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Institutional culture and change : staff and pupils' perceptions.

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Chapter 1
Literature Review

1.1 Aim

Schools are important institutions in promoting and enforcing state laws and policies some of which include racial integration in the context of South Africa. This is because they are the only institutions that have the most population of the nation's children, and they influence the youngest members of society (Amir & Sharan, 1984). Therefore it is the aim of this project to explore, identify and attempt to understand the mechanisms and the processes that are present at schools as integrating institutions. Additionally this project aims to look at the relationship between the institution's culture and change as well as how both teachers and pupils experience and make sense of the school's ethos and change (or lack thereof).

1.2 Rationale

In light of democracy, the education system has undergone a number of changes in terms of old policy changes and new policy development and implementation. The education system as well as the South African constitution has policies and regulations that promote integration. In the constitution of South Africa no. 84 of 1996, the South African schools Act, it is stipulated that education should be transformed and democratized in line with the values of human dignity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism. One of the major changes and policy developments was the move from a racial, undemocratic and authoritarian exclusive education system to a more participatory democratic and inclusive education system (Harber, 1998). In light of the above mentioned, it is important to investigate the extent to which these policy changes are implemented, and the manner in which schools respond to these implementations.

Hacker (1995), a political scientist, presents research in aspects such as attitudes towards race and the perceptions held by the different race groups of each other, found that there is less attention given to improving conditions for Black pupils in previously White institutions, whether with remedial programs or simply by striving to create a more hospitable atmosphere. He continues to assert that what is barely acknowledged is that it is the racial

mood or ethos at so many White schools that continue to exclude or rather to sideline many Black students. It is this institutional culture that is not accommodative of historically disadvantaged individuals, more specifically African pupils. Therefore it is important to examine the dynamics involved and to understand the experiences of pupils and teachers at these institutions so as to see the extent in which the education policy has been realized in the classroom.

1.3 Literature

"*The current ethos of a school and the nature of interaction and existing patterns and institutional features and policies of a school may limit or facilitate integration*" (Naidoo 1996:11).

This research project seeks to explore the institutional ethos and features of a public high school as an aspect or factor that can potentially promote or hinder true racial integration. Integration depends on how the concept of difference is defined (Soudien as cited in Chisholm, 2004). In light of that, this research paper will work with the most dominant and popular approach to understanding difference in South Africa, both race and culture. This chapter begins by outlining a brief historical context as well as policy formation and how these were purposefully aligned with the political vision of the apartheid government.

Historical Background

It is important to look at the context in which integration became necessary. According to Gaganakis (as cited in Freer, 1992) racial integration in South African schools became a focal point in 1976, where there was political and educational crisis. The apartheid regime was characterised by oppression, and this was countered with resistance and resulted in reforms. Examples of such resistance were protests against the education system that the regime at the time intended for African pupils. One of these protests was the Soweto uprising on June the 16th, 1976 which instigated a period of increasing protest against the inferior black education system (Christie as cited in Freer 1992).

It was during the mid 70s through to mid 80s that the first wave of integrated schools began. However, though the government was rethinking the issue; at that time, integration was against the state's policy (Gaganakis as cited in Freer, 1992). It was as a result of protests and the socio-political crises facing the country that democracy and racial integration at schools, among other changes, became necessary. In addition, the historical background of South Africa where race was used as a deciding factor in determining people's socio-economic state and different entitlements (and disentitlements), such as the quality of education, necessitated racial integration.

The education system as well as the South African constitution has policies and regulations

that promote integration. As noted above, the constitution of South Africa no. 84 of 1996, the South African schools Act, obligates that education be transformed and democratized in line with the values of human dignity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism. Moreover, as part of the transformation of the education system, the above mentioned schools Act came into being, proposing that public schools should have a governing body (with appropriate stakeholders as members), and it should be able to determine their own admission policy and mission provided that this is in accordance with the constitution. This states that no discrimination will be permitted on the grounds of race, gender, ethnic, social origin, and religion (Teachers' league of South Africa as cited in Burkhalter, 1996). Following the adoption of the new constitution, democratic policies were developed. These policies serve to promote inclusive education and are necessary in building a society that is non discriminatory and democratic. However, the concern seems to be that these are just ideals that are very clear on paper, but their implementation at schools seems to come against some challenges.

Assimilation

The important observation that can be made over the past 14 years of democracy is the ability of public high schools to successfully meet the demands of desegregating the learning space. It is clear from the literature and research studies conducted that desegregating previously White high schools over the past years has been successful. In her talk at the HSRC colloquium the minister of education stated that schools have been, in fact, quite successful at ensuring that they are open to pupils from different race groups (HSRC, 2003). In agreement, Sujee (2004) states that there has been a large number of entry of learners from township schools into the formerly White schools. However, it has been equally acknowledged that true racial integration, at these learning institutions, has proved to be a hard goal to attain (Zitha, 2007). Jansen (2004:01) noted, "It is one thing to open the doors of learning, quite another to change what is behind them". He argued that schools have been very successful in desegregation than in meeting the ideal of social integration. Most studies found that, in South Africa, the pattern has been that most schools have followed the assimilationist route.
According to Soudien (as cited in Chisholm, 2004) assimilation is one of the approaches that represent a continuum of possibilities in which one can see degrees of accommodation and integration. The assimilationist position is the least accommodative and integrative. Naidoo (as cited in Chisholm, 2004) argued that key to this position are the presumptions that subordinate race groups present a threat to the standards of the dominant group and that the

dominant group is culturally superior. As a result the subordinate group is expected to first, forsake their own culture and identity in addition to acknowledging the superiority of the culture and the identity of the dominant group. It is clear that this approach is very oppressive and has dire consequences for the subordinate group. In South Africa, it is the African pupil, especially, who is expected to give up his or her identity and culture and appreciate that of the group into whose social context he or she is moving into.

The SAHRC (1999) found that African pupils in particular, are expected to adapt and to accept the schools' culture, which, as a consequence of the Apartheid policy, is White. This causes them to feel uneasy and disgruntled. One teacher in a study conducted by the SAHRC commented that African pupils felt alienated and lonely (SAHRC, 1999). However, there seem to be different experiences amongst the Black learners (which includes, Coloured, Indian and African learners). Harber (1998) found that Coloured learners did not have a difficulty accepting the White culture as it was very similar to theirs, as opposed to the African learner who perhaps might find it difficult to identify with the White culture. This could be as a consequence of colonialism and, in South Africa, apartheid where the effects have been such that a particular race group (White) is valued and seen as superior over other race groups (Blacks). As a result Coloured pupils aspire to be White, not only because the White culture is similar to theirs, but also because being White is highly valued. One of the recommendations made by the SAHRC report was the need to restructure the culture and ethos of the school so that it is representative of the school and its surrounding community (SAHRC, 1999).

Some studies have argued that assimilation is used as a mechanism to manage 'otherness', while allowing other members of society to be included in a particular institution, this inclusion is controlled (Distiller & Steyn, 2004). Individuals from other race groups will be included and accepted in the system in so far as they take on the system or rather the institution's culture, and in some ways forsake their own culture. This is obviously an obstruction to a truly inclusive culture which in turn hinders true racial integration in these institutions.

Desegregation versus Integration

Studies on transformation emphasize the importance of differentiating racial desegregation

and racial integration. For instance, Govender (1997) and Jansen (2004) stress the importance of having a clear distinct understanding of these constructs. Desegregation at schools is a mechanical process that involves pupils of different racial backgrounds coming together to one school. Whereas, integration is more than that; it is a social process occurring over a period of time, and it requires fundamental changes in the way a school functions (Govender, 1999). As noted, the former has been easily achieved by many institutions, while integration is not as easily achievable. Integration requires serious change, among other things, in individual attitudes, perceptions and behaviour patterns. Furthermore, integration is when different groups with their cultures come together (Naidoo, 1996). This paper is more interested in exploring and discussing what happens when these different cultures come into contact, and whose culture shapes the ethos and processes of the institution.

While institutions may formally include pupils of different race groups, they may continue to subtly exclude learners through school structures such as the student representative council, participation in the classroom and sports teams (Soudien, Carrim & Sayed, 2004). This subtle exclusion is further emphasized by Hacker (1995) who states that in the context of desegregated schools, there is less attention given to improving conditions for Black pupils on previously White campuses, whether it is through remedial programs or by simply trying to create a more hospitable atmosphere. To emphasize this further, he reiterates that it is the racial mood at so many schools that excludes or sideline Black pupils. Therefore this highlights the importance of the institutions' ethos or culture. Adding to this, Jansen (2004) argues that the last frontier in the mission for racial or social integration and non racial communities in previously White institutions will always be institutional culture. Integration at this level would be a success in terms of social justice.

Institutional Culture

In an institution or school that appears to be open to all, is the culture inclusive?
Institutional culture has been defined as the way in which the institution describes the way they do things. Jansen (2004) argues that institutional culture presents itself within the school through portraits and paintings that appear in corridors, the collection of books or items that dominate the library, whose language dominates the public meetings or events and whose is excluded. It has to do with the repertoire and complexion of the schools' choir, the complexion of those in leadership, the LRC's, the prefects, and the complexion of those who

work at the tuck shops, of the cleaners and the complexion of the secretarial pool. The content of the school's song, the metaphors for talking about others and ways in which the school talks about the future. Similarly, Van Zyl and Steyn (as cited in Higgins, 2007) defined institutional culture as the sum total effects of values, attitudes, styles of interactions and the way of life of the institution known only by those who study or work in the institution through their lived experiences.

In a study conducted at the University of Cape Town (UCT), by Van Zyl and Steyn (as cited in Higgins, 2007), they argued that the institutional culture of UCT had been shaped by a very specific historical cultural positioning, and the worldview which informs the position that has been normalized within the institutions' environment. The cultural milieu they refer to has been characterized by "whiteness" to a greater extent. Following this, Higgins (2007) argues that lack of attention paid to institutional culture is experienced both as a symptom and a consequence of this culture of "whiteness". Over time this "whiteness" has been naturalized as a cultural marker against which otherness is defined. In other words, "whiteness has become the invisible norm for how the dominant culture measures its own worth or civility.

It is important to mention that "whiteness" is not the only factor in institutional culture, instead it is a factor among other factors such as gender or "maleness", sexuality or "heterosexuality" and the like (Higgins, 2007). However, for the purposes of this paper "whiteness" is the key factor of analysis.

Culture seen as static and unchangeable where African pupils especially, are expected to adjust to a particular foreign culture, as a result the White culture and language is given more value. This is evidenced by the fact that White learners are not interested in acquiring the language and learning about the culture of African student, further highlighting the dominance of the White culture.

Multiculturalism

It would appear therefore that a non-inclusive institutional culture will invariably lead to assimilation. A trend, as previously noted, in desegregated schools has been that of an assimilationist approach instead of multiculturalism, where all cultures of the pupils at the

school are embraced. Multiculturalism was developed as a response to the oppressiveness of assimilation (Soudien et al. as cited in Chisholm, 2004). At the core of multiculturalism is the idea that the school has to accommodate the diverse cultures brought into it, validate and respect all cultures including those of the subordinate groups. Multicultural education is of course based on the premise that racism is a result of prejudice and ignorance that can be eradicated by merely promoting personal contacts and cultural exchange (Vandoyer & Killen, 2006).

However, this approach has not been immune to criticism. Some critics have argued that multiculturalism among other things is infirm and tends to be racist in that it only pays lip service to the rights of the subordinate group. In addition, they argue that it failed to engage with complex ways in which both the individuals and the groups develop stereotypes and attitudes towards each other. Although cultures are celebrated and perhaps acknowledged, the way in which they are portrayed and organized in a hierarchy is never acknowledged (Soudien as cited in Chisholm, 2004). Vandoyer and Killen (2006) concur and criticize this as an idealistic system, arguing that culture in the context of multicultural education is depoliticized and this in turn undermines the power and structural dimension of racism.

Anti-racist program

Consequently, the critics of multiculturalism suggest an approach that acknowledges and engages with the processes of meaning making. This approach, they argue, will confront the othering that is embedded implicitly in the dominant culture. The anti-racist programme is defined as an action oriented strategy for institutional, systemic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression (Dei as cited in Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). This strategy calls for a confrontation of overt attitudes and practices of racism, as well as subtle racism, stereotypes and patronizing attitudes.

Institutional racism is an example of a form of subtle, covert racism and it results from acts of indifference, omissions and refusal to challenge the status quo (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). This takes the form of institutions maintaining structures or systems that continue to exclude the previously oppressed group in South Africa, Black people. In light of this, the following section will explore the different ways in which this subtle form of racism is expressed and maintained.

Premature Policies

Although there has been policies implemented to encourage transformation in education, certain policies have been identified as hindrances to attaining this goal. For instance, in a study conducted by Beckmann and Karvelas (2006) the zoning policy was criticized for being at risk of re-entrenching segregation and stifling transformation. The zoning policy limits parents to register learners at a school nearest to their homes. The school and the governing body of a particular school have the right to use this admission policy. Beckmann and Karvelas (2006) argue that such a policy is premature for South Africa. South Africa's democracy is still young, and as such there has been no significant socio-economic and demographic change to justify the zoning policy. This can be seen in the fact that there are still a large number of African people who still reside in townships and cannot afford to move to the suburbs. As such, former White suburbs are still largely populated by White people. Beckmann and Karvelas (2006) state that this type of policy should be adopted only after inequalities in the education system and schools have been adequately addressed. These would include aiming for equal standards between the township and suburb schools, as well as ensuring that there is easy movement from the formerly White suburb to the township and vice versa.

'Feel at home'

"Our sense of space and sense of self are mutually constitutive" (Ballard, 2004: 51). Even though it is desirable to believe that an individual can shape their own world, the environment can also shape, challenge and constrain. Thus the institution is an important space as it shapes and affects the learner. In a similar view, Jansen (2004) argues that the test of whether South African institutions have achieved inclusive institutional culture might well be the extent to which Black and White pupils feel 'at home' within the institutions, that is, they feel as if the institution is their own space. In addition these institutions become an extension of themselves. It follows then, that for pupils at a school to effectively experience the institution as their own space they need to be sufficiently comfortable with the values, practices and words or language spoken at the institutions. Therefore, the institutional culture needs to be shared by everyone in the school.

The role of teachers

Jansen (2004) argues that the problem in formerly White schools has not been the lack of acceptance for Black pupils but rather about not having Black teachers in the same space. This he believes is why most of these institutions have made little progress. He adds that this is because of racialised notions of White competence and Black incompetence. His point draws attention to the role of the teacher as an integral part in the pupil's education process. According to Munshi (1998) education in the classroom is a personal encounter between two individuals. In a desegregated classroom this encounter is between people of different cultures and different historical identities, and these differences manifest in their interaction. This highlights the importance of having an inclusive culture wherein these differences are managed well.

This interrelationship between the teacher and the pupil is central in determining the perceived quality of education of the pupil. In a study by Vandeyar and Killen (2006) they found that teachers tended to be attracted towards learners from cultural backgrounds that were similar to their own and these might make those particular learners to feel some sense of belonging. However, Pumfrey and Verma (1990) warn against, and emphasize that it is important that teachers be impartial in their relations with pupils despite their race group, and that this can be achieved through training programs. Springthorpe (as cited in Pumfrey & Verma, 1990) asserts that the social realities in which both the student and the teacher interact tend to be ignored, and it is as if education takes place in an idealized vacuum. However, this is not the case as learning happens in a social context that is formed by historical processes and structures, especially in South Africa. The implication for those pupils who do not share any cultural identities with the teachers, is that they are likely to be ignored and feel isolated thus affecting their learning and possibly have negative impact on their self-esteem

Moreover, the teacher's attitudes towards and perceptions of racial integration at schools may affect their sensitivity to the cultural identities and interactions with their pupils. Reagin (as cited in Munshi, 1998) argues that a teacher who supports racial integration will behave differently towards students than the one who does not support racial integration. This further emphasizes the role of teachers in the process of racial integration, and the need to explore teacher's experiences and perceptions of transformation at schools. Jansen (2003) commented that teachers experienced difficulties in coping with the increasing diversity of the staff and the student body. He attributes this to the lack of awareness around such issues as well as the

lack of training staff in how to cope with the change.

Language

Painter (2006) argues that in South Africa, language, racism and education are entangled; hence one cannot talk about racial integration or transformation in schools without making reference to language. In a country that is as diverse as South Africa, with eleven official languages, language in education becomes an issue. To paraphrase the Minister of education, Dr. Pandor, students who are taught in English, which is the dominant medium of instruction currently, and is in most cases for the majority of learners not their home language, are at a disadvantage (HSRC, 2003). According to Vandeyar and Killen (2006) indigenous languages in these desegregated schools, are largely inconsequential to obtaining quality education. African languages are marginalized as languages of learning and are not usually used much beyond primary schooling. White culture and language continues to be given more premium and as a result the White culture dominates as if the educator is teaching to a mono-cultural group (Jansen, 2003).

The issue of language, in the South African education system, has always been a political one. Language was historically used as the tool for categorizing and dividing people. Furthermore, language policies and practices in education were historically, aimed at empowering White learners at the expense of Black learners (Alexander cited in Painter, 2006). During the Apartheid era, English and Afrikaans were defined as ‘languages’ while the indigenous African languages were defined as ‘tongues’ and/ or ‘vernaculars‘. The issue here was that the term “language” carried a lot of weight in terms of rights, privilege and recognition, while the reverse was true for the ‘vernacular’ (Mda, 2004).

The constitution of South Africa no. 84 of 1996, the South African schools Act, informed some of the policy formations which sought to promote multilingualism, the development and the respect of all the languages. Additionally, the aim was to ensure and improve the access of learners to education that is free of racially and linguistically discriminatory language (Mda, 2004). Among other rights, learners have the right to choose their preferred language of teaching upon admission to a school and to request for the provincial education department to make provision for instruction in the chosen language where no school within the school district offers the chosen language as the language of learning or teaching. Furthermore, the Department of Education together with the school governing bodies are

required to implement ways and means of maintaining alternative languages in schools and/ or school district where additional languages of teaching in the home language of the learner cannot be offered (Mda, 2004).

Regardless of the policy changes and efforts to redress the past imbalances, as outlined in the constitution, in terms of promoting African languages and language diversity, the use and the status of African languages in education, especially in formerly White schools, has not changed or improved much. As a consequence the negative stereotypes among White and Black South Africans alike, about the African languages remain (Alexander as cited in Painter, 2006). It is important to focus attention on possible factors that inhibit the effective implementations of the policy. In an attempt to address this Mda (in Chisholm, 2004) noted the importance of teacher training and socio-political factors that continue to nullify African languages.

The two former official languages, English and Afrikaans, are still powerful and they enjoy the social and economic advantage, such that, while the non-African-language speakers are not encouraged to learn African languages the African learners aspire to acquire the English language and the culture as a means to attain a good socio-economic stature. Hook (2004) relates the experience of a young African student who expressed that "*the education system gave me a new language, that is, English, as the only medium of instruction, which I then had to use as a means of defining myself…the education system… made me understand that the only way to survive was to aspire to be more Western or more integrated into a Western lifestyle with the hope of achieving social mobility… this made me believe that being Black is an aberration from the normal, which is white...".* In this instances the 'whiteness' or the White culture has become the invisible norm for how other cultures measure their own worth or value. In addition, it is in the naturalization of 'whiteness' as a marker against which otherness is defined. Fanon (1976) argues that speaking in a language, a foreign language, requires not only the structural knowledge but the propagation of the culture and values embedded in the language. In addition it means that one has to assume a particular culture.

Vandeyar and Killen (2006) studied the interaction between teachers and pupils in desegregated schools, and they found that Black pupils were not allowed to use their home languages while at school. This exclusion of their languages suggests that their language is not as important and affirms the notion that it is irrelevant to their education. Consequently

the Black pupils become less concerned about their home languages and what might happen to these when acquiring and being fluent in another language (English). This could be explained by the high value that is placed on the English language and the status that comes with acquiring the language (Zitha, 2007). This is one of the manifestations of institutionalized racism.

Racial stereotypes can have debilitating effects on pupil's academic achievement, as research shows (Bobo, 2003). Ogbu's oppositional culture theory suggest that low expectations lead pupils to feel hesitant or unsure about school and to disengage academically, in the belief that academic achievement is only for White pupils (Bobo, 2003). Coupled with this is the expectation by many that the inclusion of Black pupils will lower the standards of education. Although it is not clear what it is about the inclusion of Black pupils that will impact or affect the standards of education; it can be hypothesized that at the root of this concern rather misconception is the idea and belief of 'Black underachievement' (Powell, 1997). Powell (1997) argues that this belief is not only common within the Black community but it is carried and entrenched in the White community.

According to Sayed (as cited in Vandoyer & Killen, 2006), true integration is a process whereby the quality of contact both at the personal attitudinal level (between teachers and learners) and at the level of institutional arrangements, policies and the ethos of schools, is interrogated. While the trend or rather the proposed ideal is a move to a more multicultural education, which sets out to create equal opportunity for pupils from different racial, cultural and ethnic groups. A more radical approach is needed to ensure structural change.

In South Africa, especially, the purpose of integration is not only about having children of different race groups or cultures in one school, it is also about addressing the past imbalances in education and to ensure educational equity for all. Such that the success of integration is crucial to the education of many Black pupils that find themselves in integrated schools. In addition, the institution's culture is central in fostering and ensuring the success of transformation and true integration in desegregated schools. It is clear that until such time as that structural change is achieved, the doors of learning and culture that should by now have been opened to all will remain half closed (Jansen, 2003).

1.4 Research Questions?

Therefore, based on the literature presented above the following questions are asked:
What are the experiences of the staff and pupils at Rose High school regarding the process of racial integration? What are the perceived 'right ways' of doing things at this school? How are these different to ways of doing things at other schools? What is the main language used? Are there any other languages, and who uses these and where? What are the rituals of the school, and what is their history? What are the symbols/portraits found around the school?

Chapter 2
Methodology Chapter

This is a qualitative, phenomenological study through which the lived experiences of both the pupils and staff at the school were investigated as well as meanings attached to these experiences (Mertens, 2005). In addition, the intention for this project was to understand institutional culture and change from the perspectives of the pupils and the staff at this school. Therefore, this report has allowed for an exploration, the in-depth understanding and the meaning of staff and pupils' experiences and perceptions of their school culture in relation to racial integration.

2.1 Reflexivity of Qualitative Research

Rossman and Rallis (2003) express that in a qualitative study the researcher is the instrument of the study. The qualitative methodology places the researcher into the field and into varied interactions with participants. Therefore, they argue that the implications are that, knowledge constructed during a qualitative study is interpretive; in that the researcher constructs or understands the data through their own subjective worldview (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Throughout the study it was important that I was aware of my own personal biography and my biases that might and have shaped this study. Likewise, participants have their own biases and biographies that inform their worldview and during interviews these social group identities (both the researcher's and the participants') impacted on the interview process. The African participants assumed quite often that we shared a social identity, on the basis of my race and possibly, age group. This was problematic in that they did not elaborate on some of their responses and assumed that I knew what they meant. For example, most of the participants would respond "…*you know*". It is important to note that my reflections will be included at points where it is salient; however reflections will not be the dominant lens through which the findings are described.

2.2 Context of the Study

The school is a former model C school situated in Roodeport, in a previously white, small suburb. It accommodates pupils from the area as well as from the surrounding communities

like; Kagiso, Dobsonville, and Witpoortjie to mention a few. Over the years the demographics of the school in terms of racial composition of the pupils have drastically changed, currently it is largely dominated by African pupils with a handful of white pupils and a few Coloured and Indian Pupils. In terms of the racial profile of teachers, there is an even split among the different race groups namely, African, White, and Coloured.

2.3 Sample

The proposed sample size was 15 participants with the breakdown of six pupils and nine staff members. However, the deputy principal of the school expressed that her staff members were quite busy and therefore she could only avail three staff members for the interviews. The sample size had nine participants, from the School. Participation was on a voluntary basis. The nine participants included six pupils from grade 10 to grade 12, two participants from each grade, and three staff members. The purposive sampling approach was informed by the consideration that that the staff members have been working at the school for at least two years. Considering this minimum period of time was to ensure there were informed of how the school operated, as well as to ensure familiarity with the school context. Given this, this approach is constitutive of purposive sampling to the extent that only those people that fit the purpose of the study will be selected, and no random sampling will be done (Mertens, 2005). Similarly the pupils in grade 10 have been attending the school for two years, that is, from grade 8, this indicates that they are familiar with the context. In addition, it has been hypothesized that senior students might have been exposed to racial issues amongst themselves and with each other at school and within the society at large (Zitha, 2007).

According to Sandelowski and Barroso (2006) the threat to the validity of a qualitative study is a huge sample size, because this can undermine the ability of the researcher to conduct intensive analysis. This justifies the sample size, as it has allowed for an in-depth, subjective view of the staff and pupils. It is important to note, that it is not the aim of the study to generalize from the sample to the population, rather the aim is to describe, highlight and analyze beliefs and subjective understandings of staff regarding their experiences of the school and its culture.

2.4 Instrument

Phenomenological studies commonly rely on interviews (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The interview schedule was used as a guide to elicit the participants' perceptions and their experience at the school. Semi-structured interviews appeared to be the most appropriate tool to gather data. This allowed for the exploration of responses, especially given that teachers and pupils have a specific way of colloquial communication whose specific nuances were not necessarily shared by the researcher. Furthermore, interviews as a method ensured that the material gathered was as relevant as possible to the study at hand. In addition, interview questions were appropriately adapted to suite different individuals. According to True (1989) interviews are flexible and thereby allow the researcher to rephrase or explain the question to respondents.

An interview schedule was utilized as a guide, living some room for probe questions and it also allowed for the pursuit of topics that the participants brought up. There was a demographic questionnaire in addition to the interview schedule [examples of questions asked on each of these sections are attached as appendix A]

2.5 Procedure

With permission from the Department of Education and the school, the deputy Principle of the school obtained the details of the pupils and staff members who would be interested in participating in the study. A convenient time for the participants was arranged and they were briefed about the study, in addition consent forms were given to those who were willing to participate in the study, to sign or to take home for the signature of guardians, in the case of pupils. Face to face individual interviews were conducted at the school with each participant. The duration of the interview sessions were approximately 45 minutes long. All the interviews were conducted at the school premises during school hours however due to the staff's work commitment the interviews, with them, were conducted after school hours.

2.6 Analysis

The analysis of this study was primarily framed by the approach of the study. Phenomenological studies generally seek to search for themes and of meanings (Rossman &

Rallis, 2003).

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, this allowed for an identification of recurring and constant themes, as well as concepts to be analyzed. Thematic content analysis can, at a basic level, be defined as the analysis of both obvious and latent communication (Krippendorff, 2004). It is for this reason that thematic content analysis is a commonly used technique for qualitative research. Furthermore, this method of analysis will be suitable for this study as it will highlight, breakdown both manifest and hidden ideas or perceptions held by staff and the pupils' of what constitutes institutional culture at their school. For instance the language used, the teacher-pupil interaction, and the social process in the school. Highlighting and breaking down these perceptions will in turn help in interpreting meaning from the data that will be collected (Shannon, 2005).

To facilitate the interpretation of meaning from data, both inductive and theory-led thematic analysis was used, to allow for themes to emerge from the data, and to use themes that were established beforehand (Hayes, 2000).

Following data collection, responses were coded and grouped according to their similarities. Broad categories were sought, with sub-themes to explain the meanings expressed by the participants. In addition, the research questions informed these preliminary categories in which data analysis began (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). From this, dominant threads were identified and therefore informed the theme of the report.

In studies exploring institutional culture, the literature has supported the emergence of the following themes: Language and Language policy, Curriculum content, standards of education, assimilation, non-inclusive culture, and the racial profile of teachers. The themes that emerged from the data gathered in this research included and resonated with those identified by the literature in the area of institutional culture, however there are variations. The themes include the following: Language and Language policy, 'academic culture', teacher-pupil interaction and the 'culture'. However these themes will be discussed comprehensively, in the following chapter. It should be noted that the discussion is organized around themes that emerged from interviews with both the pupils and the teachers. The responses of the respective groups (teachers and pupils) are discussed under these themes parallel to each other.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed about the study, in addition they were told what the research question was, as well as the type of questions asked in the interview schedule. All the appropriate informed consent forms both for the participants and the parents for the pupils were issued out. In addition consent from the Department of Education and from the school was obtained. Confidentiality was ensured by not using the participants' personal identifying information as well as the real name of the school in the research report and potential publications. Furthermore, the raw material was destroyed after the completion of the research study.

Chapter 3:
Results and Discussion

This chapter will outline and discuss the themes that emerged from the data. Part of what led to the identification of these particular themes is their close resonance with some of the literature and theories in the area of institutional culture. It is important to note that there were other themes that emerged**,** such as those relating to school fees, transport and lack of motivation from the learners. However, for the purpose of this report, only the most salient ones will be discussed. These include; language and language policy, the 'academic culture', teacher-pupil interaction and 'culture'.

3.1. Language and Language Policy

At the school, the home languages of the pupils who were participants were as follows: 2 IsiZulu, 2 SeSotho and 2 SeTswana. It is estimated that this is the general split in the whole school. The deputy Principle also indicated that the majority of learners had IsiZulu, SeSotho and SeTswana as their home languages. The medium of instruction at the school is English and the second language subject taught is Afrikaans. This is seemingly problematic given that the majority of learners is African and has English as their second, if not third language, with Afrikaans ranking further down. Mda (in Chisholm, 2004) argues that it is because English and Afrikaans are still powerful, and this power, she adds, is fuelled by the fact that both these languages still enjoy social and economic advantage. As a result the previously White schools are not encouraged and/or motivated to introduce the indigenous languages into the school. Therefore, the African learners aspire to acquire these powerful languages and their culture as a means of attaining socio-economic power. As Pupil 5 expressed:

> *"…we can use our African languages, but they are not valued… they are not seen as professional…"* (Pupil 5)

In the same way this statement typifies the sentiments that most participants shared about the value of African languages. African languages, at previously White high schools continue to be undervalued and are inconsequential to learning (Mda, 2004). Furthermore, it is usually the case that members of the governing bodies, the learners and including Black parents,

sometimes for different reasons, privilege English and Afrikaans over 'African' languages. Although Pupil 3 saw the need and perhaps the value for White teachers and learners to learn African languages he strongly believed:

> "*…yes there is a need to learn other African languages…but should not learn it here at school…*" (Pupil 3)

In the same way Pupil 4 states:

> "*I don't think so, I mean a township school in the suburbs! For me, my mother brought me here because she thought I would have a better education, not that I am degrading them (African language*)" (pupil 4)

As previously noted, over the years, the demographics of the school have changed in the learner population with the admission of African learners who are speakers of the African languages. However there have been very slow or no changes to the language policies of the school. The staff members stated that in future it might be useful to introduce some of the African languages as subjects. They reported that they have noticed how certain pupils struggle with both English and Afrikaans. Mr. Action, Mrs. Mamvula and Mr. Van Rooyen expressed that:

> *"…language is a problem, because you find that there are pupils who grew up with their grandparents in the rural areas and have moved to the informal settlement across the road and they cannot speak English…we will have to make a plan…"* (Mr. Action)

> "*…In future we might need to consider introducing some African languages, because we have here children from the informal settlement around the corner and they mostly come from the rural areas and their English is not good…*" (Mrs. Mamvula)

> "*…I think it is an issue, we definitely have kids who don't understand English as well as they should as a medium of instruction. And so they just get lost in the system a little bit…*" (Mr. Van Rooyen)

The Minister of Education, Dr. Pandor noted this as a challenge that is faced by the majority of the Black learners for whom English is not their home language (HRSC, 2003). As a result the White culture and language continues to dominate and disadvantage the majority of the Black learners. Pupil 3 and pupil 2 capture the reality of some African pupils in class:

> "*…it happens in class that some students don't understand but they keep quiet because they are scared what others might think of them. Normally its people who are fluent in English who participate in class…*" (Pupil 3)

> "*…I think it would be a good thing. Like you find other people in the classroom who don't understand Afrikaans but would do better in another African language…*" (Pupil2)

This highlights some of the challenges faced by many African learners, who are taught in a language that they are not yet proficient in. In this case as noted by Pupil 3, learners who do not have a good command for English shy away from participating in class and engaging with the content in the classroom. Consequently, as noted by Vandeyar and Killen (2006), language in this case English, becomes a gatekeeper to academic progress. Moreover, it disempowers the learners and robs them access to prior knowledge and means of cultural expression (Sonn as cited in Vandeyar & Killen, 2006).

It is therefore, clear that desegregation or rather the inclusion of Black learners in the previously White schools does not essentially translate into equal opportunities for the learners. Orfield (1983) noted that opportunities in desegregated schools are different even within the classroom. In addition, he asserts that equal opportunities are dependent on the success of efforts to create equal access and respect within a diverse setting.

Furthermore, the department of education and schools are required, by law, to introduce and implement ways of maintaining home languages that are not offered at the school (Mda, 2004). Although there is no language policy that prohibits learners from speaking through their mother tongue in and outside of the classroom, the school does not have clearly outlined programs or means that encourage or builds the development and the maintenance of the African languages.

The implication here is that Black learners' home languages and the cultures associated with these languages continue to be undermined and undervalued. As a result the institutional culture continues to reinforce the racial hierarchies and subtly excludes Black learners. Vandeyar and Killen (2006) argue that previously White schools have continued to reflect the hegemonic culture, dominance of whiteness, which typify the apartheid schooling, by their reluctance to embrace indigenous languages. Further reinforcing to the African learners that their home languages are insignificant to obtaining quality education, and that English and Afrikaans and their associated cultures (or the white culture in the context of South Africa) is superior.

3.2 'Academic Culture'

'Academic culture' here is used as shorthand for curriculum content and the different ways in which the content informs the institutional culture of the school. Skinner (1999) stated how the historical juncture in South Africa provides an interesting question of whether education can be made to promote transformation of society or whether it can only be functional for existing systems. In agreement Baxen and Soudien (1999) assert that education remains central to the discursive process of racial and cultural integration or the lack thereof. Historically, education was used to legitimate White supremacy and Black inferiority. Furthermore the curricula were tailored to produce and validate the legitimacy of separation and hierarchy (Baxen & Soudien**,** 1999).

Therefore, the adoption of the Outcome Based approach to Education was meant to address these past biases and inequalities. Copper and Jamison (in Baxen &Soudien, 1999), argue that the Outcomes Based approach to Education focuses on the transformation of the country's ideological legacy. In addition, adherents have claimed that the approach has the potential to meet the needs of all the students regardless of their environment, ethnicity, and class status.

However, the Outcomes Based approach to Education has not been immune to criticism and challenge. Mr. Action, who has been teaching at the school for over 24 years, points out that there might be some inherent problems in the new approach to education:

"*Pupils don't care. It might be a question of the curriculum…"* (Mr. Van Rooyen)

The apathy displayed by the pupils over their schoolwork is attributed to the relatively new Outcomes Based approach to Education, which was employed to address past inequalities. Although the learner did not explicitly attribute the apparent apathy among learners to the new curriculum, they noted that there was apathy amongst the student body. As Pupil 3 and Pupil 5 said:

> *"…but they have an attitude that they don't care as long as they get the pass mark."* (Pupil 3)

> *"I don't know, maybe it is because nathi (we) don't show any interest…"* (Pupil 5)

This apathy or lack of interest displayed by the learners may be a reflection or a projection of the teachers' own feelings about the new curriculum. It is well acknowledged that teacher involvement was minimal in the development and implementation of the new Outcomes Based approach to Education (Monyokolo & Potenza, 1999). In addition, Muller (in Monyokolo & Potenza, 1999) noted that if there is no buy in from the teachers and teacher development is not prioritized the education system will not be transformed. Furthermore, Jansen (1999) argued that OBE undermined the already fragile learning environment in the schools and the classrooms through the flawed inherent assumptions about what happens in the classroom.

3.2.1 Influx of African learners

Jansen (2003) states that teachers experience difficulties in coping with the increasing diversity of the staff and the student body. Furthermore, their difficulties are worsened by the absence of the institutions creating awareness of these issues and training for the teachers. Pupil 1 reported on the apparent changes since the increasing entry of African pupils at the school:

> "*It's all about the discipline than education …because I have been in a White school before and Whites have also exited that school and more Black people came in and I saw a change…I think it becomes more about discipline than education. It's harder to*

control when more Black people are in." (Pupil 1)

"…It is not about quality but more administration" (Mr. Van Rooyen)

This suggests that the school might not be ready for the entry of African learners and as such they are unable to maintain the balance between discipline and teaching. Pupil 4 concurs with Pupil 1, Pupil 4 said:

"*If you were to look at the stats from way back you see the difference. I think especially with the White people they struggle to teach black people, it's like they don't know how to get you (Black people) to understand" (*Pupil 4).

With the entry of African learners the focus shifts from teaching to management or discipline. Foucault (1979) noted the discipline-based production of social order in different institutions, including schools. Furthermore that order was maintained through methods of control such as time management, confinement and surveillance for the purpose of normalizing social behaviour. The institutional culture at the school resembles what Foucault (1979) would describe a surveillance. The responses from the participants indicate that there is a lot of punishment as part of the institutional culture of the school, for instance, detention, cutting down on academic excursions and certain extracurricular activities. It is hypothesized that this resulted from an increased influx of African learners in the school. In this way the school attempts to instill particular social behaviours, through exalting particular kinds of behaviours that are accepted and good, in addition, are understood as uncommon in the Black culture by the school. For instance, time management, (Seidman, 2004).

Pupil 5 clearly illustrates this:

"*…I think maybe there is a criteria, like these interviews, the deputy principal came in and choose us and told us what it was about. It was not like they asked who was interested…but they choose those who are receptive…*" (Pupil 5)

Pupil 5 highlights how through institutional power, certain behaviours are exalted and how others are not. Moreover, Foucault (1979) speaks of the criminological discourses and practices as producing a "criminal subject" whose essential psychological and social nature is

driven to commit crimes. Keeping in line with this, it can be argued that the "defiant" or "deviancy" discourse, employed by the school produces "deviant subjects" in this case being the African learners who are essentially driven to be defiant and ill disciplined. The perception of the African learner is that of an ill-mannered and undisciplined subject. Subsequently the manner in which the African learner is approached and engaged with is informed by this perception. This approach reinforces and produces the deviant subject, when the subject (African leaner) acts in ways that are in accordance with how they are approached.

Correspondingly Powell (1997) speaks of the *discourse of deficit* and the *discourse of potential*. She argues that every student has both potential and development needs. Additionally, she posits that it is the school's responsibility to appreciate both these needs in every student. However, due to desegregation, most schools have experienced difficulties in effectively teaching all pupils from different race groups (Powell, 1997). As a result, these desegregated institutions project their worry of incompetence to the African learner, such that the African learners are the ones with possible incompetence. This she terms the discourse of deficit (Powell, 1997). Pupil 4 noted this dynamic:

> "…*They (White teachers) have the mentality of thinking that where there are Black people a certain mess up will happen*…" (Pupil 4)

The entry of African learners has come to imply incompetence, and there is then the fear that the school will be seen as incompetent. This fear is then carried out in how Black learners are engaged. The Black learners' perceived weaknesses create an anticipation of their failure. The treatment of Black learners, which is underlined by anticipation of failure and incompetence, creates subjects that are in line with these perceptions. So the learners' performance comes to reflect these perceptions.

In contrast, Ms. Mamvula, reported that the school held workshops that were aimed at preparing the teacher and ensuring the smooth entry of a new teacher, in a diverse environment such as the school:

> "…*We actually worked it through… Ja we have NGO's that come in every year. Maybe in January, February, and March they come in. That is after every employment do you understand a new person might feel err different from those who*

are here at school. So we bring in NGO to come put err a speaker to come talk about whatever that can put the people together." (Ms Mamvula)

Although it may be true, it is clearly not sufficient. Jansen (2003) suggests that even training institutions should prepare and equip teachers with the skills necessary for working in a diverse environment. In addition, the school should have a clearly stated program that confronts and transforms the institutional culture.

3. 3 Teacher-Learner interaction

According to Munshi (1998) education in the classroom is a personal encounter between two individuals. In a desegregated classroom this encounter is between people of different cultures and different historical identities, and these differences manifest in their interaction. Furthermore, the interrelationship between the teacher and the learner is central in determining the perceived quality of education of the pupil. Roeser, Eccles & Sameroff, (2000) examined schools as a context of early adolescents' achievement and social emotional development. They studied perceptions of opportunities provided by the teacher, and how these opportunities are related to the changes in the adolescent's academic performance over time. Their findings showed that specific instructional, interpersonal and organizational dimensions of school life, as perceived by adolescents, are associated with the quality and character of their education (Roeser, Eccles & Sameroff, 2000). Therefore, the impartial relationship between the teacher and the pupil is fundamental as one of the ways of providing equal opportunities in education for members of different race groups. Pupil 4 described a patronizing interaction between White teachers and African pupils:

"…*They pity us; maybe they just push us through to the next grade*…" (Pupil 4)

Based on these perceptions, the White teachers do not provide learning opportunities for African learners in the classroom. This has negative impact on the pupils' confidence on their capabilities. In conjunction Bobo (2003), in his research on schooling, performance and achievement, found that negative cultural stereotypes about racial groups can have debilitating effects on pupils' academic achievements. It is through interpersonal contact that one is able to pick up on the subtle racial or even cultural prejudices and stereotypes that

are held by both the learners and the staff. For Mr. Van Rooyen:

> "*Some kids don't like the fact that there is a White guy standing in front of them teaching. One so much as said that to a student teacher that he would listen to him if he were not White…*" (Mr. Van Rooyen)

However, it can be argued that the different cultural background or identities of both the learner and the teacher inform their interaction, such that, particular ways or forms of interacting are understood differently in the different cultures. Thus it is possible that the perceived 'pity' is not really what the teacher is communicating, however it is read as such by the learner.

3.3.1 Teachers going the extra mile

This interrelationship between the teacher and the learner is central in determining the perceived quality of education of the learner. About half of the learner participants expressed that they perceived lack of motivation from the teachers as stated in these statements by some of the learners:

> "*…Honestly, I think if there were a lot of White pupils … teachers would put in that extra mile. Because there are a lot of Black kids they don't put in the effort. If you look at the pass rates of the school that dominated by Whites and those dominated by Blacks you will see the difference"* (Pupil5)

> *"…I don't know if the White teacher gives more time to White pupils because they are common. So they might not go that extra mile for me'.* (Pupil 4*)*

This perceived disengagement or disinterest from the White teachers is likely to diminish the African learner's self esteem and motivation to perform academically, further leading them to disengage academically. Moreover, the perceived indifference from the teachers, in this case, reinforces institutional racism (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006); in that it restricts or delays the academic growth of African learners, and therefore exclusively keeping power and privilege for White learners.

Springthorpe (as cited in Pumfrey & Verma, 1990) asserts that the social realities in which both the student and the teacher interact tend to be ignored, and it is as if education takes place in an idealized vacuum. Thus it is possible that given this neglect, teachers are not properly equipped or efficiently trained to teach in multicultural environments. The pupils read this as indifference when in fact it might be that teachers are not prepared for the multicultural environment they find themselves in. Khosa (2001) and Vally (1999) share similar sentiments, they point to the fact that many of the teachers and leaders in the former white Afrikaans language medium schools were not trained to cope with the new multi-racial and multi-cultural situations in the schools, and as such found themselves in foreign territory. This has rippling effects on academic performance and the dropping of the standards of education in these desegregated schools.

3.3.2 Unity in diversity

Vandeyar & Killen (2006) argue that multiculturalism is based on the premise that racism is a result of prejudice and ignorance that can be removed through promoting personal contacts, cultural exchange and education. However, critics have argued that multiculturalism depoliticizes culture and continues to ignore the power and the structural dimensions of racism. When describing the schools' culture or ethos, Ms Mamvula, who is the deputy principle of the school defensively said:

> "*There is no cultural or racial domination, we do things as recommended by the Department of Education…there is no problem here at school, and the children are fine*." (Ms Mamvula)

McCarthy and Crichlow (in Vandeyar & Killen 2006) describe this reluctance or rather the refusal to acknowledge difference as 'colour blindness'. They argue that this serves to hide institutionalized racism and discriminatory attitudes and perceptions in desegregated schools. It is crucial therefore, that differences be acknowledged and appreciated so as to create a fertile environment for true integration. As Calhoun (1995) noted, social integration is dependent on some kind of difference. Moreover, when racial, cultural or interpersonal difference is not acknowledged there is a tendency to devalue difference. In turn, this impedes institutional transformation and maintains the status quo and the ethos of the institution.

Arendt (in Calhoun, 1995) appends that plurality is the foundation to human life. He argues that humans are distinct from each other and will usually strive to distinguish themselves. It follows then that through institutions - such as schools - acknowledging differences and embracing diversity will enable individuals to express themselves and grow without any impingements. In his understanding of what racial integration is Mr. Van Rooyen expressed:

> *"…I think the whole point of integration is to bring people to understanding that we are different but that we are the same and we need to understand each other's difference so that we can grow with each other's strengths…"* (Mr. Van Rooyen)

Mr. Van Rooyen echoes Arendt's (in Calhoun, 1995) sentiments, that although there is no simple sameness unmarked by difference, in the same breath there is no distinction not dependent on some common recognition.

3.4 'Culture'

Culture in this context is used as a generic term to describe the way things are done in the school. According to Jones and Fennimore (1990: 16) "every culture brings habits of thought, resources, and contexts which have built into them vehicles that promote learning and inquiry, and accordingly, children of any culture can and should have curriculum and instructional practices that draw from that culture."

3.4.1Assimilation

Literature on desegregation, racial integration and institutional transformation, more broadly, notes that desegregation usually invites assimilative tendencies (Vandeyar & Killen, 2006). Some of the perceptions from the participants highlighted this tendency:

> "*…Teachers have been leaving the school because of the way we treat them. We are not used to them so we tend to act like ourselves, we can't adapt to them…*" (Pupil 1)

> "*…Where you get a handful of kids…and unless those kids are performing at levels*

> *[in brackets, complete what you understood the pupil to be wanting to say]…but I think sometimes the teachers might be more inclined to say you see now, there, they can't manage and err they make all sorts of sweeping statements.*" (Mr. Van Rooyen)

Some studies have argued that assimilation is used as a means or mechanism to manage 'otherness'. While allowing other members of society to be included in the institution, this inclusion is controlled (Distiller & Steyn, 2004). This form of control also informs who is afforded opportunities at the school. During the process of data collection I became aware that the group of learners who had volunteered to participate in the research were selected by the deputy Principle based on their perceived good behaviour. In describing the non-inclusive culture at the school, Pupil 5 reflected:

> "*It is kind of selective with the opportunities given to certain individuals. I think maybe there is a criterion. Like these interviews, the deputy came in class and chose us and told us what it was about, it wasn't like hey! Who is interested? But I think they choose those who are receptive. Even when they choose people you will hear students saying- "ah! Besazi bazo khetha lo na lo (we knew they would pick this one and that one*)" (Pupil 5)

This illustrates how other African learners are continuously excluded on the basis that they have not completely taken on the culture of the school, which is white culture. Furthermore, it highlights that Black learners will be included and accepted in the school in so far as they take on the institutions' culture and forsake their own. The best African learners are those who have been assimilated to a greater extent than their other African counterparts. These are student that get to be part of the institutional culture of the school; the sport teams and student leadership. However, they are included as assimilated subjects. Pupil 4 also made this apparent:

"*…We (the school) value the more civilized way of doing things. Because there were Coloured who were Muslim and they were allowed to wear their religious outfits. It was not a big deal because I think it is similar to theirs (the school), so they overlooked it. But I doubt the same would happen if I came wearing iBheshu* (iBeshu is a Zulu traditional outfit)…" (Pupil 4)

This approach is an obstruction to a truly inclusive culture, which in turn hinders true

transformation in these institutions. Moreover, this indicates that Black pupils are aware of these cultural biases and intolerance and as such are left feeling alienated and alone. To emphasize this further, Hacker (1995) argues that it is the racial mood at so many schools that excludes or sidelines Black pupils. Therefore this further highlights the importance of the institutions' ethos or culture. This assimilation mood excludes those who are not as assimilated.

3.4.2 Black Deprecation

The non-accommodating culture brings to the fore issues of Black deprecation and the fact that the dominance of a particular culture, the White culture devalues other cultures. In line with this, Jansen (in Khosa, 2000) argues that most desegregated schools assume that the Black pupils present with a number of social and academic problems that need to be fixed. For instance, pupil 4 believed the following:

> "*…they (White teachers) have the mentality of thinking that where there are Black people a certain mess up will happen…*" (Pupil 4)

Mr. Van Rooyen expressed:

> "*…I have to ask myself…is it just a misunderstanding… the attitude of submitting work. In my matric for arguments sake, now I don't know if that's something that comes or linked with culture perhaps or a work ethos that is associated with culture*."

There seems to be a bias or thinking leaning more to the belief that there might be something inherently wrong with the culture or way of being of Black people, or in this instance, Black pupils. Khosa (2000) asserts that the perception that the culture and the knowledge of Black children are deficient compromises their learning and their sense of identity.

3.4.3 Positive Shifts

Jansen (2004) argues that institutional culture presents itself within the school through portraits and paintings that appear in corridors, the collection of books or items that dominate

the library, whose language dominates the public meetings or events and whose is excluded. It has to do with the repertoire and complexion of the schools' choir, the complexion of those in leadership, the LRC's and the prefects. Through observation, I was able to see the pictures that appear in the corridors of the school. It was interesting and encouraging to see that these were a true reflection of the demographic change that the school has undergone over the years, despite that these faces might be of learners who are more assimilated than most of their Black counterparts. Pupil 3 put it this way:

> *"…Pictures of old Black students, it is good because we are motivated and it is encouraging because we see that we can get there too…things have changed recently there are award ceremonies and that feels good and it encourages us to look forward to school"* (Pupil 3)

This change is experienced as positive, at least for this pupil in that among other things, it allows and encourages him to grow. Jansen (2004) argues that the test of whether South African institutions have achieved inclusive institutional culture might well be the extent to which Black and White pupils can identify with the culture and they feel as if the institution is their own space.

The term learner migration or movement has been used to describe a trend that is prevalent in South Africa, where learners, African learners especially, move to schools outside their residential area (Sekete, Shilubane & Moila, 2001). This is because schooling in South Africa is still spatially defined in that, privileged and highly resourced schools are largely located in the predominately White suburbs, while the under-resourced schools are largely located in working class areas and chiefly serve African learners (Sekete, et al. 2001). As a result, African learners continue to be academically disadvantaged, therefore in order to access better schools, African learners move from the townships to suburb schools.

In conjunction with this, observation were made that the school not only drew from the surrounding suburbs, like Lindhaven and Witpoortjie but it also served other township areas, like Zola, Dobsonville and Emndeni, to mention a few. This was encouraging given that the school and its governing body had the choice to employ the zoning policy. This admission policy limits parents to register learners at a school nearest to their homes (Beckmann & Karvelas 2006). It has been argued that this policy is problematic given the South African

context, where democracy is still young, and as such there has been minimal socio-economic and demographic change to justify it (Beckmann & Karvelas 2006). The deputy Principle Ms. Mamvula reflected on the positive impact this has on the learners:

> "…*We are open... you find that these children are from Zola, Mndeni, and all and as they travel to school they are exposed to different things, different lifestyles. So it actually changes their mindset, ja*." (Ms. Mamvula)

The fact that the school draws from a wide area is perhaps indicative of their dedication to change and transformation.

3.5 Conclusion

Schools as integrating institutions should be a space where learners, as noted by Jones and Fennimore (1990) are able to use their culture with its resources as a vehicle that encourages learning and inquiry. Embedded in this sentiment is the assumption that the institution is inclusive and representative of all the stakeholders. However the findings in this study do not completely reflect this. The study elucidated that African learner's home languages and their associated culture and knowledge are inconsequential to learning and they continue to be undermined in favour of English and Afrikaans with its culture in the South African context. Despite an increased number of African learners, there is still the reluctance by the school to embrace indigenous languages. Although a majority of African learners have successfully learned English as their second language there are still learners who are struggling and would therefore benefit from the introduction of the indigenous languages as learning subjects.

With regard to the new curriculum, which was tailored to address past biases and inequalities, the findings suggest that there is no clear guideline for teachers on how to redress these inequalities. Instead there is the dissatisfaction it seems, among the teachers around their involvement on the development and the implementation of Outcome Based approach to Education. As a result this is projected onto and reflected in the learners' attitude towards their academic performance.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the school was not prepared and equipped for the high influx or entry of African learners. This was seen in their shift from teaching to management and discipline of the African learner. This unpreparedness is also evident in the interaction between learners and teachers, in that members of different cultural groups misinterpret each other's gestures and behaviour. For instance one of the participants understood the teacher's manner as patronizing. Similarly some of the teachers perceive the learners as being hostile.

Furthermore, the data showed there is the reluctance by the school to acknowledge difference. As consequent cultural differences are devalued; this in turn hinders institutional transformation through maintaining the current ethos of the school.

Literature on desegregation and institutional transformation argues that desegregated schools, which do not have policies on racial integration, tend to adopt the assimilation approach

(Khosa, 2000). The Findings in this research concur with this; furthermore they show that as a result the Black learners' inclusion into the institution is controlled and dependent on how well they adapt to the institutional culture. Moreover, this non-accommodative culture highlights some of the held stereotypes and prejudices about Blacks. Furthermore the belief that there is something inherently wrong about the culture of Black learners compromises their sense of identity and more importantly their learning.

However, there is some indication that the school is dedicated to change and transformation. My observations show some shifts in the institutional culture through the changed faces on portraits and pictures that appear in corridors of the school (Jansen, 2004).

In sum, the lack of change in the language use, 'academic culture', assimilation instead of real integration and Black deprecation are reflective of lack of change in the institutional culture of the school. These in turn inhibit transformation by maintaining the status quo, setting aside competence, privilege and power for White learners while lack of discipline, incompetence and inferiority is left to African learners.

3.6 Strengths and Limitations

The first challenge in this study, the race of the researcher could have interfered with the responses given. The African participants assumed a shared social identity with the researcher and this was problematic in that they failed to elaborate on some of their responses based on the assumption that the researcher understood what they meant. Similarly, the researcher's social identity might have impacted on the interview process with the White participants, in that the White participants may have reserved their negative perceptions about racial integration and its impact on the institutions' culture.

In addition, the study focused on the perceptions of pupils and staff which are subjective views of individuals. Therefore, these views might not essentially be an accurate reflection of an objective reality of the school. In addition, this in conjunction with the limited size of the sample makes it difficult for the findings of the study to be generalized to other context.

However, the sample size allowed for an in-depth qualitative study, which enabled a thorough understanding of the pupils' perception of racial integration. In addition, these perceptions were accessible given that the pupils could relate with the research because of the particular aspects of her social identity.

3.7 Recommendations

3.7.1 Further Research

This study has mainly focused on the perceived culture of the school and whether the learners and the staff think this culture is inclusive and representative. Therefore it is suggested that:

- Future research should investigate or explore the possible ways or strategies for addressing covert, institutionalized racism.

In addition, as a result of desegregation and the influx of African learners in the previously White schools the dynamics have changed from race divides to class. Therefore it would be useful to have a research study that investigates how this aspect of class features in institutional culture and transformation.

3.7.2 The Department of Education

One of the recommendations made by the SAHRC (1999) report was the need to restructure the culture and ethos of the school so that it is representative of the school and its surrounding community. It is suggested that this can be achieved through the following:

- Teacher and learner training or support strategies that promote racial integration, provide clear guidelines for both the learner and the teacher and serves as a support base for teachers.

3.7.3 The School

- Schools lacking a policy on racial integration tend to follow a reactive approach when confronted with racial problems (Khosa, 2000). Therefore, it is crucial that the school should have clear policies on racial integration and institutional transformation.

- Anti-racist approach to confront overt attitudes and practices of racism, as well as subtle racism, stereotypes and patronizing attitudes (Vandeyar & Killen 2006). In addition acknowledging and celebrating diversity.

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