

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE EDUCATOR TIME-USE DIARIES

#### 5.1 Introduction

The analysis in this section may be described as a hybrid type analysis, drawing from the quantitative and qualitative research approaches. I drew from the **quantitative** research approach to the analysis by calculating the **total time**, in hours and minutes that each educator spent on the various core duties, which I used in the questionnaires. Thereafter, I calculated the **average time**, in hours and minutes that each educator spent on the various core duties. I furthermore drew on the **qualitative** research approach in the analysis of the additional written comments and observations offered by educators.

#### 5.2 Implementing the Educator Time-Use Diaries

I began my fieldwork at the beginning of the second school term. The Western Cape Education Department prohibits fieldwork at any of its public schools during the first and fourth school terms, which happen to be the busiest terms of the year. The educators employed at the schools I approached completed the time-use diaries (Addenda I and J on attached CD-Rom), in which I asked them to record, in hours and minutes, all their school-related duties and responsibilities under the core duty headings for two weeks. I did not specify exact dates in which educators needed to complete the time-use diaries but informed the principals that I would collect the diaries within six weeks. I received 31 completed educator time-use diaries of the 75 delivered to schools, which is a 41% return. Although seemingly low, this was an improvement on the open-ended questionnaire return rate.

Upon collection of the educator time-use diaries, four principals explained to me that their educators had been too busy with school activities to complete their diaries. These comments alone suggest that educators have intense workloads.

In preparation for the data analysis, I firstly read the time-use diaries to gain an overall impression of the educators' responses to my instruction, which was to record the time they spent on all their school related duties and responsibilities under the core duty headings for two weeks. I noted that some of the educators recorded their diaries over a period that included at least three public holidays. This meant that instead of

recording their diaries over a period of fourteen days, some educators only recorded their diaries for eleven days. The omission of three days would significantly influence my data analysis and findings. I also noted that some educators put a great deal of time and effort into the completion of their diaries and offered additional comments and suggestions, which were meaningful in terms of my research question and working assumptions. Once I had completed reading the contents of the time-use diaries, I coded each diary with the code “E” representing “educator” as well as a numerical reference number.

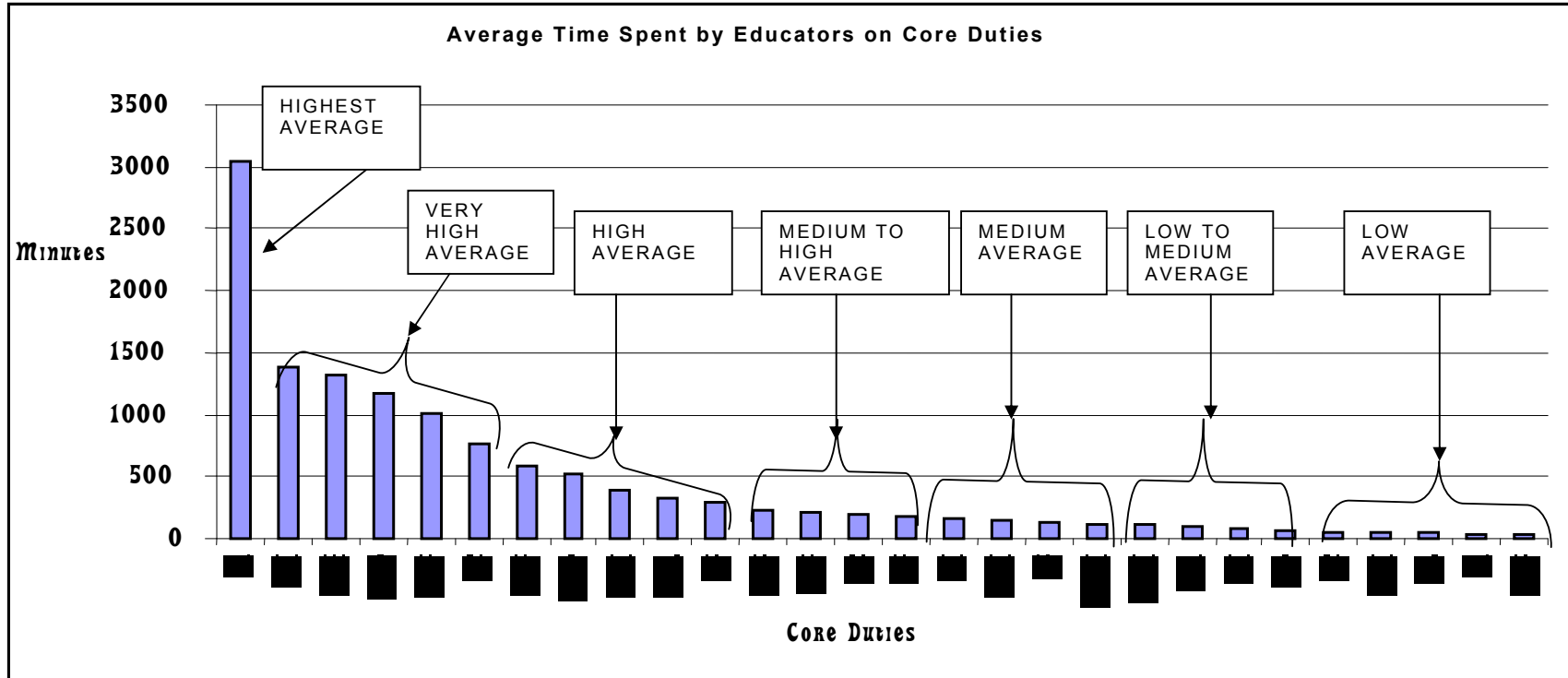
### 5.3 Presentation and Discussion of the Analysis, Findings and Interpretation of the Data

Briefly, the format of the data analysis for each of the core duties throughout this section is as follows:

- Calculation and recording of the **total time** spent over two weeks, indicated in hours and minutes, by educators on the various core duties in tabulated format (Addendum M on attached CD-Rom).
- Calculation and recording of the **average time** spent by educators on the various core duties over two weeks (Addendum M on attached CD-Rom).
- Graphic representation of the average time spent by educators on the various core duties to identify striking similarities, patterns, trends, relationships, differences and peculiarities in the data (Figure 5.1).
- Analysis of additional comments made by educators.
- Analysis of educator’s (E5) “job description”.
- Analysis of the excerpt from an educator’s personal diary.
- Examination of prevailing education labour law and other relevant law to ascertain whether the actual duties and responsibilities performed by educators are in alignment or in conflict with legislation.

The following figure, Figure 5.1 below, depicts the average time over two weeks that educators spent on each of the core duties in order from the duty having the **highest** average to the duties having the **lowest** averages. I sifted the data into an outlier and six categories according to the trends depicted in Figure 5.1 below.

**Figure 5.1 Graphic Representation of the Average Time Spent by Educators on Core Duties**



**LEGEND:**

TL=Teaching Lessons; MD=Maintaining Discipline; CPE=Creating a Positive Environment; OEM=Other Extra-Mural Activities; M&F=Marking and Feedback; SA=Sport Activities; P&P=Planning and Preparation; OCM=Other Classroom Management; OAD=Other Administrative Duties; ASW=Attending Seminars and Workshops; KR=Keeping Records; OTR=Other Teaching Responsibilities; ALP=Assisting Learners with Problems; CA=Cultural Activities; PR=Progress Reports; SC=School Committees; BGD=Bus and Gate Duty; SF=Social Functions; OPaD=Other Pastoral Duties; OPrD=Other Professional Duties; EBL=Enriching Bright Learners; PD=Playground Duty; CM=Collecting Money; FA=Fundraising Activities; SPD=Scholar Patrol Duty; HN=Handing Out Newsletters; SL=Sick Learners; AR=Attendance Registers

I identified Teaching Lessons as an outlier. Howell (2008:42) defines an outlier as an extreme point that stands out from the rest of the data distribution. Teaching Lessons scored the highest average and stands out from the rest of the data set because teaching lessons is an educator's primary function.

The **first category** comprised core duties on which educators spent a **very high** average of time. The total time spent varied between twelve to twenty-three hours. This category included:

- Maintaining Discipline
- Creating a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment
- Other Extra-Mural Activities
- Marking Learners' Work and Feedback
- Involvement in Sport Activities

The **second category** comprised core duties on which educators spent a **high** average of time. The total time spent varied between five to ten hours. This category included:

- Planning and Preparation
- Other Classroom Management Duties
- Other Administrative Duties
- Attending Seminars and Workshops
- Keeping Record of Learner Assessment and Profiles.

The **third category** comprised core duties on which educators spent a **medium to high** average of time. The total time spent varied between three to four hours. This category included:

- Other Teaching Responsibilities
- Assisting Learners with Learning Problems
- Involvement in Cultural Activities
- Progress Reports to Parents

The **fourth category** comprised core duties on which educators spent a **medium** average of time. The total time spent varied between two and three hours. This category included:

- Involvement in School Committees
- Bus and Gate Duty
- Involvement in the School's Social Functions
- Other Pastoral Duties

The **fifth category** comprised core duties on which educators spent a **low to medium** average of time. The total time spent varied between one to two hours. This category included:

- Other Professional Duties
- Enriching Bright Learners

- Playground Duty
- Collecting Money

The sixth category comprised core duties on which educators spent a **low average** of time. The total time spent was less than one hour and included:

- Involvement in Fundraising Activities
- Scholar Patrol Duty
- Handing Out Newsletters
- Sick Learners
- Keeping Attendance Registers

### **5.3.1 Discussion of Category One Core Duties that Scored Very High Averages**

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained very high averages, namely, teaching lessons, maintaining discipline, creating a positive teaching and learning environment, other extra-mural activities, marking learners' work and providing feedback and involvement in sport activities.

#### **5.3.1.1 Teaching Lessons (Ave=50h 48min)**

Teaching lessons is the core duty on which educators spent the most time. This finding does not come as a surprise since teaching is an educator's primary task and is consequently the task to which a educator devotes the most time. It is a compulsory core duty as evidenced by the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Chapter A, Paragraph 3, Section 3.2 (a), which states that, "All educators should be at school during the formal school day, which should not be less than 7 hours per day. The 7 hours per day includes the breaks and periods in which the learners are not at school".

Furthermore, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching, states that, "A educator must be a class educator and engage in class teaching which will foster a purposeful progression in learning and which is consistent with the learning areas and programmes of subjects and grades". The participants' responses clearly indicate that they not only fulfil this core duty but also engage in teaching lessons above the expectations placed on them by legislation.

#### **5.3.1.2 Maintaining Discipline (Ave=23h)**

The reason for this very high average is that educators maintain discipline throughout the day, whether they are teaching lessons, supervising cultural activities or coaching sport. Most educators teaching learners in

middle-class contexts are aware that they need to apply discipline consistently for it to be effective. E2, E6 and E8 commented that they apply discipline “all day”. E4 offered “during class time” while E15, E16 and E17 stated that discipline is “a continual process”. E20 maintains discipline “in class and at sport”. Therefore, maintaining discipline is a continuous process and an integral part of every lesson. In other words, discipline is an indisputable requirement for effective teaching and learning and educators often plan, prepare and structure their lesson presentations and activities to ensure maximum discipline.

The requirement of discipline is stipulated in the Employment of educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, (d) entitled “The Aim of the Job”. This section reads, “To engage in class teaching, including the academic, administrative, educational and **disciplinary aspects** and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that the education of the learner is promoted in a proper manner”.

The educator’s responses and comments provide evidence that they view the maintenance of discipline in their classrooms and schools as a priority and therefore prefer to work within the guidelines set out in legislation. However, if educators are maintaining discipline “all day”, then it follows that the maintenance of discipline is eroding valuable teaching time.

This line of thinking begs the following questions: “If all learners came to class self-disciplined, would educators not be able to spend maximum time engaged in teaching and learning activities? Whose primary task is it to discipline learners, parents or educators? It appears that the present generation of parents in particular has shifted the responsibility for disciplining children to the educators and school. I substantiate my claim by citing the findings of Dinham & Scott’s research on sources of educator dissatisfaction. Two of the sources of dissatisfaction mentioned by Dinham & Scott (2000:7), which are particularly pertinent to maintaining discipline, include changes to school responsibilities and management as well as “increased expectations placed by society on schools and educators to solve the problems society seemed unwilling or unable to deal with”. In addition, there was also a clear feeling that community expectations had increased in recent times and concern for the additional “social welfare” burden that educators and schools now have to carry (2000:8-9) (See § 2.3.1).

The disciplinary challenges that educators in middle-class contexts are expected to manage have clearly been exacerbated, if not created by prevailing legislation. The South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996, Section 10, Prohibition of Corporal Punishment, prohibits the

administering of any form of corporal punishment on school property. Likewise, Chapter 2, Section 28 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, states (1) every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. Section 10 deals with human dignity and provides, “everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected.” Section 12 provides, (1) “everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person, which includes the right (c) to be free of any forms of violence, (d) not to be tortured in any way and (e) not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way”.

In light of this legislation, the discipline and punishment options that educators have at their disposal appear to be limited. To be consistent in their discipline, educators will need to sacrifice some teaching and learning time to reprimand and discipline learners to ensure quality teaching and learning may ultimately take place.

### **5.3.1.3 Creating a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment (Ave=22h)**

Similar to maintaining discipline, the reason for the very high average may be attributed to the fact that most educators view the creation of a positive teaching and learning environment as an ongoing process that takes place throughout the day, every day. Educators’ responses indicate those activities which demand a great deal of the educators’ time after school, include pinning learners’ work on pin boards for display, cleaning, sweeping and tidying the class and packing away books and apparatus. Some educators also spent time setting a display table for a new theme, making and using a star system as well as making and sending cards to sick learners and to welcome learners’ new baby brothers and sisters.

My analysis and interpretation of the data I have gathered on classroom management reveals that a relationship exists between the creation of a positive teaching and learning environment and maintaining discipline. Literature supports my claim. Cowley (2005:26) states that, “Your classroom environment can have a powerful impact on standards of work and behaviour”.

Prevailing education labour law, namely the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching, also requires educators “To establish a classroom environment, which stimulates positive learning and actively engages learners in the learning process”. The high average time spent on classroom management suggests that the educators who participated in this time-use diary probably have substantial knowledge of



and experience in classroom management and therefore put a great deal of effort into creating a positive teaching and learning environment. It follows that the creation of a positive teaching and learning environment is not only a time-consuming core duty but also contributes significantly to educators' workloads.

#### **5.3.1.4 Involvement in Other Extra-Mural Activities (Ave=19h 30min)**

This core duty, namely educators' involvement in other types of extra-mural activities, struck me as a peculiarity in the data because it attained a higher average than any of the specified extra-mural activities in the time-use diary. However, the educators' records of their involvement in other extra-mural activities explained the reasons for this peculiarity in the data:

- E3 attended a rugby camp for 4 days during the April school holidays.

The April school holidays in the Western Cape, at the time of my fieldwork, amounted to ten days, which included the Easter long weekend. This means that E3 enjoyed a break of 6 days away from school between a normally hectic first term lasting approximately ten weeks and a busy second term lasting approximately eleven weeks.

- E7 was involved in planning the school's centenary celebrations.
- E12 was responsible for the school's First Aid and safety and presumably had to be on standby duty at the school's sports activities.
- E25 had a heavy schedule dealing with sport administration.
- E27 arranged a function for the school's cultural evening.
- E29 who is the head of the school's Charity Committee commented as follows:

It would appear that the above-mentioned "other" extra-mural activities in which these educators were involved, were an implicit part of normal extra-mural activities owing to the open-ended nature of the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (ii) dealing with Extra- and co-curricular duties. This section simply states, "To cater for the educational and general welfare of all learners in his/her care".

#### **5.3.1.5 Marking Learners' Work and Feedback (Ave=16h 48min)**

In this core duty, only two educators offered supporting comments. E5 commented that she marked 99 Grade 1 books each day, which is particularly time-consuming, amounting to 02h 30min each day. E14 commented:

- *Educators work a full day at school, have a full afternoon programme and always take home planning and marking work (E14).*



In addition, the excerpt from the educator's personal diary indicated that this educator was required to mark 33 Writing and 33 Mathematics books each day.

Marking learners' work is a prerequisite for the accurate assessment of learners' work. It is a critical but time-consuming duty, which all educators are expected to attend to every day or at least after the completion of any written work. Thorough marking entails not only correcting learners' errors for remediation purposes but also requires the educator to provide feedback by means of positive and constructive comments, which will motivate and encourage the learner to improve.

The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching, is not explicit concerning the expectations it places on educators with regard to marking and feedback. It does not provide a detailed account of the *modus operandi* it expects educators to follow. It is rather open-ended in its wording, "To plan, co-ordinate, control, administer, evaluate and report on learners' academic progress".

The fact that marking learners' work and providing feedback has attained the fifth highest average of time spent by these educators on the core duties coupled with three educators' meaningful comments, provides evidence that educators who teach at schools situated in middle-class contexts are conscientious about the marking of their learners' work and the importance of feedback. The educators' responses indicate that educators often need to mark until late into the night owing to their demanding schedules throughout the formal school day.

My findings are consistent with the findings of Naylor & Schaefer (2002:33-36) who summarise four reports by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) on educator workloads and stress. The data used in their article were obtained from two surveys of secondary school educators. They found that educators devote the majority of their work time to preparation and **marking**.

Similar to the findings of the BCTF report, the Educator Workload in South Africa report (2005:184) attributes the intensification of educators' workloads in terms of marking and assessment to the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) policy:

Policies such as OBE are one amongst many that have had an impact on educators' sense of their workload. The vast majority of educators experience the multiple, complex and constantly changing requirements in teaching and learning

contexts, marked on the whole by large classes with diverse teaching and learning needs, as an unbearable increase in workload. OBE in particular is singled out for having increased workload through its onerous assessment requirements.

#### **5.3.1.6 Coaching and Involvement in Sport (Ave=12h 42min)**

Coaching and Involvement in sport scored a very high average, which supports my working assumptions, which is that many educators spend a great deal of time on sport related duties. The data reveals a trend towards educators' involvement in sport being not only limited to coaching sport. The responsibilities associated with sport have a reciprocal effect on several other core duties. The following data elucidate the relationship between sport and other core duties:

##### Social Functions

E11 commented on educators' continual attendance at school, sport and cultural functions.

##### Involvement in Committees

E11 is a member of both the Netball and Athletics Committees at school.

##### Other Extra-Mural Activities

E3 accompanied learners on a rugby camp for four days during the April school holidays. E12 is responsible for the first aid at sports meetings and matches.

##### Administrative Duties

E25 spends copious time on sports administration.

##### Bus Duty

E19 accompanied learners on a bus trip to a sports day held at a school in another town on a Saturday from 05:30 to 14:30.

##### Other Pastoral Duties

E8 held informal discussions with netball players on two occasions for motivational purposes.

##### Newsletters

E10 often spends time handing out sports letters to learners.

### Professional Duties

E2 attended a netball course. E8 attended a netball meeting during second break. E16 attended a sports meeting with parents.

Additional comments provided by educators also draw attention to the fact that sport impacts on several areas of their lives:

- *I am also involved in Western Province School netball as well as Western Province netball, and therefore I devote a lot of my time to sport (E22).*

One educator does not sound enthusiastic about the five sports days held on consecutive Saturdays during the winter months:

- *Sports matches are often played in icy wind and rain during the winter months in schools in the Western Cape (E4).*

Furthermore, I am able to detect a measure of relief in another educator's comment:

- *Fortunately, our school has appointed two sports co-ordinators who can assist us with the arrangements for sports matches and tournaments. Without their help, we would have had to fit these duties into our admin periods or breaks (E8).*

The fact that this particular school considered it necessary to appoint two full time sports administrators is proof that sport is a prominent activity at this school and that middle-class parents view sport as an important activity.

It is of consequence to note that some of the schools that participated in this study maintain a rich sporting tradition. A number of famous sportsmen, among them rugby players and cricketers, who have represented South Africa in national teams, were educated at these schools. These schools take great pride in their sports teams and coaches that are largely financially sponsored by prominent companies, many of which are owned or managed by parents. It is common knowledge that they use their excellent sport reputations as effective marketing tools.

My data analysis and findings unequivocally link with one of my working assumptions, namely that members of primary school governing bodies situated in middle-class contexts tend to hold high expectations of educators, particularly in relation to sport. Moreover, it appears that the gaps and silences in South African labour law, particularly regarding the nature and extent of educators' involvement in sport, create legitimate spaces in which governing bodies could have an impact on the workloads of educators. It also appears that governing bodies' use of such space might militate against children's right to education and even the best interests of children.

### 5.3.2 Discussion of Category Two Core Duties that Scored High Averages

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained high averages in the data analysis. The core duties include the planning and preparation of lessons, other classroom management duties, other administrative duties, attending meetings, seminars and workshops for professional development purposes and keeping records of learners' assessments and profiles.

#### 5.3.2.1 Planning and Preparation of Lessons (Ave=09h 49min)

Educators who teach at schools in middle-class contexts appear to put a lot of effort and time into their lesson planning and preparation, hence the high average attained by this core duty. Some educators may prefer to plan per term and prepare their lessons on a weekly basis. One educator's comment shows that many educators complete planning and preparation at home either in the evenings or over weekends:

- *Educators work a full day at school, have a full afternoon programme and always take home planning and marking work (E14).*

The format of planning and preparation differs from school to school according to each school's internal policy. A comment offered by one educator indicates that lesson planning takes place weekly. Another educator's comment about the lesson discussion with the grade group indicates that some educators complete their lesson planning and preparation as a grade group, which can save valuable time. This method of planning and preparing can also be beneficial in the sense that the group is able to share insights and ideas as well as collectively address and solve any problems that may arise.

Similar to my findings, which emerged in the section dealing with the marking and feedback of learners' work, my findings in respect of planning and preparation are also consistent with the findings of Naylor & Schaefer (2002:33-36) who summarise four reports by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) on educator workloads and stress. The data used in their article were obtained from two surveys of secondary school educators. They found that educators devote the majority of their work time to **preparation** and marking (See § 5.3.5).

The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching, states that one of the core duties and responsibilities of an educator is to "Prepare lessons taking into account orientation, regional courses, new approaches, techniques, evaluation, aids, etc. in their field".

Furthermore, The National Education Policy Act, No 27 of 1996, in the Norms and Standards for Educators, under the heading Learning Mediator, describes the roles and competencies expected of educators in respect of planning and preparation of lessons:

The educator will understand and interpret provided learning programmes, design original learning programmes, identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select and **prepare** suitable textual and visual resources for learning.

### **5.3.2.2 Other Classroom Management Duties (Ave=08h 36min)**

The high average attained by this core duty may be attributed to the fact that in addition to their normal classroom management duties, educators also perform a variety of other classroom management duties, of which people who are not professionally involved in teaching will be unaware. The following educators performed the following duties: E3 was involved in a discussion concerning the week's academic work with colleagues. E6 assisted student educators with their classroom organisation. E11 claimed that the instruction of life skills is a continual process. E21 spent extra time on educating learners about neatness, which is also a continual process since it is a life skill. E30 made posters. E25 completed reports on learners' discipline. Some schools use a type of conduct chart as a means of maintaining discipline. Educators are required to record learners' positive and negative conduct regularly and transfer this information to the learners' profiles, which may also form part of educators' administrative duties.

### **5.3.2.3 Other Administrative Duties (Ave=06h 25min)**

Other administrative duties appear to be major contributors to the intensification of educators' workloads hence the high average attained by this core duty. E4's time-use diary revealed that this educator spends a great deal of additional time writing, translating and proofreading newsletters. Parallel medium schools offering instruction in both English and Afrikaans, often appoint bilingual educators who have good writing skills, to translate, proofread and edit school documents such as newsletters, modules, brochures and many more. E8, E9 and E25 mentioned that they use their admin periods to photocopy modules and tasks. Quite a few educators referred to the issue of photocopying but recorded the time they spent on this responsibility in the section dealing with other teaching responsibilities. E8 used 35 minutes to sort out school photographs. Furthermore, E8 travelled 722km on a Sunday, 400km on a Monday, which was a public holiday and 400km on a Tuesday, which was also a public holiday to gather information for an outreach programme in

which her school was involved together with a local church. In other words, this educator spent three days out of the four days comprising a long weekend on the road for school business. E27 is in charge of the staffroom's inventory as well as the foundation phase prefects. Taking stock and updating of inventories are usually time-consuming exercises because all items must be counted and accounted for. E30's additional administrative duties included arranging an outing for the grade group and detention duty. One comment in particular has a sense of urgency about it and reads:

- *Very Important! Administrative tasks are taking up and taking over instruction time (E11).*

I concur with E11's urgent response. Firstly, I refer to Hargreaves and his colleagues who conducted research on the work intensification thesis (1992:90) and found that increased accountability has led to an increase in paperwork. Secondly, Hargreaves also refers to research conducted by Apple (1992:89) who claims that there is a proliferation of administrative tasks. Thirdly, in the conclusion of his article, Hargreaves (1992:104) states that heightened expectations, broader demands, increased accountability, more "social work" responsibilities, more meetings, multiple innovations and increased amounts of administrative work are all testimony to the problems of chronic work overload.

The Educator Workload in South Africa report documents similar findings to Hargreaves. It states that, "Administrative duties, extra-mural activities and fundraising are other workload duties found to most seriously undermine teaching" (2005:xiii).

#### **5.3.2.4 Attending Seminars, Workshops and Courses for Professional Development Purposes (Ave=05h 18min)**

This core duty attained a high average score owing to the fact that educators attend a wide variety of seminars, workshops and courses, which contribute to their professional development in terms of knowledge and skills. The time they spend on professional development varies from brief meetings during break to discuss sport to more formal and structured meetings and workshops in the afternoons and evenings. Government has reserved the right to present certain courses, attendance at which is compulsory, during the holidays as well. The educators who recorded time-use diaries attended the following seminars and workshops:

- Lesson discussion meetings
- Grade meetings
- Phase meetings
- Staff meetings
- Sports meetings with parents





- Departmental meetings
- Area meetings
- Union seminars
- Methodology training
- First aid courses
- Whiteboard training
- Marketing meetings
- Meetings concerning learner matters
- Meetings with occupational and speech therapists
- Session regarding implementation of New Curriculum Statement (NCS).

The law is clear and unambiguous in its prescriptions regarding the professional development of educators. The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 3, Section 3.2 (d) reads, “All educators may be required by the employer to attend programmes for ongoing professional development, up to a maximum of 80 hours per annum. These programmes to be conducted outside the formal school day or during the vacations”.

Educators are often required to plan and prepare for meetings and courses, compile agendas and record, type, photocopy and handout the minutes of meetings. Educators may also spend time travelling long distances to various venues to attend courses. In brief, I assert that professional development duties may make demands on educators’ time and may intensify educators’ workloads. Hargreaves and his colleagues (1992:90) found that increased accountability has led to an increase in paperwork and time spent attending meetings, conferences and workshops, which offers strong support for the intensification thesis.

#### **5.3.2.5 Keeping Record of Learners’ Assessment and Profiles (Ave=05h)**

Hargreaves and Apple’s research findings (1992:89), namely the occurrence of a proliferation of administrative tasks, also hold significance for this discussion focusing on the recording of learners’ assessment and profiles, which attained a high average. Most educators would categorise keeping record of learners’ assessment and profiles under administrative duties. A possible explanation for the high average in this section would be that educators are expected to keep a regular and accurate record of learners’ formal assessment scores arising from tests and other academic tasks and projects, as well as informal assessment scores arising from a variety of assessment instruments such as checklists, rubrics and matrices. Each of the nine learning areas in the Intermediate Phase alone prescribes its own assessment methods and learning outcomes. The recording and calculation of assessments of the



learning outcomes in the Senior Phase is an even more complex and time-consuming exercise.

Furthermore, since the purpose of assessment is to monitor learner progress in regard to the achievement of learning outcomes, educators need to record all relevant details of learners' progress and conduct in their profiles too. E15 asserts that the recording of incidents takes an additional 15 minutes per learner profile. This implies that in a class of 30 learners, an educator may spend approximately seven and a half hours updating profiles and it is likely that efficient educators will attend to this process at least every fortnight. E27 marks learners' tasks and records their profiles at the same time. E29 recorded time spent on noting information in files and reading marks into the computer.

An educator's duty to keep record of learners' assessment and profiles corresponds with and is in alignment with the core duties and responsibilities of an educator, listed under the Employment of educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching. This excerpt from prevailing education labour law requires educators to "Plan, co-ordinate control, administer, evaluate and report on learners' academic progress". Furthermore, the National Education Policy Act, No 27 of 1996, in the Norms and Standards for Educators, under the heading Assessor, states, "The educator will keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment".

### **5.3.3 Discussion of Category Three Core Duties that Scored Medium to High Averages**

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained medium to high averages in the data analysis. These core duties include other teaching responsibilities, assisting learners with learning problems, involvement in cultural activities and progress reports to parents.

#### **5.3.3.1 Other Teaching Responsibilities (Ave=03h 51min)**

This core duty, dealing with additional teaching responsibilities performed by educators attained a medium to high average, which appears peculiar as it gives rise to questions as to what other teaching responsibilities an educator may fulfil besides teaching. When someone refers to the teaching profession, one tends to think of it in terms of an educator standing in front of a class teaching a lesson. The data have illustrated that educators perform a variety of teaching related duties in addition to teaching lessons. Among these are compiling lesson content, setting tests and memoranda, photocopying work, communicating with parents and supervising student educators. As I mentioned previously, (See § 5.3.9)

many educators singled out the compiling, typing and photocopying of learning modules and supplementary notes as a time-consuming teaching and administrative duty that undoubtedly increases an educator's workload. The need for educators to compose and type their own lesson content, photocopy modules and supplementary notes for learners is a direct result of constant, hit and miss changes to the curriculum from the original Outcomes-Based Education policy to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) to the existing National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Writers and publishers of schoolbooks have been hesitant to publish school textbooks for the various learning areas because ongoing curriculum changes may render books outdated and obsolete the moment they leave the press. Instead, educators have literally become curriculum and textbook writers and "publishers". E8's comment supports this idea:

- *Most time is spent compiling new modules and extra tasks for learning areas as well as photocopying (E8).*

E17 and E28 similarly respond:

- *Compiling new assessment tasks according to departmental requirements (E17).*
- *Setting tests and extra lessons (E28).*

It appears that the introduction of the compulsory reading period into the primary school curriculum, has added to educators' workloads. Almost all educators, even those who are not language specialists, are required to conduct reading lessons and provide learners with related language exercises during the reading period. E11 spends additional time on handing out and collecting study guides and workbooks and E12 spends time on reading periods and book reports.

Educators frequently spend a considerable amount of time communicating with parents, either face-to-face or in writing. E2 met with a parent to discuss his child who uses medication, namely Ritalin. E10 mentions, "Telephone calls to parents". E20 refers to "Feedback to parents in respect of parent evenings, cellphone short messages and letters," while E29 alludes to, "Homework books and letters to parents".

Another aspect, which requires additional time and effort from educators in regard to many of the core duties, is student educator training. Twice a year, for a period of four weeks, student educators are allocated to various educators and grades in schools for practical teaching experience. Educators' responses indicated that educators are responsible for assisting students with their classroom organisation, evaluation of student educators' lessons and completing their evaluation

reports (E6). Planning lessons with students, evaluating their work and completing their evaluation reports (E7).

The data show that the responsibilities placed on educators, in addition to their daily teaching duties, can be somewhat overwhelming.

### **5.3.3.2 Assisting Learners with Learning Problems (Ave=03h 30min)**

Although this section attained a medium to high average, the data indicate that assisting learners with learning problems can consume a significant proportion of an educator's time because it is a slow process requiring continual repetition and re-enforcement together with endless patience. The educators' responses show that they mostly assist learners who have learning problems during lesson time. My assertion is that most educators, who teach at schools situated in middle-class contexts, are conscientious with regard to assisting learners who encounter learning problems. Some of the responses reflect their enthusiasm to assist learners:

- *In class time the moment I detect a problem (E20).*
- *Mathematics every day, 30min at break time (E2)*
- *Mathematics assistance 7 periods per week, entire period (E8).*

It appears that a number of learners experience difficulties in Mathematics since educators primarily concentrate on assisting learners with Mathematics and the acquisition of numeracy skills. Effective intervention requires an educator to complete additional planning and preparation to assist learners with special needs, since learners are normally grouped according to their abilities and each ability group must be catered for.

Although this section fell within the third category of a low to medium average of time spent by educators on the core duties, I predict an increase in the number of learners requiring assistance in the future. I base my prediction on the research findings of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation Reports published by Naylor & Schaefer (2002:33-36) which affirm that educators "Report high and increasing numbers of students with special needs in their classes". Educators also need to "adjust their teaching methods to cope with workload pressures".

Furthermore, my prediction is supported by the notion that the implementation of the White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education may increase educators' workloads as:

In mainstream education, priorities will include multi-level classroom instruction so that educators can

prepare main lessons with variations that are responsive to individual learner needs; co-operative learning; curriculum enrichment; and dealing with learners with behavioural problems (2001:18).

Despite the possibility that educators may in future need to spend additional time assisting learners with special needs, the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (i), Teaching, expects educators to “Engage in class teaching, which will foster a purposeful progression in learning”.

### **5.3.3.3 Involvement in Cultural Activities (03h 12min)**

The medium to high average attained for the data indicates that fewer educators are involved in cultural activities than in sport activities. In my opinion, there may be two possible explanations for this finding. Firstly, it may be that some parents and educators view sporting activities as having more value than cultural activities and tend to emphasise sport more than culture, as GB5’s response indicates:

- *In every school, there are educators who excel at cultural activities, better than in sport, but take care not to neglect one at the cost of the other (GB5).*

Secondly, most educators are able to coach the basic skills required for sport but not all educators are sufficiently talented and trained in arts and culture activities e.g. drama and music. Therefore, in many schools, the co-ordination, preparation and presentation of cultural activities rests on the shoulders of a small number of educators. The result is that this minority of educators devote copious time and effort to cultural activities. The cultural activities that the participating educators referred to in their time-use diaries included a talent competition (E18), leading assembly (E19) music and choir evening (E23) while E25, E27 and E30’s school held a concert. Significant data could probably be gathered on educators’ workloads if educators were able to record a separate time-use diary of their duties and responsibilities during a school concert alone.

As in previous sections that deal with extra-mural activities, prevailing education labour law does not provide precise detail of what it expects of educators in respect of cultural duties, which renders legislation completely open to personal interpretation and application. The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (v), Communication, states, “Educators must maintain contact with sporting social, **cultural** and community organisations”. It follows that educators may be expected to perform any type of duty that may be associated with culture.

#### 5.3.3.4 Progress Reports to Parents (Ave=03h)

The medium to high average attained in this section can be attributed to the fact that the educators completed their time-use diaries at the beginning of a new term and in most schools, the progress reports are discussed with parents at the end of each term. The medium to high average is evidenced by these responses:

- *Not at the moment (E8).*
- *This will happen next week (E29).*
- *End of term (E18).*
- *Only after a test series (E21).*
- *Once per term (E24).*

It follows that this core duty would possibly have attained a far higher average if educators had completed the time-use diaries closer to the end of the term.

Prevailing education labour law provides guidelines and prescriptions, which compel educators to inform parents of their children's scholastic progress. The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (v), Communication, requires educators to, "Meet parents and discuss with them the conduct and progress of their children".

All the participant schools comply with legislation and reserve afternoons and evenings at different stages of the school term especially for this purpose. The process may prove to be rather time-consuming since it begins with calculating marks, reading marks into the computer, printing reports, checking reports, writing comments and handing out reports (E12). Thereafter, educators meet with parents for approximately 15 minutes at formal parent evenings, which adds up to numerous hours, particularly if there are many learners in a class. The day following a parent evening is taken up in trying to contact parents who did not attend, either by means of notes written in homework books or on telephone calls to parents.

- *We have to calculate marks, read the marks into the computer, check the reports, write comments and hand out the reports (E12).*
- *Additional 15min per learner's parents at formal parent evening (E15).*
- *Progress reports once per term. Teacher communicates with parents via homework book (E19).*
- *Telephone calls to parents (E28).*

Educators are also expected to record the salient matters arising from the parent interviews in the learners' profiles, which naturally contributes to educators' administrative workloads.

#### **5.3.4 Discussion of Category Four Core Duties that Scored Medium Averages**

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained medium averages in the data analysis. The core duties include involvement in school committees, bus and gate duty, involvement in social functions and other pastoral duties.

##### **5.3.4.1 Involvement in School Committees (Ave=02h 48min)**

The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (iv), Interaction with Stakeholders, requires educators to, "Contribute to the professional development of colleagues by sharing knowledge, ideas and resources". It also calls on educators to "Participate in the school's governing body if elected to do so".

In keeping with these expectations and the expectations voiced by the participants, many educators co-ordinate and serve on a number of various school committees. The medium average attained in the data analysis, indicates that educators spend many hours serving on, among others, sports committees such as netball and athletics committees (E11), language committees, charity committees (E29), school newspaper and editorial committees, class committees (E4) and as members of the school management team. None of the educators indicated that they represented their school's educators on the School Governing Body.

##### **5.3.4.2 Bus and Gate Duty (Ave=02h 21min)**

In compliance with the *in loco parentis* and duty of care principles, educators have a legal obligation to care for all people, particularly learners placed in their care. All the participant schools attached infinite importance to these legal principles and conscientiously fulfilled their pastoral duties. In most cases, bus and gate duties were combined with playground duty. Bus duty however, appears to consume more time than gate duty, particularly for educators who have to accompany learners in buses to sports days. E19 accompanied learners by bus to a sports day held in a distant town, on a Saturday from 05:30 to 14:30. As discussed previously (See § 5.3.6), sport is possibly one of the main contributors to increases in educators' workloads. Sport and its related activities appears to erode not only teaching and learning time but educators' personal time as well, particularly where educators are expected to accompany learners



on field trips and tours during weekends, long weekends and school holidays.

#### **5.3.4.3 Involvement in the School's Social Functions (02h 12min)**

In my opinion, the medium average attained by this core duty may be considered a peculiarity in the data findings. The number of hours that participant educators recorded in their time-use diaries does not accurately reflect the actual time they spend attending the school's social functions. The reason for this disparity is that educators recorded their diaries in the first two to three weeks of a new term, too early for most social functions, which usually take place during or at the end of a term. E4 supports my argument with, "Later in the term" and T8 adds "Not during these two weeks". E11 confirms that such functions do actually take place regularly with "Continual attendance at school, sport and cultural functions". E5 concurs with an explanation of her duties:

- *I am in charge of the crockery and cutlery storeroom. Responsible for counting out and dispatching all crockery and cutlery needed for school functions, counting and packing the crockery back again. I do this in the afternoons. Some weeks there are many functions (E5).*

Both my personal and school diaries indicate that most school functions take place at the beginning and end of the year, namely terms one and four, which happen to be the busiest terms in respect of academic work. Unfortunately, I was prevented from gathering data during these two terms since the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) prohibits research and fieldwork during these two terms precisely for this reason. The type of functions that the participant educators attended included a discussion with a local church concerning the school's outreach programme (E25) a school dance (E28) and a Grade 7 function.

The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (v), Communication, states that, "Educators must maintain contact with sporting **social**, cultural and community organisations", but does not expand on the extent of an educator's involvement in such organisations.

#### **5.3.4.4 Other Pastoral Duties (Ave=02h)**

Other types of pastoral duties, which educators are sometimes called upon to fulfil include counselling learners in collaboration with social workers and psychologists (E21) and corridor duty every day before school, at breaks and after school (E23). E5 has a heavy workload in respect of other pastoral duties. This teacher fulfils the following responsibilities in regard to the needy families at school:



- *My pastoral duties include organising and collecting tinned food, grocery shopping and packing of grocery hampers, collecting second hand clothing and handing out clothing to the needy families. I do this one afternoon per month and it takes the entire afternoon (E5).*

It follows that a number of educators may be involved in this type of pastoral duty, something one would not normally expect of educators.

### **5.3.5 Discussion of Category Five Core Duties that Scored Low to Medium Averages**

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained low to medium averages in the data analysis. The core duties include other professional duties, enriching bright learners, playground duty and collecting money in class.

#### **5.3.5.1 Other Professional Duties (01h 56min)**

In my discussion of this section, which attained a low to medium average, I included the other professional duties referred to and recorded by educators previously under other core duties, namely parent evenings, completing reports, meetings with student educators, meetings with parents after school and serving on various school related committees. E20 makes an important claim in respect of a educators' additional professional duties:

- *Handling of social skills, emotional intelligence exercises, study skills and conflict resolution skills takes place every day (E20).*

I am able to distinguish a noticeable link between the preceding section, which focuses on other pastoral duties and this section, which focuses on other professional duties. They are similar because they are imbedded in a social context of community expectations, which according to the findings of Dinham and Scott (2000:8-9), increased in recent times to become an additional "social welfare" burden that educators and schools now have to carry.

#### **5.3.5.2 Enriching Bright Learners (Ave=01h 30min)**

It is both surprising and worrying to find that in contrast to assisting learners who experience learning problems, educators appear to spend considerably less time enriching bright learners, hence the low to medium average attained for this core duty. This finding is worrying since it may appear that some educators may be unintentionally discriminating against learners in respect of their intellectual abilities and may therefore infringe on the learners' rights to education. Nevertheless, educators are required to implement differentiation in their classes by planning, preparing and

providing extra tasks to keep bright learners intellectually challenged and engaged in advanced learning content. Most educators responded that they enrich bright learners during lesson time and continually during the school day as evidenced by these responses:

- *Takes place in lesson time (E3).*
- *Included in lesson planning (E4).*
- *Continually during school day (E15).*
- *Teacher provides extra tasks (E19).*
- *Differentiation during lessons and tasks (E19).*

#### **5.3.5.3 Playground Duty (Ave=01h 18min)**

Most educators indicated that they regularly perform this pastoral duty. Although the time educators spend on this duty does not infringe on teaching and learning time and is carried out during the formal school day and not after school, it does at times deprive educators of their breaks and the right to relax, if only for a few minutes. During playground duty, educators are expected to pay attention to the legal principle “duty of care” and ensure that learners are not psychologically or physically harmed in any way.

It appears that the educators who participated in this research are well informed of the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 3, Section 3.1 (b) (i) (dd), which specifies the pastoral care core duties as **ground**, detention and scholar patrol duty, etc.

#### **5.3.5.4 Collecting Money in Class (Ave=01h 12min)**

The educators’ responses showed that although the collection of money in their classes does not for the most part, appear to erode teaching and learning time too often, it does occur on a continual basis (E15). However, educators indicated that the time they spend on collecting and counting money in class increases substantially during fundraising projects. Examples of collecting money in class include the payment of photo money and collecting donations for charity organisations such as the Guide Dog Association. One teacher’s response suggests that collecting money in class may hold certain drawbacks for educators:

- *Some weeks are busier than other weeks. The collection of photo money or outing money can change your day in a wink (E18).*

However, according to prevailing education labour law, educators are expected to collect money in class. The Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration Measures, Chapter A, Paragraph 4.5, Section (e) (iii), Administrative, states that, “Educators must perform

or assist with one or more of other non-teaching administrative duties such as collection of fees and other monies”.

### **5.3.6 Discussion of Category Six Core Duties that Scored Low Averages**

In this section, I discuss the core duties that attained low averages in the data analysis. The core duties include involvement in fundraising activities, scholar patrol duties, handing out newsletters, sick learners and keeping attendance registers.

#### **5.3.6.1 Involvement in Fundraising Activities (Ave=00h 53min)**

The low average obtained in this core duty constitutes a striking disparity in the data since I expected this core duty to elicit one of the highest averages. One of the reasons for my expectation is that the Educator Workload in South Africa report found that fundraising activities emerged as a significant category of time use and teacher activity in four schools and disrupted teaching and learning time (2005:181). Similar to the discussion, which focuses on the school’s social functions, I wish to argue that the average time participant educators recorded in their time-use diaries does not provide an accurate reflection of the actual time most educators spend on fundraising activities. Fundraising activities continually take place in schools but not normally during the first few weeks of a new term, hence the low average for this particular duty. E11 supports my claim in the comment:

- *Continually as arranged by school (E11).*

Furthermore, E4 and E28’s responses serve as evidence that most schools do arrange several fundraising events throughout the year. The completion of the teacher time-use diary simply did not coincide with any (See § 5.6).

E14 interestingly points out that at his/her school, teacher involvement in fundraising activities is limited to 20 hours per year. This implies that fundraising duties for educators at this school exceed 20 hours per year.

Drafters of education labour law may wish to take cognisance of the time limits imposed by this school’s management and governing body and amend some of the laws to include similar, more specific time limits. Such steps would greatly assist in filling the “gaps” in legislation and would ensure the maintenance of a reasonable teacher workload and distribution of work.

The educators' responses demonstrated that some of the duties expected of educators in respect of fundraising activities included collecting soap powder boxes every morning, contacting parents every evening at home to sell them tickets for a theatre production and attending a wine auction.

#### **5.3.6.2 Scholar Patrol Duty (Ave=00h 47min)**

Despite the provision in prevailing education labour law, namely the Employment of Educators Act, No 76 of 1998, Personnel Administration measures, Paragraph 3, Section 3.1 (b) (i) (dd), which specifies pastoral care core duties as ground, detention and **scholar patrol duty**, etc, few educators perform scholar patrol duty, hence the low average for this core duty. Schools appear to combine scholar patrol duty with playground duty. Only one teacher spent one week per term performing scholar patrol duty.

#### **5.3.6.3 Handing Out Newsletters (Ave=00h 45min)**

The data pertaining to this core duty indicate that educators do not spend any significant amount of time handing out newsletters. E19, who is most likely a Foundation Phase teacher, spends time stapling pages containing learners' homework tasks into their diaries every day. E24 responded that at his/her school, educators hand out newsletters twice a week. E10 indicated that sports letters are often handed out in class.

A possible explanation for the low average for this core duty is that many schools that participated in this research communicate with parents by means of cellular phone short messages. Many of these schools are also fortunate enough to have sponsored electronic message boards strategically placed at their entrances, which disseminate important messages and school related information to the school community.

#### **5.3.6.4 Sick Learners (Ave=00h 31min)**

Educators appear to spend minimal time on this responsibility. E8 telephoned parents to enquire about two learners and E19 arranged homework for a sick learner.

#### **5.3.6.5 Keeping Attendance Registers (Ave=00h 28min)**

Educators do not need to spend too much time on this duty. E18 delegates this duty to the capable Grade 7 learners and E21 has appointed a reliable learner to perform this duty every day.

#### **5.4 Additional Data Gathered from an educator's "Job Description"**

Educator E5 did not record the amount of time spent on the various core duties but made meaningful comments concerning her daily duties:

- Grade 1 Head of Department.
- Marking of 99 Grade 1 books each day, which is very time-consuming, amounting to 02h 30min each day.
- Regular attendance of meetings.
- School's representative at the educators' union and is a member of the Western Cape Teacher Union's management.
- Coaches sport during the first and fourth terms.
- Participates in Land Service as a cultural extra-mural duty.
- Organises the school's carnival.
- Always attends all the school's social functions.
- Secretary for committee on academic matters.
- Member of the School Marketing Committee.
- In charge of the crockery and cutlery storeroom. Responsible for counting out and dispatching all crockery and cutlery needed for school functions, counting and packing the crockery back again. I do this in the afternoons. Some weeks there are many functions.
- Pastoral duties in regard to the needy families at school include organising and collecting tinned food, grocery shopping and packing of grocery hampers, collecting second hand clothing and handing out clothing to the needy families. I do this one afternoon per month and it takes the entire afternoon.
- Daily collection of money, handing out newsletters and recording attendance register.

#### **5.5 Additional Data Gathered from an Educator's Personal Diary**

One of the educator participants photocopied an excerpt of his/her personal diary, which he/she recorded from 19 April to 3 May for my perusal. I decided to include it in this discussion because it serves as a data document and seems to provide a reasonably accurate description of a typical middle-class educator's day at school:

##### **APRIL**

##### **Thursday, 19**

07:30-13:30 Teach

13:30-14:00 Mark books

14:00-15:00 Clean classroom

15:00-16:30 Shopping for items needed for hand skills lesson

20:00-21:00 Plan for entrepreneurs market.

Count money, get change ready, prepare tables,  
identify workers and contact them

**Friday, 20**

07:00-07:30 Prepare classroom  
07:30-13:30 Teach  
13:30-14:00 Prepare Technology classroom for lesson  
14:00-17:15 Land Service hand skills with 69 learners  
17:15-17:30 Tidy and pack away  
17:30 Home

**Monday, 23**

07:30-13:30 Teach  
14:00-16:00 Interviews with seven learners' parents  
16:00-17:30 Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books  
18:30 Marketing meeting

**Tuesday, 24**

07:00-07:30 Prepare classroom  
07:30-13:00 Teach  
13:30-14:00 Drive to Durbanville Primary School for:  
14:00-16:30 Session regarding implementation of New Curriculum Statement (NCS)  
16:30-17:30 Back to my school to pick up my child. Drop him off at home then drive back to school  
17:30-19:15 Attend meeting concerning learner matters  
20:15-21:00 Type the minutes of above meeting  
21:00-Late Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books  
Prepare for tomorrow

**Wednesday, 25**

07:00-07:30 Photocopy and staple the minutes of last night's meeting  
07:30-13:30 Teach  
13:45-16:00 Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books  
16:00 Drop my child at home and drive back to school  
17:00 Interviews with five learners' parents

**Thursday, 26**

07:00-07:30 Prepare classroom  
07:30-13:30 Teach  
13:30 Photocopy, staple and hand out Land Service programmes, camp letters and indemnity forms to respective classes  
17:00 Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books

**Friday, 27** Public holiday

**Saturday, 28** Write out Land Service receipts

Compile and prepare camp programme  
Compile and prepare the menu for the camp

**Monday, 30** School holiday  
Shopping to buy non-perishables for the camp  
Type the camp programme, menu, telephone number list and packing list  
Type homework pages for my class

## MAY

**Tuesday, 1** Public holiday

**Wednesday, 2**

07:00-07:30 Prepare classroom

07:30-13:30 Teach

13:30-14:00 Clean classroom

14:00-16:00 Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books and prepare for tomorrow

16:00-19:05 Interviews with seventeen learners' parents

**Thursday, 3**

07:00-07:30 Prepare classroom

07:30-13:30 Teach

13:30-14:00 Sweep class and mop floor

14:00-15:00 Mark 33 Writing books and 33 Mathematics books

15:00-16:30 Grocery shopping of perishables for the camp

16:30-17:00 Drive to Durbanville to purchase requirements for hand skill lessons for the camp

17:00-Late Mark worksheets  
Pack for the camp

### 5.6 Conclusion of Chapter Five and Preview of Chapter Six

In Chapter Five, I presented an analysis of the data I gathered by means of the educator time-use diaries. I also presented my findings and arguments, in respect of the core duties performed by educators.

Prior to stating my conclusion, I wish to refer to significant comments offered by three educators, which have significantly influenced the findings of my analysis.

E4 avers,

- *This time-use diary is not completely representative of the actual nature of our work and the time we spend on various duties because we only spent two weeks recording it. It may happen that we have to attend a camp of 3-5 days that will take place shortly after the two weeks have elapsed. At these*



*campus, we are on duty all day and night (24 hours). Furthermore, carnivals, etc, etc, etc, are often held later in the term. Likewise the 5 (five) sports days that are held on Saturdays during the winter months.*

E28 concurs with E4,

- *A few of these categories happen at different times of the term. Just before I started filling in the times, we had just finished a fundraising project therefore this is not an accurate representation of our time and what we do. Culture involvement had also just finished two weeks before this as we had our cultural evening and many hours went into that. An assessment of this kind should be done over a longer period.*

In conclusion, I cite E7 who claims:

- *The pressure on educators is a daily occurrence (E7).*

The data analysis and findings therefore, not only point to a significant increase in the workloads of educators, it also indicates that there is enormous pressure on educators' time. Teaching is no longer a "half day job," as so many people who are unfamiliar with the roles and competencies expected of educators insist. In reality, educators appear to have minimal time at their disposal to tend to the real needs of their learners, let alone time to tend to personal needs and the interests of their families. Will this trend increase in time or will policy writers intervene?

In Chapter Six, I focus on my third data collection instrument, my interviews with school principals.

## CHAPTER SIX

### INTERVIEWS WITH PRINCIPALS

#### 6.1 Introduction

I did not anticipate my interviews with principals as a data collection instrument as part of my research design in Chapter 1. However, as I mentioned previously in Chapter 3 (See § 3.11), I met nineteen school principals who were all interested in my research. Four principals, however, did not grant me permission to collect data at their schools. I respected their decisions and therefore did not include the unstructured interviews I conducted with them in this analysis. Some provided explanations for declining while others pointed out the clause in my letter of consent, which stated that participation in the research was voluntary. My reason for including my interviews with consenting principals as data rested on the fact that principals are *ex officio* members of the school governing body. They are familiar with educators' workloads as they are responsible for the division of work of their educators. Furthermore, they may have been principals long enough to have seen and experienced the changes and intensification in educators' workloads.

#### 6.2 Categories Emerging from the Interviews with Principals

Upon reflection of my interviews with principals, I was able to sift the principals into three distinct categories according to the opinions they expressed in relation to my research question and working assumptions.

##### 6.2.1 Category One - Denial

The **first category** comprised three principals who firmly stated that the members of their schools' governing bodies did not contribute to the intensification of their educators' workloads. The salient points each of the following three principals in category one referred to during our interviews may be summarised as follows:

**P1** averred that the parents of children who attend his school, which is situated in a middle-class to affluent context, are primarily highly qualified, professional and business people who work long hours and who return home fairly late at night. They are extremely busy conducting their careers and have limited spare time to devote to their children and the school. They therefore do not have the available time to concern themselves with the professional management of the school. They prefer to compensate for their "absence" by means of generous financial contributions to the school. The parents' generosity is noticeable in the

impressive, exceptionally well-maintained school building and sports facilities.

The tone of P1's explanation of the parents' preference indicated that P1 was in total agreement with the relationship between parents, school and educators. I could not resist perceiving that these are precisely the type of parents who hold high expectations of educators and who, in my opinion, positively contribute to increases in educators' workloads. They meet Creese & Earley's description of the "Abdicators" in combination with the "Supporters Club" who "leave it to the professionals". Although they appear to have abdicated their social and educational responsibilities toward their children and the school primarily to the educators, they support the school financially.

They also remind me of Roos' corporate type of governing body, in which members see themselves as "directors", particularly in this case in point where parents' financial contributions to the school are so highly regarded.

Unfortunately, P1 was one of the principals who denied consent for me to collect data at this school.

**P2** appeared amused that I should even suggest parents have any influence whatsoever on the professional management of a school or on educators' workloads. P2 explained that he/she was able to maintain a balanced, harmonious working relationship between the school governing body and educators. P2 claimed that the members of the school governing body clearly understood their functions and roles in respect of the governance of the school and had no intention or opportunity to encroach on the professional management of the school. The school governing body supported the school and the educators in every possible way.

To prove a point, P2 took me on a guided tour of the school and introduced me to several educators and learners. They all appeared content and positive in their classrooms and were engaged in quality teaching and learning. P2 showed me the school's well-maintained and well-equipped facilities, such as a fully equipped, modern computer centre, a well-stocked library and a study for educators, which was equipped with several computers directly linked to photocopy machines and interactive whiteboards.

Since this school is situated in a typical middle-class, medium income context, it is clear that there is outstanding collaboration between the school governing body, principal and educators to maintain these high standards.

I therefore categorised this school's governing body according to Creese & Earley's description of "The Partners", where the school governing body works in partnership with the principal and educators, and all have a clear understanding of their respective roles. I was disappointed that P2, like P1, did not consent to my gathering data at this school.

**P3** claimed that the members of this schools' governing body clearly knew the difference between school management and school governance. The governing body fulfilled its role and carried out its functions strictly according to Sections 20 and 21 of the South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1996 and in no way ever interfered with the professional management of the school. P3 wished to prove to me that prevailing education labour law, in his/her opinion, clearly prescribes the limits and sets the guidelines within which governing bodies must function. P3 opened an education law reference book at Section 20 of the South African Schools Act, No 84 of 1994, and suggested I read the functions of the school governing body carefully. P3 averred that I would realise that legislation does not permit any interference on the part of school governing bodies in the professional management of the school. P3 then proceeded to comment that the parents at this school are extremely grateful to the educators for always showing willingness to "walk the extra mile".

Although educators recorded and completed the teacher time-use diaries anonymously, I was able to correlate the educators who teach at P3's school with the heaviest workloads recorded in the time-use diaries. Several of this school's educators are actively involved in community upliftment projects, which consume large proportions of their time. It follows that P3's perception of the expectations held by the members of his school's governing body do not correspond with the intense workloads that his educators are trying to cope with daily, including weekends and holidays.

### **6.2.2 Category Two – No Comment**

The **second category** comprised six principals who were entirely non-committal in their views and neither admitted nor denied the possibility that school governing bodies may hold high expectations of educators and consequently contribute to the intensification of educators' workloads. In a sense, they appeared to steer the interview in a direction that I was unable to detect their personal opinions on the topic.

The salient points each of the following six principals in category two referred to during our interviews may be summarised as follows:

**P4** stated that the members of this school's governing body are innovative and hard-working parents who are more than willing to fulfil their responsibilities toward the school, its educators and learners. This school's governing body is renowned for its unique fundraising initiatives. The fundraising events are of such a magnitude and so popular that this school has become well known throughout Cape Town and its environs for its fundraising initiatives, which are well attended by the public. The members of the school governing body do not expect educators to be involved in any planning or organisation of these events but do appreciate it if educators are able to attend. The parents ensure that the educators are able to fulfil their primary function, namely teaching.

It would appear that the members of this school governing body fall within Roos' category of the small number of governing bodies who are working in the spirit of legislation and creating new relationships between parents, principals, educators and learners.

**P5** mentioned that parents tended to put a lot of pressure on this school and educators to achieve great heights in sport. Parents expect educators to provide learners with high quality sport coaching and to maintain a competitive edge over neighbouring schools. Sporting performance plays an important role in the school's marketing strategy since this school has received the highest sporting accolades for primary schools in the Western Cape Province for several years.

**P6** was hesitant to voice an opinion on this school governing body's expectations of educators although nodded in seeming agreement as I explained the aims and nature of my research. P6 agreed to hand out the open-ended questionnaires to the members of the school governing body and the teacher time-use diaries to the educators. However, the following day the school secretary contacted me to ask if I would collect the documents again since none of the educators wished to participate in the research. She did not provide a reason for the change in decision.

**P7** and **P8** did not provide any indication as to their personal or professional opinions on the research topic but gave me their consent to gather data at their schools. They assured me that I would be welcome to approach them any time in the future for any additional data I might require. The members of these schools' governing bodies and the teacher participants provided meaningful data, which I analysed and included in my findings.

**P9** welcomed me into the office by posing a question I have been asked on numerous occasions, namely, "How do you manage to teach and study?" P9, who is a highly qualified university graduate in education,

pointed out that according to the National Education Policy Act, No 27 of 1996, educators are continually called upon to broaden their knowledge and experience by becoming scholars, researchers and lifelong learners. However, P9 maintains that it is virtually impossible for educators to upgrade their qualifications because of their teaching workloads. The busy schedules that educators are expected to competently manage deter educators from engaging in further studies. The members of this school's governing body and the teacher participants provided meaningful data, which I analysed and included in my findings.

### **6.2.3 Category Three - Concurrence**

The **third category** comprised six principals who agreed unequivocally that governing bodies of schools situated in middle-class contexts possibly hold high expectations of educators and consequently contribute to the intensification of educators' workloads. The salient points each of the following six principals in category three referred to during our interviews may be summarised as follows:

**P10** agreed with my suggestion that educators' workloads had indeed intensified over the past years and attributed the increase to continual changes in policy and the curriculum. This principal specifically singled out the increase in paperwork and administrative duties as the main contributing factor in increased workloads. This principal was enthusiastic about my data collection and agreed to forward the open-ended questionnaires and teacher time-use diaries to the participants. However, on each occasion that I contacted P10 to ascertain whether the documents were ready for collection, P10 made excuses. Consequently, I was unable to collect data at this school.

**P11** is the principal at a school that boasts a rich cultural heritage as it was one of the first schools established in the sample area. This school is synonymous with sport and renowned for its present and past learners' excellent sporting achievements. P11 emphasised that the educators at his school show total commitment to all their core duties and responsibilities. This school also employs two full-time sports administrators who co-ordinate all the sports activities that take place at the school each day. Naturally, the nature of their job descriptions relieves the educators from the administrative burden of sporting activities so that they are able to focus entirely on the coaching techniques and strategies for which they are widely acclaimed. The research participants from this school provided significant data, which I analysed and included in my findings.



**P12's** school is situated in a middle-class to affluent context. P12 listened intently as I explained the details of my research. After I had concluded my explanation, P12 continued the interview by claiming that he/she experienced the wealthy mothers of the school who did not need to work, as particularly tiresome. P12 referred to these mothers as the “Tea-drinking mothers who have nothing better to do with their time but to arrange and attend tea parties”. At these tea parties, mothers apparently discuss the school and educators and think up ways of “improving the school”. They view it their duty to arrange social events at school, which they expect educators to support and attend.

**P13** is principal of a school, which is extremely competitive in sport. My perception of this school, based on first-hand experience, is that the educators and learners uphold the “win at all costs” approach to everything they do, particularly their sporting activities. P13 concurred that educators’ workloads have intensified but not at this school. P13 attributed this trend to the members of school governing bodies’ lack of knowledge and understanding of their roles and functions in regard to governance as described in the South African School’s Act, No 84 of 1996. P13 claimed that governing bodies that had received appropriate training understood the boundaries dividing management from governance and seldom interfered with the professional management of the school. I found convincing evidence of P13’s claim in the analysis of the data. Most of this school’s participants’ responses to the core duties mentioned in the open-ended questionnaires followed the same pattern, namely, *“Only if educators have the time. Instruction comes first”*.

The research participants from this school provided significant data, which I analysed and included in my findings.

**P14** listened intently as I explained the details concerning my research. After I had concluded my explanation, P14 continued the interview by concurring that educators’ workloads have increased over the past years. P14 added, in a tone, in which I perceived a hint of despondence, that his/her spouse was also an educator at a neighbouring school and that between the two of them, their heavy workloads did not allow them a decent family life. P14 concluded the interview by claiming that he/she had the highest respect and admiration for the extremely high, professional work ethic the members of his staff embrace. The research participants from this school provided significant data, which I analysed and included in my findings.

**P15** received me in the office, where I explained the details of my research. After listening attentively to my assumptions, namely that the expectations of members of the governing body could possibly lead to an



intensification of educators' workloads, P15 firmly stated that this was definitely not the situation at this school. As I prepared to leave, P15 partially closed the office door and to my surprise, told me that students constantly approach this school for assistance with their research projects but that this research was the most meaningful research project he/she had ever come across. P15 continued to explain that his/her spouse was also an educator at a neighbouring school and similarly to P14, their heavy workloads no longer permitted them to enjoy a family life.

### **6.3 Conclusion of Chapter Six and Preview of Chapter Seven**

In Chapter Six, a number of significant findings emerged from the data focusing on my interviews with school principals, on which I elaborate in Chapter Seven, where I integrate the findings emerging from the analysis of data collected by means of the three data collection instruments.