

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED FOR DATA COLLECTION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to discuss the methodology employed for data collection. It focuses on the purpose of the research, permission obtained, the choice of research methodology, validity and reliability, choice of the population group, method of sampling and the selection of respondents as well as the questionnaire.

4.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The purpose of this research project is to collect relevant data which will assist in determining whether there is a meaningful/significant link between the differences in the results of the South African school leaving examination of various schools in the Northern Province and the hidden curriculum. It aims at determining whether the differences in the South African school leaving examination results of various schools in the Northern Province can be partly attributed to the way the formal curriculum and the formal structures of various schools are being impacted by the informal curriculum and the informal structure, i.e. the hidden curriculum.

Although the above hypothesis can be tested against numerous aspects of the formal curriculum, due to time and financial constraints, I have decided to limit the questionnaires to nine aspects of the hidden curriculum which are mainly informed by the literature review and which are viewed by myself as being at the core of both the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum, viz. general information, attitude, punctuality and attendance, afternoon studies, school timetable, syllabi and written work, discipline and school policy, support services and staff development as well as motivation and acceptance of the responsibility for the results which will be argued in paragraph 4.7.

Babbie (1998:90) mentions three most common and useful purposes of social research, viz. exploration, description and explanation. Without drawing lines between the three purposes, I

view the purpose of this research project as being more explanatory since I intend to search for a linkage or relationship among the variables, viz., the South African school leaving examination results and the hidden curriculum.

4.3 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

In reply to my application and the University of Pretoria's application to conduct research, permission was granted in writing by the Northern Province Education, Arts, Culture and Sport on the 29th June 1998 (see Appendices N, O and P). Since the permission clearly stipulated that I have to inform the Regional Director of the research taking place in his schools, I decided to introduce myself physically to the former at the Northern Regional offices. Verbal permission was granted by the Regional Director's office which referred me to the relevant district, viz. Soutpansberg.

As the grade 12 learners were busy writing the trial examination in August and September 1998, I could not proceed with the arrangement for permission.

Permission to conduct research was renewed on 5 July 1999. Permission was granted by the Soutpansberg District Manager in writing to visit the sample schools (see Appendix Q). Although the district manager granted permission to visit the schools, I first had to introduce myself to the circuit managers as recommended by the District Manager. All the circuit managers granted permission verbally and assisted me in locating the sample schools.

As the circuit managers advised me to inform the schools, I applied to the principals for permission to conduct research (see Appendix R). Before the actual research could be started, I decided to introduce myself physically to the principals of the sample schools and made arrangements for the dates and times on which their schools could be visited. See Appendix F for the school visit schedule.

4.4 CHOICE OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

As the purpose of this research project is to investigate whether the differences in the South African school leaving examination results of various schools in the Northern Province can be partly attributed to the impact of the hidden curriculum, I found the quantitative research method

and its techniques to be suitable for this type of study rather than the qualitative method. My choice of the quantitative method and techniques was determined by, *inter alia*, the ontological and epistemological assumptions (Mouton 1996) which include the type of research problem and the research purpose. Mouton (1996:39) asserts that:

“Similarly, the notion of that constitutes good information or valid results (the epistemological dimension) influences our decision to formulate a research problem in a particular way ... the nature of the unit of analysis dictates one particular choice of technique and rules out another.”

Due to the nature of the phenomena being investigated and the large size of the population group and the sample, I had to use the quantitative research method while acknowledging its limitations and while I am fully aware of the fact that most of the studies in the area of the hidden curriculum have been conducted through qualitative research methods. This includes qualitative studies by Gatto (1992), Gilborn (1992), Cusick (1973), Willis (1977), McLaren (1986, 1993), Omokhodion (1989), etc.

In choosing the research method, I conducted a pre-survey and interviews in three schools which included one school from the former Department of Education and Training, one school from former House of Delegates and one from former Transvaal Education Department. Three principals, five grade 12 learners and five grade 12 educators took part in the pre-survey and interviews. After comparing information gathered through interviews and questionnaires, the quantitative method of research was chosen for the following reasons:

Due to the unequal power relation between educators and learners (Jackson 1990), due to the emotional and intellectual dependency (Gatto 1992) which are linked to the cultural ethos of the Soutpansberg district where educators' authority cannot be questioned, challenged or doubted, learners are very sensitive to communicate any negative information which implicates educators while on the other hand educators are free to communicate and blame the learners.

Educators of schools which performed poorly blamed the learners while principals blamed both learners and educators. Educators and principals of schools which performed well attributed good performance to themselves, i.e. their hard work while learners of the latter schools attributed good performance to educators, principals and themselves.

As the timing of this research project coincided with the educators' mass actions, electioneering, political activities and post-election fever (see Chapter 5), which were characterised by unorganised criminal activities, mistrust and unsafe conditions for any stranger, in-depth observation or interviews were not possible. I planned the survey in such a way that very little time would be spent in schools and to avoid a situation where I would have to frequent a school or use the same route frequently. As I sought accommodation in Makhado next to the police station, my safety and my property were always assured.

The choice of the quantitative method is also influenced by the different educational histories which emanated from the historical unequal funding and other resource provisioning which ultimately resulted in different racial and ethnic schools which hardly resembled each other (see Chapter 3). In view of the fact that the research was conducted at the time when the Department of Education was still engaged in reducing the gap in resource provisioning, the application of the qualitative research method would provide information based on schools divided along racial and ethnic lines but not of the non-ethnic and non-racial Soutpansberg district nor of the Northern Province.

Due to the racial and ethnic barriers which were created by the former so-called separate development policies, the period when the research was conducted, in-depth observations or interviews which would be required by this study could not be possible. Although apartheid was illegal, people were still racially, ethnically and culturally divided when the research was conducted, hence any close interaction between whites, Indians and blacks was still viewed as a cultural and racial taboo, as was revealed by the pre-survey.

Due to the conservative nature of the Soutpansberg people which is reinforced by the racial division, in-depth observations or interviews would result in gender taboos as girls and boys do not freely interact as was revealed by the pre-survey. Notwithstanding my status as a researcher, due to my gender, boys interacted more freely with me while girls, particularly of other races, could hardly interact with me.

4.5 CHOICE OF THE POPULATION GROUP AND SAMPLE

The Northern Province of Education, Arts, Culture and Sport consists of thirty-six district (area) offices. Each district office has a number of circuit offices. The Northern Province Education,

Arts, Culture and Sport had a total number of 1 254 secondary schools which entered candidates for the 1999 South African school leaving examination.

Due to the large population of the secondary schools, financial and time constraints, I chose the Soutpansberg district as my area of research. The majority of the former racially-divided education departments were found in the Soutpansberg district, i.e. the Venda Education Department, the Gazankulu Education Department, the Transvaal Education Department, the House of Assembly and the House of Delegates. In this study, I view the above-mentioned former departments of education as a fair representation of the former Northern Province departments of education and the Northern Province schools.

As the Soutpansberg district consists of 65 secondary schools that had entered candidates for the 1999 South African school leaving examination, all the secondary schools were grouped into three groups according to their 1999 final examination results.

Schools which obtained an aggregate pass of 0% - 30% were grouped in the bottom category (which is viewed as poor performance) and accounts for 18 schools. Schools which obtained an aggregate of 31% - 49% (which I view as a fair performance) accounts for 25 schools. Schools which obtained 50-100% (which I view as a good performance) accounts for 25 schools.

Due to the large number of secondary schools (65) as well as financial and time constraints, I deemed the sampling technique necessary. In defining sampling, Mouton (1996:135) argues:

“... we usually select only some of the elements with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken.”

Babbie (1998:192) concurs with Mouton in defining sampling:

“... the process of selecting observations ... allows a researcher to make relative few and generalize from those observations to a much wider population.”

The inclusion of all 65 schools within the three groups, viz. top, middle and bottom, is done in order to give each member of the population an equal chance of being selected. Mouton (1996: 138) argues that every member of the population must have an equal chance of being selected.

In each of the above-mentioned categories 10 schools were selected using the random sampling technique. Ten schools in each group, totalling 30 schools were viewed as a fair sampling number to represent the whole population. Mouton (1996:136) argues:

“The key concept in sampling is representativeness. Unless the sample from which we will generalize ‘truthfully’ or ‘faithfully’ represents the population from which it is drawn, we have no reason to believe that the population has the same properties as those of the sample.”

In order to ensure representativeness and unbiasedness in selecting schools, I requested the assistance of a research support consultant (University of Pretoria, Department of Information Technology) to perform a random selection of schools.

The 1999 performance list of all the Northern Province secondary schools was supplied by the Northern Province Education, Arts, Culture and Sport. The researcher compiled a merit list of the Soutpansberg District secondary schools and supplied it to a research support consultant who made a random selection of schools (see Appendix D: 1999 merit list of the Soutpansberg District Senior Certificate; Appendix E: Random selection of schools: Top, Middle and Bottom.)

A complex sample which consisted of two levels was used, viz. a sample for schools and a sample for learners within schools. A stratified random sample was used for selection of schools. Babbie (1998:217) explains stratified sampling as the grouping of the units composing a population into homogenous groups (or strata) before sampling. This procedure improves the representativeness of a sample, at least in terms of the stratification variables.

Schools were grouped into three strata, viz. top, middle and bottom performers. A random sample of schools was selected from each stratum.

A systematic sample of 20% of the 2000 grade 12 learners of each school was selected from the class list. All the 1999 grade 12 educators of the sample schools who were present on the day of the survey were expected to complete the questionnaires.

4.6 THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaires excluded information based on the availability of facilities and did not require the respondents to supply any information on the availability of facilities as an in-depth related study has been conducted by other researchers, including the Human Sciences Research Council (1997) and Sheppard (1998) (see Chapter 3).

Before drawing up the final questionnaires I consulted a research support consultant and a statistician (University of Pretoria) who checked and corrected the draft questionnaires.

In order to collect data, questionnaires were distributed among the randomly selected grade 12 secondary schools of the Soutpansberg District which entered for the 1999 Senior Certificate examinations. According to Babbie (1990:377) a questionnaire is defined as:

“A document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis.”

The purpose of the questionnaire is clearly stated by Babbie (1995:158):

“Questionnaires provide a method of collecting data by asking people questions or asking them to agree or disagree with the statements representing different points of view.”

While acknowledging the numerous ways of collecting survey data and the strengths and weaknesses thereof, I find self-administered questionnaires as being more appropriate to this type of research than the other forms of interview surveys, viz. face-to-face interviews or telephone interviews. Self-administered questionnaires are clearly explained by Babbie (1998:257-258):

“... respondents are asked to complete the questionnaires themselves ... Research workers deliver the questionnaires themselves ... Research workers deliver the questionnaires to the homes of sample respondents and explain the study. The questionnaire is then picked up later by the research team.”

Due to the poor condition of the roads and the distance between schools, I had to deliver the questionnaires to the schools and waited for completion by the respondents. As the differences

in the results of the South African school leaving examination of various schools in the Soutpansberg District can be a sensitive issue, particularly where there are some extremes in performances and where there is an unequal power relation among the respondents, viz. the principals, educators and learners (Lynch 1989:1), self-administered questionnaires were necessary to ensure the unbiasedness of the respondents.

The questionnaires consist of close-ended questions as well as many open-ended elements. The questionnaires were to be answered by 30 principals, 20% of the 2000 grade 12 learners and all the 2000 grade 12 educators of the randomly selected schools. Jolliffe (1986:24-25) defines those types of questions as:

“In an open question respondents are left to make up their own responses whereas in a closed question a list of responses is given and respondents choose the appropriate one.”

As I am aware of the shortcomings of close-ended questions, *inter alia* the denial of any spontaneity of response by the respondent, a possible lack of the respondent's appropriate category for his or her answer or insufficient details, an open-ended element is attached to almost all the questions. Bailey (1994:122) argues that:

“A questionnaire containing primarily fixed alternative questions should contain at least one open-ended question (at the end of the questionnaire) to determine whether anything of importance to the respondent has been omitted.”

My choice of the closed-ended questions is based on, *inter alia*, the large number of sample schools and the respondents, as well as the time and money available for this research project. Since the purpose of the research is to compare the under-performing, middle-performing and high-performing schools, standardized answers which can be coded and analysed are essential (Bailey 1994:119).

Although the above-mentioned hypothesis can be better tested against numerous aspects, due to time and financial constraints, I decided to limit the questionnaire to nine aspects, viz. general information, attitude, punctuality and attendance, afternoon studies, school policy, support services and staff development, motivation and value expectation accepting responsibility for the results and school timetable, as well as syllabi and written work (see Appendices A, B and C).

The choice of the nine aspects of the questionnaire from which categories of questions are derived is mainly informed by the literature review of the conceptual framework, i.e. the notion of the hidden curriculum and the school leaving examination as will be explained below under sections of the questionnaires.

4.7 SECTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

4.7.1 General information

In this section I intend to investigate, against the background of the hidden curriculum, whether the differences in the South African school leaving examination results of various schools in the Northern Province can be attributed to variables like gender, age, experience, years in grade, qualifications and choice of the subject group. The following questions were put to the educators, principals and learners:

Educators:

- Indicate your gender
- Indicate your main subject which you taught in grade 12 in 1999
- What is your highest qualification in the subject mentioned

Principals:

- Indicate your gender
- Experience as a principal
- Indicate your academic and professional qualifications

Learners:

- Indicate your gender
- Age in years
- Years in grade 12
- Which subject group are you doing?
 - Commercial
 - Science
 - General

4.7.2 Attitude and the hidden curriculum

While acknowledging the diversity of definitions and definitional problems of the concept *attitude*, Oppenheim (1992:174, 175) offers the following explanation.

“Attitude is a state of readiness, a tendency to act or react in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli. Most of an individual’s attitudes are usually dormant and are expressed in speech or behaviour only when the object of the attitude is perceived.”

Attitudes, like many other components of behaviour, are strengthened by beliefs or opinions and are often expressed in evaluative terms like *good* or *bad*, *desirable* or *undesirable*, *acceptable* or *unacceptable*, *satisfied* or *dissatisfied*, etc.

Zimbardo (1977:30) defines attitude as:

“Private events whose existence we infer from our own introspection or from some form of behavioral evidence when they are expressed overtly in word or deed.”

Attitudes have many attributes and differ in intensity and endurance. Attitudes can impact either positively or negatively on any form of performance as is affirmed by Willis (1977) who attributed the oppositional behaviour and the counter-school culture of working class learners to their own attitude towards school as a whole. This has been further asserted by Jackson (1990:74) who links performance of good learners with positive attitudes. It is against this background that I intend to investigate whether the differences in the South African school leaving examination results of various schools in the Northern Province can be attributed to the impact of attitudes. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- Rate your enjoyment in teaching the subject mentioned in question 5.
- If 1, why did you teach it?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 final examination results of the subject mentioned in 5.
- Do you think your learners were capable of obtaining more than 80% in your subject?
- What final results (pass percentage) did you expect from your learners in your subject?

Principals:

- Rate your enjoyment in heading your school in 1999.
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 final examination results of your school.
- Do you think your learners were capable of obtaining more than 80% pass aggregate?
- What final results (pass percentage) did you expect from your learners?

Learners:

- Rate your enjoyment in doing the subject group mentioned in question 7.
- Do you like all the subjects which you are doing?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 final examination results of your school.
- Do you think your learners were capable of obtaining more than 80% pass aggregate?
- What final results do you expect from your final examination?

4.7.3 Punctuality, attendance and the hidden curriculum

While the Department of Education has some basic guidelines to regulate punctuality and attendance of both educators and learners, each school has to develop its own policy of controlling punctuality and attendance. While it is acknowledged that punctuality and attendance and the way policies impact on punctuality and attendance differ from school to school, Jackson (1990:12) argues that:

“... responsibility of the teacher and one that calls our attention to another important aspect of classroom life, is that of serving as an official timekeeper. It is he who sees to it that things begin and end on time...”

Both educators and learners should learn to observe time if they want to achieve their objectives through schooling as all school activities are regulated by time. The importance of punctuality is indicated by Gatto (1992:6) as he argues:

“But when the bell rings, I insist they drop whatever it is we have been doing and proceed quickly to the next work station. They must turn on and off like a light switch. Nothing important is ever finished in my class nor in any class I know of.”

The following questions were asked to investigate the mediation of time by learners, educators and principals in order to ascertain whether the differences in the grade 12 school performance in the South African school leaving examination can be attributed to punctuality and attendance.

Educators:

- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' attendance of your lessons.
- What action was taken against the learners who failed to attend your lessons regularly?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' punctuality during your lessons.
- What action was taken against the learners who failed to be punctual during your lessons?

Principals:

- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' school attendance.
- What action was taken against the learners who failed to attend school regularly?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' punctuality during the lessons.
- What action was taken against the learners who failed to be punctual during lessons?

Learners:

- Comment on the 2000 grade 12 learners' attendance of lessons.
- What action is taken against the learners who fail to attend lessons regularly?
- Comment on the 2000 grade 12 learners' punctuality during the lessons.
- What is action is taken against the learners who fail to be punctual during the lessons?

4.7.4 Afternoon studies and the hidden curriculum

While the importance of afternoon studies as a way of creating additional time for learners to study is acknowledged, the time allocated and the way it is controlled differs from school to school. While acknowledging the numerous factors which impact on the attendance of afternoon studies, it remains the responsibility of both learners and educators to create favourable conditions which will motivate learners to attend these afternoon sessions. The unequal power relationship between educators and learners (Jackson, 1990) gives educators more responsibility in allocating time, including scheduling afternoon studies. In explaining the responsibility of educators as official timekeepers, Jackson (1990:12) argues:

“It is he who sees to it that things begin and end on time, more or less. He determines the proper moment for switching from discussion to workbooks, or from spelling to arithmetic.”

Appendices A, B, C, questions under section D (afternoon studies) investigate whether the difference in the grade 12 school performance in the South African school leaving examination

can be attributed to afternoon studies. The questionnaire investigates whether good or poor performance can be linked to the presence or lack of afternoon studies, whether afternoon studies were controlled, whether attendance was satisfactory and whether afternoon study lessons were conducted. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- Did your school have an afternoon study timetable for grade 12 learners?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' attendance of afternoon studies.
- How many days per week did you teach your grade 12 learners during afternoon studies?

Principals:

- Did your school have an afternoon study timetable for grade 12 learners?
- Comment on the 1999 grade 12 learners' attendance of afternoon studies.
- Did your school have afternoon study lessons for grade 12 learners?

Learners:

- Does your school have an afternoons study timetable for grade 12 learners?
- Comment on the 2000 grade 12 learners' attendance of afternoon studies.
- Does your school have afternoon study lessons for grade 12 learners?

4.7.5 School timetable, syllabi, written work and the hidden curriculum

While the Department of Education has the task of prescribing and supplying all the syllabi which have to be covered within a given period, schools have the responsibility of timetabling the syllabi.

Lynch (1989:29) argues that:

“The manner in which knowledge is selected, and the ways in which it is organized and evaluated, are largely identical in all schools. The content of syllabi is similar as it is specified annually by a centralized government authority, the Department of Education.”

School timetables direct teaching and learning activities and indicate how the school manages its time. As each school has the task of drawing up its own timetable, timetabling determines the particularistic and universalistic character of a school. The school timetable has to accommodate

and to schedule the formal curriculum and the formal activities of the school. Through timetabling, educators have a responsibility of imparting the curriculum and the syllabi to the learners within a given time. Although this may have an unintended effect of fragmenting the educational experience for learners (Cusick 1973) or the alienation and violation of inner time experience (Berkhout & Bergh 1994), timetabling remains an important feature of the school and the future life of learners. Cusick (1973:212) asserts that:

“This is in part a result of the compartmentalization of knowledge and the corresponding routine demands that a new activity begin every forty or fifty minutes. It is also a result of the way classes are run.”

Notwithstanding the universalistic contents of the syllabi, the particularistic and the universalistic features of the timetable and written work, Northern Province grade 12 schools produce final examination results of far a different quality.

It is against this background that I intend to investigate whether the differences in the final examination results of various schools in the Northern Province can be attributed to the mediation of timetabling, written work or syllabi. The questionnaires focus *inter alia*, on the completion of the syllabi and the quantity of written work given. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- Were you able to teach on the 1st day of the 1st semester in 1999?
- How often per month did you test your 1999 grade 12 learners?
- How did you react to the grade 12 learners who failed tests?
- How often per month did you give the grade 12 learners homework?
- How often per month did you give the grade 12 learners class work?
- In which month did you complete the syllabus of the subject you mentioned in question 5?

Principals:

- Did your school manage to teach on the 1st day of the 1st semester in 1999?
- According to your school policy, how often per month were the 1999 grade 12 learners supposed to be tested per subject?
- How did you react to the grade 12 learners who failed tests?

- According to your policy, how often per month were the 1999 grade 12 learners supposed to be given homework per subject?
- How often per month were the 1999 grade 12 learners supposed to be given class work per subject?
- In what month were the educators expected to complete the 1999 grade 12 syllabi?

Learners:

- Were you taught on the 1st day of the 1st semester this year?
- How often per month are you tested per subject?
- What action is taken against the learners who fail tests?
- How often per month are you given homework per subject?
- How often per month are you given class work per subject?
- In which month do you expect educators to complete their 2000 grade 12 syllabi?

4.7.6 Discipline, school policy and the hidden curriculum

Discipline is a multi-dimensional concept. In this study I intend to focus on discipline as explained by Hindess (1996:113) who argues that:

“It is a power exercised over one or more individuals in order to provide them with particular skills and attributes, to develop their capacity for self-control, to promote their ability to act in concert, to render them amenable to instruction, or to mould their characters in other ways.”

Discipline, power and authority imply each other although they may not have the same definition. In any learning situation where objectives are set, there should be discipline to ensure that the task is performed smoothly and procedurally. The importance of discipline is argued by Gatto (1992:12):

“Children must be closely watched if you want to keep a society under tight central control. Children will follow a private drummer if you can’t get them into a uniformed marching band.”

The unequal power relation (Jackson 1990) between learners, educators and principals necessitates discipline in order to attain the set objectives. Jackson (1990:10) argues:

“Teachers are indeed more powerful than students, in the sense of having greater responsibility for giving shape to classroom events and this sharp difference in authority is another feature of school life which students must learn...”

School policies should help to create a favourable discipline which would enhance teaching and learning. Lynch (1989:30), however, argues that:

“... school administrators, teachers and pupils mediate the application of state educational policies to themselves.”

In their mediation of school policies, learners, educators and principals engage in particularistic and universalistic practices which aim at producing good results which comply with public expectation. Due to the hierarchical relations between learners, educators and principals (Lynch 1989), i.e. the unequal power relations (Jackson 1990), due to the learners' dependency on rules and regulations (Cusick 1973), educators and principals as the official mediators of state policy have more responsibility in ensuring that schools operate a system of maintenance and procedural activities (Lynch 1989) that promote favourable learning conditions. Apple (1990:87) focuses on the potency of school discipline as reproductive force and as the maintenance of hegemony as he differentiates basic rules from the preference rules and argues that the hidden curriculum serves to reinforce the basic ground rules. He argues further that the basic rules as the broad parameters in which action takes place are tacitly learned and are neither rarely questioned nor communicated as they reside at the root of the learners' brains. Although schools have to operate a system of maintenance and procedural activities, the mediation of school discipline and school policies differs from school to school and impacts on the examination results differently.

Appendices A, B and C (questions under F), investigate the mediation of discipline and school policies with an attempt to investigate whether poor learner performance in the school leaving examination in the Northern Province can be attributed to differential disciplinary patterns of the various schools. The questions investigate whether both learners and educators have managed to create discipline which will enable the school to achieve its aim, which includes good learner performance in the school leaving examination. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- What contribution did the regulations of your school have on the discipline of your grade

12 learners?

- Evaluate the implementation of the school regulations in terms of their contribution to the grade 12 results of your subject.
- What action was taken against grade 12 learners who violated the regulations of your school policy?

Principals:

- What contribution did the regulations of your school have on the discipline of the grade 12 learners?
- Evaluate the implementation of the school regulations in terms of their contribution to the grade 12 results.
- What action was taken against grade 12 learners who violated the regulations of the school policy?

Learners:

- What contribution do the regulations of your school have on the discipline of the grade 12 learners?
- Evaluate the implementation of the school regulations in terms of their contribution to the grade 12 results.
- What action is taken against grade 12 learners who violate the regulations of the school policy?

4.7.7 Support services, staff development and the hidden curriculum

Support services and staff development can impact on any form of performance, including learner performance, educator performance and principal performance. This questionnaire focuses on support services and staff development in the form of in-service training and workshops for educators and principals, inspection by the circuit managers, services of the Professional Auxiliary Services Personnel as well as support services in the form of providing additional books and parental support. Education support services are defined by the Department of Education (1997:2):

“All human and other resources that provide support to individual learners and to all aspects of the system.”

Inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services hamper meaningful learning and teaching. Beck (2000:383) asserts:

“We often need assistance from other people to achieve our goals and so we affiliate with others because of this need. The assistance that they give us may reinforce and maintain our affiliative behavior over long periods of time.”

Commenting on the parental role in the education of the child, Gatto (1992:18) warns parents who completely “dump” their children in the hands of educators as he argues:

“They are mistrustful of intimacy like the children of divorce they really are (for we have divorced them from significant parental attention).”

Appendices A, B and C, questions under section G (Support Services and staff development), investigate whether the differences in the grade 12 school performance in the South African school leaving examination can be attributed to the above-mentioned forms of support services and staff development. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- How many in-service training courses have you attended in 1999 for the subject mentioned in question 5?
- Rate the principal’s support in terms of his/her contribution to the 1999 results of the subject mentioned in question 5.
- Were you guided on the requirements for the 1999 grade 12 final examination?
- Were you visited by the Professional Auxiliary Services personnel in 1999 to assist you in teaching your subject?
- Besides the textbooks, did your grade 12 learners have additional books which could assist them in learning your subject?
- Besides the textbooks, did you have additional books which could assist you in teaching your subject?

Principals:

- How many management workshops have you attended in 1999 which aimed at developing your management skills?

- Rate your support in terms of your contribution to the 1999 grade 12 final examination results.
- Were you visited by the circuit manager in 1999 to advise you on school management?
- Do you think inspection could improve the 1999 grade 12 results?
- Rate the parents' support in terms of their contribution to the 1999 grade 12 final examination results.
- Rate the support of the Professional Auxiliary Services personnel in terms of their contribution to the 1999 grade 12 results.

Learners:

- Have you visited a library this year (2000)?
- Do you know the requirements of the syllabi of the subjects which you are doing?
- Were you guided on the pass requirements for the 2000 grade 12 final examination?
- Besides the textbooks, do you have additional books which can assist you in your studies?

4.7.8 Motivation, value expectation and the hidden curriculum

The concept *motivation* can be defined from various points of view, *inter alia*, the biological, the behavioural and the cognitive approach. Being a multiple determined concept, motivation is expressed by Petri (1991:3-4) as follows:

“Motivation is the concept we use when we describe the forces acting on or within an organism to initiate and direct behaviour to indicate the direction of behaviour... to explain why behaviour occurs in the one situation but not in the other.”

As Petri (1991) ascribes more intense behaviour to the results of higher levels of motivation, I intend to investigate whether the differences in the quality of the school leaving examination results of various schools can be attributed to higher levels of motivation, lower levels of motivation or even a lack of motivation. By means of the questionnaires I intend to investigate why a certain behaviour occurs in one situation but not in the others, i.e. why some schools do well in the South African school leaving examination while others fail. Beck (2000:2) asserts:

“Motivation is one of the explanations we use when we try to account for the variability of behaviour ... why some kids do well in school when equally talented ones fail?”

The questionnaires further investigate the value expectation of learners, educators and principals. Beck (1983:19) argues that value is a motivational concept, and something that has value is an incentive.

Learners who recognize the value of the South African school leaving examination are expected to be motivated and to work very hard in order to attain it. Value expectation, a form of intrinsic motivation, enhances performance. Beck (2000:31) argues:

“Motivation is a theoretical concept that accounts for why people (or animals) choose to engage in particular behaviours at particular time.”

The questionnaires focus on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. While acknowledging the potency and relevance of intrinsic motivation, it does not imply that extrinsic motivation has no role in enhancing learning. Intrinsic motivation is clearly defined by Ausubel (1978:495) as the acquisition of knowledge as an end in itself or for its own sake.

Comparing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Geen (1995:120) argues:

“... when a reward is offered, people low in achievement motivation may value competence as much as high achievers do when no reward is offered ... Thus high achievers may value competence less when a reward is offered than when one is not.”

In order to investigate whether the differences in the school leaving examination results can be linked to the mediation patterns of motivation, the following questions were asked:

Educators:

- How did you treat the grade 12 learners who performed exceptionally well in your subject final examination?
- How many external visits did your school have in your subject in 1999 which intended to motivate the grade 12 learners?

- In which FEST (Foundation for Education, Science and Technology) competition did your grade 12 learners take part in 1999?
- In your view, what were the future plans of the majority of your 1999 grade 12 learners for the year 2000?

Principals:

- How did you treat the grade 12 learners who performed exceptionally well in the 1999 final examination?
- How many external visits did your school have in 1999 which intended to motivate the grade 12 learners?
- In which FEST (Foundation for Education, Science and Technology) competition did your grade 12 learners take part in 1999?
- In your view, what were the future plans of the majority of your 1999 grade 12 learners for the year 2000?

Learners:

- How do you want your school to treat you if you perform exceptionally well in your examinations?
- How many external visits did your school have this year 2000 which intended to motivate the grade 12 learners?
- In which FEST (Foundation for Education, Science and Technology) competition did you take part this year 2000?
- What are your future plans for the year 2001?

4.7.9 The hidden curriculum and the acceptance of responsibility for the final examination results

The questionnaires investigate whether the grade 12 learners, educators and principals are aware of their responsibility as demanded by, *inter alia*, the state, commerce, parents, etc. While learners, educators and principals should be allowed to choose what is good for themselves, they should also accept responsibility for their own behaviour. Lynch (1989:32) argues:

“Teachers (especially in second level) must be seen to get results if they are to have professional credibility - the most visible results are the grade levels attained in

public examinations.”

Educators, learners and principals should be aware of the value of the South African school leaving examination and should also accept responsibility for the results. The acceptance of responsibility for the results would motivate learners, principals and educators to improve their performance.

Gatto (1992:1) argues that some educators teach for the sake of complying with their employment contract and without taking responsibility for the results.

“The license I have certifies that I am an instructor of English language and English literature, but that isn’t what I do at all. I don’t teach English, I teach school and I win awards doing it.”

The seven universally taught lessons as explained by Gatto affirms the need to reflect on what educators teach, i.e. the contents of the curriculum, and how they teach, i.e. teaching methods.

The questionnaires investigate whether learners, educators and principals are aware of the importance of their collaborative efforts in improving the grade 12 results and that any failure affects all the stakeholders. The following questions were asked:

Educators:

- If your school achieved an exceptionally good pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination, who would you commend the most?
- If your school achieved an unsatisfactory pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination, who would you chiefly blame?

Principals:

- If your school achieved an exceptionally good pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination, who would you commend the most?
- If your school achieved unsatisfactory pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination, who would you chiefly blame?

Learners:

- If your school achieved an exceptionally good pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination,

who would you commend the most?

- If your school achieved an unsatisfactory pass rate in the 1999 grade 12 examination, who would you chiefly blame?

4.8 CONCLUSION

As the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the methodology employed for data collection, quantitative data collection methods will be applied. Three types of questionnaires will be used to collect data, viz., a questionnaire for grade 12 subject educators (Appendix A) which will be completed by the 1999 grade 12 subject educators, a questionnaire for principals (Appendix B) which will be completed by all the principals of the sample schools, and a questionnaire for learners (Appendix C) which will be completed by 20% of the 2000 grade 12 learners of each sample school.

Although I have decided to limit the questionnaires to only nine aspects, viz. attitude, punctuality and attendance, afternoon studies, school policy, support services and staff development, motivation and value expectation, accepting responsibility for the results, school timetable, syllabi and written work as well as general information, I acknowledge the multi-dimensional and non-static nature of the hidden curriculum. The selection of the nine aspects has been influenced by my experience as a principal of a secondary school and what I assume to be the possible factors which may be linked to the differences in the grade 12 school performances in the school leaving examination. This chapter can be graphically depicted by the following figure (Figure 4.1).

Attitude, punctuality, attendance, afternoon studies, school policy, support services and staff development, motivation and value expectation, accepting responsibility for the results, school timetable, syllabi and written work

School Leaving Examination Results

Figure 4.1: Possible aspects of the hidden curriculum on the school leaving results

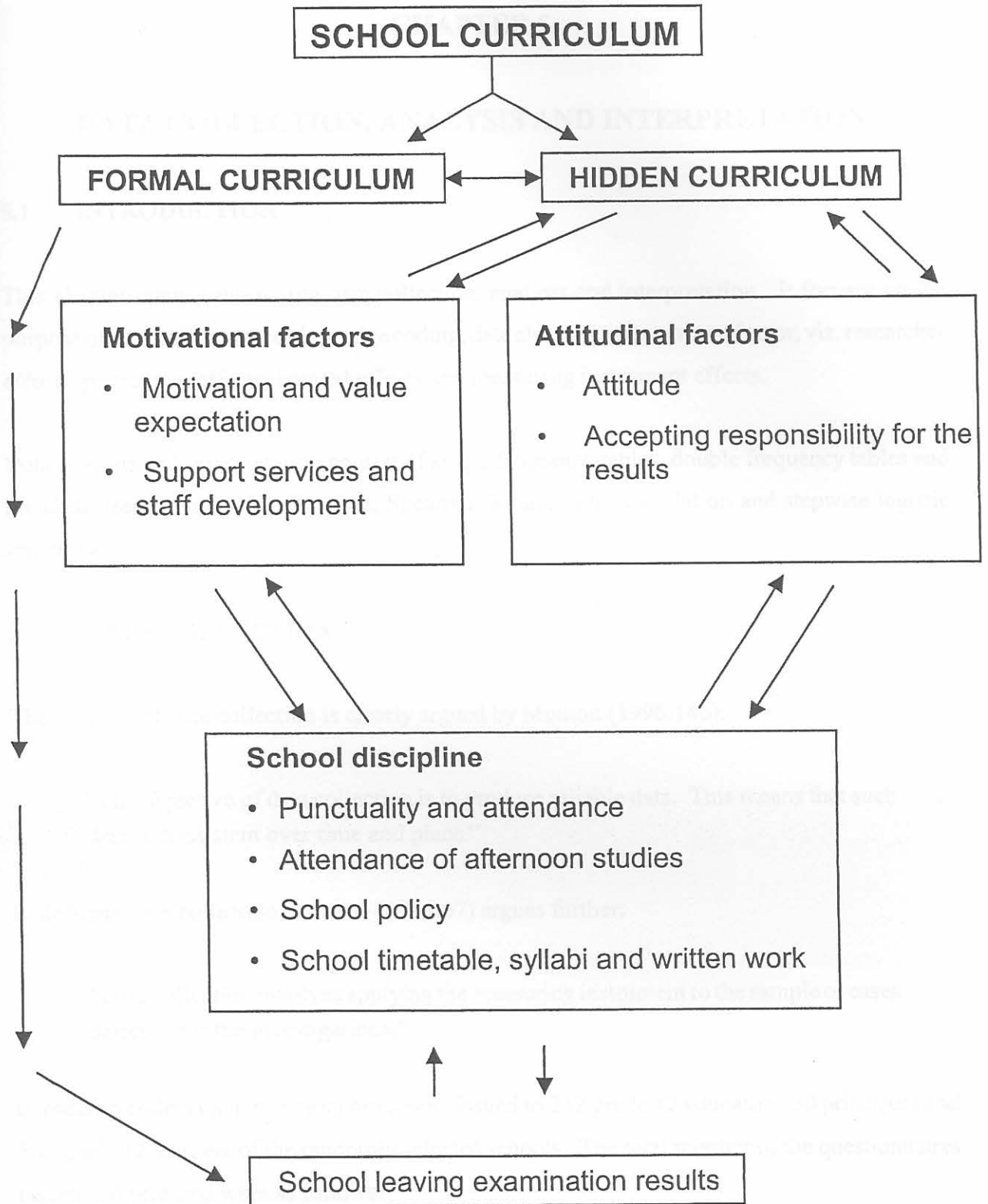


Figure 4.1 Possible impact of the hidden curriculum on the school leaving results in the Northern Province

	Number Issued	Number Returned
...	30	30
...	30	502