to education. Walford (1996:146) states that this is in line with Article 2 of the Protocol to the European Convention on human rights which states that no person shall be denied the right to education. Thus, everyone has the right to a basic education and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible [Constitution, Act no. 108 of 1996 section 29(1)].

The implementation of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 at the beginning of 1997, abolished the different models of schools and established two types of schools, namely the public and the independent schools, thereby doing away with Model C schools (Sedibe, 1998:278). In order for education to be accessible to all citizens, the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 (SASA) section 5(1) states that no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent:

- Is unable to pay or has not paid the school fees as determined by the governing body under section 39;
- Does not subscribe to the mission statement of the school; or

- Has refused to enter into a contract in terms of which the parent waives any claim for damages arising out of the education of the learner.

This section of the South Africa Schools Act (SASA) makes the admission of learners in South African schools open and it also allows for free movement of learners between schools. The Act also gives parents the right to choose the school their children would attend. In addition, according to this Act, section 5(9) provides that, if a learner or a parent of a learner is refused admission to a public school, the parent may appeal against the decision to the Provincial Member of Executive Council (MEC) for education.

Parents have fundamental rights and duties in respect of all aspects of a child's life, development and welfare (Oosthuizen, 1998:72). Common law principles provide that a parent has a right and a responsibility to educate, nurture and provide for his/her child. Thus, parents are required by law, to educate their children. The right and duty of the parent to educate a child, permits him/her to make decisions that affect his/her child as an individual, for instance, the particular school that he/she is to attend and the subjects that he/she may study or follow (Oosthuizen, 1998:78). The United Nations Universal declaration of human rights asserts that parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children (Hargreaves, 1996:133).

Choice without diversity is meaningless. A menu with only one dish precludes choices. Adler (1997:298) argues that if there is no genuine diversity, parents who cannot get their children into the popular schools, will continue to feel conned by the rhetoric of parental choice. Adler (1997:299) further states that it is not choice that is being exercised when parents, no longer trusting their neighbourhood schools, try and fail to place their children elsewhere. In addition, it is preferable for families to have a diversity of schools to choose from rather than to have no choice at all (Walford, 1996:151).

The government should not deny choice to those who want it, unless there are very powerful, reasonable and well documented grounds for doing so. Potgieter, Visser, Van der Benk, Mothata and Squelch (1997:97) state that in terms of SASA section 5, every Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of education, must ensure that there are enough school places so that every child who lives in his/her province, can attend school. Gorard (1999:25) and Macbeth (1989:112) state that choice is associated with the freedom of the citizen. He argues that a democrat would demand, as a rational being committed to liberty, to fairness and consideration of interest, that freedom of choice be given to parents and to children. This has been in pursuit of two fundamental principles, that education be made available to all and fairly distributed. If parents are given the freedom of choice, then choice must be allowed to operate (Bagley, Woods and Glatter, 1996:46). Thus, it is the responsibility of the government to ensure that there are enough public schools. Section 29(3) of the Constitution provides that everyone has the right to establish and maintain at their expense, an independent or private school that does not discriminate on the basis of race. Parents in South Africa have a broad choice, that is, they could choose between public schools, private schools as well as between private and public schools.

The introduction of the open admission policy in South Africa has left rural public schools under-subscribed and former Model C schools over-subscribed. Thus, in rural schools, the educator: learner ratio is very low (Maile, 2004:92). This unequal distribution of person-power in schools, was brought about by the implementation of various Resolutions of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC); Resolution 3 of 1996, Resolution 6 of 1998 and Resolution 2 of 2003, that dealt with procedures for rationalisation and redeployment of educators in the provisioning of educator posts. The most important object of these resolutions was to re-deploy educators in excess or in addition from where their services were less needed, to where they were mostly needed (Resolution 6 of 1998).

There are several possibilities for educators in schools with a declining roll or who are to be re-deployed because their schools are under-subscribed, and the following are such possibilities (Hargreaves, 1996:135):

- Good staff may leave the profession for greener pastures in the private sector;
- The quality of teaching and learning may also deteriorate;
- The staff become demoralised, and demotivated; and
- The staff is challenged out of complacency; they respond by identifying and then seeking to meet the expectations of the local community. The best teachers are retained and the least effective made redundant; there is a strong focus on those matters which are known to affect parental views and school reputation, for instance a concentration on discipline and social order.

In South Africa, legally, no child can be excluded from a state school because his or her parents are unable to pay fees.

3.4 School and parental choice

Choice is power and parents have the power to choose the school best suited for their children and this is similar to the power to choose jobs, homes, churches and leaders (Hakim, Seidenstat and Bowman, 1994:147). Gorard (1999:26) states that choice is a process and other studies, while acknowledging the role of the child, have portrayed school choice as a joint process (Gorard, 1999:27 and Macbeth, 1989:114). It is regarded as such because it involves the parent(s) of the child, relatives, the child and other family and community members.

Choice is not a panacea, but a prerequisite to improved education. Furthermore, choice is the key to educational reform because of its effectiveness in improving education and can be a powerful agent of change and improvement. Hakim et al.

(1994:148) believe that school choice, by itself, does nothing to improve schools, however its converse is also true, that, without choice, schools have not and are unlikely to improve. The following are advantages of school choice (Lankford and Wyckoff, 2001:293; Smith, 1995:147; and Hakim et al. 1994:149):

- The stabilisation of the school population due to the continuous enrolment of learners;
- The re-enrolment of dropouts and continued enrolment of potential dropouts;
- Choice is the only viable agent of change to improve schools;
- Fewer discipline and truancy problems;
- Choice gives people a sense of shared ownership in what they have chosen. If parents have chosen a particular school, they will have more interest, they will participate actively and voluntarily in its activities;
- Creation and implementation of alternative assessment of learners;
- Better usage of facilities and space within those facilities;
- Choice is consistent with the value system of most nations or societies;
- Creation of a sense of mission under each individual school's philosophy, giving parents, learners and educators a stake in the success of the school and invigorating the school as a whole;
- More parental and community involvement in each school;
- More diversity among schools and their curricula and hence more success in meeting the needs of learners' learning styles; and
- The advancement of racial integration and opportunities and support for minority learners.

Choice has many powerful enemies like change. It should not be surprising, for when any effort is made to change the status quo, it is bitterly resisted. However,

choice has the following disadvantages in general (Lankford and Wyckoff, 2001:292 and Smith, 1995:151):

- Choice segregates learners by race or social class;
- The factors that stimulate entrepreneurial activity in competitive markets are not present in public education;
- School choice is unlikely to produce innovative educational options without talented and energetic educators;
- Participation may be based on convenience or other factors; and
- Choice may insulate schools from change because the most active parents will leave the schools that need them most.

Lankford and Wyckoff (2001:297) believe that school choice makes a difficult situation worse. They argue that choice will do the following:

- Reduce public support for the very schools most in need of additional funding as learners leave to attend other schools;
- Skim off the academically best learners, leaving behind the weakest, least motivated learners; and
- Increase the existing racial and economic segregation of schools.

To sum up, the word 'choice' has connotations of personal freedom and abundance of opportunities. It is born out of a vision to provide quality education to children through shared governance and support for education endeavours. Furthermore, it is a measure to attain equality and to exercise rights.

3.4.1 Reasons for school or parental choice

Parents are less consistent in their reasons for making a positive choice of schools. The classification of reasons for school choice, as revealed by the literature, has two broad categories namely, the academic and non-academic reasons discussed below (Gorard, 1999:28; Coldron and Boulton, 1996:54; Smedley, 1995:96 and Maddaus and Marion, 1995:77):

3.4.1.1 Academic criteria

Academic criteria are regarded as one of the major reasons for school choice (Gorard, 1999:29, Bagley et al., 1996:47 and Fossey, 1994:322). The reason is that it is relatively easy to quantify and compare between schools. Academic standards are of a great concern for the middle-class, mainly professional parents, who are described as 'active choosers' (Smedley, 1995:97). These parents look for quality education and academic excellence but the child's wishes are not highly rated. Parents of high socio-economic status also regard good examination results as vital but decisions are made jointly with the child.

In the South African context, choice opportunities are not evenly distributed socially, and the higher the socio-economic level of the parent, the greater the choice opportunities. This is an indication, as well as a result, of the increasing commodification of education, that is, more money buys a better education (Hoadley, 1999:28). There are several reasons why school choice might be related to academic achievement. Families are empowered to avoid schools that they perceive to be of low-quality, parents are able to select a school with resources that match individual children's needs (Shumow et al., 2002:3).

Woods, Bagley and Glatter (1998:123), on the other hand, state that parental school choice, tend to reflect a balance between instrumental-academic and

intrinsic-personalised/social value perspectives, rather than the academic being valued as the sole or supreme measure for schooling.

3.4.1.2 *Situational or convenience criteria*

Parents, such as the working class families, choose schools because of their proximity to their homes and/or having friends in the same school. However parents in rural areas, who appear to have no choice of schools at all, choose the local schools and schools where it is easy to travel to because of isolation and travel difficulties (Gorard, 1999:31). Bagley et al., (1996:48) assert that the scope of parental choice is very limited in rural areas because of the distance between schools, the low number of schools and the limited public transport system. Bagley et al., (1996:51) point out that schools often have to work with the children who are the product of the community they serve. But for more affluent families in rural areas, travelling is not important, thus choice is not based on whether children will travel or not.

Parsons, Chalkley and Jones (2000:37) state that school proximity is ever-present as a choice factor in the published studies. There is substantial research evidence that many parents will choose the local school, provided it satisfies their basic requirements for a safe and disciplined environment and acceptable academic standards. Adler (1997:300) states that the decision-making process of parents, corresponds with the 'satisfying' model, whereby parents seek the most convenient school that satisfies various defined standards rather than tries to find an alternative that maximises particular pre-defined goals. Goldring and Hausman (1999:481) found in their research that blacks in the USA, are more likely to choose for reasons of convenience than academic reasons and are more likely to opt for Catholic schools.

3.4.1.3 *Organisational criteria*

The organisational criteria include the elusive 'ethos', as well as the school size and management style. Parents who use the organisational criteria, look for school where they would be welcomed, schools with attractive uniform, attractive environment and happy atmosphere (Gorard, 1999:32).

3.4.1.4 *Security criteria*

Parents who regard security as important, are generally concerned about the safety and welfare of their children. Coldron and Boulton (1996:57) and Smedley (1995:97) state that parents prefer to take their children to schools where they would be happy. Ill-discipline threatens children's happiness either in the form of direct bullying or as a result of unruly elements, and parents show appreciation for schools that proactively deal with bullying incidents. But one common strand involves discipline, which can be lenient, fair, firm but not severe. Adler (1997:308) found that in Scotland, discipline was used as the major factor in secondary school choice.

Most parents using the Catholic schools in the USA are chiefly looking for the teaching of moral values, discipline, respect and care for others (Gorard, 1999:34, and Goldring and Hausman, 1999:475). Goldring and Hausman (1999:475) found that in the USA, lower income parents chose schools for discipline or safety reasons.

3.4.1.5 *Voice and exit option*

The voice 'implies articulation of one's critical opinions' when dissatisfied with services received or the quality of education at the school. If the school fails to improve sufficiently, parents may choose the exit option and enrol their children elsewhere (Goldring and Hausman, 1999:477). If parents are dissatisfied with

their local public schools, they have the option to either exit (moving away or choosing private schooling) or voice (trying to change the school). Without voice, parents dissatisfied with the public schools have two options only (Lee et al., 1994:438) namely:

- Resorting to political or legal action to engineer a change; or
- Removing their child and bearing the cost of a private school while continuing to pay taxes to support public education.

If a parent uses the exit option, the parent does not have the following options (Witte, 1999:59):-

- To say what is exactly wrong; or
- What should be done to correct it; or
- Have to argue, persuade or cajole teachers or management.

One only needs to exit and look for another suitable alternative. Goldring and Hausman (1999:478) argue that parents choose because they are dissatisfied with the previous school. Martinez, Godwin, Kemerer and Perna (1995:493) point out that choosers tend to be more dissatisfied with the previous school than the non-choosers.

In summary, there are many choice systems, parents from certain social groups may not be active choosers. Furthermore, parents seem to be exercising choice for different reasons in different contexts.

Despite the above reasons and benefits for choosing certain schools, some schools are rejected and or avoided by the parents and learners.

3.4.2 Reasons why some schools are avoided or rejected

Smedley (1995:98) points out that parents are remarkably consistent in their reasons for avoiding or rejecting particular schools. The following are reasons for school rejection (Bagley, Woods and Glatter, 2001:310; Bagley et al., 1996:53; and Smedley, 1995:100):

- **Transport or distance to and from the school**

In a research conducted by Bagley et al. (2001:312) in the UK, most parents, from semi-rural areas of Greenvale indicated transport and/or distance as the major reason for non-selection or rejection of some schools. Parents indicated that there was lack of private or adequate public transport – at certain stages that caused a lot of inconvenience and difficulties with regard to getting to and from school. The travelling distance from home to an ‘alternative’ school was – for geographical reasons – more pronounced in the semi-rural and rural areas. Parents were somehow concerned about the safety of their children in having to travel, in some instances, long distances to and from school on public transport, which sometimes was unreliable, in the dark and during cold winter months (Bagley et al., 2001:315).

- **Learners at the school**

Generally, this factor is related to the ‘unacceptable’ appearance and behaviour of children who already attend a particular school, where learners smoke, abuse drugs and use foul language during school hours and after school (Bagley et al., 2001:319).

- **Ethnic composition**

Ethnic composition refers to the racial or ethnic make-up of a school and how integrated such a school is. This will mostly be applicable in multi-ethnic or multi-racial areas or even schools. Bagley et al. (2001:320) state that in the Northern Heights (UK) white parents moved away from multi-ethnic schools to schools that were predominantly white because of the existence of racist ideas – based on radicalised choice.

- **School environment**

School environment refers to the structural features of a school such as its size, age or state of repairs or maintenance. Purkey and Schmidt (1990) states that almost anyone can recognise smelly restrooms, cluttered offices, peeling paints or unkempt buildings. Bagley et al. (2001:320) argue that parents would reject schools with playgrounds full of broken glass and broken fences. Schools that are very big, very old, with a lot of concrete corridors, tend sometimes to put parents off.

- **Staff at the school**

This factor relates to issues such as the 'scruffy' appearance of educators, their lack of enthusiasm, and generally being 'unapproachable' (Bagley et al., 2001:321). In the research conducted by Bagley et al, (2001:321) parents from the working-class indicated that the staff, and by implication the school, did not seem interested in them because of their social background. They seemed to be interested on parents who spoke very nicely or looked 'moneyed'. In this context, whether the attitude of staff towards these low socio-economic parents was part of a deliberate strategy or a subconscious

response on behalf of some educators or support staff to behave in accordance with the direction they (and possibly senior management) would like the school to develop, it nevertheless has the effect of making parents reject certain schools.

- **The school principal**

Some schools are rejected because the school principal is very pompous towards his or her staff, speaks over them and so on. But also because of their management styles, especially in situations where it is a one-man show, and people are not happy about their leader (Bagley et al., 2001:317). Sometimes it is the overemphasis placed by the principal on a school's academic prowess in comparison with other aspects of the school, especially those related to providing a caring environment for the learners. In this instance, it is not the behaviour of the principal in relation to individuals, rather, it is what he/she says and the impression he/she gives of the school that makes parents reject the school.

- **School reputation**

When choosing schools, parents avoid schools with bad reputations. The following are some of the characteristics of schools with a 'bad reputation' (Smedley, 1995:101):

- Bullying of learners by others;
- Violence;
- Racism;
- Low academic standards; and
- Educators who appear not to be interested.

Bagley et al. (1996:55) argue that once the school has acquired a bad name it will take a lot of time to overcome that and reverse it. A school's perceived bad reputation may relate in a general sense to one or more of the factors listed as a reason for school rejection.

Bullying as a reason for school rejection can be divided into the following two categories (Bagley et al., 2001:322):

- Concerns based around the knowledge of children already at a school who had been bullied. This could lead to parents not wanting their child in such an environment and reject the school; and
- Concerns of parents whose children had either been bullied by learners at their junior school and who are attending at a preferred school – thus parents rejecting the school because they do not want their child to attend the same school with his/her former bullies or who had been attacked by a learner(s) already attending a particular school (Bagley et al., 2001:322).

In summary, from the discussion on reasons for school rejection, it is evident that parents have a tendency to avoid schools where human warmth is relatively neglected and where a concern with the rational academic is seen as too dominant. Woods (2000:227) defines human warmth as a concern for the intrinsic worth of all people as people, the communication of that concern through appropriate ways of relating to others and manifesting forms of care and support. Human warmth is concerned with social relations, for instance, it includes a concern to avoid environments in which bullying is not effectively tackled, or in which the atmosphere is unfriendly (Woods, 2000:231).

The next section focuses on the implications of school choice on different stakeholders, such as, schools, parents and learners.

3.4.3 Implications of choice on different stakeholders

The following are some of the implications or effects of school choice on the school, parents and learners.

3.4.3.1 *Effects of choice on schools*

It should be borne in mind that, from the onset the possibility of parents to withdraw their children from a school of choice is a very powerful motivator for schools (educators and principals). Schools of choice need to attract learners in order to survive. Hill (1996:672) argues that every school can offer something to give it an identity, for instance, a specific curriculum (Science schools in South Africa), social climate or extra-curricular activities that could attract the interest of parents and learners. But, once it has established an identity, it has to deliver on its promises well enough, to keep current learners from transferring 'out'.

Hill (1996:672) further states that once an identity has been established, the staff has a strong incentive to avoid major disruptions in the programme. If a school is compelled to close because few learners want to attend it, all educators have to find new jobs, regardless of how well they have been teaching. Teachers in schools of choice have a strong incentive to keep their work in line with the mission of the school, to help one another, to identify weaknesses, and to ensure that variations in teacher performance do not harm the school's ultimate product and reputation.

Staff in schools of choice know that the continuation of their jobs depends on their own performance and that of their colleagues (Hill, 1996:673). Therefore, they are quick to alert their colleagues or school management if another teacher is not performing up to set standards. They are also reluctant to give up on a learner, simply because too many stories of failure can have a negative impact

on their school's reputation. Hill (1996:673) states that in the USA, staff members in a compulsory attendance public school need not fear for their jobs if their school fails to perform. He argues further that even if the state could intervene by closing the school, staff members will be assigned to a similar school in the local system. Schools of choice have no such luxury and the staff members must treat all learners as if they are educable, not frozen in either their academic abilities or their attitudes (Hill, 1996:674).

Hargreaves (1996:137) points out that if the school is not chosen, it becomes under-subscribed. An under-subscribed school usually has more accommodation than learners. There are several possibilities for under-subscribed schools with a declining roll (Hargreaves, 1996:138) and these are indicated below:

- The staff become demoralised, good staff leave, resources decline, quality of teaching and learning deteriorates; or
- Little significant change; or
- The staff is challenged out of complacency; the best teachers are retained and the least effective are made redundant; they respond by identifying and then seeking to meet the expectations of the local community.

Hargreaves (1996:138) argues that schools which fall under the first category, need government intervention for the sake of learners already in those schools.

3.4.3.2 *Effects of choice on parents*

The connection between parents and school of choice is a complex one. Hill (1996:674) points out that parents who choose a school for their children, give the school a grant of parental authority. School staff members are, therefore, able to use the parents' grant authority to make demands on the learners. For instance, learners could be told that they have been sent to school to learn.

Schools of choice also have leverage in dealing with parents and they could make the following demands on parents, for instance (Woods, 2000:224, and Hill, 1996:675):

- To monitor homework;
- Ensure that learners attend school regularly; and
- To ensure that the learners come to school well fed, rested enough and ready to learn.

This is mostly a common practice in the former Model C schools in South Africa. Schools of choice understand that parents lack the time and money to make donations, raise funds or attend frequent meetings. But, the schools demand that parents should do anything within their power, to ensure that their children succeed in the school. In the United States of America, partnership schools look for foster homes for learners whose families have been disrupted by death, unemployment, illness or imprisonment. But, they would still expect the family to support the educational process whenever it is physically possible (Hill, 1996:671). Schools of choice are very influential because they are trusted; there is that relationship of trust between schools of choice and the parent community.

3.4.3.3 *Effects on the learners*

Evidence from countries where school choice experiments are underway indicates that choice can improve learner performance. According to the Mackinac Center for Public Policy (1999:2) in New York, 1 300 low-income families received privately funded scholarship to choose the schools their children would attend. After one year, the scholarship learners were scoring higher on reading and mathematics tests than their public school counterparts. On the other hand, school choice helps learners from low-income families to remain (or opt to remain) in public schools. A study conducted by Ohio University

in 1998, found that public school learners got higher – than – average grades when they lived in areas with larger than usual proportions of learners enrolled in private schools (Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 1999:2). The reason is that increased competition from private schools compels public schools to do a better job with their learners as well. In fact, competition can succeed where increased spending cannot.

3.4.4 Aims of school choice

On the basis of a comparative study of school choice in six countries, namely Australia, England, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and the United States of America, the following main aims of school choice can be isolated (Adler, 1997:310):

- To stimulate and respond to an increased desire to choose among existing schools;
- To give parents a greater role, and professional educators a reduced role, in shaping school policy;
- To establish a new discipline which encourages learners in public schools, to perform well;
- To extend the range of choices available to parents and encourage greater educational pluralism within the public as well as the private or independent sector; and
- To increase the range of options open to parents to influence the quality of their children's education.

Thus, school choice may lead to academic benefits as a result of better “matches” between learners and the schools they attend.

3.4.5 Limits on school choice

The basic element of any open admission policy is to afford parents the right to send their children to any school of their choice (Adler, 1997:310). This right may be limited in a number of ways and countries in terms of the following:

- Whether choice is optional or mandatory. There is a vast difference between countries (like Sweden) in which learners are allocated to a school but may choose a different one if they wish and countries (like New Zealand) in which one is not allocated to a school and everyone has a choice;
- Whether or not limits are set on school rolls. In the Netherlands there are no limits and the public authorities have to build or procure extra accommodation for schools that are overcrowded, in New Zealand schools must admit learners unless they can demonstrate that they are in danger of overcrowding, in France, choice of secondary schools is permitted only as long as the preferred school does not become too full or the local school too empty;
- How places are allocated when they cannot all be met – ‘objective’ criteria are usually adopted, most commonly geographical proximity and one or more siblings already at the school. Somewhat paradoxically, the use of such criteria militates against parents who may have good reasons for wanting to send their child to a particular school;
- Whether reasons for choice need to be given or are taken into account. If reasons are taken into account, parents can ‘play the system’; if not, parents can choose on ‘questionable’ grounds, for instance, on the basis of the ethnic composition of the school;
- Whether or not choice is restricted to school within the parent’s education authority;

- Whether or not choice is restricted to public schools and whether or not it extends to private schools; and
- Whether or not assistance with transport costs is available.

If not carefully implemented, school choice would disproportionately benefit minority learners because the academic and educational practices in some public schools may not be well-suited to meet the needs of all learners while some schools of choice may have cultures, missions, or expectations that are more congruent with learners' needs.

3.4.6 Objections to school choice

School choice may prompt a two-tiered public education system, in which those learners with motivated parents leave for good schools, while other learners languish. The other concern is that school choice seems not to have 'plan B' for many things which may go wrong. School choice converts schools into businesses that struggle against each and raises questions of what would happen when one of them goes "out of business" or bankrupt (Holland, 2003:2). The following are some of the objections raised towards school choice (Holland, 2003:4 and Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe, 1995:147)):

- Choice might be a fine idea but it will not work in practice. Gewirtz et al. (1995:149) state that parents who are already more advantaged are more likely to take advantage of it and, by so doing, add to their advantage or because popular schools are bound to fill up and as a result, choice is closed off;
- Choice might work but it will make undesirable side effects. For instance, it may result in increased social segregation and reduce the pressure to improve the educational system;
- Choice in education is self-defeating because the exercise of choice by some may pre-empt it for others. For instance, if some parents (in

minority) in a given area, choose not to send their children to a particular local school, the school will no longer be viable and has to close although the majority of parents in the area wish to send their children there; and

- Putting power into the hands of parents will make schools more conservative and throttle innovation as schools seek to perform well in those respects which parents regard as important, for example, good examination results, at the cost of providing a 'good' education.

It is important to explain the different categories of parents that can be identified when dealing with school choice. The following section distinguishes between skilled, semi-skilled and disconnected parents.

3.5 Parents as customers

At the level of political rhetoric, parental choice of school is championed as a mechanism that will extend personal freedom by giving greater control to all parents while making schools more responsive to their customers. Furthermore, the rhetoric simply assumes that the mechanisms of school choice, once established, will guarantee equal parental access to the benefits of choice. Increasingly, the discourse of traditional comprehensive schooling is being combined with a market-oriented lexicon that emphasises easily visible and quantifiable academic results. Gewirtz et al. (1995: 149) suggest that this discursive shift is part of a process of value drift, which appears to be effective in schools. This drift in values denotes a transition from comprehensive to market values within the school value system. Thus, it is a shift from schools led by an agenda of social and educational concerns to schools led by image and budgetary concerns; from cooperation among schools to competition between schools; and, more significantly, from schools oriented to serving community needs to schools oriented to attracting "motivated" parents and "able" learners (Holland, 2003:5).

There are three types of parents as customers, namely the privileged or skilled choosers; the semi-skilled choosers and the disconnected choosers (Gewirtz et al., 1995:150). This analysis shows how school choice is directly and powerfully related to social class. Though the semi-skilled group, the privileged or skilled choosers are overwhelmingly middle and upper-middle class, the disconnected choosers are overwhelmingly working-class. Even though the three categories are ideal types, the central point is that, contrary to the political rhetoric of parental choice, the differences in the process of choosing a school are not exclusively a matter of individual deficiency in which certain parents are less motivated and responsible. These three categories of parents as customers, are briefly explained in the following discussion.

- **The privileged or skilled choosers/parents**

The privileged/skilled parents (broadly the middle class) value the idea of, and have a strong inclination towards school choice. This type of parent possesses a substantial capacity to engage with and use the possibilities of school choice. They already possess the correct economic, social and cultural capital. Skilled or privileged parents are able to decode and understand school systems and organisations; discriminate between schools in terms of policies and practices; engage, question, evaluate and challenge teachers and principals and collect and interpret pertinent information from a variety of sources (Hoadley, 1999:37).

- **Semi-skilled choosers or parents**

Semi-skilled choosers or parents are newcomers and consist mainly of the working class parents. They tend to exhibit some schooling knowledge and choosing abilities similar to the privileged parents, but to a far lesser extent. The families represented by this category have a strong inclination

towards school choice, but a limited capacity to engage effectively with the market. Semi-skilled parents are oriented to the same schools as the privileged or skilled parents, however, their socio-cultural histories do not provide them with the same experience and inside information about the school nor the social contacts and skills, to pursue their choice productively (Hoadley, 1999:39).

Furthermore, semi-skilled parents are less familiar with the rules of the game, the complexity of choosing a school is often reduced, and schools are understood in terms of very general qualities – both positive and negative. They have little confidence in the judgement being made about various possibilities, there is at the same time also a degree of confusion and uncertainty surrounding the parents' perception of schools (Hoadley, 1999:39). As school choosers, these parents/families talk about potential school choices as outsiders, relative to the privileged or skilled parents. As a result, as outsiders, they may be more easily influenced by media accounts of schools and by individuals school self-promotion or advertising than skilled parents.

Like the privileged or skilled parents, the semi-skilled parents are concerned about the proportion of racial and ethnic minority learners in various schools, with the only difference being that privileged/skilled parents may not refer to minority learner mix in overt terms. Privileged parents, perhaps more attuned to the social unacceptability of racism, are more reticent about their own racism and more skilled in disguising it in socially acceptable ways (Hoadley, 1999:31).

- **Disconnected parents**

The disconnected parents are detached from the market and they are not inclined to engage with it. These parents have no views at all about

education or no concern about schools and their children's experiences and achievement. Many disconnected parents, though not all of them, care very much about their children's education, but they do not see their children's enjoyment of school or their educational success as being facilitated by a consumerist approach to schooling. Choice is primarily determined by considerations around distance, safety, convenience and locality. It is also informed by local social networks rather than 'the individuality of the child-matching strategies' of the skilled choosers (Hoadley, 1999:37).

Thus, for these parents, the idea of critically examining and comparing a wide range of schools is not within their frame of reference. For disconnected parents, choice means something different from the process gone through by the privileged and semi-skilled parents. School choice seems more or less predetermined, a process of confirmation rather than comparison.

In summary, parental choice cannot be separated from the experiences, relationships and environments that constitute and constrain the lives and opportunities of different groups of parents and their families. For the disconnected and semi-skilled parents, choice of school is not an actual matter of free choice, in which all forms of coercion are absent and everyone is vested equally with power. The process of choosing a school, especially for the disconnected parents, is in reality a complex terrain of concerns and necessities unrelated to education. Schools have to be fitted into a set of constraints and expectations related to work roles, family roles and the demands of household organisation. For privileged parents, and some semi-skilled parents, it is more likely that family roles and household organisation are accommodated at school. In addition, the sense of locality in disconnected choice and more expansive activities of privileged parents, suggest that parents as consumers, are oriented to different circles or groups of schooling (Hoadley, 1999:38).

3.6 School choice decision-making

Currently one of the unanswered educational questions with regard to school choice, is whether parents choose schools, or learners choose schools or schools choose customers (parents and learners). The literature is also not specific in answering this question, and there is no agreement or consensus on the answers given.

While acknowledging the role played by the child in the process of choosing a school, the literature has portrayed that school choice is a joint venture or process (Gorard, 1996:237 and Macbeth, 1989:114). It is regarded as a joint process because it involves the parent(s) of the child, the child, brothers and sisters, relatives and other members of the family and the community. Therefore it is evident from the literature that most players are involved in choice at different stages of the process of school choice. The bottom-line is, if people are given the freedom of choice, choice must be allowed to operate to the benefit of the direct consumers (learners) and the larger society.

Mothers are almost always greatly involved in the process of school choice, partly because they are more commonly the parents in one-parent families. But, in most cases, both parents are involved with the fathers acting as a form of later verification. Clearly then, in most cases, the decision is mostly a commonly joint one. Even though the right to choose is given to parents, it is the child who actually has the largest say (Gorard, 1999:36 and Reay and Ball, 1997:93). Some parents may find it difficult to distinguish between taking the child's preference into account and allowing the child as a person to choose (Gorard, 1999:36). For instance, in the working-class families, parents are much more reluctant to go against the child's wishes (Smedley, 1995:102). Kearney and Arnold (1994) state that most learners at secondary level, exercise some

choice in the programme they follow, the subjects and courses they pursue and also the activities in which they are engaged.

However, where choice of single-sex or mixed schools exist, parents are more likely to opt for a single-sex school for their daughters and mixed schools for their sons. Most parents allow their children to go to schools where they feel that they will be happy (Smedley, 1995:102). In some instances, there is a likelihood that often the views of children and parents coincide. Starnes and Paris (2000:393) argue that if children are allowed to make decisions on their own without boundaries, without coaching and without respect for the rights of others (the rights of parents), effective learning, the development of democratic principles and the developmental progress of learners are impaired.

Children like to go to schools where they will feel secure, where friends, relatives and neighbours' are attending and which are closer to their homes (Starnes and Paris, 2000:394). Children are not in favour of schools where there is bullying, gangs and violence (especially boys), drug abuse and smoking (mainly girls) and schools that appear to be old and dirty (Smedley, 1995:102). The prominent role played by children is influential to their parents' choice of school.

3.7 School choice in other countries

The following discussion examines school choice in developed countries like England and France.

3.7.1 School choice in England

Karsten, Visscher and De Jong (2001:232) state that the term 'choice' is largely absent from English education law, but all reforms since 1988 stress the right of parental choice. They further state that it is the duty of the Local Education Authority (LEA) to make arrangements for each parent to express a preference

for a particular school. The parent's preference must be honoured, unless the school:

- Has reached its physical capacity;
- Has a denominational or charitable character and the child does not belong to that faith or denomination; or
- Is selective and the child does not meet the selection criteria.

In England, parents cannot be forced to send their child to a local school with a particular catchment area. The following two procedures are present in fairly widespread use:-

- Open enrolment – in which all parents have to express a preference, which will be honoured, provided there is enough accommodation; and
- The traditional way to allocate a place in a school for the child, with the parents submitting a request for a different school if they so wish.

In England, schools admit learners based on (social) selection in response to market forces in the education sector. Middle-class parents do their best to get their children into high scoring schools (Karsten et al., 2001:233). Performance in terms of examination results, appears to be only one of the many factors that parents take into consideration when choosing a school. The extent to which a school is 'child-centred', is more important to some parents than the extent to which such a school is 'academic centred'. As a result, schools are forced to respond differently in the local market in which they operate. The following responses or effects on schools are evident from schools in England due to school choice (West, Noden, Edge, David and Davies, 1998:46):

- Schools do environmental scanning to gain greater knowledge of their own position in the market;

- Substance changes in the curriculum, the mission, the composition of the learner population (through admission criteria), organisation and equipment;
- Structural changes in the administration or status of the school;
- Promotional activities to present the school in as favourable a light as possible; and
- Changes in resource management (personnel policy).

The changes above, mainly fall into categories, namely promotional activities and substantive changes and actions geared to improving examination performance. Promotional activities are mainly to inform parents and learners about the school using glossy brochures. The most important aim of substance change, which is concerned with the curriculum and primary process, is to influence the learner intake. This is not so much about what the school can do for its learners but what the learners can do for their school. Because disruptive learners can affect the learning of a large proportion of a class, schools could be more inclined to exclude them (Ball, 1999:90).

3.7.2 School choice in France

Formal opportunities for parental choice in France are limited. Parents use the private sector, mainly of Catholic affiliation, because 40% of learners have spent some time in these schools (Karsten et al., 2001:233). This is in contrast to the official policy of the *carte scolaire* (school cards). According to Karsten et al., (2001:234) the *carte scolaire* took away parents' freedom to send their children to the school of their choice, requiring them to choose a school in their own district.

In response to the socialist government's plan to abolish the specific status of private schools, experiment with limited school choice began to be allowed (desectorisation). This policy of desectorisation has been systematically extended and broadened. At present, it is estimated that half of all secondary

schools, use the desectorisation policy. Paris has been completely desectorised for a long time (Karsten et al., 2001:236).

The use of *carte scolaire*, which compels parents to register their children at the nearest school, is applied in a varied way, depending on the political affiliations or tradition of the region. This is the reason why the *carte scolaire* was used in a fairly flexible way in the Paris region and ultimately was abolished. But, some regions, like around Lille, the card is still applied in more strict ways. Karsten et al., (2001:237) point out that where the *carte* is applied in a flexible way, movements do take place. There is a flight to the “better” schools or private schools and “poorer” schools are avoided. In France, a high mark in the school-leaving examinations is worth more than in some other European countries.

In France, like in other countries, there is a difference between the high social class and the middle-class. The higher social groups have a broader choice of ‘good’ schools and worthwhile options when it comes to curricula because of where they live, for instance, in Paris, there are many *lycees* (French schools for older learners) with very good reputations. The middle-class, who live in more socially heterogeneous districts with fewer ‘good’ schools options, resort to a variety of strategies in order to make the best choice for their children (Karsten et al., 2001:238). These include, inter alia choosing unusual combination of subjects so that they be allowed to choose a school outside their own district, applying for exemption from the *carte scolaire*, and more illicit practices such as the use of false addresses, (for example, of a friend or relative who lives in the catchment area) to get their child into a better school, or making arrangements with the school principals.

The lowest social class make the least effort to get round the school card partly due to lack of means (where they live, high transport cost) and partly because of a lack of information. However, where they do avoid schools, this is because they have a bad reputation (violence, and so on) as a result of the composition of their

learner populations rather than for reasons of educational quality (Adnett and Davies, 1999:223).

The effect of school choice in France has resulted in schools adopting some strategies to regulate their annual intake of learners within their limited available resources. According to Karsten et al. (2001:238), this is in order to satisfy parents who are increasingly behaving like customers. The best-known forms are the establishment of streams or “elite” classes, offering unusual subjects (for example Russian) or unusual combination of subjects, closing unpopular departments, focusing on examination preparation and the exclusion of “difficult” learners.

3.8 Private and public school choice

Education in most countries, like South Africa and the United States of America, is the largest publicly provided service. In South Africa, the education department is one of the departments that receive the biggest share of the national budget annually.

Greene, Peterson and Du (1999:193) state that the public confidence in public schools remains very low. They argue that the weak confidence in public schools, may be due to their failure to keep pace with rising public expectations. In the USA, on average, private school learners outperform their public school counterparts in terms of standardised test scores, graduation rates and the probability of attending college (Goldhaber, 1997:145). Parents may choose an educational alternative, to obtain ‘merits goods’ such as religious and ethical values. Thus, this suggests that parents may pay for private schools even if they do not expect greater academic quality in the private schools.

School choice is supported by those who assume that private schools are more efficient than public schools, that parents can distinguish between schools of

differing quality and that parents will select schools that perform well. Private schools are also preferred since they have less disruption because they are not compelled to accept every child who applies or to keep every child who enrolls. But, it must be borne in mind that if a private school fails to attract learners, it closes. The public believes that schools should be safe, orderly and disciplined developers of basic skills (McGhan, 1998:610). Furthermore, the public believes that private schools are better providers of these essentials than public schools. These beliefs about private schools are hotly contested.

The difference in academic performance between private and public schools, can be explained by differences in schools resources and/or on the backgrounds of learners (Goldhaber, 1997:146). For instance in Scotland, studies (such as, the study conducted by Martinez et al., 1995:492) have shown that parents with high socio-economic status, were more likely to exercise choice, sending their children to schools (private) with similar higher status children. This proves that learners in private schools tend to come from 'wealthy', better-educated families. Private schools are able to purchase and use better resources because they charge high fees. Fossey (1994:327) argues that these schools have enough equipment, supplies and books, to prepare learners for examinations.

Martinez et al. (1995:493) argue that not only parents with high socio-economic status are able to enrol their children in private schools, but, also parents with fewer children are able to spend their own resources for educational objectives. Also parents with fewer children and greater spacing between them, invest more time and money in each child.

Rose and Gallup (1999:51) state that the public in the USA is generally satisfied with public schools. But this should not cause one to lose sight of the fact that the public wants these schools to improve. Most importantly improvement should be on areas in which problems exist. Such problem areas are at the top of the list, lack of discipline, fighting/violence/gangs, and lack of financial

support/funding/money (Rose and Gallup, 1999:51). One other problem cited by Rose and Gallup (1999:52) is the question of sexual harassment, which seems to be rife in schools. The student-to-student sexual harassment seems to be more serious than teacher-to-student sexual harassment in the United States (Rose and Gallup, 1999:53).

The question that one should ask is whether private schools are alternatives or solutions for public schools. Mote (1999:767) argues that private schools have long been in existence, but for the purpose of separation. First, separation of children from the public schools by their parents, who seek a 'better' education for their children. Second, separation of learners on the basis of race, colour, gender, religion, or social class, contradicts societal values. According to Rose and Gallup (1999:53), the Americans prefer that emphasis should be placed on improving the public schools. This means that the public is generally satisfied with public schools.

McGhan (1998:611) argues that it is important that public school educators should entertain the idea that their schools need to be free to choose not to teach certain students. He further states that the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has made a call for a 'zero tolerance' policy towards disruptive students. Such students are responsible for disruptions in public schools. Rose and Gallup (1999:54) state that the American public continues to support zero tolerance policies with regard to drugs and alcohol, and they believe that violation of these should lead to automatic suspension.

One alternative to public schools, according to Rose and Gallup (1999:54) is home schooling. They have established that in the USA, the public is becoming more receptive to the idea of home schooling. Parents who have children who are physically challenged, frequently use this option because most schools, both private and public, are not user friendly and are also reluctant to introduce inclusive education.

The other alternative is to extend the benefit of choice to all schools and all learners, and more specifically to do the following:

- Give all learners equal access to every public school in a community, regardless of where their families can afford to live;
- Involve all parents (not just the so-called sophisticated) in making informed decisions about where their children will go to school;
- Create pressure for improvement, over time, of every school through the elimination of guaranteed enrolment on the basis of residence; and
- Achieve racial desegregation of every school while making as little mandatory assignment as possible.

Mote (1999:768) argues that as parents seek high-quality schooling, they need to learn more about schooling and be more involved. As they learn more and become more involved, there is a likelihood that schools will also improve.

To sum up; in order to improve education, public schools should be organised more like private schools, that is, they should be controlled by the market and not by bureaucracy, as it is the case in the democratic South Africa.

3.9 Influential factors for school choice – research findings

There are numerous factors, which influence the final decision of parents and learners about the choice of schools. Kaplinski (1992:44) states that the bottom line when choosing a school is to look for a school that is best for one's child. He further argues that the parents should not relax their efforts to ensure that schools of their choice are vibrant and dynamic and they have all the necessary facilities.

Tanner and Griffith in 1989 –1990 school year conducted a research with the aim of finding out what criteria parents report for choosing a school for their children. A stratified sampling method was used to select schools and parents for the study. Twenty seven schools were selected in the sample and 612 questionnaires were mailed to parents. Parents were asked to respond to each of the 34 items, indicating its relevance to their selection of schools. These items were classified under seven (7) categories as shown in Table 3.1 (Tanner and Griffith, 1992:33).

Table 3.1: Category rankings

Rank	Category	Mean
1	Academic emphasis	5,452
2	Personal attention	4,862
3	Student discipline	4,761
4	Self-esteem	4,576
5	Parent involvement	3,998
6	Homogeneity of student body	2,847
7	Society and family	2,232

Source: Tanner and Griffith (1992:30).

Items not categorised:

- Cleanliness and orderliness 5,110
- Safer environment 4,961
- Friendlier atmosphere 4,316

It is evident from Table 3.1 that parents are more interested in teacher-parent contact than having a direct say in decisions and policies affecting the education of their children. Thus, they do not choose schools because they are able to 'run' such schools. A strong curriculum and an academic reputation mostly attract parents.

Personal attention is of great importance to parents; it is ranked second in the reasons listed by parents. Parents choose schools where learners are given individual attention and they are recognised as individuals with unique talents.

Small class size has emerged through the literature as a major determinant in the choice of independent schools. This is because in small classes, educators are able to give individual attention to learners and there are more opportunities for individualised instruction. Parents are mostly attracted by a strong curriculum and academic reputation taught in small classes and with high expectations of students (academic emphasis ranked at the top of the reasons listed by parents).

Parents look for a school that appears clean, attractive, that is, a self-inviting school which is safe and enrolls well-disciplined learners. Parents of high school age children are less interested in parental involvement in the school than those with younger children. This finding probably is caused by the reluctance of older children to include parents in the schooling process and the inclination of parents to allow older children to fend for themselves.

Parents consider the importance and cost of secondary schooling too great for enrolment to be determined by the desire for social status. Social unhappiness may, however, be a reason to leave a school. Parents want the school to be a place where learner behaviour contributes to an environment conducive to teaching and learning. They want learners to be serious about their obligations and also display good character and high morals. Fitz et al. (1993:25) point out that the appearance and behaviour of learners outside the school, for instance, are seen to be indicative of the qualities inside the school.

3.10 Summary

This chapter reflected a review of relevant literature on issues pertaining to school and parental choice. The concept school choice was defined and the following major findings could be highlighted with regard to school and parental choice:

- School choice aims at stimulating and responding to an increasing desire to choose among the existing schools and to increase the range of options open to parents to influence the quality of their children's education;
- School choice has been criticised by some researchers, stating that choice in education is self-defeating because the exercise of choice by some, may pre-empt it for others;
- That parents as choosers could be divided into a number of groups, namely:
 - The privileged or skilled choosers;
 - Semi-skilled choosers; and
 - Disconnected choosers.
- The following are reasons for parental choice of school:
 - Academic criteria;
 - Situational or convenience criteria;
 - Organisational and security criteria; and
 - Voice and exit option
- The following were stated as reasons why some schools were rejected:
 - Transport and distance from and to school
 - Ethnic composition of the school;
 - School reputation;
 - School environment; and
 - Learners and staff at the school.

- School choice decision-making is basically the responsibility of the entire family.

In the following chapter, the method of research is discussed in terms of the research problem and purpose, study population and respondents, and data collection and analysis

CHAPTER 4

4. METHOD OF RESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 focused on parental school choice and research findings on studies already conducted about the school or parental choice.

The main purpose of this chapter is to explain the rationale behind the methodology used in this study and also how the research was conducted. The chapter further outlines the steps that were taken, among others, to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. As such, the aims of the study as stated in Chapter 1 were the guiding principles for the investigation.

4.2 Research instruments

Eichelberger (1989:141) states that all researchers in all fields, mostly use questionnaires and interviews for many different reasons or purposes. Questionnaires and interviews are the most common research instruments used for collecting data in survey studies (Legotlo, 1996:132).

4.2.1 Mailed questionnaire as a research instrument

Researchers tend to collect data through a variety of methods. In the process, they tend to use a sample of individuals presumed to have certain experiences and knowledge. As such, in a survey research, the data collection methods include mailed questionnaires (Wiersma, 1995:154)

A mailed questionnaire is one of the best forms of survey when carrying out social and educational enquiries. But the main criticism is that it tends to be the only means of communication between the researcher and the respondents or subjects (Mutchbick and Berg, 1996:24).

4.2.1.1 Advantages of mailed questionnaires

The questionnaire was used in this study because of the following advantages as cited by Legotlo (1996:162) and Bailey (1994:213):

- Considerable saving of money: Mailed questionnaires cost far less than travelling for self-administered questionnaires;
- Greater assurance of anonymity: The names of the respondents are not given;
- Homogeneous stimuli: The stimuli provided are identical since questionnaires are identical;
- Securing information: It allows the respondent to consult his/her records, confer with colleagues or even conduct research before completing the questionnaire;
- Ease of processing: The questionnaire could be carefully structured, pre-coded with a few open-ended questions being used;
- The questionnaire may be completed at the respondent's convenience: The respondent is not compelled to answer all questions at once, but he/she is free to do some and others during his/her spare time. The respondent is also able to start with easy questions and later try the more difficult ones;
- Time saving: Questionnaires can be mailed to all respondents at the same time, and most replies will be received in a week or two depending on the distance;
- Accessibility: Respondents in all parts of the country can be reached by means of a price of a postage stamp; and

- No interview bias: There is no chance for the respondent to be biased by an interviewer.

4.2.1.2 Disadvantages of mailed questionnaires

Mailed questionnaires, like any other method of data collection, have some disadvantages and these include the following (Bailey, 1994:217):

- Many questions may remain unanswered;
- Questionnaires are likely to have a low response rate;
- They lack flexibility, because if the respondent misinterpreted a question he/she can choose any option;
- It is difficult to differentiate bad/wrong postal addresses from non-responses; and
- Someone other than the intended respondent can complete the questionnaire.

A high rate of non-response in questionnaire studies remains a serious problem to researchers. Wiersma (1995:59) defines the response rate as the percentage of respondents returning the questionnaires, and the quality of response depends entirely on the completeness of data. Non-response or a low response rate may introduce bias into the data because it is not representative of the sample intended to be surveyed. But, the greater the response rate, the better the survey.

Sybouts (1992:76) points out the following as causes of non-response in mailed questionnaire studies:

- Questionnaires of excessive length;
- Lack of professional printing;
- Poor layout or a cramped format;

- Poor timing, for instance, mailing questionnaires towards school holidays or during examination period;
- Complex or confusing instructions;
- Poorly constructed questions/items; and
- Options that are not appropriate or force respondents to answer inappropriately.

Therefore, in order to increase or improve the response rate in questionnaire studies, Legotlo (1996:163), Wiersma (1995:60) and Bailey (1994:218) have identified a number of factors and several aspects of design and layout in securing a good response rate to mailed questionnaires:

- A questionnaire must have a professional appearance and be attractive;
- A questionnaire must be concise with an informative covering letter;
- The practice of sub-lettering questions is a useful technique for grouping together questions to do with a specific issue;
- Clarity of wording and simplicity of design are vital. Good instructions make questions easy to answer; and
- Contents of a questionnaire should be arranged in such a way that cooperation is maximised.

Therefore, if these factors are carefully considered and applied in the design of a questionnaire, then a high response rate can be achieved. In this study, careful attention was paid to all these aspects with the aim of maximising the cooperation on the part of the respondents and the response rate.

4.2.1.3 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire is similar to the paper-and-pencil test. It contains questions aimed at collecting specific data on a variety of topics (Borg, 1987:139). Great care should be taken in the construction of the questionnaire because the measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of the collected data. Therefore, a well-designed questionnaire boosts the reliability and validity of the data to an acceptable level of tolerance.

Some guidelines for designing a questionnaire are pointed out by Bailey (1994:221) and MacMillan and Schumacher (1993:167) and are listed below:

- Double-barrelled questions, or two-in-one questions should be avoided at all costs. Thus, a question should be limited to a single idea or concept;
- Slang in the wording of questions, and ambiguity should also be avoided. It should be borne in mind that an item achieves clarity when all respondents interpret it in the same way;
- It is better when writing a questionnaire item to use the shortest version that conveys what is intended. Long and complicated items should not be used because they are more difficult to understand;
- Questions should be asked in their more neutral form. If stated negatively, respondents may unconsciously overlook the negative word, so their answers will be the opposite of the intended;
- Questions asked should refer to concrete and specific issues and have specific answers, if possible;
- Questions should be relevant. Respondents should be asked questions that are important to them. If they are unimportant, the respondents will respond carelessly, and the results will be misleading; and
- Respondents must be competent to answer. Questions should be constructed in such a way that the respondents are able to provide reliable information.

4.2.1.4 Format and content of the questionnaire

In this study, the questionnaire was designed such that it had four parts. Part A was aimed at collecting the biographic and demographic data of the respondents. Part B of the questionnaire consisted of ten (10) items which aimed at determining whether the respondents knew anything about school marketing, what school marketing entailed and whether they marketed their schools to their clients.

In Part C, the purpose of the items was to establish the opinions of the respondents on a number of factors, inter alia, school choice, reasons for rejection of schools and the effect of school choice on different stakeholders. Part C also used the Likert scale. According to MacMillan and Schumacher (1993:172), a true Likert scale is one in which the stem includes a value or direction and the respondent indicates agreement or disagreement with statement. Likert-type items use different response scales; the stem in this scale is directional. The respondents have to check on the scale that best represents their reaction to each statement (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1990:126).

Thus, for each item the respondents were asked to reflect, on a four-point scale, their opinion about factors that affect parental school choice, namely:

- 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)
- 3 = Agree (A)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Part D of the questionnaire consisted of six (6) open-ended questions. The purpose of these questions or items was to determine, inter alia, how school principals are marketing their schools, the benefits and challenges of school

marketing. These type of questions were used mainly because of the following advantages (Bailey, 1994:222):

- They allow respondents a chance for creativity;
- They allow respondents to answer adequately all the details. Thus, they can clarify and qualify their answers;
- They can be used when the researcher wishes to see what the respondent views as appropriate answer categories; and
- They can also be used when there are many potential answer categories to list on the questionnaire.

Enough space was provided for the respondents to outline how they marketed their schools and the challenges they encountered during this process (cf. Appendix A).

4.2.2 Interview as a research instrument

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview schedule was used to collect data for the study (cf. Appendix B). Bell (1999:79) describes a survey interview as a conversation between the interviewer and the respondent (interviewee) with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent. As such, this is an activity that requires careful preparation and considerable practice, if the eventual reward is to be a worthwhile exercise. Therefore, reasonable attention was paid to all these aspects in the preparation of the interview schedule (Appendix B) for this study.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:111) point out that educational researchers mostly favour semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study because of the following advantages.

4.2.2.1 Advantages of semi-structured interviews

According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:116), Bailey (1994:223) and Ary et al. (1990:133) semi-structured interviews have the following advantages:

- The researcher is able to obtain answers to all or most of the questions;
- The researcher asks certain questions to all the respondents, but each time the sequence can be altered in order to probe more deeply and also to overcome a common tendency among respondents to anticipate questions;
- The respondent is not able to “cheat”, for instance, by obtaining answers from others, or by asking others to complete the entire questionnaire for him/her, as often happens in mailed questionnaire studies;
- Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to repeat questions or to clarify their meaning in case they are not understood by the respondent; and
- Furthermore, they enable the researcher to observe non-verbal behaviour and to assess the validity of the respondent's answer.

4.2.2.2 Disadvantages of semi-structured interviews

Like any other strategy for data collection, semi-structured interviews have the following disadvantages (Evans, 1995:89; Bailey, 1994:224 and Ary et al., 1990:144):

- Semi-structured interviews take longer than the structured interviews;
- They are more costly and time-consuming than questionnaires;
- Respondents may feel they are being manipulated or that the researcher is not really interested in their views;
- Semi-structured interviews offer less assurance of anonymity than the mailed questionnaires. The researcher typically knows the respondents by

names and addresses and often their telephone or cellular-phone numbers as well; and

- Some samples are inaccessible for face-to-face interviews.

Despite these disadvantages, semi-structured interviews are still commonly used for data collection and they were also used in this study. Every interview was conducted at the respondent's workplace.

Sybouts (1992:78) states that for the interviewer to overcome some of the limitations above, he/she should consider the following factors:

- A simple plan and procedure should be developed to identify the respondents or interviewees; and
- Interviewers should know how to do the following:
 - Reach persons to be interviewed;
 - Ask questions and record answers in a consistent way;
 - Ask appropriate, probing questions;
 - Record information accurately;
 - Relate to respondents in the manner that they are motivated to complete the interview; and
 - End the interview and leave the respondent in a positive frame of mind.

In order to gather relevant and more information on school marketing and school choice, the researcher chose to use a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews (cf. Appendix B) were conducted or employed with school principals, parents and Departmental officials, as shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Interviewees

Interviewees	Number
School principals	20
Parents	60
Institutional support co-ordinators (former circuit managers)	10
Area Project managers	5
Total	95

4.3 Pre-testing the questionnaire and interview schedule

It is impossible to predict how the respondents will interpret the questionnaire items unless the researcher pre-tests the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents before starting the main study (MacMillan and Schumacher, 1993:175). The respondents participating in the pre-testing of the questionnaire should be drawn from the same sample that will be used in the main study. MacMillan and Schumacher (1993:175) argue that if the questionnaire is pre-tested the researcher will be able to know if it takes time to complete and whether or not the instructions and items are clear. The results of the pre-test should be used to refine the questionnaire.

To determine any ambiguity and flaws, the questionnaire was pre-tested using a sample of ten ($n = 10$) respondents. Enough space was provided for the respondents to comment on the points that needed to be considered for the improvement of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix A). The researcher took into account all respondents' comments and/or feedback. Hence, after the pre-testing exercise, areas in each instrument that needed rectification were attended to.

4.4 Covering letter

The covering letter forms part of any survey involving a questionnaire. Legotlo (1996:163) states that its purpose is to introduce the questionnaire to the respondents, to indicate the aim of the survey and its importance, to assure them of confidentiality and to encourage them to participate. The covering letter must be signed by someone who is, or appears to be, associated with the researcher and it should be on the letterhead of the institution with which the researcher is registered (Wiersma, 1995:61). Wiersma further argues that if a graduate student writes the covering letter, stating that the purpose for data collection is for a thesis or dissertation, the response rate will be low and disappointing.

One of the requirements of a covering letter is that it should be short and neat, but broad enough to cover all essential details. Thus, a straightforward and simple, but clear covering letter that explained the purpose of the study accompanied each and every copy of the questionnaire that went out to respondents (Appendix C). It also had instructions about how to fill in the questionnaire and guidelines on how to return completed questionnaires to the researcher.

4.5 Administration procedures

Initially permission for access to schools was obtained from the Regional Chief Directors of the Central and Bojanala West regions (Appendix E). Lists of all schools in the two regions were obtained from the respective regional offices. The following information was provided in the lists from regional offices:

- The name of the school;
- Whether the school was public or independent (private);
- Physical address; and
- Telephone and cellular numbers, where applicable.

The researcher delivered copies of the questionnaire directly to principals of the sampled schools. But, in some Area Project Offices, institutional support co-ordinators raised the concern that principals do not respond to questionnaires, but promised the researcher that they would do their best to encourage, request and motivate them to complete and return the questionnaires timeously. Finally, arrangements were made with institutional support co-ordinators for the collection of completed copies of the questionnaires.

4.6 Follow-ups

Low response rate in questionnaire surveys is a major problem. Furthermore, according to Sybouts (1992:91) low response rates can cause distortions to the information gathered and a loss of reliability and validity. Thus, follow-ups are a must in questionnaire surveys, in order to maximise response level, to re-emphasise the importance of the study and the value of the respondents' participation.

In this study, follow-ups were made telephonically with institutional support co-ordinators. In addition, few telephonic follow-ups were also made with some principals, especially those who were given copies of the questionnaire directly by the researcher. Furthermore, a follow-up letter (**Appendix D**) was also distributed to schools in the same way in which copies of the questionnaire were distributed. After all these efforts, there was a significant improvement in the response rate.

4.7 Population and sampling

The best known of the probability sampling procedures is simple random sampling. When this method is used, all members of the population have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Bailey, 1994:221). A population is defined as a group of interest to the researcher, the group to which he or she would like the results of the study to be generalised. Furthermore, Wiersma (1995:54) states that in certain instances, an entire population of individuals may be included in a research study, but in many educational research studies, it is simply not feasible to include all members of the population. The time and effort required would be prohibitive. This is certainly true of survey research when large populations are concerned. Thus, a sample is used much more commonly.

A sample is a subset of the population to which the researcher intends to generalise the results (Wiersma, 1995:57). Selecting a random sample ensures representivity from a mathematical point of view. However, it is not possible to select random samples for all possible educational research studies so, at times, purposeful samples are used. A sample either is or is not random and a random sample must incorporate some aspect of random selection. Obtaining a random sample may be a relatively complex procedure, especially if large (and possibly diverse) populations are to be sampled (Wiersma, 1995:57).

The population used in this study included all schools (that is Public and independent/private schools) in the Central and Bojanala West regions of the North West Province. Table 4.2 below shows the size of the total school population, which is 761. A simple random sampling of 500 schools was done. The open-ended questions or items were answered by all school principals in the survey.

Table 4.2: Total Population – Per Region

Bojanala West Region			
	Public schools	Independent schools	Total number of schools
	378	27	405
Central Region			
	Public schools	Independent schools	Total number of schools
	325	31	356
	Total		761

For the sake of confidentiality, the names of the schools and the school principals were not used in this study. Rather, the schools were designated by code numbers, Central Region schools were given codes beginning with **C** and the Bojanala West region schools with **B**.

Table 4.3 below shows the distribution of the sampled schools in the two regions.

Table 4.3: Population distribution

Region	No. of Public schools	No. sampled (Public)	No. sampled (Independent)	Total sampled population
Bojanala West	378	225	25	250
Central	325	225	25	250
	Total schools sampled			500

4.8 Response rate

A total of 500 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the sampled schools, to be answered by school principals, in the Central and Bojanala West Regions of the North West Province. Out of the total number of (n = 500) copies of the questionnaire which were distributed, 416 copies of the questionnaire, that is 83,2 %, were returned. Table 4.4 shows the response rate.

Table 4.4: Response rate

Region	No. of Public schools	No. returned	%	No. of Independent schools	No. returned	%	Total returned	%
Bojanala West	225	194	86.2	25	19	76	213	42.6
Central	225	187	83.1	25	16	64	203	40.6
TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED							416	83,2

This response rate indicates the importance of follow-ups done by the researcher by telephone and in writing. It also shows the importance of delivering and collecting questionnaires directly from the schools by the researcher, and also the importance of the study as it was explained to the respondents by the researcher.

4.9 Data analysis

A computer-aided statistical analysis was employed. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 13.1 (SPSS 13.1) programme was used in order to compute the results of the study. The first step in the analysis of data was to compute descriptive data for each respondent in the study. These include statistics such

as frequency distribution, percentages, means, standard deviations and chi-square.

In order to determine possible statistically significant differences between the views of urban and rural respondents the Chi-square (χ^2) was computed. The χ^2 -value is discussed in the next chapter. A χ^2 – test of statistical significant difference was done also to determine whether the null hypothesis should be rejected or not. The χ^2 – test was used to determine the level of significance of an observed difference in frequencies between independent groups.

4.10 Summary

In this survey, the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were the main instruments used for the collection of data because of their advantages (cf. 4.2.1.1). Efforts which, among others, were made to enhance the validity of each instrument such as pre-testing procedures, are also referred to. Furthermore, the methodology employed in this study has been explained to give an understanding of the procedures that were followed in the collection of data. The chapter also outlined the target population, sampling procedures, as well as the distribution and response rate.

Chapter 5 focuses on the results and findings of the research.

CHAPTER 5

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, the research method was discussed in terms of the research design, research problem and purpose, the study population and respondents and data collection procedure.

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the results of the empirical investigation conducted in order to determine the factors that influence parental choice for educational institutions and marketing techniques employed by educational institutions to market themselves. The qualitative and quantitative data collected through this investigation are summarised and discussed.

5.2 Review of respondents

The analysis and interpretation of data were based on the responses of 416 copies of the questionnaire which were returned by the respondents. This showed a response rate of 83,2% (cf. Table 4.4).

5.3. Biographical and demographical data

The biographic and demographic data were requested from the respondents in order to give a picture of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This information was vital in understanding people who should be or were involved in the marketing of educational institutions. Table 5.1 below shows such information.

5.3.1 Teaching experience

Table 5.1 shows that the majority of the respondents (76,4%) had 10 or more years of teaching experience. Thus, as principals and experienced educators, they were conversant with factors that affect both parents and students in choosing and/or rejecting a school. Having been involved with schools that long, they would have accumulated adequate knowledge through experience on how to market an institution like a school.

5.3.2 Type of settlement

Table 5.1 and Fig 5.1 indicate that the majority of schools in the two regions, that is, Bojanala West and the Central, were in the rural areas where print media which could be used for marketing schools, was a rare commodity. Few schools, that is, 34.1%, were in urban areas and were likely to have sufficient resources to market themselves (cf. Table 5.1).

Fig. 5.1: Type of settlement

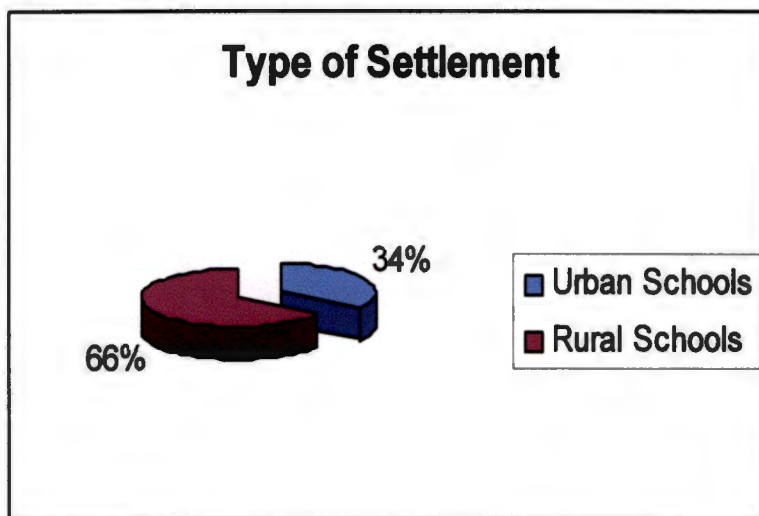


Table 5.1: Biographic information of respondents

Teaching experience	f	%
0 – 4	13	3,1
5 – 9	85	20,4
10 – 14	150	36,1
15 – 19	107	25,7
20 – 24	55	13,2
25 and above	6	1,4
Total	416	100
Type of settlement	f	%
Urban	142	34,1
Rural	274	65,9
Total	416	100
Type of school	f	%
Public Primary	193	46,4
Public Secondary	188	45,2
Private Primary	22	5,3
Private Secondary	13	3,1
Total	416	100
Socio-economic status	f	%
High	28	6,7
Middle	127	30,5
Low	197	47,4
Very low	64	15,4
Total	416	100
Educational level	f	%
Professionals	4	1,0
Literate	119	28,6
Non-professionals	122	29,3
Not literate	171	41,1
Total	416	100
School age (in years)	f	%
Younger than 10	52	12,5
10 – 19	193	46,4
20 – 29	155	37,3
30 years & older	16	3,8
Total	416	100

5.3.3 Type of school

The respondents were further requested to indicate whether their schools were private/independent or public.

Fig. 5.2: Type of school

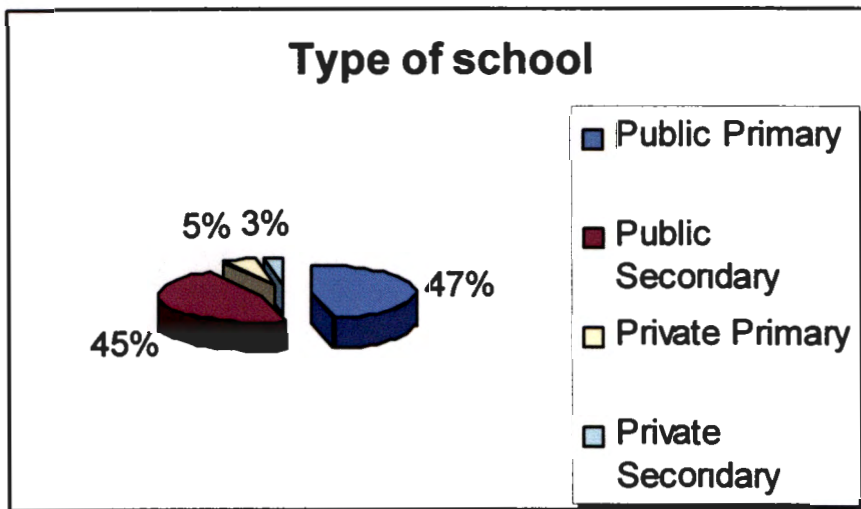
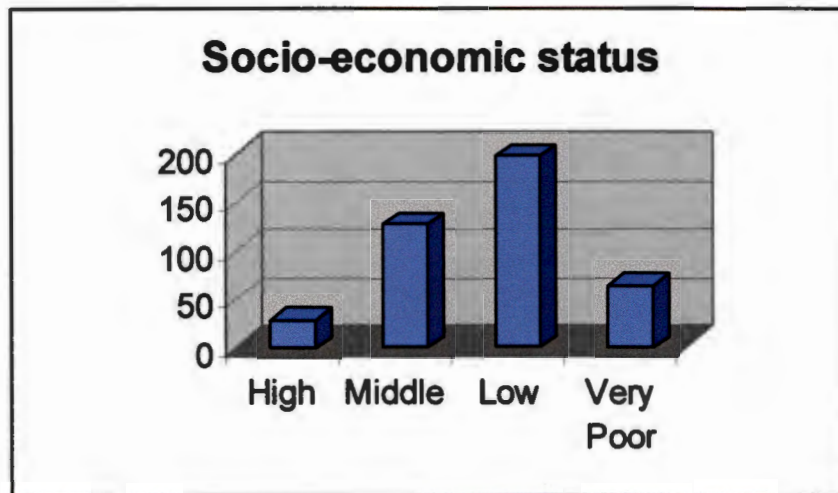


Figure 5.2 shows that more than 90% of the schools in these regions were public schools. This implies that the majority of parents in these regions still send their children to public schools because they are cheaper. But, also that the Department of Education still has to open its doors for more private or independent schools.

5.3.4 Socio-economic status of parents

The respondents were asked to show the socio-economic status of parents of learners admitted in their schools.

Fig. 5.3: The socio-economic status of parents

It is evident from Table 5.1 and Figure 5.3 that more than 60% of the schools in the two regions, in the perception of the respondents, were in poverty stricken areas. Thus, there is the likelihood that most parents are not able to pay school fees and the Department probably needs to fund or increase its funding mostly in the rural areas. The process of establishing “No-fee schools” should be speeded up.

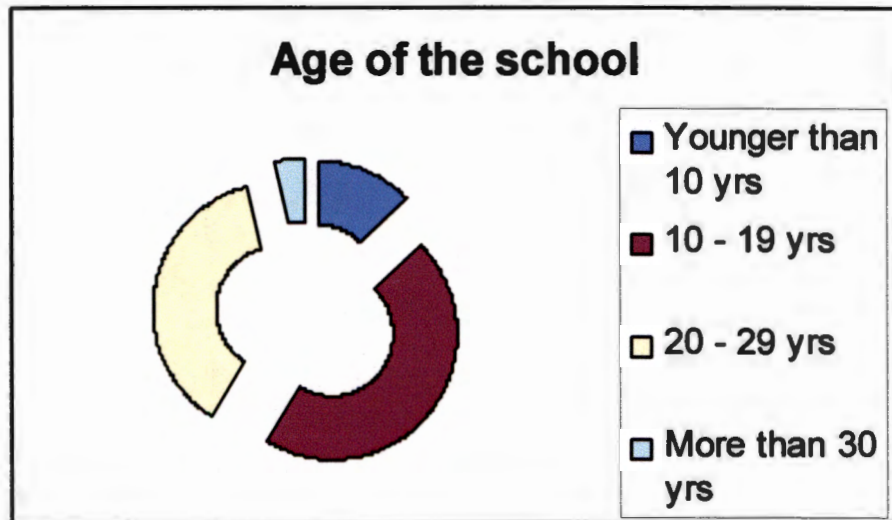
5.3.5 Educational level of parents

The respondents were asked to show the educational level of most parents of learners admitted in their schools. Table 5.1 indicates the educational level of most parents of learners admitted in sampled schools. In the perception of the respondents, more than 70% of the parents of most learners admitted in schools in the two regions were non-professionals and did not have advanced formal education. Thus, possibly this implied that schools should depend mostly on personal selling and invitational education in marketing their schools to such parents.

5.3.6 Age of the school

The respondents were requested to indicate the age of their schools.

Fig. 5.4: Age of schools



It is evident from Figure 5.4 above that the majority of schools in the two regions were more than 10 years old. This possibly implies that the conditions of schools which are more than 20 years old need to be improved in order to make them more inviting. Thus, some of these schools might need minor renovations and some major renovations especially those that are more than 20 years old. Furthermore, it was evident from most of the schools visited during the fieldwork, that school governing bodies were probably compelled to go the extra mile to look for funds in order to improve the conditions of their schools' infra-structure. It was evident from the literature that of all the elements of the marketing mix (4P's), the place is the simplest to change (cf. 2.4.3.1.3). Thus, improving this element of the marketing mix, would make the school intentionally inviting and parents and learners would be attracted. But, the Department of Education can assist schools by putting aside the bulk of their budget for renovation and maintenance of school buildings.

5.4 School recruitment practices

Part B of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix A) sought to determine from the respondents the extent to which they used some of the marketing elements in their schools. The items were structured in such way that the respondents had to state whether a certain element was used or not. If a particular element was used the respondents had four options to indicate the effectiveness of such an element in recruiting learners or marketing their schools. If not used, the respondents had to indicate the reason or reasons why such an element was not used; the respondents had to choose from nine given reasons. The respondents had a chance of choosing more than one reason or give their own reasons.

Table 5.2: Views of respondents on marketing elements

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9	
Marketing elements	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Advertising	132	32	82	20	53	13	34	8	24	6	22	5	3	1	9	2	18	4
Advertising research	104	32	77	19	47	11	32	8	18	4	34	8	7	2	15	4	29	7
Development of a marketing plan	71	17	64	15	59	14	50	12	33	8	39	9	2	1	6	1	36	9
Marketing audit	82	20	59	14	61	15	53	13	26	6	50	12	5	1	2	1	34	8
Marketing research	77	19	64	15	50	12	43	10	35	8	31	8	12	3	13	3	28	7
Pricing	69	17	65	16	68	16	49	12	27	7	37	9	7	2	6	1	21	5
Publicity	75	18	66	16	42	10	38	9	39	9	51	12	4	1	15	4	29	7
Personal selling	62	15	72	17	54	13	34	8	19	5	43	10	7	2	9	2	32	8
Use of a marketing team/committee	64	15	75	18	55	13	57	14	16	4	37	9	5	1	10	2	29	7
Use of marketing consultant	162	40	52	13	46	11	28	7	25	6	24	6	9	2	12	3	40	10

Key:

- 1 > Too expensive
- 2 > Not appropriate for our school
- 3 > Not a priority in our school
- 4 > No qualified person in our school
- 5 > Lack of implementation

- 6 > Not considered
- 7 > Lack of administrative leadership
- 8 > We believe it would not be effective
- 9 > Lack of knowledge on this technique

As indicated in Table 5.2 above, the majority of the respondents indicated that they used some of the marketing elements. The majority of these schools indicated that they used the following marketing elements effectively, that is advertising, personal selling, a marketing plan, and a marketing team.

Table 5.2 provides a picture of the extent to which schools used different elements of marketing in their schools in order to recruit learners.

It is evident from Table 5.2 that the majority of the respondents, that is, on average 87%, indicated that they did not use the following marketing elements, that is, advertising, marketing research and marketing consultants. The major reasons advanced by the respondents were the following and these also emerged as challenges in school marketing:

- To advertise in newspapers, to carry out a marketing research and to use a marketing consultant was rather too expensive for them;
- They further indicated that these elements were not used because they lacked the knowledge (the know how) of such techniques and that there were no qualified people in their schools; and
- Some respondents indicated that these elements were not appropriate and prioritized in their schools.

The data reflected in Table 5.2 suggests that school principals lack marketing skills and they need to be trained in school marketing and invitational education in order to be able to attract and retain learners in large numbers in their schools. This will also reduce the number of educators already declared in excess or additional to their schools.

5.5 Factors influencing parental school choice

Two of the main purposes of this study were to empirically determine factors that influence parental/student choice for educational institutions and marketing techniques, employed by educational institutions to market themselves. A questionnaire was administered to school principals of both public and independent or private schools, to obtain their views on the two important issues, which affect learner enrolment in their schools.

5.5.1 School choice

Table 5.3 below indicates the views of the respondents on some of the factors that affect school or parental choice. A brief discussion of each item is provided below.

Item 9.1: Parents have the sole right to choose schools for their children

As indicated in Table 5.3 below, more than eighty percent (80%) of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that it was the sole right of the parents to choose schools for their children. Thus, possibly this implies that respondents are aware that they may not refuse any learner admission at a school in terms of the provisions or prescripts of the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996. Furthermore, there is a possibility that school principals do not refuse parents with transfer letters if they wish to take their children to other schools which they, as parents, perceived to be better than the current school.

Item 9.2: Children have a say in choosing the school they attend

Table 5.3 indicates that more than 70% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that children did have a say in choosing the school they attended. The majority of the parents who were interviewed also indicated that their children had a greater say in choosing the school they attended. This implies that schools need to satisfy the needs of their present learners so that they could be in a position to recruit their friends, relatives and neighbours.

Table 5.3 : Views of respondents on school or parental choice

ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
School or parental choice								
9.1 Parents have the sole right to choose schools for their children	130	31,3	207	49,8	54	13,0	25	6,0
9.2 Children have a say in choosing the school they attend	60	14,4	250	60,1	72	17,3	34	8,2
9.3 School choice is a joint process by parent(s), the child and relatives	159	38,2	197	47,4	45	10,8	15	3,6
9.4 Parental school choice is a prerequisite to improve education	177	42,5	197	47,4	35	8,4	7	1,7
9.5 Parental school choice is a powerful agent of change to improve schools	177	42,5	196	46,9	39	9,4	5	1,2
9.6 School choice results in fewer disciplinary problems	167	40,1	161	38,7	66	15,9	22	5,3
9.7 School choice gives parents a sense of school ownership	157	37,7	169	40,6	55	13,2	35	8,4
9.8 School choice improves parental involvement in the school	190	45,7	197	47,4	21	5,0	8	1,9
9.9 School choice enhances racial integration	196	47,1	166	39,9	43	10,3	11	2,6

Key: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree

Item 9.3: School choice is a joint process by parent(s), the child and relatives

Table 5.3 above also indicates that the majority of the respondents, that is 74,5%, agreed and strongly agreed that school choice was a joint process by parents, children and relatives. The literature (cf. 3.4) has also revealed that school choice was a joint process and acknowledges the important role played by children and other members of the family.

Item 9.4: Parental school choice is a prerequisite to improve education

More than 80% of the respondents as indicated by Table 5.3 above, agreed and strongly agreed that parental school choice was a prerequisite to improve education. This implies that respondents are aware that school choice is not a panacea for the improvement of education but only a prerequisite.

Item 9.5: Parental school choice is a powerful agent of change to improve schools

Table 5.3 again points out that the majority of the respondents (89,4%) agreed and strongly agreed that parental choice was a powerful agent of change to improve schools. The literature has revealed that without choice, schools are unlikely to improve (cf. 3.3). This implies that school principals were to improve the quality of education they provide to their customers in order to attract as many learners as possible.

Item 9.6: School choice results in fewer disciplinary problems.

More than 75% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that school choice resulted in fewer disciplinary problems. This finding indicates that school

principals could make demands on parents to ensure that their children come to school regularly, do their homework and behave well during school hours. In addition, it becomes incumbent on the part of the school to ensure that all relevant policies are in place and consistently implemented. School staff members are, therefore, able to use the parents' authority to make certain demands on the learners.

Item 9.7: School choice gives parents a sense of school ownership

Table 5.3 shows that more than 78% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that school choice gave parents a sense of school ownership. This implies that school principals have the perception that school choice gives people a sense of shared ownership in what they have chosen. If parents have chosen a particular school, they could probably have more interest in it as well as concern about such a school and they would participate actively and voluntarily in its activities.

Item 9.8: School choice improves parental involvement in the school

Table 5.3 indicates that more than 90% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that school choice could improve parental involvement in school activities. Literature (cf. 3.6) indicates that school choice provides a leverage in dealing with parents. Thus, this finding suggests that school principals can make certain demands from parents, such as attending parents' meetings and assisting in supervising sports. At the same time, because parents have chosen a particular school for some reasons, they tend to participate actively and voluntarily in its activities. During the interviews one parent said:

"As parents we voluntarily come to school at the beginning of each year to clean school surroundings and classrooms. This is done so

that educators can start teaching our children from the first day of the re-opening. Our SGB chairperson also provides free labour in fixing broken windows and doors”.

Item 9.9: School choice enhances racial integration

The majority of the respondents, that is 87% as reflected in Table 5.3, agreed and strongly agreed that school choice enhanced racial integration in schools. This means that respondents know that the doors of education in South Africa are open for children of all racial groups and that the school population should resemble the rainbow nation of South Africa. Furthermore, that, it is the wish of the majority of the people of this country to see more schools, both public and independent, especially in multi-racial areas, becoming more racially integrated (Maile, 2004: 111).

5.5.2 Reasons why parents choose some schools

Table 5.4 below provides views of the respondents on the reasons that were advanced by parents for choosing some schools. The reasons for choosing schools were categorised as follows (see analysis of items 10.1 to 10.11 below).

Item 10.1: Academic reasons are considered mainly by professional parents

Table 5.4 below shows that most of the respondents (87%) agreed and strongly agreed that academic reasons were considered mainly by professional parents when exercising their right to choose a school for their children. The literature (cf. 3.3.1.1) also revealed that academic standards were of great concern for the middle-class which consisted mainly of professional parents who were also described as “active choosers”. This means that if school governing bodies pay

more attention to the recruitment of good teachers to influence the academic performance of the learners this may attract as many middle-class parents as possible.

Item 10.2: Parents choose schools with good examination results

The majority of the respondents, that is 95,6% as shown in Table 5.4, agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools with good examination results. This finding suggests to school principals that they have to use each and every minute of the contact time with learners fruitfully in teaching and learning. The literature (3.3.1.1) revealed that parents regarded good examination results as a major reason for school choice and they looked for quality results. This implies that schools have to improve the learner pass rate and the quality of the examination results.

Item 10.3: Parents select a school with resources that match individual children's needs

Table 5.4 shows that most of the respondents (92,3%), agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools with resources that match individuals children's needs. This finding poses a serious challenge to school principals to make sure that their schools are well-resourced in order to attract more learners. A school can have the best resources or facilities in the world, but if they are not effectively used in order to improve and enhance the quality of learning and teaching process in the classrooms, they will not yield the desired results.

Table 5.4: Views of respondents on reasons parents choose some schools

ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
10.1 Academic reasons are considered mainly by professional parents	224	53,8	138	33,2	41	9,9	13	3,1
10.2 Parents choose schools with good examination results	261	62,7	137	32,9	13	3,1	5	1,2
10.3 Parents select a school with resources that match the individual children's needs	167	40,1	217	52,2	28	6,7	4	1,0
10.4 Parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home	148	35,6	198	47,6	60	14,4	10	2,4
10.5 Parents choose schools because they think children would be safe	127	30,5	171	41,1	77	18,5	41	9,9
10.6 Parents choose schools that are easy to travel to	82	19,7	201	48,3	108	26,0	25	6,0
10.7 Parents choose schools with attractive uniform	57	13,7	208	50,0	99	23,8	52	12,5
10.8 Parents choose schools with attractive environment	129	31,0	222	53,4	49	11,8	16	3,8
10.9 Parents take their children to schools where they would be happy	134	32,2	229	55,0	41	9,9	12	2,9
10.10 Parents take their children to schools that proactively deal with bullying incidents	156	37,5	191	45,9	46	11,1	23	5,5
10.11 Parents prefer to take their children to schools where they would be able to voice out their opinion when they are dissatisfied with the quality of education	167	40,1	176	42,3	55	13,2	18	4,3

Key: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree

Item 10.4: Parents choose schools because of their close proximity to their home

Table 5.4 indicates that more than 80 % of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home. It could be possible that most of such respondents were from the rural areas because most parents in these communities were very poor and their choice of schools was limited. The same finding was made by Parson et al., (2000), in the United States. They found that parents were likely to choose the local school provided that it satisfied the parents' basic requirements for a safe and disciplined environment and acceptable academic standards. Literature (cf. 3.4.1.2) also revealed that blacks in the USA were more likely to choose for reasons of convenience, that is close to their homes, rather than academic reasons. But, in South Africa, in some instances, it is not that parents choose schools because of their proximity to their homes, but because it is the only school in that particular locality.

Item 10.5: Parents choose schools because they think children would be safe

According to Table 5.4, more than 70% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools because they thought their children would be safe. During the interviews parents also emphasised that they also considered the safety of their children when choosing schools. Parents indicated that they preferred schools which emphasised learner discipline and proactively dealt with alcohol and drug abuse. This implies that school principals are aware of the fact that safety is very important in schools for both learners and educators and all other members of the staff. The literature revealed that in the USA parents who belong to lower income brackets chose schools for the purposes of discipline and safety (cf. 3.4.1.4).

Item 10.6: Parents choose schools that are easy to travel to

More than 65% of the respondents, as indicated in Table 5.4 above, agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools that were easy to travel to. A similar finding was made by Bagley et al., (2001) in the UK, in which parents indicated that there was a lack of private or adequate public transport; at certain stages that caused a lot of inconvenience and difficulties with regard to getting to and the from school. Furthermore, this implies that school principals are aware of the fact that they have to arrange transport for learners or even make it available for their present and prospective learners if they want to retain their enrolment at an acceptable level. This can be done by making arrangements with the local bus companies and/or taxi associations to transport their learners to and from the school, at a low price. Thus, there is a likelihood that parents would reject a school that is far from their home and involve the use of public transport that is unreliable in winter and during rainy seasons (cf. 3.4.2).

Item 10.7: Parents choose schools with attractive uniform

Table 5.4 indicates that more than 60% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools with an attractive uniform (cf. 3.4.1.3). Respondents regard attractive school uniform as a contributing factor for attracting more learners to schools.

Item 10.8: Parents choose schools with an attractive environment

According to Table 5.4, more than 80% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools with an attractive environment. The literature (cf. 3.3.2) revealed that parents rejected schools with playgrounds full of broken glasses, broken fences, peeling paint, smelly restrooms and unkempt buildings. This poses a serious challenge to school principals to make their school environment self-inviting and attractive with the little resources that they have,

especially in rural schools, in order to attract as many parents as possible to enrol their children.

Item 10.9: Parents take their children where they would be happy

Table 5.4 indicates that more than 85% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents took their children where they would be happy. This finding indicates that parents would choose a school where they would be welcomed by everybody and with a happy atmosphere. This further implies that school principals have to make their schools disciplined, because indiscipline threatens learners' happiness.

Item 10.10: Parents take their children to schools that proactively deal with bullying incidents

According to Table 5.4 above, more than 80% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents took their children to schools that proactively dealt with bullying incidents. This finding shows that respondents believe that parents would probably choose schools that are well-disciplined. Adler et al., (1989) also found that in Scotland, discipline was used as a major factor in secondary school choice. School principals have to deal with all forms of misbehaviour in their schools because this could result in damaging their school's reputation.

Item 10.11: Parents prefer to take their children to schools where they would be able to voice out their opinion when they are dissatisfied with the quality of education

Table 5.4 above also shows that the majority of the respondents, that is 82,4%, agreed and strongly agreed that parents preferred to take their children to schools where they would be able to voice their opinion when they are dissatisfied with the quality of education. This implies that the respondents

believe that if parents are without a voice, they would take their children to other schools or even to independent schools (in other words, they would use their exit option). If parents use the exit option, there is the likelihood that they would state exactly what is wrong with the school or even speak badly of educators or management to prospective parents.

5.5.3 Reasons parents reject some schools

Table 5.5, provides the views of the respondents on the reasons that are advanced by parents for rejecting some schools. These reasons include the following (Item 11.1 to 11.10):

Item 11.1: Lack of adequate public transport to the school

According to Table 5.5 below, more than 75% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents rejected some schools because of the unavailability of public transport to such schools. Respondents believe that parents consider the availability of public transport when choosing a school, but in certain instances because of poverty they ask for accommodation from relatives and friends. The literature (cf. 3.3.2) pointed out that in the UK some parents rejected some schools because there were no private and/or public transports to those schools. It further indicated that the travelling distance to an alternative school was more pronounced in rural areas. Thus, this implies that respondents believe that long distances could be a security and safety problem.

Table 5.5: Views of the respondents on the reasons parents reject some schools

	ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
	Reasons parents reject some schools	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
11.1	Lack of adequate public transport	103	24,8	213	51,2	69	16,6	31	7,5
11.2	Parents are concerned about the safety of their children having to travel long distances to and from school on public transport	97	23,3	204	49,0	97	23,3	18	4,3
11.3	Unacceptable appearance of children who are already attending a particular school	166	39,9	193	46,4	46	11,1	11	2,6
11.4	Unacceptable behaviour of children who are already attending a particular school	158	38,0	190	45,7	47	11,3	21	5,0
11.5	Parents reject schools that are very dilapidated	147	35,3	141	33,9	103	24,8	25	6,0
11.6	Parents move their children away from schools that are predominantly white or black	130	31,3	190	45,7	65	15,6	31	7,5
11.7	Parents reject schools where educators lack enthusiasm and commitment	159	38,2	204	49,0	43	10,3	10	2,4
11.8	Parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat	161	38,7	182	43,8	58	13,9	15	3,6
11.9	Parents move away their children from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matter in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners	159	38,2	165	39,7	85	20,4	7	1,7
11.10	Parents reject schools with bad reputation	173	41,6	189	45,4	51	12,3	3	0,7

Key: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree

Item 11.2: Parents are concerned about the safety of their children having to travel long distances to and from school on public transport

Table 5.5 indicates that more than 70% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents were concerned about the safety of their children having to travel long distances to and from school on public transport. Literature has indicated that in the semi-rural areas of the UK, transport and/or long distances is the major reason for non-selection or rejection of some schools. Thus, this implies that school principals are challenged to provide hostel accommodation to learners from their feeder schools if they are to attract many learners and avoid being under-subscribed. There is a possibility that if they become under-subscribed they would lose educators through the process of redeployment.

Item 11.3: Unacceptable appearance of children who are already attending a particular school

The majority of the respondents, that is 86,3%, agreed and strongly agreed that the unacceptable appearance of children who were already attending a particular school could contribute to the school being rejected by parents.

Item 11.4: Unacceptable behaviour of children who are already attending a particular school

According to Table 5.5, the majority of the respondents (83,7%) agreed and strongly agreed that unacceptable behaviour of children who were already attending a particular school could cause parents to reject the school. Schools where learners smoke, abuse drugs and use foul language during and after school hours, are at risk of being rejected by parents. School principals have a challenge of making sure that their learners' code of conduct is thoroughly implemented and the desired behaviour of learners is achieved if they want to retain and attract more learners.

Item 11.5: Parents reject schools that are dilapidated

According to Table 5.5, the majority of the respondents (69,2%) agreed and strongly agreed that parents tended to reject schools that are dilapidated. This implies that school principals believe that parents do not want to see their children in a school with leaking roofs, cracked walls and floors as well as schools that are not well maintained (cf. 3.4.2). During the interviews with principals, principals indicated that it is the responsibility of the school governing bodies to repair broken windows and doors and the general maintenance of the school. Unused old dilapidated classrooms in a school should be demolished and/or be renovated in order to improve the image of the school.

Item 11.6: Parents move their children away from schools that are predominantly white or black

It was the perception of the majority of the respondents (77%), as indicated in Table 5.5 above, who agreed and strongly agreed that parents tend to reject schools that are predominantly black or white. The introduction of the open-admission policy by the South African Schools Act has made the movement of learners from one school to the other relatively easy. Most principals during the interviews indicated that parents prefer to take their children to schools that are racially integrated, unfortunately these schools are in towns and cities. During the interviews one of the principals said:

“This has gone to the extent that parents in urban areas want to see their children attending schools which were predominantly white in the past; however white learners do not move into black schools”.

A similar finding was made by Bagley et al., (2001) in the UK that white parents moved their children away from multi- ethnic schools to schools that were predominantly white and this is currently true in South Africa. This was because schools, which were predominantly white, are currently becoming blacker each year and white learners moved to independent schools.

Item 11.7: Parents reject schools where educators lack enthusiasm and commitment

According to Table 5.5, the majority of the respondents (87,2%) agreed and strongly agreed that parents rejected schools where educators showed lack of enthusiasm and commitment in their work. This implies that the respondents are probably of the opinion that if their educators are not dedicated and committed in their work, absent themselves from school, do not have the welfare of learners at heart, parents would not choose their school and could also move their children away from such a school.

Item 11.8: Parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat

Table 5.5 indicates that the majority of the respondents, that is 82,5%, agreed and strongly agreed that parents were turned off by school principals who were autocratic. This finding implies that school principals should evaluate their management styles and be as democratic and participative as possible. Thus, there is no need for school principals to be autocratic towards their staff and parents. However, it is not the behaviour of the principal in relation to individuals, rather, it is what he/she says and the impression he/she gives of the school that makes parents reject the school.

Item 11.9: Parents move their children away from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matter in comparison to other aspects, like a caring environment for learners

According to Table 5.5, the majority of the respondents, that is 77,9%, agreed and strongly agreed that parents moved their children away from schools where there was an overemphasis on academic matters in comparison to other aspects, like caring environments for learners. This finding suggests that in the perception of the respondents parents are not only interested in the academic prowess in comparison with other aspects of the school but are also probably interested in the caring environment for the learners and they want schools that will develop their children in totality, which is mentally, spiritually, physically, morally and aesthetically.

Item 11.10: Parents reject schools with bad reputation

According to Table 5.5, 87 % of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents avoided or rejected schools with a bad reputation. Schools with a bad reputation are characterised by aspects such as violence, racism, bullying of learners by others and low academic performance (cf. 3.4.2). Most parents indicated that they could not take their learners/children to schools that were probably going to fail them at the end of the year. Thus, this implies that school principals have a challenge of combating these characteristics in order to build a good name for their schools. The literature (cf. 3.3.2) has revealed that once the school has a bad name, it will take a great deal of time to overcome this and reverse it.

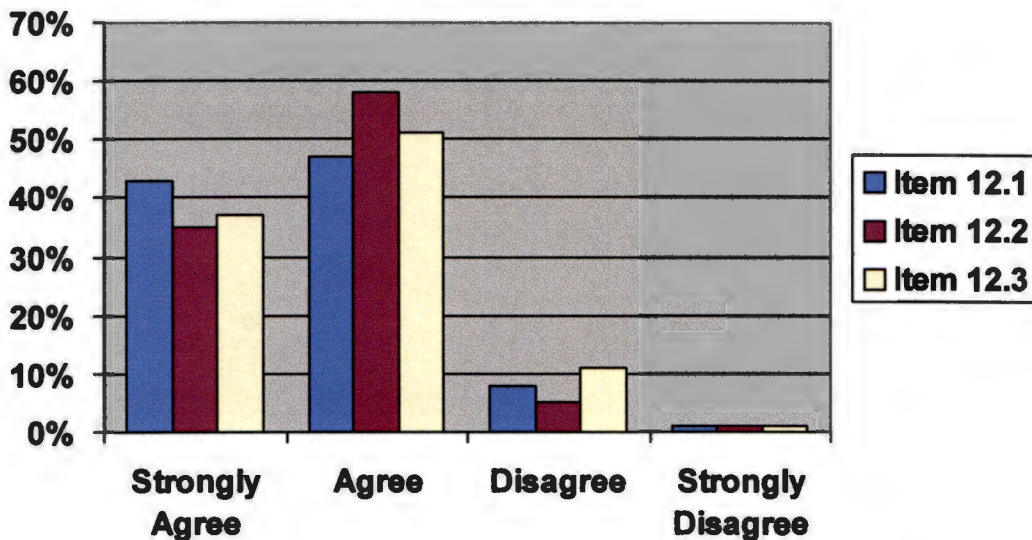
5.5.4 The effect that school choice has on the school as a whole

This section gives a brief summary of the effect that school choice has on the school as a whole. Fig. 5.5 and Table 5.6 provide a picture of the findings on this issue.

Item 12.1: With declining roll staff become demoralised resulting in the quality of teaching and learning deteriorating

According to Figure 5.5 and Table 5.6, the majority of the respondents, that is 90,1%, agreed and strongly agreed that when the enrolment of the school declines, the staff became demoralised and the quality of teaching and learning deteriorated. This suggests that if schools' enrolment declines, educators and other staff members could be declared additional or in excess to their establishment. Such educators and staff members could be redeployed to other South African schools where their services are most needed. School principals should also alert their staff that the continuation of their job depends on their performance in the classroom and that of their colleagues otherwise learners would move away from their school.

Fig. 5.5: Effect of school choice on the school



Item 12.2: Schools of choice (that is preferred schools) could make demands on parents to monitor children's homework

Table 5.6: Views of respondents on the effect of school choice on the school

ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
The effect that school choice have on the school as whole								
12.1 With declining roll staff become demoralised resulting in the quality of teaching and learning deteriorating	179	43,0	196	47,1	35	8,4	6	1,4
12.2 School of choice (preferred school) could make demand on parents to monitor children's homework	147	35,3	241	57,9	25	6,0	3	0,7
12.3 School choice can improve learner performance	152	36,5	214	51,4	45	10,8	5	1,2

Key: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree

Figure 5.5 and Table 5.6 indicate that the majority of the respondents, that is 92,3 %, agreed and strongly agreed that schools of choice could make demands on parents to monitor children's homework. The literature argued that schools of choice had a leverage of dealing with parents (cf. 3.4.3.2). Schools of choice have a tendency to make certain demands on parents, for instance, to ensure that learners should attend school regularly, to deliver and to collect learners from the school during educational tours or ordinary school trips.

Item 12.3: School choice can improve learner performance

According to Table 5.6, the majority of the respondents, that is 87,9%, agreed and strongly agreed that school choice could improve learner performance. This finding suggests that if schools do not perform to the required standard or level, they would probably lose learners. Thus it is incumbent upon school principals to ensure that there is an improvement in learner performance. Furthermore, educators should treat all learners as if they are educable and not as "frozen" in either their academic abilities or their attitudes, if they want to retain and attract more learners. Educators in schools of choice (that is, mostly preferred schools) have a strong incentive to keep their work in line with the mission of the school, to help one another, to identify weaknesses and to ensure that variation in educator performance does not, in any way, harm the school's ultimate product and reputation (cf. 3.4).

5.5.5 Private or independent schools versus public schools

The purpose of this section was to determine reasons for the parents in choosing independent or private schools. Table 5.7 gives a picture of the findings on the reasons for parents on choosing private schools.

Table 5.7: Views of respondent on reasons why parents choose independent schools

ITEMS	SA		A		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Reasons why parents opt for independent schools								
13.1 Parents opt for private or independent schools because they perform better than public schools	177	42,5	194	46,6	41	9,9	4	1,0
13.2 Parents prefer independent schools because they have less disruptions	173	41,6	203	48,8	35	8,4	5	1,2
13.3 Independent schools are better resourced than public schools	168	40,4	211	50,7	33	7,9	4	1,0
13.4 Parents opt for independent schools because they are disciplined than public schools	94	22,6	222	53,4	84	20,2	16	3,8
13.5 Parents take their children to independent schools because they want high quality education	168	40,4	214	51,4	31	7,5	3	0,7
13.6 Parents choose independent schools because of their small classes which allow educators to give individual attention to learners	197	47,4	188	45,2	24	5,8	7	1,7

Key: SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly disagree

Item 13.1: Parents opt for private or independent schools because they perform better than public schools

Table 5.7 indicates that more than 86% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents opted for private or independent schools because they perform better than public schools. Some of the principals during the interviews indicated that independent schools generally performed better than public schools academically and in sports. This suggests that principals believe parents can distinguish between schools of differing quality and that parents would opt for schools that perform well.

Item 13.2: Parents prefer independent schools because they have fewer disruptions

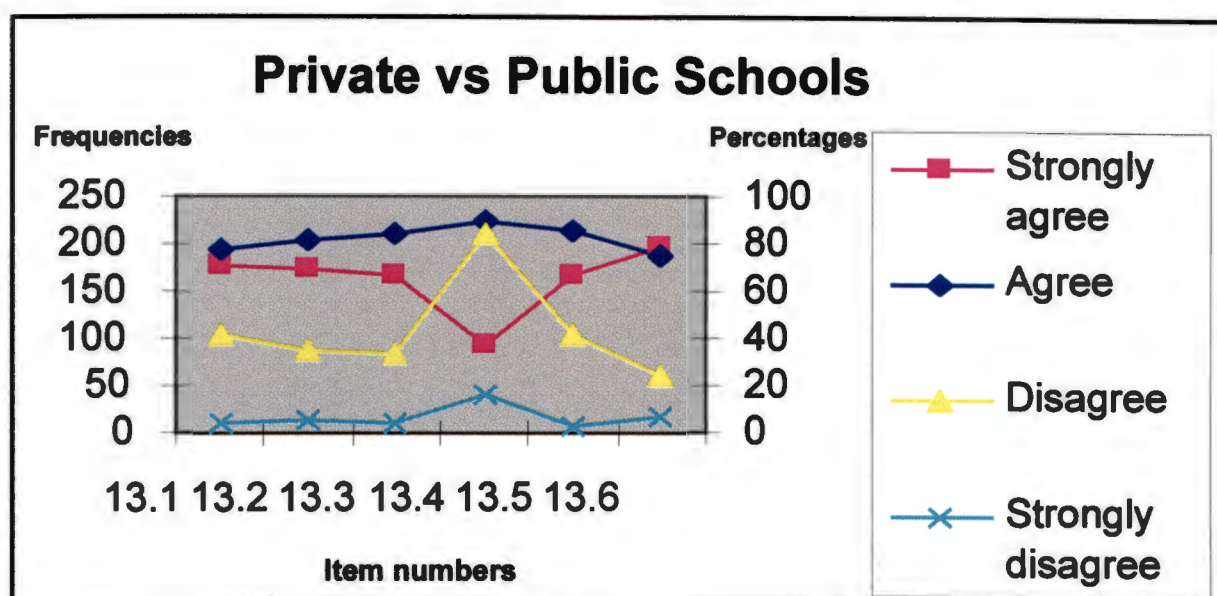
More than 89% of the respondents (cf. Table 5.7) agreed and strongly agreed that parents opted for independent schools because they had less or no disruptions during the course of the year possibly due to aspects such as educators' strikes and numerous meetings and workshops organised by officials of the Department of Education. During the interviews principals said that education should be treated as an essential service, so that educators could be prohibited from going on strike, like police officials. The literature revealed that independent schools had less disruption because they were not compelled to accept every child who applied or even to keep every child who enrolled. During the interviews principals raised a concern that there were numerous meetings organised by unions and officials of the department which took educators out of their classrooms during the course of the year, thus disrupting the smooth running of the teaching and learning process in schools.

Item 13.3: Independent schools are better resourced than public schools

According to Table 5.7 more than 90 % of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents selected private schools because they were better resourced than public schools. According to a study conducted by Martinez et al. (1995), parents who opted for private schools are 'wealthy' and better educated (cf. 3.8). During the interviews parents admitted that families that opted for independent schools are mostly wealthy and educated ones. They further indicated that such parents were able to pay high fees charged by independent schools. This enables private schools to purchase and use better resources as compared to public schools which currently rely heavily on what the department is able to offer in terms of resources such as computers, educators, finances, infra-structure and so on.

Item 13.4: Parents opt for independent schools because they are more disciplined than public schools

According to Table 5.7 the majority of the respondents (76 %), agreed and strongly agreed that parents opted for independent schools because they were more disciplined than public schools. This possibly suggests that the South African society wants to see public schools improving with regard to learner discipline and security in general. The absence of or minimal security in public schools is a serious concern for everyone who has an interest in public education because some educators and learners are killed in daylight in the presence of other learners and educators. The lack of discipline in public schools is evident by the high rate of drug and substance abuse and the high rate of absenteeism of both educators and learners. School governing bodies and principals have a challenge of addressing all those issues but they need the support from the State and the community at large in order to succeed.

Fig. 5.6: Views of respondents on why parents choose private schools

Item 13.5: Parents take their children to independent schools because they want quality education

Table 5.7 and Figure 5.6 show that the majority of the respondents, that is 91,8%, agreed and strongly agreed that parents took their children to independent schools because they want quality education. This finding suggests that education in public schools is not of the same quality as compared to education in independent schools. The literature pointed out that on average, independent school learners outperformed their public school counterparts with regard to academic performance (cf. 3.8). Thus, public schools' governing bodies, school management teams and the Department of Education should ensure that all relevant resources (human and material) necessary to improve the quality of education in public schools are available.

Item 13.6: Parents choose independent schools because of their small classes which allow educators to give individual attention to learners

Table 5.7 indicates that the majority of the respondents, that is 92,6 %, agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose independent schools because of their small classes which allowed educators to give individual attention to learners. Public schools do not have enough educators or staff; classes are overcrowded or generally too big and the educator-learner ratio is also high and unacceptable. With these issues in mind, there is no way in which the public can talk about individual attention to learners, quality education and good results in public schools because these schools are generally under-resourced and some are overcrowded especially in the rural areas.

In summary, from the empirical investigation conducted, respondents revealed that independent or private schools, perform better than public schools. The reason advanced is that these schools are better resourced, their learners are more disciplined and experience less classroom disruptions than their counterparts. In order to bring public schools on par with independent or private schools, the Department of Education needs to provide these schools with the necessary resources, for instance, increase its provision for the human resources (educators) and the number of classrooms and financial resources.

5.5.6 Mean score rating on the effects of school or parental choice

Table 5.8 shows the mean score rating on the effects of school or parental choice on schools.

Table 5.8: Mean score ratings for each item – school or parental choice

Item no.	Items	Mean score	Rank order
9.8	School choice improves parental involvement in the school	3.37	1
9.4	Parental school choice is a prerequisite for improved education	3.31	2
9.5	Parental school choice is a powerful agent of change to improve schools	3.31	2
9.9	School choice enhances racial integration	3.31	2
9.3	School choice is a joint process by parents(ə), the child and relatives	3.20	5
9.6	School choice results in fewer disciplinary problems	3.14	6
9.7	School choice gives parents a sense of school ownership	3.08	7
9.1	Parents have the sole right to choose schools for their children	3.06	8

Item 9.8 School choice improves parental involvement in the school (mean 3.37)

It is evident from Table 5.8 that according to the perception of the respondents school or parental choice increases parental participation and involvement in schools of choice. Parents are free to participate in the education of their children by doing the following, for instance:

- Getting involved in school activities, like in fund-raising projects;
- Assisting their children in doing school work, for example, homework, projects, assignment and researches;
- Assisting in different sporting activities in the school; and
- Offering their services voluntarily to the school.

Item 9.4 Parental school choice is a prerequisite for improved education (mean 3.31)

It is imperative that the State should empower parents to exercise the right to choose schools for their children so that schools can be compelled to improve their quality of education. Furthermore, parents can move away their children when they are not satisfied with the education provided to these children.

Item 9.5 Parental school choice is a powerful agent of change to improve schools (mean 3.31)

The literature regards choice as a powerful agent of change that could be used to bring about improvement in all schools, both public and independent (cf. 3.4). Thus, parents must be given the right to choose schools because that is one of the most important strategies for bringing about change in public schools. Furthermore, school or parental choice is a strong agent for the general improvement of the school and the whole education system within a particular country.

Item 9.9 School choice enhances racial integration (mean 3.31)

The mean of 3.31 means that respondents agree that school choice enhances racial integration. The literature has also shown that South African schools were racially and ethnically separated before 1994 due to Apartheid laws. Thus, one of the ways of racially integrating schools is by allowing parents and learners to select the school of their choice.

5.5.7. Mean rating scores on the reason why parents choose some schools

Table 5.9 below shows the mean scores ratings of each of the reasons why parents choose some schools. The purpose of Table 5.9 is to indicate the rank

order of the views of the respondents regarding the reasons why parents choose some schools. These findings are supported by the literature which revealed that parents choose schools because of certain reasons. These reasons could be exploited by schools as their strong points and for opportunities, to enrol a greater number of learners

Table 5.9: Mean score ratings for reasons parents choose some schools

Item		Mean score	Rank order
10.2	Parents choose schools with good examination results	3.57	1
10.1	Academic reasons are considered mainly by professional parents	3.38	2
10.3	Parents select a school with resources that match individual children's needs	3.31	3
10.11	Parents prefer to take their children to schools where they would be able to voice out their opinion when they are dissatisfied with the quality of education	3.18	4
10.9	Parents take their children to schools where they would be happy	3.17	5
10.4	Parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home	3.16	6
10.10	Parents take their children to schools that proactively deal with bullying incidents	3.15	7
10.8	Parents choose schools with attractive environment	3.12	8

It is evident from Table 5.9 above, that the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parents chose schools with good examination results. This implies that principals should work tirelessly on the academic performance or examination results of their schools in order to attract and retain as many parents and/or learners as possible. Tanner and Griffith made a similar finding in the

research that was conducted in 1992 in America (cf. 3.9) where academic emphasis was also ranked at the top.

5.5.8 Mean rating scores for reasons why parents reject some schools

Table 5.10: Mean score ratings for reason why parents reject some schools

Item		Mean score	Rank order
11.10	Parents reject schools with a bad reputation	3.28	1
11.3	Parents reject some schools due to unacceptable appearance of children who are already attending a particular school	3.24	2
11.7	Parents reject schools where educators lack enthusiasm and commitment	3.23	3
11.8	Parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat	3.18	4
11.4	Parents reject some schools because of unacceptable behaviour of children	3.17	5
11.9	Parents move away their children from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matter in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners	3.14	6
11.6	Parents move away their children from schools that are predominantly white or black	3.01	7

It can be deduced from Table 5.10 above, that parents reject schools with a bad reputation. The literature has indicated bullying, racism and violence as some of the characteristics of schools with bad reputation (cf. 3.4.2).

This implies that school governing bodies need to work on their learners' code of conduct to ensure that they address unacceptable behaviour of learners in their

schools more effectively. Further, school principals need to ensure that the appearance of learners attending their schools is acceptable to the community, for instance, they appear clean and tidy even though the uniform might not be that attractive. Furthermore, it also suggests that parents should be given a platform in schools, in order to express their views if they are not satisfied with the service they get from the school, otherwise they will opt to exit (cf. 3.4.1.5)

5.5.9 Mean score rating on the effects school choice has on stakeholders

Table 5.11 below shows the mean scores ratings on the effect that school choice has on learners, parents and educators.

Table 5.11: Mean score ratings of the items on the effects of school or parental choice

Item no.		Mean score	Rank order
12.1	With declining roll staff become demoralised resulting in the quality of teaching and learning deteriorating	3.32	1
12.2	Schools of choice (that is preferred schools) could make demands on parents to monitor children's homework and to attend classes regularly	3.28	2
12.3	School choice can improve learner performance	3.23	3

It is evident from Table 5.11 above, that if most parents do not choose a school for their children to attend, the staff is negatively affected. If the enrolment drops, the post establishment of the school is negatively affected because the school would qualify for fewer educators.

School choice would also work to the advantage of the school of choice because such a school will be able to make certain demands on parents and learners (cf.

3.4.3.2). For instance, to insist that parents should monitor their children's work at home, pay whatever is due to the school in advance like school fees and other additional fees.

5.5.10 Mean score rating on private schools versus public schools

Table 5.12 below shows the mean scores ratings on private or independent schools versus public schools.

Table 5.12: Mean score ratings on private schools versus Public schools

Item no.		Mean score	Rank order
13.6	Parents choose independent schools because of their small classes which allow educators to give individual attention to learners	3.38	1
13.2	Parents prefer independent schools because they have less disruptions	3.31	2
13.1	Parents opt for private or independent schools because they are more efficient than the public schools	3.31	3
13.3	Independent schools are better resourced than public schools	3.31	4
13.5	Parents take their children to independent schools because they want high quality education	3.31	5

It is not surprising to find that the majority of the respondents in this study regarded small classes as the main reason for parents to choose independent schools. The majority of the respondents were from public schools. Independent schools were able to control their admissions, even the number of learners per grade or class. It was indicated by one parent, who had a child in an independent school, during the interviews, that the main reason for choosing that school was because the child (who had some learning barriers) would be able to receive

individual attention from the educators. But, with regard to public schools the opposite is true because the size of the class is determined by the number of parents who want to enrol their children, for instance, in primary schools, a class can accommodate 35 learners.

The other interesting finding is that the respondents agreed that parents chose independent schools because they did not experience disruptions that were caused by educators' strike. During the interviews parents were very vocal about disruptions in schools due to workshops, educator strikes and meetings which were attended during school hours. Some parents suggested that workshops and meetings, as far as possible, should be held during school holidays because the children are left without supervision. This tends to suggest that parents may have had enough of educators' strikes and educator absence because they disturb the culture of teaching and learning in schools and also deny their children the right to education.

5.6 Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data

In this section the respondents were asked to give their views with regard to a number of issues, this was done by means of open-ended questions in the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The views of the respondents on different issues were collated, categorised and the frequencies of each category form the basis for the analysis of data recurring. Therefore, this section discusses the outcomes of the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Content analysis was employed to cluster or collate different views that emerged from the open-ended questions and during the interviews.

The open-ended questions or items (Appendix A – Part D) were answered by all school principals in the survey. Furthermore, these items (open-ended items) were again used as the interview schedule (Appendix B) for semi-structured

interviews. The researcher managed to interview 60 parents, 20 principals and other Department officials, such as area project managers and institutional support co-ordinators (cf. 1.4.2.2 and Table 4.1). The main purpose of these interviews was to determine among others, strategies used by schools in marketing themselves, the reasons why parents selected and rejected some schools and the reasons why some parents opted for independent or private schools.

Table 5.13: Interviewees

Interviewees	Number
Principals	20
Parents	60
Area Project managers	5
Institutional support co-ordinators (circuit managers)	10
Total	95

5.6.1 How schools market themselves

The respondents were asked to state in details how they marketed their schools to customers. It was evident from this open-ended question and semi-structured interviews that some schools did not have specific strategies for marketing themselves. But schools rely heavily on certain activities in which they are doing well, to attract more learners for their schools. Table 5.14 below summarises the views of the respondents indicated in Table 5.13 above

Table 5.14: Respondents views on marketing strategies

		f	%
1.	Good results	103	20,3
2.	Regular meetings with parents	87	17,2
3.	Good learner discipline	81	16,0
4.	Recognition of good achievement	67	13,2
5.	Well-cared surrounding and buildings	66	13,1
6.	Sporting activities	33	6,5
7.	Regular financial report	27	5,3
8.	Stakeholder involvement	21	4,1
9.	Meetings in feeder schools	20	4,0
10.	Clear vision and mission	13	2,7
11.	Diverse curriculum	09	1,8

As indicated in Table 5.14 above, the majority of the respondents mentioned the following views:

- **Good results.** The respondents, especially in secondary schools, indicated that good results in Grade 12 made their schools popular and boosted their reputation. One of the principals said:

“Our results are a very big reason our school is over subscribed. I am confident of that. I do not have any research to show it, but I am confident in that”.

More learners want to enrol with schools which produce good results, but accommodation is insufficient. During the interviews, one principal of a Catholic school said:

“since our school is partly managed by Catholic principles, most Catholic and non-Catholic learners want to enrol with our school, because the word ‘holy’ carries more weight, so people know that anything dealing or carrying the name Catholic means quality”.

Some respondents, especially from independent schools, indicated that the good quality of the Grade 12 results in Catholic schools was because of the commitment of educators, who were well qualified and specialised in subjects they were offering. Thus, people register their children with independent schools because of their academic excellence. One of the principals during the interviews, when asked how he is marketing his school said:

“The marketing of my school is relatively limited in my day to day job experience, I do not do much of it”.

But, in similar vein, he regarded marketing to be under the auspices of management.

- **Regular parents’ meeting.** Table 5.14 shows that regular parents’ meetings are ranked among the top five. Thus, the respondents indicated that they used these meetings to inform the parents about their schools. Furthermore, the respondents stated that during such meetings, different policies, such as norms and standards for school funding, the learners’ code of conduct, school developmental plan and others, are “unbundled” to parents so that they could know what the school’s main business is all about.

- **Good discipline.** Some respondents indicated that good discipline of their learners has led to high enrolment. The respondents claimed that they had an effective learners' code of conduct which was democratically developed and that educators implemented them fairly and consistently.

- **Recognition of good achievement.** The respondents indicated that they recognised good achievement by learners, educators and parent governors. In most schools a special function is held annually in order to thank and appreciate the good work done and tokens of appreciation are given to those deserving them, in the form of certificates and small presents or gifts. One parent indicated that where her child or learner attended school, five (5) outstanding academic performers per grade per learning area were awarded certificates. She further said that, that type of recognition served as an encouragement and motivation to other learners who were not performing up to standard.

- **Well-cared for surroundings and buildings.** This finding indicates that school principals are aware that surroundings and buildings are the easiest to change in order to bring about the marketing effect. Something can be done about the surroundings and the buildings, for instance, a room may be set aside for visitors, with attractive plants, learners' art works, chairs, collection of sports trophies and so on.

- **Sporting activities.** Different sport codes are made available to all learners. One of the respondents said,

*"Sports is taken very seriously by the school
because young people enjoy playing,
therefore some learners enrol with our school
for sport. Top achievers in all different sporting codes*

are awarded floating trophies and certificates at the end of each year as a form of motivation and encouragement”.

The respondents further indicated that because of their good performance in music competitions, parents enrolled learners at their schools.

- **Regular financial report.** Schools regularly give parents financial reports. Most parents indicated that they wanted to know what had been done with the money they paid to school and became more satisfied if they were given financial reports.
- **Stakeholder involvement.** The respondents indicated that sound relationships between the home, school, community and other structures are important for attracting learners and parents. Sound relationships will always enhance the co-operation and involvement of these structures in the school. Parents get actively involved in their children's work and in the life of the school.
- **Recruitment campaigns.** The respondents indicated that they arranged meetings with parents and learners of their feeder schools in order to personally “sell” their schools. What is of great importance is that during these meetings, potential customers become attracted to the school, their interests are heightened, their desires aroused and finally those who are become convinced of the advantages of enrolling with the school are given forms to complete immediately.
- **Clear vision and mission statement.** Furthermore, the respondents indicated that sound administration in schools was essential for marketing. But sound administration was always accompanied by clear and shared vision and mission which was communicated to parents, learners, staff and other stakeholders from time to time during these

campaigns. If there is a shared vision and mission, all stakeholders work together with a common sense of purpose and clear targets.

- **Diverse curriculum.** Schools use a diverse curriculum in order to attract more learners. A number of schools have extended their curriculum to include computer literacy and computer studies because most parents want their children to be computer literate.

5.6.2 Advantages or benefits of school marketing

The respondents were further requested to state what they thought were the advantages or benefits of school marketing. Content analysis was also employed to cluster or collate themes that emerged during interviews. The following are the responses of the majority of the respondents (Table 5.15):

- **The increase of learner enrolment.** Table 5.15 indicated that respondents regarded the increase of learner enrolment as the major benefit of school marketing. Respondents had indicated that if the learner enrolment increased the school would be in a position to absorb its additional educators in terms of Resolution 8 of 1998. During the interviews one of the principals said:

“Absorption of additional educators in an institution is a morale, confidence and motivation booster for most educators, especially for those living in the urban and semi-urban areas”.

Movement of learners away from the school will be avoided, as no educator will be redeployed.

- **Increase in the number of promotional posts.** The school enrolment is directly proportional to the number of posts in a school. Thus, if learner enrolment increases, the number of posts increases, including promotional posts. Thus, the school would be able to appoint well-qualified educators in these posts. Most principals indicated that if educators were promoted internally they would start to show commitment in their work because they would have seen that it paid dividends. But, if people from outside were appointed in these posts, they would be in a position to bring about innovations in the school and the problem of possible in-breeding would be eliminated.

- **More financial resources.** Ten officials of the department indicated that as the number of learners increased, schools would gain financial resources. If the school falls in quintile 1 or 2, each learner will bring to the school an amount of R516.00 in terms of the Norms and Standards for public school funding (SASA). Thus, this possibly suggests that the schools will be able to purchase some of their important resources, such as computers, cleaning materials and so on. But, still, if the enrolment increases, the number of learners who should pay school fees also increases, and this is an advantage to the school. If the school has more money, it will be in a good position to purchase more or extra resources that could improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. The South African government has made a commitment that no learner should be taught under a tree, thus if the number of classes of learners exceeds the number of classrooms, the Department has promised to build more classrooms for such schools.

Table 5.15: Advantages of school marketing

	f	%
1. Increasing learner enrolment	213	43,1
2. Increase in the number of promotional posts	111	22,5
3. More financial resources	67	13,6
4. The school becomes more popular	43	8,7
5. Increased parental and community participation	31	6,3
6. Increased participation in sporting and cultural activities	29	5,9

- **The school becomes more popular.** School principals argue that if a school is marketed, it becomes known to most parents. Even parents and/or learners living far from the school can get the message depending on the method of the promotion mix used, such as press advertising and press releases (cf. Table 2.7 and par. 2.4.3.1.1).

- **Increased parental and community participation.** During the interviews, school principals and officials of the department, emphasised that if the school had more learners and enough resources, parents could possibly participate in school activities, for instance, officiating during inter-school athletics competitions and serving in different sub-committees of the school governing body such as fundraising. Parents would want to see themselves contributing towards the success of the school, because the school could probably be popular and this would also boost their social status. The community could possibly support and co-operate with the school in its endeavours to bring about change. There would probably be a sound relationship between all stakeholders. Parents could possibly volunteer to look for donations or even donate goods to the school.

- **Increased participation in sporting and cultural activities.** If the number of learners increases, the school could possibly be able to participate in a number of different activities without involving the same learner each time. School principals argued that if there were many learners in a school, they became easily involved in sporting and cultural activities because the interest also increased. In addition, if there was an outstanding performance in these activities there was a likelihood that the school could be adopted by non-governmental organisations or get donations and/or assistance from the business sector. Consequently, learners' interest in these activities could possibly increase and the reputation and the image of the school would be boosted. An official of the department said:

“Learners who are doing excellently in sports can get sponsorship from companies and they end up playing for national teams or even internationally”.

5.6.3 Reasons why parents reject some schools

The respondents were asked to give reasons for rejecting some schools. The following are views of parents, school principals and officials of the department on reasons parents and/or learners reject or avoid some schools (Table 5.16). The themes that emerged were categorised, ranked and are displayed in Table 5.16.

Lack of resources. The respondents indicated that their schools were generally avoided because of lack of resources. They further stated that facilities, such as toilets, computers, libraries, library books, science laboratories and so on, were inadequate. The respondents in the informal settlements near big towns stated that, even though the Department was trying to provide them with temporary

portable classrooms, it was not enough because more people moved into these areas daily.

Distance from the school. Most parents indicated that they did not choose schools that were far from their homes due to lack of reliable public transport and long distances learners had to walk and/or travel to and fro between home and school. Thus, parents had no other option but to opt for schools close to their homes.

Table 5.16: Reasons parents reject some school

	f	%	Rank
1. Lack of resources	128	26,7	1
2. Bad examination results	109	22,7	2
3. Limited curriculum offered	79	16,5	3
4. Lack of discipline	51	10,6	4
5. Distance from the school	45	9,4	5
6. Lack of commitment on the part of educators	37	7,7	6
7. The language of teaching and learning (LOLT)	31	6,5	7

Limited curriculum. School principals stated that the limited curriculum offered by their schools work to their disadvantage. They further indicated that lack of security hindered them from introducing subjects or learning areas which are currently in demand, such as computer studies, travel and tourism and technical subjects. Parents, on the other hand, indicated that they chose schools where learners were taught computer literacy and other technical subjects because learners were able to get employment after completing Grade 12.

Lack of discipline and commitment on the part of educators. More than 50% of the respondents stated that educators in most predominantly black schools did not show a sense of duty consciousness, they did not show any commitment in doing their work, they came to school late and left early and some even attended

when under the influence of liquor. One of the parents indicated that educators should stop commuting because buses came late and left early. Most parents indicated that they would not take their children to schools where learners did drugs, smoke, sniff glue and were generally ill-disciplined. One parent during the interviews said bitterly:

“Some schools are terrible. I know a lot of parents whose children attend at school X. I do not want my child to attend at that school and learn how to sniff glue”.

The language of learning and teaching (LOLT). The majority of the parents indicated that they preferred schools which used English as the medium of instruction. Furthermore, parents indicated that they preferred schools which were racially integrated because their children could be able to interact with learners from other cultures and racial groups, and such schools used English strictly as the language of teaching and learning.

5.6.4 Reasons why parents choose independent or private schools

The respondents were also asked to give reasons why parents chose independent or private schools. Content analysis was also employed to cluster or collate themes that emerged during interviews. The themes that emerged were categorised and ranked. The following is a brief discussion of the major reasons why parents often choose independent schools:

- **Availability of resources.** Most parents indicated that the major reason for choosing independent schools was because these schools were well-resourced. Libraries were within reach and learners were able to use them for doing their projects, assignments and even do independent study. They had enough classrooms that were well kept. Because such schools

charge high fees, most of them had adequate modern teaching and learning aids and laboratories and libraries were well resourced.

- **Quality education.** Parents also indicated that they chose independent schools because they were able to attract well qualified and experienced educators who were able to deliver quality education. Not only that, they stated that most independent schools were able to purchase their own learner and teacher support material (LTSM), while others demanded that parents should purchase textbooks for their learners, therefore learners had the necessary learner support material. The number of learners per classroom, which in most instances was low and usually below 25, allowed educators to give individual attention to learners, as observed during fieldwork. One of the respondents stated that the number of learners per educator in private schools was manageable, and in most instances an educator taught twenty or less learners in a classroom.

- **Educators are contracted.** In most independent schools educators are contracted. These contracts are renewable and guaranteed once the educator performs well above expectations, unlike the situation in public schools where educators are appointed permanently or for an unspecified period. Thus, in independent schools if an educator does not perform as expected, his/her contract is not renewed. This compels educators to work to the best of their ability, to go the extra mile in order to ensure that learners with whom they are entrusted, pass at the end of the year. Most, if not all educators in independent schools, are not unionised, thus lessons in these schools are not disrupted by union meetings and educator strikes as is the case with public schools. During field work it was observed that most educators in these schools, were educators who had previously retired.

- **Safe environment and discipline.** Entrance or access to these schools, whether during the day and at night, is restricted in many ways. Such schools are therefore free from most of the violence that occasionally occurs in public schools. The environment and atmosphere in most independent schools is supportive to the child's well-being. The respondents further indicated that learners in these schools were well-disciplined, because parents assisted school management with regard to learner discipline. Thus, there was high level of discipline which enabled effective teaching and learning to take place; and
- **Transport.** Some of the private schools attracted parents by providing learners and educators with transport. Parents indicated that for the fact that their children were provided with reliable transport to and fro, their children were always punctual at school and they were able to attend to extra classes and extra mural activities in the afternoon.

5.6.5 Challenges in school marketing

The respondents were further requested to identify the challenges they were faced with when marketing their schools. Content analysis was also employed to cluster or collate themes that emerged during the interviews. Themes that emerged as major challenges were categorised as follows:

- **Lack of training in school marketing**

Most school principals indicated that they lacked the expertise or know-how in school marketing and they did not have staff members in their schools who were knowledgeable in school marketing. The respondents emphasised that, for them to successfully market their schools, they needed thorough training in the basics of school marketing.

Some officials of the Department acknowledged that school principals needed training in school marketing, but they did not need training on school beautification or how to keep their school attractive because they were able to keep their own yards beautiful and attractive. But what was needed was to change the attitudes of the principals towards the schools they were heading.

- **The conditions of the school buildings**

The majority of the respondents indicated that their schools were built by communities themselves and the workmanship was not satisfactory. Thus, most schools need major renovations and a few needed to be demolished and new ones erected. Officials of the Department indicated that though the schools needed renovations and sanitation, the Department was trying by all means to address the issue of school infra-structure but resources were limited. Furthermore, they indicated that they were encouraging schools to raise funds and to ask for donations in order to improve their schools' image, and also to organise "letsema" [letsema, plural matsema, refers to people (in this case parents of learners) coming together to work in the property of one of them (in the school) on a voluntarily basis or communal work (Matumo, 1993:205)] to keep their schools clean and attractive].

- **Lack of financial resources**

The majority of the respondents (74%) indicated that lack of resources, especially finances was a serious impediment in marketing schools. The respondents mentioned that they did not have the financial means because most parents were reluctant to pay school fees. Furthermore, school principals indicated that parents did not pay school fees in the name of 'free education' which in some instances was mentioned by

politicians especially towards national and local elections. Also because most parents are exempted from paying school fees, late or non-payment of Norms and Standards monies and the low socio-economic background of most communities further reduced financial resources. Thus, schools were not even able to make their letter-heads, to design and print flyers or brochures to distribute to the market or even to buy a computer that could be used to write letters to parents, let alone a photo-copier to multiply all these materials.

- **Lack of support and commitment from the SGB and staff**

School principals (56%) especially in the rural areas, indicated that school governing body members were grandparents of their learners, therefore they did not show any interest in most school activities. They were not supportive and left major decisions to the principal. Even some staff members did not show any commitment because they wanted to be redeployed to schools nearer to towns; as a result they wanted to see the school enrolment declining.

5.6.6 Suggestions for improving school marketing

The respondents were requested to state or suggest how they thought school marketing could be improved. Content analysis was also employed to cluster or collate themes that emerged during interviews. The following emerged as suggestions on how school marketing could be improved:

- **Training of members of the school management team**

The majority of the respondents (78%), especially principals, strongly emphasised that principals and, at least members of the school management team, should undergo training or workshops on school

marketing. This implies that the training should include among others the different elements of the marketing mix, how to develop a marketing plan and how to implement it. If the Department does this training, it would save school money because schools would be able to do it themselves rather than employ a marketing consultant.

▪ **Bringing parents closer to the school**

The respondents indicated that the only way of bringing parents closer to the school was by actively involving them in different school activities, for instance, by involving them in the following:

- Fundraising activities or campaigns;
- Decision-making processes, like in school policy development;
- Supervising learners during school trips and excursions, and during studies in the afternoon and/or on Saturdays;
- Allowing parents to offer voluntary service to the school and 'Letsema';
- Opening the doors of the school to all parents; and
- School meetings.

One of the respondents said:

“Parents should be shown respect during meetings when they come up with suggestions to improve the school, irrespective of their race, culture, creed or social status. This will encourage parents to participate and be closer to the school”.

Thus, parents and other stakeholders, should be treated with respect and the dignity they deserve during meetings in schools.

- **Maximise learner participation in sporting activities**

The respondents indicated that schools should offer different sporting codes so that all learners would be able to participate actively in at least one sporting code that they like most. Furthermore, the respondents stated that sporting facilities should be of acceptable standard and conditions, whether a school is in the rural or urban area. As far as possible parents should be invited to train learners in sporting codes that they had the expertise in.

- **Care of the school surrounding and buildings**

The respondents strongly recommended that school management teams and school governing bodies should spend some money on school beautification, gardening and minor renovation projects. Officials of the Department suggested that schools could also make use of parents who were exempted from paying school fees for cleaning and keeping the school surroundings tidy and attractive. Such parents could even bring flowers to school for planting and do minor painting and window repairs. This suggests that school principals and school governing bodies need only to be innovative and initiate some of these projects.

- **Introducing a school magazine or newsletter**

The respondents stated that, for marketing purposes, it was important for a school to introduce a school newsletter or magazine. Schools can use these types of communication to inform current learners and parents about what is going on in the school and make them feel part of the team.

They can be used externally to create an awareness and to uphold the institution's image with the suppliers and customers.

- **Furthermore, the respondents suggested the following:**
 - Schools should develop clear and realistic vision and mission statements. All stakeholders should be involved so that they can own such vision and mission statements. This suggests that if stakeholders have ownership of the school vision and mission they would turn them into a 'rallying cry'; and
 - The local municipality should start to own schools and take responsibility for the maintenance of school infra-structure and provision of school sanitation.

5.7 A comparison of the views of urban and rural respondents using the Chi-square test

The main purpose of this section was to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between urban and rural respondents on the type of settlement using the Chi-square test. The Chi-square test was used because it is a nonparametric statistical test that is commonly used when the research data are in the form of frequency counts (Borg and Gall, 1989:464).

Table 5.17: Chi-square Test – Parents choose schools with attractive environment (Item 10.8) and urban and rural respondents (Item A2)

Environment (Item 10.0) and urban and rural respondents (Item A2)

			Parents choose schools with attractive environment				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	2	7	85	48	142
		Expected Count	5.5	16.7	75.8	44.0	142.0
		% of Total	.5%	1.7%	20.4%	11.5%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	14	42	137	81	274
		Expected Count	10.5	32.3	146.2	85.0	274.0
		% of Total	3.4%	10.1%	32.9%	19.5%	65.9%
Total		Count	16	49	222	129	416
		Expected Count	16.0	49.0	222.0	129.0	416.0
		% of Total	3.8%	11.8%	53.4%	31.0%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 14.16; p\text{-value} = 0.003; df = 3$$

The data in Table 5.17 ($\chi^2 = 14.16$; $p\text{-value} = 0.003$) indicates that there is an association between the type of settlement and the parental choice of schools with an attractive environment. Statistically significantly more rural respondents, that is 52.4% (32.9 + 19.5%), believe that parents choose schools with an attractive environment than do urban respondents, that is only 31.9% (20.4 + 11.5%).

The statistically significant difference could be that the respondents who serve rural schools are more realistic about the educational value of an attractive environment which encourages parents to enroll their children in such schools – with attractive infrastructure (cf. 3.4.2). Principals in some rural schools are unable to maintain their infrastructure due to the low socio-economic background of most parents in such communities and hence they are more aware of the value that funds play in providing an attractive environment.

Table 5.18: Chi-square Test – Parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home (Item 10.4) and rural and urban (Item A2)

			Parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	3	11	72	56	142
		Expected Count	3.4	20.5	67.6	50.5	142.0
		% of Total	.7%	2.6%	17.3%	13.5%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	7	49	126	92	274
		Expected Count	6.6	39.5	130.4	97.5	274.0
		% of Total	1.7%	11.8%	30.3%	22.1%	65.9%
Total		Count	10	60	198	148	416
		Expected Count	10.0	60.0	198.0	148.0	416.0
		% of Total	2.4%	14.4%	47.6%	35.6%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 8.080; p\text{-value} = 0.044; df = 3$$

The data in Table 5.18 ($\chi^2 = 8.080$; $p\text{-value} = 0.044$) indicates that there is an association between the two independent groups. Of the total respondents, 52.4% (30.3 + 22.1%) of the rural respondents held the perception that parents chose schools because of their proximity to their home while only 30.8% (17.3 + 13.5%) of urban respondents had this perception.

The statistically significant difference between the opinions of both sets of respondents could possibly be as a result of the unreliable public transport in rural areas which does not allow a free movement of learners away from nearby feeder schools. Thus, parents are bound to enroll their children in the local schools (cf. 3.4.1.2).

Table 5.19: Chi-square Test – Parents choose schools where they think their children would be safe (Item 10.6) and type of settlement (Item A2)

			Parents choose schools where they think their children would be safe				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	4	27	83	28	142
		Expected Count	8.5	36.9	68.6	28.0	142.0
		% of Total	1.0%	6.5%	20.0%	6.7%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	21	81	118	54	274
		Expected Count	16.5	71.1	132.4	54.0	274.0
		% of Total	5.0%	19.5%	28.4%	13.0%	65.9%
Total		Count	25	108	201	82	416
		Expected Count	25.0	108.0	201.0	82.0	416.0
		% of Total	6.0%	26.0%	48.3%	19.7%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 12.247; p\text{-value} = 0.007; df = 3$$

The data in Table 5.19 indicates that 41.4%, (28.4 + 13.0%), of the respondents from rural areas agree to strongly agree that parents choose schools where they think their children are safe. In contrast only 26.7% (20.0 + 6.7%) of the respondents from urban schools have the same perception. Statistically significantly more rural area respondents believe that parents choose schools where they think that their children are than respondents from urban areas. A similar finding was made by Goldring and Hausman (1999) in the USA, where they found that lower income parents, who are mostly in rural areas, chose schools for discipline or safety reasons (cf. 3.4.1.4).

Rural parents are probably more conservative in their thinking and hence discipline and safety are regarded more highly.

Table 5.20: Chi-square Test – Parents tend to reject schools where principal is an autocrat (Item 11.8) and rural and urban respondents (Item A2)

			Parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	7	10	68	57	142
		Expected Count	5.1	19.8	62.1	55.0	142.0
		% of Total	1.7%	2.4%	16.3%	13.7%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	8	48	114	104	274
		Expected Count	9.9	38.2	119.9	106.0	274.0
		% of Total	1.9%	11.5%	27.4%	25.0%	65.9%
Total		Count	15	58	182	161	416
		Expected Count	15.0	58.0	182.0	161.0	416.0
		% of Total	3.6%	13.9%	43.8%	38.7%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 9.369; \text{ p-value} = 0.025; \text{ df} = 3$$

The data in Table 5.20 indicate a statistically significant association between the two independent grouping of variables ($\chi^2 = 9.369$; p-value = 0.025). Statistically significantly more respondents from rural areas, 52.4% (27.4 + 25.0%), agree and strongly agree that parents tend to reject schools where principals are autocrats than do respondents from urban areas (30.0%, that is, 16.3 + 13.7%).

The reason for the difference which is statistically significant with regard to the statement that parents tend to reject schools where principals are autocrats, probably lies in the greater involvement of parents in the governance of the school than urban parents do.

Table 5.21: Chi-square Test – Parents reject some schools due to lack of adequate public transport to the school (Item 11.1) and type of settlement (Item A2)

			Parents reject some schools due to lack of adequate public transport to the school				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	17	23	61	41	142
		Expected Count	10.6	23.6	72.7	35.2	142.0
		% of Total	4.1%	5.5%	14.7%	9.9%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	14	46	152	62	274
		Expected Count	20.4	45.4	140.3	67.8	274.0
		% of Total	3.4%	11.1%	36.5%	14.9%	65.9%
Total		Count	31	69	213	103	416
		Expected Count	31.0	69.0	213.0	103.0	416.0
		% of Total	7.5%	16.6%	51.2%	24.8%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 10.265; p\text{-value} = 0.016; df = 3$$

The data in Table 5.21 indicates that 51,4% (36.5 + 14.9%) of the respondents from rural areas agree and strongly agree that parents reject schools due to lack of public transport. In contrast only 24.6% (14.7 + 9.9%) of respondents from urban areas have the same perception. Statistically significantly more rural area respondents believe that parents reject schools because of public transport to the school than respondents from urban areas. A similar finding was made by Bagley et al. (2001) in the UK, where they found that most parents from semi-rural areas of Greenvale indicated lack of transport as a major reason for rejecting some schools (cf. 3.4.2).

According to Table 5.21, a statistically significant difference exists between the views of respondents from rural and urban areas with regard to parents rejecting some schools due to lack of adequate public transport. This finding could possibly be as a result of parents not enrolling their children in schools that are distant from their homes because of inadequate transport which would possibly leave learners frustrated because they are not able to enroll in schools of their choice (cf. 3.4.2).

Table 5. 22: Chi-square Test – Parents move away their children from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matter in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners (Item 11.9) and type of settlement (Item A2)

			Parents move away their children from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matters in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners				Total
			SD	D	A	SA	
Type of settlement	Urban	Count	0	22	67	53	142
		Expected Count	2.4	29.0	56.3	54.3	142.0
		% of Total	.0%	5.3%	16.1%	12.7%	34.1%
	Rural	Count	7	63	98	106	274
		Expected Count	4.6	56.0	108.7	104.7	274.0
		% of Total	1.7%	15.1%	23.6%	25.5%	65.9%
Total		Count	7	85	165	159	416
		Expected Count	7.0	85.0	165.0	159.0	416.0
		% of Total	1.7%	20.4%	39.7%	38.2%	100.0%

$$\chi^2 = 9.321; p\text{-value} = 0.025; df = 3$$

The data from Table 5.22 indicates that there is a statistically significant association between the two independent groups ($\chi^2 = 9.321$; $p\text{-value} = 0.025$). Thus, statistically significantly more rural respondents, 49.1% (23.6 + 25.5%), have the perception that parents move their children away from schools with an overemphasis on academic matters, than urban respondents, 28.8% (16.1 + 12.7%), have this perception.

In terms of Table 5.22, the statistically significant difference could possibly be ascribed to the fact that parents prefer their children to be developed in totality. Most parents want to see their children excelling in a number of spheres, for instance academically, spiritually, aesthetically and physically (in different sporting codes). Hence, they would remove their children from schools that are, for example, academically orientated only.

In Chapter 1, researcher assumed that there would be no statistically significant difference between the respondents from rural and urban areas regarding the reasons why parents choose and reject some schools (cf. 1.4). This null hypothesis is rejected on the basis that there was a statistically significant difference between the views of respondents from rural and urban areas on the following aspects:

- Respondents had the perception that parents choose schools with attractive environment (Rural respondents agreed more);
- Respondents had the perception that parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home (Rural respondents agreed more);
- Respondents had the perception that parents choose schools where they think their children would be safe (Rural respondents agreed more);
- Respondents had the perception that parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat (Rural respondents agreed more);
- Respondents had the perception that parents reject some schools due to lack of adequate public transport to the school (Rural respondents agreed more); and
- Respondents had the perception that parents move their children away from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matters in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners (Rural respondents agreed more).

5.8 Summary

This chapter outlined the findings of the empirical investigation conducted to determine factors that influence parental and or learner choice of schools or educational institutions and marketing techniques employed by schools or educational institutions in marketing themselves.

This investigation revealed the following major findings:

- The following emerged as influential factors for parental school choice:
 - Good examination results;
 - Resources that match the individual children's needs;
 - The ability to voice out one's opinion when dissatisfied with the quality of education;
 - Proximity to residential area; and
 - The ability of the school to deal proactively with bullying incidents

- School choice
 - School choice improves parental involvement in the school;
 - Parental choice is a prerequisite to school improvement and powerful agent for change to improve schools; and
 - School choice enhances racial integration in schools

- Parental school choice
 - Parents choose schools with good academic results;
 - Parents prefer schools with resources that match their individual children's needs;
 - Parents prefer to take their children to schools in close proximity to their homes and where they will be happy; and
 - They tend to reject schools due to unacceptable appearance of children who are already attending a particular school and schools with a bad reputation

- School marketing techniques - it was evident from the qualitative data that:
 - The majority of the schools did not have specific techniques or strategies for marketing themselves but they relied heavily on certain activities that they were excelling in, to attract learners for

their schools; such activities include good examination results, regular meetings with parents, good discipline and recognition of good achievement.

In rural areas, for school marketing to be successful, attention needs to be given to the following aspects:

- Attractive environment (cf. 5.5.2 Item 10.8 and 5.6.4)
Principals need to keep their school environment clean, attractive and free from litter.
- Availability of resources (human and material) (cf. 5.5.2 Item 10.1 and 5.6.3)
Resources such as libraries and laboratories should be made available in rural schools, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Incentives should be made available for educators teaching in rural schools, so that suitably qualified educators can be attracted to such schools. The currently used Educator Post Provisioning Model by the Department of Education, needs to be revised so that it caters for small schools which are mostly found in rural areas.
- Lack of educator discipline (cf. 5.5.3 Item 11.7 and 5.6.3)
Respondents indicated that parents tend to reject schools where educators come late and knock-off early and even come to school under the influence of liquor. Principals in such schools, need to implement the code of conduct as stipulated in the Employment of educators' Act No. 78 of 1998 as amended. The Department should make accommodation available for educators teaching in rural areas, in order to reduce the number of educators traveling to and from their work stations

Chapter 6 focuses on a marketing programme for ordinary public schools.

CHAPTER 6

6. A MARKETING PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

6.1 Introduction

Marketing must be added to the managerial toolbox of school principals so that schools become customer-centred and customer-focused institutions. For schools to survive, they need to be customer-responsive and cost-efficient and school management teams' decisions might need to be made quicker than ever before. Educators, on the other hand, have to accept the possibility or reality of cost-efficient downsizing. These tasks require a paradigm shift in the philosophy of the organisation of education at the school level. The need to survive, to retain or even to assert a competitive edge in the schooling marketplace, creates a pressure to drive school management teams' decision-making within schools towards commercial and away from educational or social considerations, although these are not always mutually exclusive.

This chapter discusses the important steps or stages for the development of a school marketing programme (SMP) for public ordinary schools, the rationale behind the development of a marketing programme for schools as well as aims and objectives of the school marketing programme. A school marketing programme can be used as a guide by schools in recruiting and retaining learners in schools. As stated in chapter one (1), the main aim of this study was to develop a school marketing programme for public ordinary schools (cf. 1.3).

6.2 Stages for the development of the school marketing programme (SMP)

The development of a school marketing programme is guided by the assumption that a programme or a model, attempts to represent reality. The school marketing programme attempts to illustrate how the different marketing techniques, can be used in real school life.

Fig. 6.1 below shows the important stages or steps that need to be observed when a school marketing programme is developed:

Fig. 6.1: The planning process of a school marketing programme

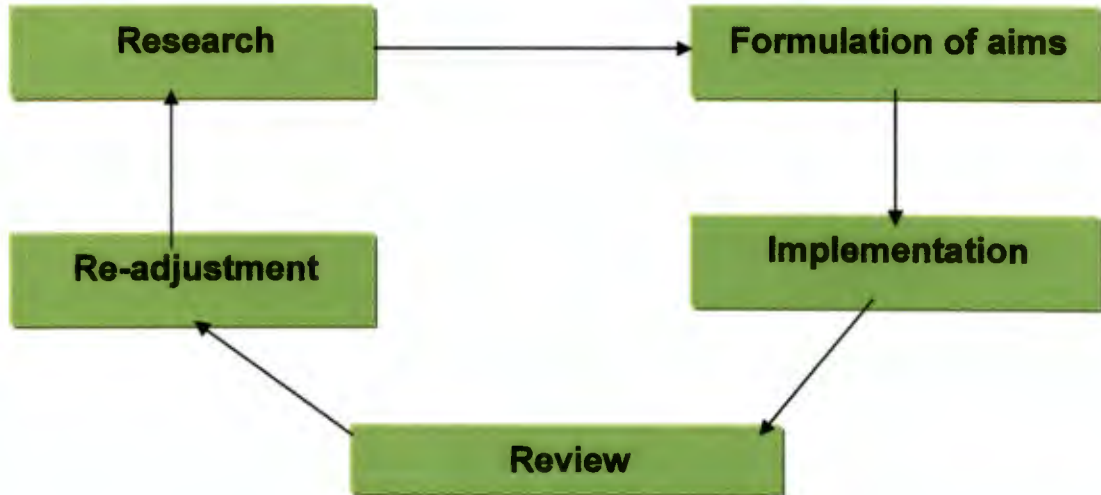


Fig 6.1 shows that before a school marketing programme can be developed, the school needs to carry out a mini-research involving all stakeholders to find out, the following, among others:

- To determine the needs of the customers;
- Who are other competitors; and
- The school's strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities (cf. 2.4.1.2).

After conducting this research or audit, a school needs to involve all stakeholders in the formulation of the specific, measurable, agreed and achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives and the creation of an action plan which will be implemented by all relevant role players. It is also important for the school to review or assess its plan, from time to time, to determine whether the target outcomes are achieved and, if not, the plan can be re-adjusted (Fig. 6.3).

6.3 A school marketing programme for ordinary public schools

This section outlines the major components of the school marketing programme. The rationale and the objectives of the programme are briefly discussed below. In developing a marketing programme, due attention should be given to the needs of the customers and to the schools themselves as the suppliers of the service. In other words, needs could be viewed as the gap between what is present and what is required (Legotlo, 1994:111).

6.3.1 The rationale for a school marketing programme

It was evident from the literature reviewed in this study (cf. 2.7) that there are limited strategies that could be used by schools for marketing themselves. The analysis of the empirical data also revealed that some schools did not have specific strategies or programmes for marketing in the two Regions where the research was conducted (cf. 5.6.1).

6.3.2 Objectives of the school marketing programme

The main aim of the school marketing programme should be to assist and guide school principals and school governing bodies in recruiting and retaining learners in their schools. It should be borne in mind that the research or marketing audit forms the basis for the formulation of the school marketing programme objectives. The weaknesses that are identified are turned into SMART objectives of the programme through the involvement of all other stakeholders.

The following are some of the main objectives of a school marketing programme:

- Assist schools to outline or explain their *raison d'être* or core business;
- Enable schools to identify the needs and wants of customers and satisfy them better than any other competitor;
- Assist schools to remain focused in their business;
- Recruit as many learners as possible;

- Inform customers about the advantages of enrolling learners at a particular school; and
- Reduce the number of educators who could be declared in excess.

Without a well-structured school marketing programme, these objectives cannot be realised or actualised by schools.

6.4 Development and implementation of a school marketing programme

To ensure that the stated objectives of the school marketing programme are achieved, a school marketing programme task team (SMPTT) at the school level, needs to be established. The establishment of a task team is based on the fact that school marketing is not the responsibility of the individual. It should rather be a collective task in which all stakeholders, are involved. All stakeholders in a school may act as ambassadors for the school – a role they can practise in their dealings with the community and private sector. The main function of this structure will be to co-ordinate all activities of the school with regard to marketing. Fig. 6.2 on the next page shows the composition of the SMPTT.

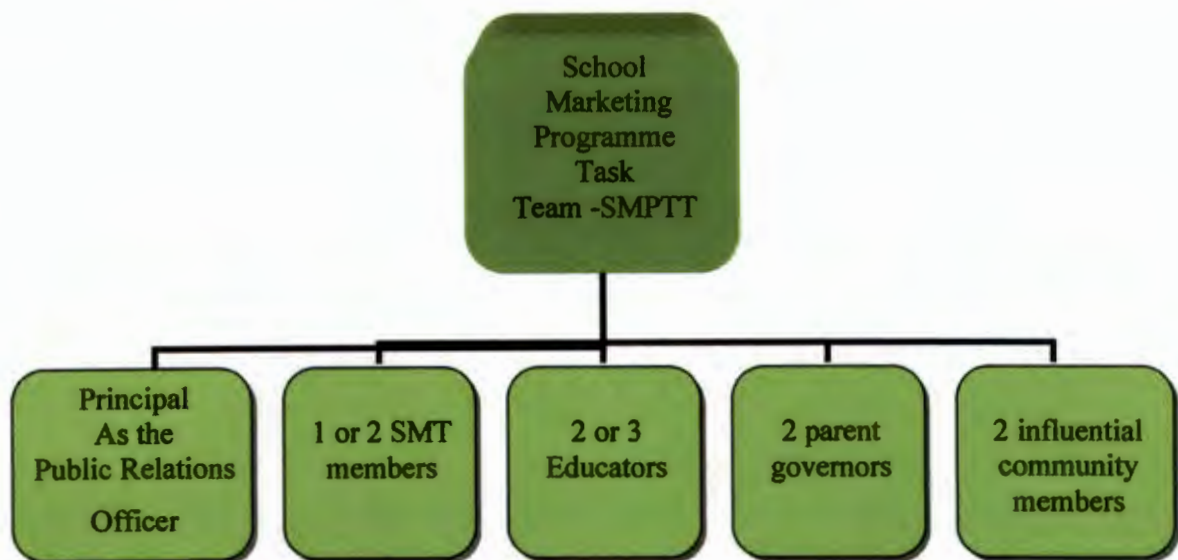
According to Hanson and Henry (1993:83), a campaign leadership structure is essential and is a key to organising the strategic marketing plan. Thus a school, wishing to market itself, has to establish a School Marketing Programme Task Team (SMPTT). The following stakeholders could be part of this committee:

- **The principal as a member of the school management team (SMT)**
The role of the principal in the development and implementation of the school marketing programme is that of an advisor, developer and implementer of the programme. During the implementation of the programme, he/she plays the role of a public relations officer or spokesperson of the school. The visibility and commitment of the principal will contribute largely to the success of the school marketing programme. In some instances, other members of the school management team could assist him/her.

- **Educators in the school**

Educators should not only educate or teach, but should also be involved in school marketing. Educators, as stakeholders, should also be included in the SMPTT, but this will depend on the size of the school. Educators need to be aware of the parents' views and preferences so that they can address them in practice or in the classrooms. They should show a high level of commitment towards issues of school marketing. Educators need to be effective so that they can promote positive word-of-mouth communication within the community. In addition, for educators to be able to assist the school in its marketing process, they should maintain good learner discipline, create a positive atmosphere in the classroom conducive to learning and teaching, offer interesting lessons, keep classrooms tidy and clean and create a safe environment in which learners can learn. Fig. 6.2 below shows how the SMPTT can be structured:

Figure 6.2: A School Marketing Programme Task Team – SMPTT



- **School governing body**

The school governing body is responsible for the governance of the school. It is responsible for the development of school policies, like the school marketing policy, its most important responsibility is to fund all the initiative of the school marketing programme task team. Because, without money or funds, there is no way in which the stated objectives can be actualised. Two (2) members of the parent component of the school governing body, that is, parent governors, should be included in the SMPTT.

- **Influential members of the community**

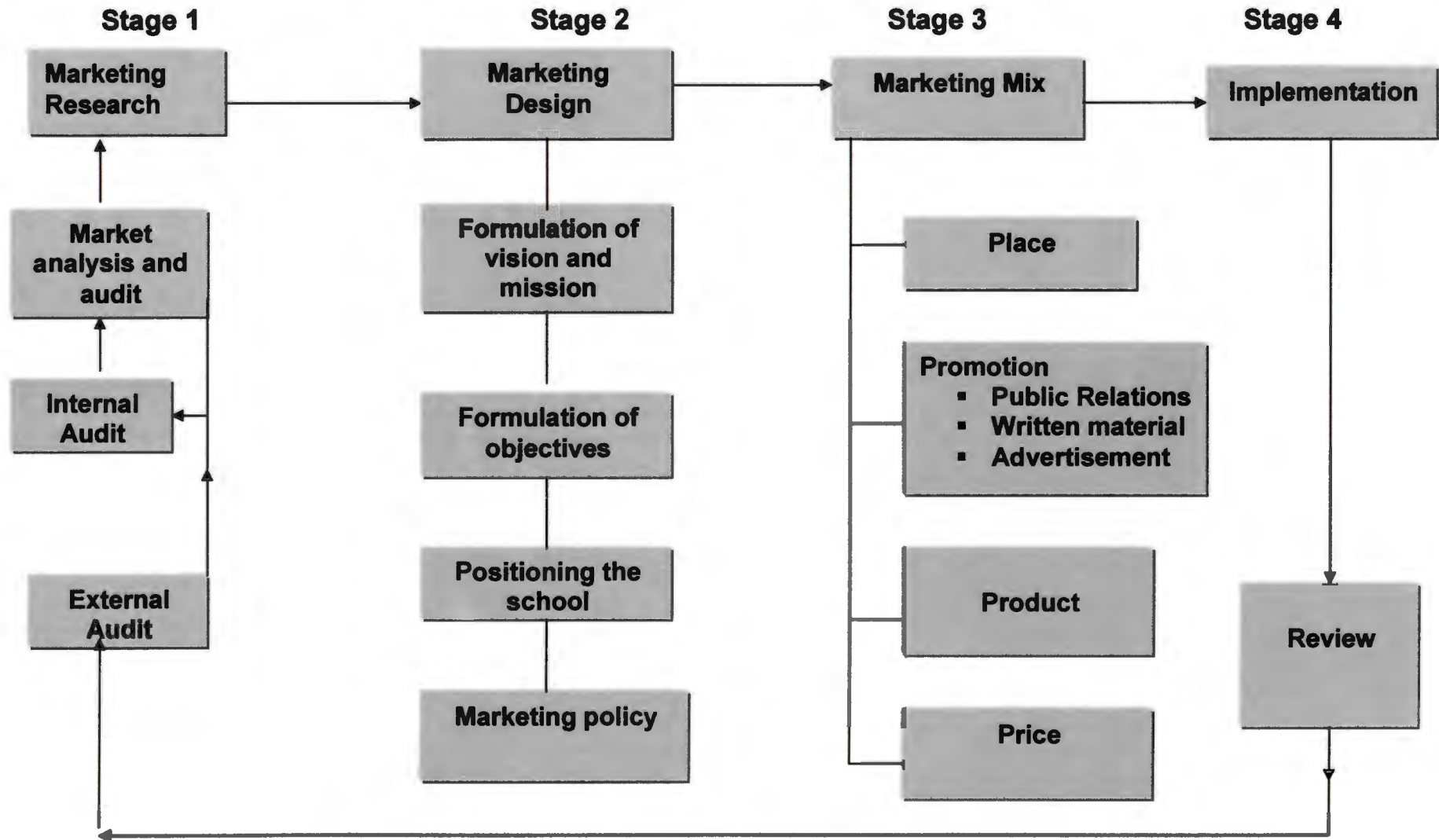
The reason for including influential community members is simply because the community trusts them and believes what they say to them (cf. 2.2.2). Such people could be used when the principal, as a public relations officer of the school, addresses parents on different occasions.

People elected or nominated to serve in the SMPTT, should, at least, have some idea of fund-raising, advertising, volunteerism, local politics and demographics. It is recommended that the committee should not be too big, and that learners may also be included especially in secondary schools or schools with Grade 8 upwards.

6.5. School Marketing Programme (SMP) for Public Ordinary Schools of the North West Province

The proposed School Marketing Programme (SMP) consists of four stages as indicated in Fig. 6.3. Each stage has a number of activities that are to be managed and co-ordinated by the school marketing programme task team (SMPTT). It was evident from the empirical investigation that schools had no specific programmes for marketing their schools; hence that proposal was put forward (cf. 5.6.1).

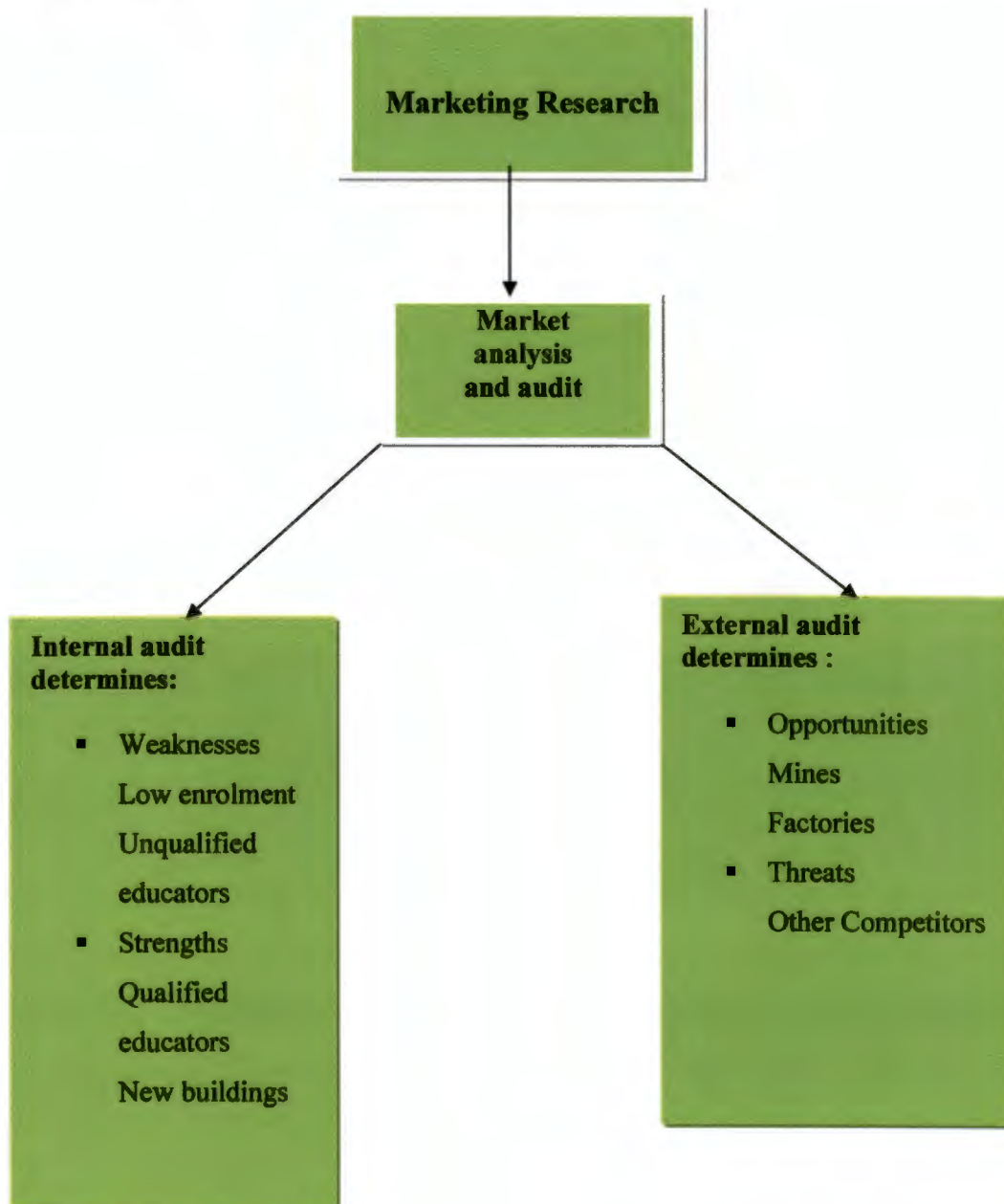
Figure 6.3: School Marketing Programme for ordinary public schools



6.5.1 Stage 1: Marketing Research

Stage 1 consists of the market analysis and audit, which is further subdivided into internal and external market audit. The marketing research is considered as pivotal and the backbone of the marketing process.

Fig. 6.4: Stage 1 – A School Marketing Research



▪ **Market analysis and audit**

Market analysis refers to gaining an understanding and determining the needs and expectations of the community. The school marketing programme task team should gather data on the needs and expectations of the community, by using any of the following instruments or techniques:

- A questionnaire;
- Interviews; and
- Meetings with
 - Community
 - Learners currently enrolled at the school; especially in Secondary schools;
 - Staff – teaching and/or non teaching staff;
 - School governing body; and
 - Parents of present learners enrolled at the school.

If community members participate extensively in this process, the outcome can contribute significantly to the marketing plan. After the collection of this data, the school marketing committee has to collate, reconcile and prioritise parents' and learners' needs. Thereafter, the school marketing programme task team together with the whole staff, school management team, learners and the school governing body need also to do self-evaluation or assessment, to determine:

- School strengths, for instance (cf. 2.4.1.1)
 - The school has well-qualified educators;
 - Extra learner accommodation;
 - Dedicated administrative staff; and so on
- School weaknesses, for instance (cf. 2.4.1.1)
 - High rate of learner absenteeism;

- High learner dropout;
- The school management team is dysfunctional; and so on

When doing this exercise, it is imperative that all stakeholders involved and participating, should be honest to themselves if they want to succeed in marketing their school.

An external environmental analysis should be conducted to determine the school's opportunities and threats. An opportunity is a favourable or unexploited condition in one or more of the management environments that can be used to the school's advantage by means of proactive management. A threat is an unfavourable condition in one or more of the management environments which, without proactive management, may harm the organisation. The following are examples of questions the SMPTT can ask in order to determine the school's opportunities and threats (cf. 2.4.1.2):

- What major business/firms/factories are presently in place or about to leave or enter the place ?;
- Who are the school's biggest competitors ?;
- What are their strengths and weaknesses ?;
- What are the income and job opportunities in the community?;
- How does political power flow, how does it relate to societal power ?;
- What kinds of lobbying have been done in the past ? What worked and did not work ?; and
- Where do areas of duplication exist ?

6.5.2 Stage 2: Marketing design

During this stage the School Marketing Programme Task Team has to formulate its own vision and mission statement. A vision is a prerequisite for strategy and it is taken to be the all-encompassing future scenario, the ideal dream of the school. It states the future situation, direction and goal the school or committee envisions, which are all based on the fundamental values and beliefs held by the role-players involved in the school. The vision

can motivate people (everybody involved in marketing the school), to make their dream a reality and put it into practice. If internalised by all involved it becomes a rallying cry. The vision developed by this campaign structure should be based on the overall school's vision.

A mission statement will present the main reason the committee exists – its *raison d'être*, its purpose. Furthermore, the mission is the declaration of the objectives of the committee and what its role is within the school. Thus the mission is the means or vehicle that the committee will use in order to realise the vision.

▪ **Formulation of goals**

By formulating goals, the school marketing committee determines where it wants to be in the future. The main purpose of formulating goals is to give direction to the committee's activities. Such goals must be attainable, acceptable to those involved, comprehensible in general, and concrete and specific. The simplest way of formulating goals is to change weaknesses into goals. For instance, the weaknesses mentioned are as follows:

- High rate of learner absenteeism;
- High learner dropout;
- The school management team is dysfunctional; and so on

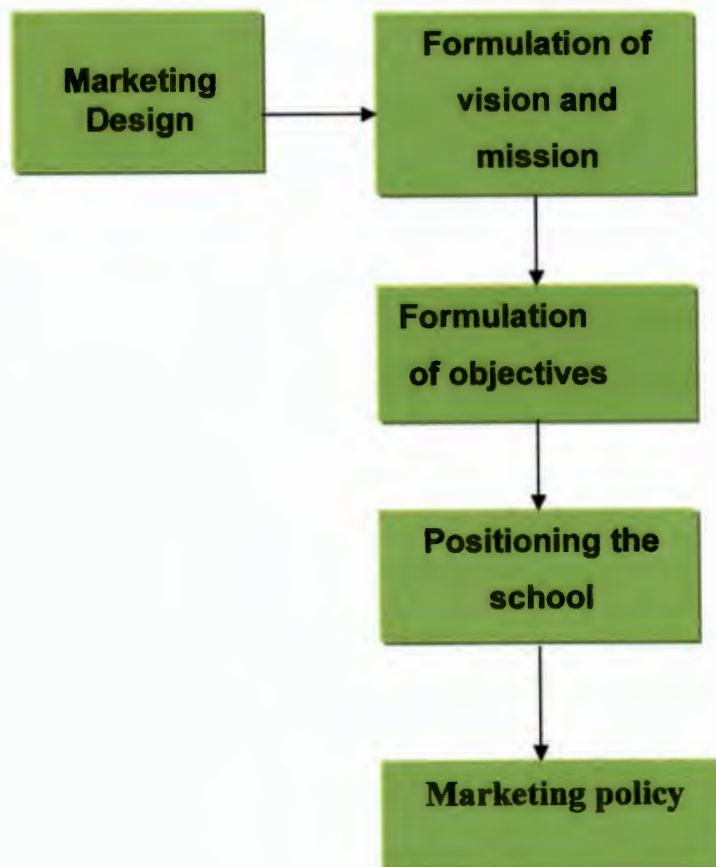
Possible goals or objectives could be:

- To reduce rate of learner absenteeism; and
- Develop an effective school management team.

To ensure that the mentioned criteria are considered when formulating goals or objectives, it is recommended that the **SMART** criteria should be used. This acronym, means that goals or objectives must be as follows (Davies and Ellison, 1991:257):

- S Specific**, rather than general, ill-defined or theoretical;
- M Measurable**, so that the progress toward attainment can be monitored, or to determine the success criteria;
- A Agreed and Achievable**, rather than discouragingly beyond reach;
- R Relevant**, meeting significant needs, of real consequence; and
- T Timed**, to be attained in a given period of time and encourage purposeful action.

Figure 6.5 : Stage 2 – Marketing design



▪ **Positioning the school**

The School Marketing Programme Task Team should then position their school in relation to other schools in the proximity. The School Marketing Programme Task Team should seek the uniqueness of their school in relation to other schools. They should easily differentiate their own school from other schools.

When positioning their school the following phrases may be used:

- Our school has a library and laboratory;
- We have small classes;
- This is an integrative school;
- This school produces good quality results; and
- Our school offers different types of sporting codes; and so forth.

The School Marketing Programme Task Team must be able to formulate a competitive position for their school. Furthermore, they should be in the position to transmit their school's uniqueness to the community through the marketing activities they will employ.

▪ **Marketing policy**

Matshidiso (1999:10) defines policy as a plan of action adopted or even followed by an individual, a particular structure, or an organisation like a school. He also defines policy as a guide for future action and also for making relevant choices towards the attainment of pre-determined goals and further indicates the choices that will best achieve the desired results. Therefore, the school marketing committee, needs to have a plan of action that will assist and guide them on their path, towards attaining the vision and mission it has set for itself, within a specific period or time frames.

6.5.3 Stage 3: The marketing mix

The marketing mix (Fig. 6.6) consists of four (4) controllable variables or elements, namely the place, promotion, product and price to be discussed below. These elements of the marketing mix are vital for a school if it wants to make a move from “where it is” to “ where it wants to be” .

6.5.3.1 *Place*

This component or variable refers to the location, appearance, and facilities of the place where the service is delivered. In simpler terms it refers to the physical environment of the school, such as, the buildings and school surroundings (Fig. 6.6).

If the school is big enough, the School Marketing Team can establish a team to look specifically for this element or component. The functions of this sub-team of the School Marketing Team, among others, will be to do the following:

- Ensure that the school surroundings are intentionally inviting by. for instance, organising the ‘LETSEMA’ twice or thrice per year, to thoroughly clean the school surroundings and the buildings inside and outside;
- Ensure that parents volunteer to offer their services to the school to keep it clean;
- Ensure that there is no littering in the school;
- Ensure that there is tight security around the school;
- Generally they are to ensure that the place is made appealing to the eye of both the present and prospective parents and learners and is also a warm and safe place for all.

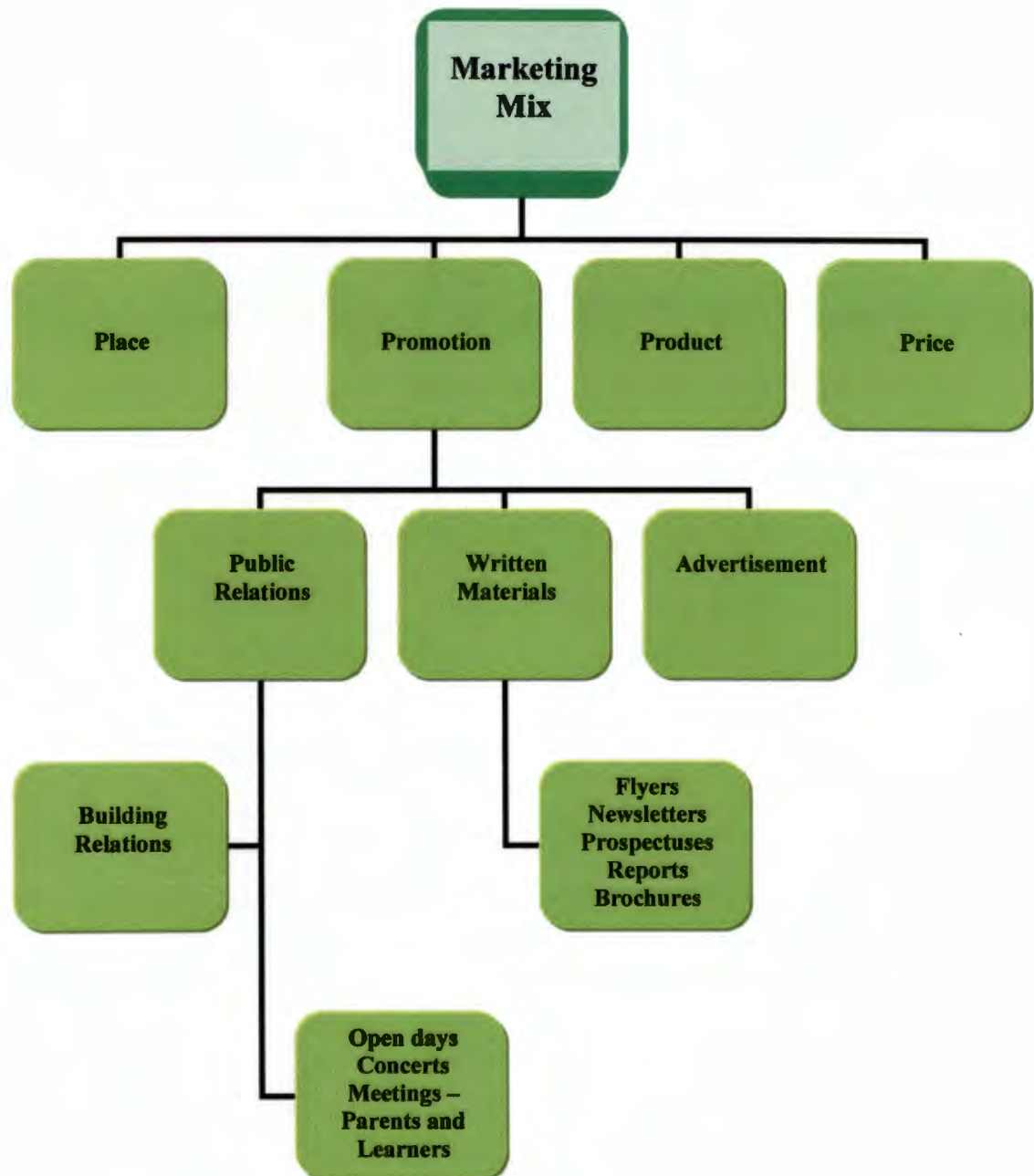
For the sub-team and or School Marketing Team to succeed in carrying out its task, it is important for the School Governing Body to set aside money or budget for the improvement of the place in general.

6.5.3.2 Promotion

Promotion includes activities such as advertising, public relations, written material, which informs the market and persuades the customers to choose the service that is offered. Some of these promotional activities are evident in most private or independent schools and some public schools which are located in or near certain towns or cities.

The School Marketing Programme Task Team can use one or a combination of the following elements of the promotion tools (Fig. 6.6):

- Advertisement;
- Written materials, such as flyers, newsletters and brochures
- Public relations.

Fig. 6.6: Marketing Mix

▪ Public Relations

The task of the public relations officer can be assigned to any influential person in the school. But, the literature recommends that the principal of the school should do this task, the literature argues that the first two letters of the word 'Principal', that is, **PR** stand for **P**ublic **R**elations (cf. 2.4.3.1.1).

During open days, concerts, parents' meetings and or learners' meetings, the public relations officer should be given an opportunity to present his/her school. The principal should describe what is going on inside the school in order to let the parents choose, using reliable information instead of rumour. In rural areas, the principal can go to the extent of asking for a two minute slot in the general meetings of the chief (kgosi). The public relations officer should also establish sound relationships with all feeder schools or schools in the catchment areas.

The public relations officer, who is preferably the principal, should meet his/her colleagues in the catchment area or in feeder schools and try to convince them to co-operate with his/her school. This will be of mutual benefit to all, as the schools will act as intermediaries of one another. By and large, the public relations officer should build and maintain sound relationships with learners and parents and that will result in a high level of satisfaction and the well-being among these groups. This will also build the *esprit-de-corps* among learners and they will feel part of the school life.

It should be noted that the 'word-of-mouth', which is extensively used by the public relations officer, is the most significant and influential marketing tool especially for schools (cf. 2.4.3.1.1).

The principal as a public relations officer should possess some, if not all of the following preferred interpersonal abilities:

- Demonstrates confidence and courage: He/she is confident, is self aware, able to confront difficult issues, deals positively with criticism, assertive, calm in a crisis;
- Communicates effectively: Is a good listener, is open to and invites feedback, gives clear expression to ideas and feelings, provides good and timely information in an appropriate format;
- Empathises with others: Understands issues from the point of view of others including children and young people, values the views and feelings of others and takes them into account, is sensitive to the needs of others;
- Values and works through teams: Consults, delegates, empowers and trusts others, is a team builder, is able to work effectively in a group, is able to recognise and appreciate a variety of talents and approaches to problem-solving and task completion;
- Inspires and motivates others: Is supportive, encouraging, interested, committed, enthusiastic, well informed, responsive to others' needs, has a sense of humour, encourages creativity and participation, actively builds the confidence and capabilities of learners and staff; and
- Creates and maintains a positive atmosphere: Consistent, gives praise and encouragement, optimistic, has good presentation skills, defuses potential problems, negotiates and handles conflicts.

▪ **Written material**

Fig. 6.6 above shows that written material, as a promotional tool, includes flyers, brochures, prospectuses, school's newsletter, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semesterly or annual reports to parents. The use of these materials will largely depend on the financial status of the school. But schools may also go out of their way, to look for sponsors in order to produce one or two of these materials.

By means of these materials, the school should try to communicate the following to the prospective parents and learners:

- Its competitive advantage, such as its good academic results, prizes awarded to the school, a new computer laboratory, and so forth;
- A description of the 'stock', such as the school library, laboratory, computer equipment;
- Its unique project(s), such as learnership, mini-cricket;
- Elaborate details of the school's academic track record and the ability of prospective learners to plan their own academic programme, especially in secondary schools;
- Extra and co- curricular activities – the importance of values education in the school and the school's climate (it is a supportive, caring and warm climate); and
- The school's relationship with its local community. The relationship can be expressed by the involvement of parents in school activities, the support given by the local ward committee and/or ward leader in the school, and so forth. The involvement of the school in social activities in the community, for instance caring for the aged, involvement in the HIV/AIDS activities in the community, and others.

Most importantly, written material, like flyers, should be able to attract the eye of the market. Thus, written material should be able to do the following (cf. 2.4.3.1.1):

- Attract the attention of the prospective customers; and
- Give prospective customers adequate information, so that they can contact the school for further information – The following information must be provided in written materials:
 - Telephone numbers of the school;

- Cellular phone numbers of the contact person;
- Fax number;
- E-mail address; and
- The school's web-site address.

▪ **Advertisement**

Marketing is about meeting the needs and wants of customers, so advertising should demonstrate how the institution intends meeting such needs and wants. Advertising is primarily a promotion element, intended to get customers to enrol with the particular institution. The literature states that when an advertisement is made, the following guidelines should be borne in mind (cf. 2.4.3.1.1):

- An advertisement should look attractive;
- The name of the school should be written clearly;
- The advertisement should include all contact details that they have; and
- It should not be used to harm the image of other schools.

For advertising to be effective, the aims of the advertising campaign should be made clear to all involved in the campaign.

6.5.3.3 Product

A product is considered to be anything that can be offered to the market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a need. Although school principals have a good understanding of what their schools offer to the community, they do not refer to it as a product, nor do they develop the product as a result of learner wants and needs. In most cases, the product is a specific curriculum offered by the school. It is also advisable for schools to offer subjects that would make learners marketable, for instance computer technology and computer literacy.

Thus, it is important for the school marketing task team to take into consideration the needs of the community and what the school is able to offer, based on the availability of person-power and accommodation. For instance, if the community wants its children to be computer literate, the school needs to check whether it has a relevant person to offer computer literacy, enough computers, and the possibility to train one educator in computer literacy and a possible donor for computers if the school does not have them.

6.5.3.4 Price

The price is the total amount of money the parent pays in order to take his/her child or ward (a child under his/her guardianship) to a particular school for one academic year. This amount includes, for instance, the money paid for school fees, fund-raising, excursions, sports fees, uniform, transport to and from the school, boarding fee (if the school has a hostel accommodation) and many other forms of money paid by parents to the school.

6.5.4 Stage 4: Implementation and Review

Fig. 6.3 above shows that Stage 4 is divided into two parts, namely, implementation and review. Each of these parts is briefly discussed below.

- **Implementation**

The main purpose of implementation is to bring the school marketing programme to reality, effectively and fruitfully. It is at this stage of the programme, where the school marketing programme task team, is allowed to run with the programme. An implementation plan should be developed in order to narrow the gap between written procedures and actions. When a programme fails at the implementation stage, it is an indication that the decision-making process at the other three phases, was somehow flawed. If all stakeholders own the programme, the implementation will proceed smoothly because all will be having a shared commitment. The programme cannot be judged effective or successful if it has no results or

does not achieve its intended objective, that is, to attract more learners to the school.

- **Review**

A programme must be evaluated, assessed or reviewed on an ongoing basis. The objective of this part of the programme is to assist the governing body and school management team, in determining whether to terminate the programme, whether to continue with it or whether to amend it, for improved effectiveness. The best way of determining whether a programme is achieving its intended objective, is by checking whether the learner enrolments and/or the numbers of applications are increasing or have increased. Where appropriate and necessary, a programme can be adjusted, to meet the statutory requirements or social changes and conditions.

6.6 Summary

The school marketing programme (SMP) has been outlined in order to facilitate an understanding of school marketing as a management task for school principals. The main purpose of this programme is to assist schools to be in a position to attract more learners and to retain them.

The development and implementation of a school marketing programme has a number of interrelated structured (cf. 6.5). This programme puts the school principal at the centre of school marketing and, as the key role player in the process of school marketing, the school principal is regarded as a public relations officer of the school (cf. 2.4.3.1.1).

The following should be borne in mind:

- School principals will only be able to benefit from this programme if they are thoroughly trained and workshopped

- This programme has been developed as a guide to be used by ordinary public schools for marketing themselves; and
- Lack of an effective programme for school marketing leads to the school being under-subscribed or depopulated.

Chapter 7 focuses on major findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 7

7. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a brief summary of the whole study is given. Furthermore, a reflection on the findings of the study is provided, as well as, recommendations that will be useful to school principals, to meet the challenges facing them in marketing their school in order to attract and retain learners in schools.

7.2 Summary

The statement of the problem and aims of the study were highlighted in **Chapter 1**. The purpose of the study was to determine from the literature and empirically, the different types of school marketing techniques or models used by schools in South Africa and elsewhere.

Chapter 2 concentrated on the nature and scope of school marketing. The literature revealed that marketing is about anticipating and satisfying the needs and wants of customers, that is parents and learners, more than any other competitors (cf. 2.2.1). It was also evident from the literature that marketing is a management process and is about giving someone what he/she wants. Schools have a number of internal and external customers that they could use in marketing themselves (cf. 2.2.2). The marketing plan of the school is as essential as learners and is part of the management task of the school principal. The marketing mix consists of four key variables which can change in order to give expression to an organisation's marketing plan or

strategy (cf. 2.4.3.1). The literature also revealed that school marketing and invitational education are more closely related and interdependent (cf. 2.5). Invitational education as a theory of practice is designed to create a total school environment that intentionally invites people in schools, to realise their relatively boundless potential. The literature also revealed that there were few school marketing models or strategies, that schools can utilize, for marketing themselves.

Chapter 3 focused on the parental school choice and research findings on studies already conducted about school or parental choice. The literature revealed that the aims of school choice are to stimulate and respond to an increased desire, to choose among existing schools and to give parents a greater role, and professional educators a reduced role in shaping policies within schools (cf. 3.3.1). This chapter further examined the limits of school choice (cf. 3.3.2) and some objections raised against school choice (cf. 3.3.3). Parents could be classified into three categories as choosers, namely, the privileged or skilled choosers, semi-skilled choosers and disconnected choosers (cf. 3.3).

The literature also revealed that parents chose schools because of a number of reasons, among others academic criteria, situational criteria, and security criteria (cf. 3.4.1). It also indicated that parents reject some schools because there was no transport to such schools or their ethnic composition either being predominantly black or white or because of their bad reputation. School choice has different implications to different stakeholders, namely learners, parents and the school itself. School choice decision-making is the responsibility of the whole family (cf. 3.5).

Chapter 4 outlined in details the empirical component of the research methodology. The instruments used, namely the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, to collect data for this study, were also thoroughly

discussed (cf. 4.2.1 and cf. 4.2.2). The literature consulted gave a deeper understanding of the techniques that were employed to collect data.

Chapter 5 reflected the data collected, analysed and interpreted, to determine factors that influenced parental or learner school choice and marketing strategies or techniques employed by the schools. From the empirical investigation, the following emerged as factors that influenced parental school choice, namely, good academic results, good learner discipline, recognition of good achievement, regular meetings with parents, and well-cared-for surroundings and buildings. Furthermore, the empirical investigation also revealed that parents chose independent schools because they were well resourced and they had small classes in which educators gave learners individual attention. The analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data revealed that schools did not have specific marketing strategies or techniques.

In **Chapter 6**, a marketing programme for schools was developed, which was guided by the literature and also the findings from the empirical investigation conducted in Chapter 5. The model is simplified so that all different types of schools can be in a position to utilise it.

7.3 Research findings

From this study there are important findings that were made and that could also contribute to the successful marketing of schools.

7.3.1 Findings with regard to Aim 1.

The aim was to determine from the literature the nature and scope of school marketing and the following findings were made:

- School marketing is mainly about identifying and satisfying the needs and wants of parents and/or learners more than any other competitor (that is any other school in the neighbourhood) [cf. 2.2.1];
- Marketing is a management process and task (cf. 2.2.1);
- Planning and marketing in the merged form, can be considered as a framework upon which to hang thoughts, ideas and decisions.
- Relationship marketing is based on the realisation that it is just as important to keep current customers as it is to attract new ones (cf. 2.5).
- Marketing mix; the four (4) P's; place, price, product and promotion; play an important role in school marketing, where (cf. 2.4.3.1):
 - The place consists of the physical environment of the school, its classrooms, hall, library, and other buildings and ground;
 - Price is the total amount the parent pays for the services rendered to his/her child/ren;
 - The literature regards the product as the knowledge and skills acquired by the learners (cf. 2.4.3.1.4)
 - Promotion is about persuading customers, that is parents, to enroll learners with a particular school
- Marketing is essential for schools in order to sustain the mutual benefit between the partnership of the school as providers of service and the customers (that is parents and learners);
- A school marketing plan consists of the following components (cf. 2.4):
 - Marketing audit (cf. 2.4.1);
 - Formation of objectives; and

- Designing marketing strategies and programme.
- School marketing and Invitational Education are closely related and interdependent;
- Invitational education is a theory of practice that is designed to create a total school environment that intentionally invites people to realise their relatively boundless potential (cf. 2.6); Invitational education is guided by the principles of respect, trust, optimism and intentionality. Furthermore it operates at the following levels (cf. 2.6.3):
 - Intentionally disinventing;
 - Unintentionally disinventing
 - Unintentionally inviting
 - Intentionally inviting
- The literature also revealed that there is a close link between school marketing and school or parental choice
- School choice aims at stimulating and responding to an increasing desire to choose among the existing schools and to increase the range of options open to parents, to influence the quality of their children's education (cf. 3.3.1);
- School choice has been criticised by some researchers, stating that choice in education is self-defeating because the exercise of choice by some may pre-empt it for others (cf. 3.3.3);
- That parents as choosers could be divided into a number of groups, namely (cf. 3.4):
 - The privileged or skilled choosers;
 - Semi-skilled choosers; and
 - Disconnected choosers.

- The following are reasons for parental choice of schools (cf. 3.5.1):
 - Academic criteria;
 - Situational or convenience criteria;
 - Organisational and security criteria; and
 - Voice and exit option.

- The following were stated as reasons why some schools were rejected (cf. 3.5.2):
 - Transport and distance to and from school;
 - Ethnic composition of the school;
 - School reputation;
 - School environment; and
 - Learners and staff at the school.

- School choice decision-making is basically the responsibility of the entire family.

7.3.2 Findings with regard to Aim 2

With regard to Aim 2, to determine from the literature different school marketing techniques or models used by schools, the following findings were made:

- It was evident from the literature that there are few marketing models or strategies available for school principals to use in marketing their schools in other countries;
- In South Africa little has been documented in as far as school marketing is concerned;

- The models discussed in this study are similar in the sense that they take the following into consideration:
 - Marketing audit;
 - Establishment of vision, mission statement and goals or objectives; and
 - Formulation of action plan.

- Furthermore, these models are very complex in nature and need to be simplified for consumption, especially of South African rural schools and even other schools in urban areas.

7.3.3 Findings with regard to Aim 3

With regard to Aim 3, to empirically determine factors that influence parental choice of schools or educational institutions for their children, the following findings surfaced:

- The following emerged as very influential factors for parental school choice (cf. 3.4.1):
 - Good examination results;
 - Resources that match the individual children's needs;
 - The ability to voice out one's opinion when dissatisfied with the quality of education;
 - Proximity to residential area; and
 - The ability of the school to deal proactively with bullying incidents

- It also became apparent that parents tended to move their children away from certain schools because of the following reasons:

- Bad reputation;
 - Unacceptable appearance of learners who are already attending a particular school;
 - Educators lack enthusiasm and commitment; and
 - Learners are ill-disciplined and there is lawlessness in the school
- The empirical investigation revealed that parents choose private or independent schools because of the following reasons:
 - They have small classes which allow educators to give learners individual attention;
 - They have less or very minimal disruptions;
 - Private schools are efficient; and
 - Furthermore, they are better resourced.

7.3.4 Findings with regard to Aim 4

Aim 4 was to empirically determine marketing techniques employed by schools or educational institutions, to market themselves, the following findings surfaced:

- The analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data revealed the following:
 - Most schools do not have specific strategies or techniques for marketing; and
 - Schools rely on certain activities at which they excel, in order to attract parents and or learners, such as the following:

- Good academic results;
- Good learner discipline;
- Recognition of good achievement;
- Regular meetings with parents; and
- Well-cared for surroundings and buildings.

7.3.5 Findings with regard to Aim 5

With regard to Aim 5, to develop a school marketing programme for the North West Province ordinary public schools, the following can be said:

- The implementation of the marketing, as presented in Chapter 6, should take into account the complex nature of the South African market (cf. 6.5);
- For this programme to succeed, all the stakeholders as indicated, should be allowed to play their roles effectively and efficiently (cf. 6.4);
- The school governing body should budget or set aside a certain amount of money specifically for school marketing (cf. 6.4)

7.4 Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Development of training programmes for all stakeholders in school marketing

Motivation

For schools to be in a position to market themselves, there is a need for the development of training programmes for all stakeholders, that is, school principals, members of the school governing bodies and educators. This need was evident during interviews with school principals and even some of the Institutional support coordinators, strongly recommended training for principals in school marketing. Such a programme will enable stakeholders to participate meaningfully and effectively in the development of a marketing plan and marketing policy. The Department of Education at the Area Project level, should assist in the development of such a programme, especially the Educational Management Development and Governance (EMDG) Unit. This is the Unit that should even go to the extent of actually training these stakeholders.

Recommendation 2

Training of school principals on strategic planning

Motivation

Planning and marketing are intertwined and interdependent. Though principals do plan, there is a need for them to be trained in strategic planning. School principals and other members of the school management team in schools, must have the capacity to determine collaboratively the strategic direction of their schools, in other words the vision, mission statement and the school's developmental plan.

Recommendation 3

Introduction of invitational education in schools

Motivation

The concept of invitational education is not known to many school principals. Thus, it remains the responsibility of the Department of Education, to conduct workshops for school principals on invitational education. This will assist them in bringing about synergy between school marketing and invitational education. Invitational education provides an overarching framework for a variety of educational approaches to school improvement that fit with its guiding principles. Furthermore, the workshops on invitational education, will help the school principals to be in a position to understand the concept of 'inviting' thoroughly. This will enable school management teams to organise as many 'matsema' as possible in order to make their schools intentionally inviting.

Recommendation 4

Improvement of learner performance

Motivation

Because of the level of poverty in some communities, schools may not be able to market themselves. Instead they have all the resources to bring about improvement in their learner performance. Emphasis should not only be on efficient schools but effectiveness should also be considered. In the past, many schools ran efficiently, but still produced poor results and not the desired learning outcomes. The emphasis is now on a commitment to constant, continuous improvement which involves

everybody in the school. Parents are attracted towards schools that produce quality results at all levels or grades not only at Grade 12. But, if the school has Grade 12 and its performance is good, this becomes the “cherry on top of the cake”. A culture of non-performance will, however, lead to parents rejecting the school. The Department of Education is there to serve the school!

7.5 Conclusion

Moving education into the market place makes for all sorts of exciting challenges and changes – by no means all of them are to the benefit of parents and or their children’s education.

It was evident from the literature and empirical information that school marketing is an alien concept to most schools or school principals and there are still some senior managers who fail to recognise its relevance in education. School education is currently undergoing serious changes; the demands of learners, parents, employers and the government are being voiced more loudly than ever before. The days of schools working in isolation are gone. Successful schools have to work closely with feeder schools, with institutions of higher learning, and industry to provide opportunities for their learners to pursue chosen career paths and to meet the needs of a rapidly changing market. School governing bodies should always compare their schools with others in the surrounding area and adopt a competitive spirit, with a view to enhancing their school’s reputation and image. The importance of school marketing is no longer a point of debate.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire on School Marketing

After completion please return to:

Your nearest Area Project Office

or

Please call: 073 164 6862; 014 555 6484 or 014 550 0119 for collection

or

Post to: ET Matshidiso
Box 6460
Rustenburg
0300

or

E mail to: ematshidiso@mweb.co.za

or

matshidiso.et@telkomsa.net

Questionnaire No.

This questionnaire should be answered by school principals.

Part A

Biographical and demographic information

Kindly answer the following questions by making a cross (X) in the appropriate block. In each case cross **ONLY ONE (1)** option.

1. Your teaching experience years

0 – 4	1
5 – 9	2
10 – 14	3
15 – 19	4
20 – 24	5
25 above	6

(1)

2. Type of settlement

Urban	1
Rural	2
Other (specify)	

(2)

3. Type of school

Public Primary	1
Public Secondary	2
Private Primary	3
Private Secondary	4
Other (specify).....	
.....	

(3)

4. Socio-economic status of most parents of learners admitted at your school

High	1
Middle	2
Low	3
Very poor	4

(4)

5. Educational level of most parents of learners admitted at your school

Professionals	1
Literate	2
Non – professionals	3
Not literate	4

(5)

6. How old is your school ?

Younger than 10 years	1
10 – 19 years	2
20 – 29 years	3
30 years & older	4

(6)

Part B

Please read the bolded term and its definition and decide if it has been used in your school admission and recruitment practice.

8.1 **Advertising:** the placing of paid advertisements in the mass media (for instance in the newspapers, radio and so on) which are aimed at prospective learners.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

- 8.2 Advertising research:** systematic analysis and evaluation of different advertising methods to determine which strategies will most effectively reach and influence prospective learners.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

- A.** If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

- B.** If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

- 8.3 Development of a marketing plan:** a written document including diagnoses, objectives, and controls appropriate to a school's marketing and recruiting for a given time.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

- A.** If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

- 8.4 Marketing audit:** conducting a full-scale analysis of an institution's market, programmes accessibility, price, promotional activities, and marketing activities and strategies.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

- A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:**

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

- 8.5 Marketing research:** the systematic design, collection, analysis and reporting data and findings relevant to the recruitment of learners for the school.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

8.6 Pricing: the mixing of cost, competition, and demand to arrive at prices to be charged for an institution's offerings.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

8.7 **Publicity:** news or promotional material placed without payment to the media and design to bring favourable attention to an institution or its services.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

8.8 **Personal selling:** This form of promotion is more effective because it promotes the opportunity for the school to communicate face-to-face with the customer(s), either on a one-to-one or group basis.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

8.9 **The use of a marketing committee or team:** creating an institution-wide marketing committee to evaluate the effectiveness of current marketing activities and make recommendations for improvements

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

8.10 The use of a marketing consultant: hiring a marketing consultant to evaluate the effectiveness of current marketing activities and make recommendations on where improvements could be made.

Cross either A or B

Used	A	Not Used	B

If you crossed A (Used) go to A and if B (Not used) go to B

A. If used, how would you rate its effectiveness at your school ? Cross the appropriate option in the table below:

1	2	3	4
Highly effective	Somewhat effective	Somewhat ineffective	Highly ineffective

B. If not used, why not ? (Check/cross all that apply)

Too expensive	1
Not appropriate for our school	2
Not a priority in our school	3
No qualified person in our school	4
Lack of implementation	5
Not considered	6
Lack of administrative leadership	7
We believe it would not be effective	8
Lack of knowledge on this technique	9
Other (specify)	

Part C**9. School or parental choice**

The following are statements about school or parental choice. State whether you agree or disagree with these statements by making a cross in the appropriate block.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9.1 Parents have the sole right to choose schools for their children	4	3	2	1
9.2 Children have a say in choosing the school they attend	4	3	2	1
9.3 School choice is a joint process by parent(s), the child and relatives	4	3	2	1
9.4 Parental school choice is a prerequisite to improved education	4	3	2	1
9.5 Parental school choice is a powerful agent of change to improve schools	4	3	2	1
9.6 School choice results in fewer disciplinary problems	4	3	2	1
9.7 School choice gives parents a sense of school ownership	4	3	2	1
9.8 School choice improves parental involvement in the school	4	3	2	1
9.9 School choice enhances racial integration	4	3	2	1

10. Reasons why parents choose some schools

The following are some reasons stated in the literature why parents choose schools.

With reference to your school, indicate statements that you agree or disagree with by making a cross in the appropriate block..

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10.1 Academic reasons are considered mainly by professional parents	4	3	2	1
10.2 Parents choose schools with good examination results	4	3	2	1
10.3 Parents select a school with resources that match individual children's needs	4	3	2	1
10.4 Parents choose schools because of their proximity to their home	4	3	2	1
10.5 Parents choose schools because they are easy to travel	4	3	2	1
10.6 Parents choose schools where they think their children would be safe	4	3	2	1
10.7 Parents choose schools with attractive uniform	4	3	2	1
10.8 Parents choose schools with attractive environment	4	3	2	1
10.9 Parents take their children to schools where they would be happy	4	3	2	1
10.10 Parents take their children to schools that proactively deal with bullying incidents	4	3	2	1
10.11 Parents prefer to take their children to schools where they would be able to voice out their opinion when they're dissatisfied with the quality of education	4	3	2	1

11. Reasons why parents reject some schools

The following are some reasons why some parents reject some schools. State whether you agree or disagree with these statements (reference can also be made to your school).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11.1 Lack of adequate public transport to the school	4	3	2	1
11.2 Parents are concerned about the safety of their children having to travel long distances to and fro school on public transport	4	3	2	1
11.3 Unacceptable appearance of children who are already attending a particular school	4	3	2	1
11.4 Unacceptable behaviour of children who are already attending a particular school	4	3	2	1
11.5 Parents reject schools that are dilapidated	4	3	2	1
11.6 Parents move away their children from schools that are predominantly white or black	4	3	2	1
11.7 Parents reject schools where educators lack enthusiasm and commitment	4	3	2	1
11.8 Parents tend to reject schools where the principal is an autocrat	4	3	2	1
11.9 Parents move away their children from schools where there is an overemphasis on academic matter in comparison to other aspects, like caring environment for learners	4	3	2	1
11.10 Parents reject schools with bad reputation	4	3	2	1

12. The effect that school choice have on learners, parents and educators.

The following are some of the effects that school choice may have on learners, parents and educators. State whether you agree or disagree with these statements by choosing the options that best suits your opinion.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
12.1 With declining roll staff become demoralised resulting in the quality of teaching and learning deteriorating	4	3	2	1
12.2 School of choice could make demand on parents to monitor children's homework	4	3	2	1
12.3 Choice can improve learner performance	4	3	2	1

13. Private or independent schools versus Public schools.

The following are some reasons why parents choose or opt for independent (private) schools. State whether you agree or disagree with these options by making a cross on the appropriate block.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13.1 Parents opt for private or independent schools because they perform better than public schools	4	3	2	1
13.2 Parents prefer independent schools because they have less disruptions	4	3	2	1
13.3 Independent schools are better resourced than public schools	4	3	2	1
13.4 Parents opt for independent schools because they are more disciplined than public schools	4	3	2	1
13.5 Parents take their children to independent school because they want quality education	4	3	2	1
13.6 Parents choose independent schools because of their small classes which allow educators to give individual attention to learners	4	3	2	1

Part D

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions in details. If possible a separate sheet may be used if the space provided is small.

1. Can you tell us in details how you are marketing your school.

[illegible]

2. In your opinion, what are the benefits (advantages) of school marketing ?

[illegible]

3. In your opinion, what are major challenges in school marketing ?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

4. In your opinion, why have (some) parents rejected your school ?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

5. In your opinion why do some parents opt for private schools ?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

6. Suggest ways of improving school marketing.

[illegible]

Thank you very much for your time

AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

This interview scheduled was used for interviewing school principals, parents and departmental officials (cf. Table 4.1).

1. Can you tell me in details how you are marketing your school.

[illegible]

2. In your opinion, what are the benefits (advantages) of school marketing ?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

3. In your opinion, what are major challenges in school marketing ?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

4. In your opinion, why have (some) parents rejected your school ?

[illegible]

5. In your opinion why do some parents opt for private schools ?

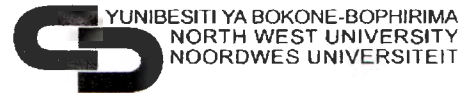
[illegible]

6. Suggest ways of improving school marketing.

[illegible]

Thank you very much for your time



YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY
NOORDWES UNIVERSITEIT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Private Bag X2046

MMABATHO

2735

21 May 2004

Dear Principal

Attached kindly find a questionnaire on school marketing

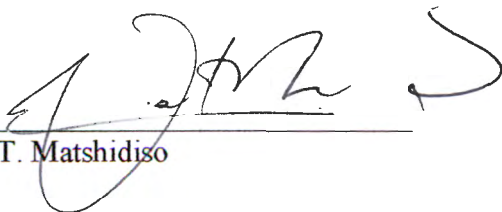
This questionnaire intends receiving information on your response to issues about parental school choice and how you market your school and/or how your school is marketed to members of the school community in general.

I humbly request you to devote about 15 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Furthermore, I'm appealing for your honest and sincere response to all issues mentioned in the questionnaire.

The information collected would definitely assist in recommending possible solutions to the issues that warrant attention and to the development of marketing programme to be used by schools.

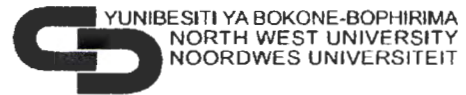
I guarantee the results of my findings to whoever would need them after the completion of this research.

Yours faithfully


E. T. Matshidiso

MAFIKENG CAMPUS
Private Bag X2046, Mmabatho, South Africa, 2735
Tel: (018)389-2111 • Fax: (018)392-5775
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MMABATHO

2735

08 September 2004

Dear Colleague

Return of completed questionnaires

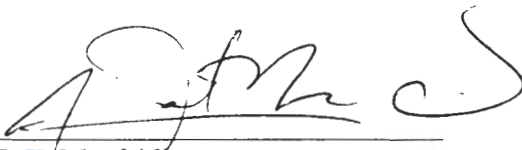
A questionnaire about "School Marketing" was sent to your school towards the end of July this year to be completed by the principal.

I'm humbly and earnestly requesting your good self to return the said questionnaire to the Area Project Office on or before the 17th September 2004.

Hoping to receive your swift response with regard to this matter.

For those colleagues who have already sent in this questionnaire, I apologise for having sent this reminder, please ignore it.

Best Regards!



E. T. Matshidiso

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OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CHIEF DIRECTOR BOJANALA WEST REGION

TO : Professor M. W. Legotlo
H.O.D. Planning and Administration

FROM : Mr E.R. Gradwell
Regional Chief Director

DATE : 2004-04-16

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

Your letter dated 05 April 2004 regarding the above matter has reference.

Permission for **Mr. E.T. Matshidiso**, your D.Ed student, to conduct research in schools within our Region is hereby granted.

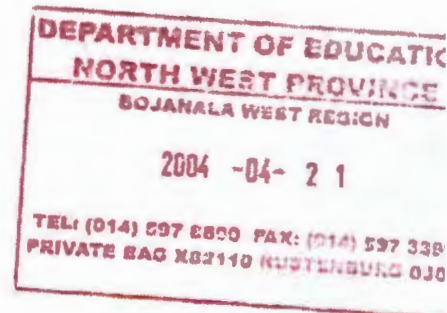
It will assist if Mr. Matshidiso could discuss the logistics of the project with Mr. D.D. More, Manager: Area Management Services who could be contacted on 014-5922424.

I trust that my response will assist.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely

MR E.R. GRADWELL
REGIONAL CHIEF DIRECTOR



m.m.m.

Re a Soma Dikolong • Re a dira mo dikolong • Ons werk in ons skole • We are working in our schools
• Re a sebeta dikolong • Siyasebenz' ezikoleni • Ha tihla eswikolweni • Re a shuma zwikoloni
• Siya sebenta etikoleni • Siyasebenz' ezikolweni • Siya berenga ezikolweni

