

**REVITALISING SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN  
A GLOBAL ECONOMY: A DEVELOPMENTAL  
PERSPECTIVE**

*By*

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## DECLARATION

The Registrar  
University of Zululand

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I, Ngenisiwe Henrietta Ntombela- Registration number 900465,  
hereby declare that

"Revitalizing School Social Work Services in a Global  
Economy: A Developmental Perspective"

is the result of my own investigation and it has not been submitted  
in full for any other degree to any other university.

*Ntombela*  
N. H. Ntombela  
KWADLANGEZWA

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, especially my two sons  
Sithembiso and Nkanyiso Ntombela.

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## ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate the possibility of school social work intervention as an institutional structure in South African schools with special reference to the Durban, Empangeni and Pietermaritzburg education areas where the writer carried out the empirical observation. The justification of the investigation was strengthened by the double factors of globalisation and fast increasing technology transfer throughout the world. The study regarded the multiplicity of social, financial and other problems plaguing communities in South Africa as a given. Against this background, the question asked was whether, given the reality of these factors inhibiting the intellectual and vocational development of school going children, educational provision for social work intervention as it obtains at the moment, was adequate to equip the younger generation to fit gainfully in a highly competitive and fast changing global market.

In terms of methodological orientation, the study was both exploratory and descriptive in nature. It employed both qualitative and quantitative methods including interviews and focused groups. The sample was divided into two phases. The respondents in phase one were educators and education managers. The respondents in phase two were social workers and social work managers from the Department of Welfare as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO's).

For this study two interview schedules were used to obtain data. One was for Educators and Education Managers and the other was for Social Workers and Social Work Managers.

The findings of this study are revealing in their disclosure. They reveal that the child could benefit from a developmental perspective in school social work, as this perspective would discourage dependency, and promote parental involvement and that of other sections of the community having a vested interest in the school.

The findings of this study give ample indication that given the situation of South Africa within a fast changing global economy, the introduction of, as well as adequate provisioning for school social work intervention would be a well placed structural improvement in the South African schooling system.

Somewhat disturbing though was the finding that educators were not making adequate use of social work services (where available in referring children with social problems to social work agencies). In turn the agency social workers were unable to attend speedily to children's social problems because of their heavy case loads. With this in the background, the recommendation for the institutionalisation of school social work is no longer of legislative choice but an existential imperative.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	-i-
Declaration	-ii-
Acknowledgments	-iii-
Abstract	-iv-
Table of Contents	-v-
List of Tables	-xxviii-
List of Figures	-xxxv-
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	5
1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY	8
1.4 THEORETICAL APPROACH	9
1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	11
1.6 KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED	13
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	14
1.7.1 Research Design	14
1.7.2 Sampling and Research Tool	15

1.7.3 Data Collection Method	15
1.7.3 Data Analysis	16
1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS	16
1.8.1 School Social Work	17
1.8.2 Development	17
1.8.3 Globalization	18
1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	19
1.10 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY	20

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW OF THEORIES AND APPROACHES

2.1 INTRODUCTION	21
2.2 THEORIES AND APPROACHES	22
2.2.1 Multicultural Approach	23
2.2.2 Ecological Theory	29
2.2.3 System Theory	31
2.2.4 Institutional Theory	31
2.2.5 The Political Economy Approach	32
2.2.6 Sutherland's Theory of Differential Association	34
2.2.7 Consultation Theory	36
2.2.8 Crisis Theory	37
2.3 CONCLUSION	38

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW: PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL WORK  
PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS

3.1	INTRODUCTION	39
3.2	THE LEGACY OF THE PAST	40
3.3	EDUCATION FOR ALL	42
3.4	DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WORK	44
3.5	PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	44
3.5.1	Problem: Child Abuse	44
3.5.1.1	Practice intervention in child abuse	47
3.5.1.1.1	Consultancy Role	48
3.5.1.1.2	Curriculum Development and Gatekeeper Role	49
3.5.1.1.3	Educational Planning	50
3.5.1.1.4	Support Systems	50
3.5.1.1.5	Community Liaison Role	51
3.5.2	Problem: Substance Abuse	52
3.5.2.1	Practice intervention in substance abuse	53
3.5.3	Problem: HIV/AIDS affected children	54

3.5.3.1	Practice intervention with HIV/AIDS affected children	55
3.5.4	Problem: Poverty	57
2.5.4.1	Practice intervention with poverty	59
3.5.5	Problem: Teenage Pregnancy	59
3.5.5.1	Practice intervention in teenage pregnancy	60
3.5.6	Problem: School Dropouts	60
3.5.6.1	Practice intervention in school drop-outs	61
3.5.7	Problem: School Violence	61
3.5.7.1	Practice intervention in school violence	62
3.5.8	Problem: Crime and Juvenile Delinquency	63
3.5.8.1	Practice intervention with crime and juvenile delinquency	64
3.5.9	Problem: Absenteeism	65
3.5.9.1	Practice intervention in absenteeism	65
3.5.10	Problem: Lack of Parent-school Collaborations	66
3.5.10.1	Practice intervention in parent school involvement	68
3.5.11	Underachievement	69



3.6	LEGISLATION AND POLICIES	70
3.6.1	White Paper on Education and Training, 1995	71
3.6.2	The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996	72
3.6.3	Basic School Functionality, School Safety Security and Discipline Policy	73
3.7	RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES	74
3.7.1	Problems with Initiatives to Reform Community Services and Link Them to Schools	75
3.7.1.1	Classroom focus enabling function	77
3.7.1.2	Student and family assistance	78
3.7.1.3	Crisis assistance and prevention	78
3.7.1.4	Support for transactions	79
3.7.1.5	Home involvement in schooling	79
3.7.1.6	Community outreach for involvement and support	80
3.8	INCREASING SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK'S VISIBILITY WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS	81
3.9	THE PROVISION OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES	83
3.9.1	The Functions of the School Social Work	83
3.9.1.1	Prevention services	84

3.9.1.2	Identification of target groups	85
3.9.1.3	Advocacy	85
3.9.1.4	Extending direct service to pupils and parents	86
3.9.1.5	Interpretation	86
3.9.1.6	Linking home and school	87
3.9.1.7	Team-work with school personnel	87
3.9.1.8	Personal service to the teacher	88
3.9.1.9	Supervision	88
3.9.1.10	Collaboration	89
3.9.1.11	Consultation	90
3.9.1.12	Referral system	90
3.10	CONCLUSION	90

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1	INTRODUCTION	92
4.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	92
4.2.1	The Tenets of Positivism	95
4.2.2	The Tenets of Qualitative Research	95
4.2.2.1	The qualitative areas of social life	96

4.2.2.2	Managing subjectivity	96
4.2.2.3	Developing rigour through writing	97
4.2.2.4	Judicious balance	97
4.2.2.5	Research as social action	98
4.2.2.6	Research and everyday life	98
4.2.2.7	Discovering and doing culture	99
4.2.2.8	Research as ideological practice	101
4.2.2.9	Naturalism	101
4.2.2.10	The language of cases and context	102
4.2.3	Characteristics of Quantitative Research	103
4.3	SAMPLING	104
4.3.1	Phase One: Educators and Education Managers	105
4.3.1.1	Sample group one: educators in KwaZulu-Natal	105
4.3.1.2	Sample group two: education managers in KwaZulu-Natal	105
4.3.2	Phase Two: Social Workers and Top Management in Regional Welfare Offices of KwaZulu-Natal	106
4.3.2.1	Sample group one: Social Workers (supervisors, senior social workers and junior social workers)	106

4.3.2.2	Sample group two: Top Management regional welfare officials in KwaZulu-Natal	107
4.4	RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	107
4.4.1	Interview Schedule	108
4.4.2	Phase One: Educators and Education Managers	108
4.4.3	Phase Two: Social Workers and Top Management in the Regional Welfare Offices of KwaZulu-Natal	110
4.4.3.1	Group One: Social Workers (i.e., supervisors, senior social workers and junior social workers)	111
4.4.3.2	Group Two: Top Management regional welfare in KwaZulu-Natal	111
4.4.3.3	Validity and reliability	111
4.5	DATA ANALYSIS	112
4.6	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	112
4.7	SUMMARY	113

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THE RESPONSES OF EDUCATORS, EDUCATION MANAGERS, SOCIAL WORKERS AS WELL AS SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS

5.1	INTRODUCTION	114
5.2	ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA	114
5.2.1	Phase One: Educators and Education Managers	115
5.2.1.1	Sample group one: educators	115
5.2.1.1.1	Identifying particulars of educators	115
5.2.1.1.1.1	Gender of educators	115
5.2.1.1.1.2	Type of school	117
5.2.1.1.1.3	Area of work	117
5.2.1.1.1.4	Type of area of work	119
5.2.1.1.1.5	Present designation	119
5.2.1.1.2	Problems experienced by children	121
5.2.1.1.2.1	Possible causes of social problems experienced by the majority families of learners	124
5.2.1.1.2.2	How problems in the families and communities can be addressed	133
5.2.1.1.3	Referral system	133
5.2.1.1.4	Multidisciplinary team	136

5.2.1.1.5	Utilization of multidisciplinary team	137
5.2.1.1.6	School policy	138
5.2.1.1.6.1	School attendance policy	139
5.2.1.1.6.2	Lack of school necessities	140
5.2.1.1.6.3	Control of late coming	140
5.2.1.1.6.4	Violation of school policies associated with Learners social problems at home	141
5.2.1.1.7	Corporal punishment	143
5.2.1.1.8	Feeding scheme	144
5.2.1.1.9	Promotion of academic excellence	146
5.2.1.1.9.1	Promotion of the culture of academic teaching	146
5.2.1.1.9.2	Measures/programmes to promote academic excellence	147
5.2.1.1.10	Prevention programmes	147
5.2.1.1.11	Preparation of learners for the global economy	149
5.2.1.1.11.1	Subjects equip learners with market related skills	150
5.2.1.1.12	Cooperation and involvement of parents	151
5.2.1.1.12.1	School's benefit in the participation of parents and communities in school	152
5.2.1.1.13	Governing body	153

5.2.1.1.13.1	Functions of the governing body to promote the culture of learning and effective teaching	154
5.2.1.1.13.2	Cooperation of the governing body and the school management or overlap exists	154
5.2.1.1.14	Role of the social worker	155
5.2.1.1.14.1	Utilization of the services of a social worker	155
5.2.1.1.14.2	Role that could be played by social workers in promoting effective teaching and learning	156
5.2.1.1.15	Recommendations to the Department of Education by the educators	156
5.2.1.1.15.1	To equip educators to identify the needs of school going children	156
5.2.1.1.15.2	To promote the culture of learning	157
5.2.1.1.15.3	Recommendations to the Department of Welfare by educators to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems in the school	158
5.2.1.2	Sample group 2 Education Managers	158
5.2.1.2.1	Identifying particulars of education managers	159

5.2.1.2.2	Problems experienced by children	162
5.2.1.2.3	How problems in the families and communities be addressed	170
5.2.1.2.4	Referral system	170
5.2.1.2.5	Multi-disciplinary team	171
5.2.1.2.6	School policy	171
5.2.1.2.7	Corporal punishment	172
5.2.1.2.8	Feeding schemes	173
5.2.1.2.9	Academic excellence	174
5.2.1.2.9.1	Promotion of the culture of teaching	174
5.2.1.2.9.2	Programs to promote academic excellence	175
5.2.1.2.10	Prevention programs	175
5.2.1.2.11	Global economy	177
5.2.1.2.12	Subjects equip learners with market related skills	178
5.2.1.2.13	Cooperation and involvement of parents	178
5.2.1.2.14	Governing Body	179
5.2.1.2.14.1	Functions of the Governing Body	180
5.2.1.2.14.2	Management of the school and the governing body working together	180



5.2.1.2.15	Role of the social worker	180
5.2.1.2.16	Recommendations mad by Education Managers	181
5.2.1.2.16.1	Department of Education recommendations to equip educators to identify social problems	181
5.2.1.1.16.2	Department of Welfare to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems in the school	181
5.2.2	Phase Two: Social Workers and Social Work Managers	182
5.2.2.1	Sample group one: social workers	182
5.2.2.1.1	Identifying particulars	182
5.2.2.1.2	Problems experienced by the school going children	187
5.2.2.1.3	Referral system	189
5.2.2.1.3	Multicultural practice in service delivery	192
5.2.2.1.4	Parental involvement in schools	193
5.2.2.1.5	Global competition of students	197
5.2.2.1.6	Prevention programmes	199

5.2.2.1.7	Accessibility of social work services in schools	200
5.2.2.1.8	Functions of School Social Work	202
5.2.2.1.9	Developmental social work	207
5.2.2.1.9.1	Benefits of the school going child from a developmental social work	208
5.2.2.1.10	Training of school social workers from a developmental perspective	209
5.2.2.1.11	Qualifications of school social workers	209
5.2.2.1.11.1	Social work services rendered by school social workers or general social workers	210
5.2.2.1.11.2	Recommendations to the Department of Welfare and the Department of Education made by the Social Workers	211
5.2.2.2	Sample Group Two: Social Work Managers	212
5.2.2.2.1	Identifying particulars	212
5.2.2.2.2	Problems experienced by the school going children	216
5.2.2.2.3	Referral system	219
5.2.2.2.4	Multicultural practice in service delivery	221

5.2.2.2.5	Parental involvement	223
5.2.2.2.6	Global economy	226
5.2.2.2.7	Prevention program	229
5.2.2.2.8	The accessibility of social work services in schools	230
5.2.2.2.9	Functions of the school social worker	232
5.2.2.2.10	Developmental social work	234
5.2.2.2.10.1	How could the child benefit from developmental social work	235
5.2.2.2.11	Training of school social workers	236
5.2.2.2.12	Social work services rendered in schools to be done by school social workers or generic social workers	238
5.2.2.2.13	Recommendations to Department of Welfare and the Department of Education made by the Social Work Managers	238
5.3	SUMMARY	240

## CHAPTER SIX: MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1	INTRODUCTION	241
6.2	FINDINGS OF THE STUDY IN TERMS OF THE OBJECTIVES	242
6.2.1	Problems experienced by children	243
6.2.2	Accessibility of Social Work Services	245
6.2.3	Collaboration of services in the school setting by both Department of Education and Social Welfare	245
6.2.4	The use of social work services by the Department of Education	247
6.2.5	Support services policy in schools	249
6.2.6	How school social work intervention through the Department of Welfare can contribute towards promoting effective learning in schools	250
6.2.7	Research evidence as to what is lacking in the schools	250
6.2.8	How the findings of the study can contribute to the existing knowledge and theory on school social work	252
6.2.9	The link between the academic achievement and socio- economic status of pupils	253
6.2.10	Training of school social workers in the suggested Paradigm shift to social development	254
6.2.10.1	Qualifications of school social workers	254

6.3	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY	255
6.4	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	256
6.5	CONCLUSIONS	256
BIBLIOGRAPHY		260
ANNEXURE A:	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: EDUCATORS AND EDUCATION MANAGERS	270
ANNEXURE B:	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS	284
ANNEXURE C:	MAP OF THE AREA OF STUDY	293

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 5.1: TYPE OF SCHOOL	117
TABLE 5.2: TYPE OF AREA OF WORK	119
TABLE 5.3: IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS	127
TABLE 5.4: LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN SCHOOL WITH PROBLEMS IN THE NEARBY COMMUNITY	128
TABLE 5.5: ASSOCIATION OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNERS WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS	131
TABLE 5.6: IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY ON THE CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROBLEMS	131
TABLE 5.7: REFERRAL OF CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS	133
TABLE 5.8: MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM	136
TABLE 5.9: SCHOOL POLICY IMPACT ON THE CHILD'S LEARNING	141
TABLE 5.10: SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY	142

TABLE 5.11: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	143
TABLE 5.12: PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AT SCHOOL	149
TABLE 5.13: GLOBAL IMPACT ON CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	150
TABLE 5.14: COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	151
TABLE 5.15: GOVERNING BODY AT SCHOOL	153
TABLE 5.16: AREA OF WORK	161
TABLE 5.17: TYPE OF AREA OF WORK	161
TABLE 5.18: PRESENT DESIGNATION OF EDUCATION MANAGERS	162
TABLE 5.19: EDUCATORS EQUIPPED TO IDENTIFY THE DIVERSITY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS	166
TABLE 5.20: LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS WITH PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY	166
TABLE 5.21: ASSOCIATION OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNERS AND PROBLEMS AT HOME	169
TABLE 5.22: IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY ON CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	169

TABLE 5.23:	MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM	171
TABLE 5.24:	SCHOOL POLICY	172
TABLE 5.25:	CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	172
TABLE 5.26:	PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	177
TABLE 5.27:	IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY ON THE CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	178
TABLE 5.28:	COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS	179
TABLE 5.29:	GOVERNING BODY	179
TABLE 5.30:	LINKING SOCIAL/BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN THE SCHOOL WITH LEARNER'S HOME CIRCUMSTANCES	188
TABLE 5.31:	DOES YOUR AGENCY DEAL WITH CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS SPEEDILY, DESPITE YOUR AGENCY'S CASELOADS	189
TABLE 5.32:	REFERRAL OF CHILDREN IN TIME TO AGENCY TO RENDER PREVENTIVE SERVICES	191
TABLE 5.33:	ARE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS IN A BETTER POSITION TO DO EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS AS WELL AS EARLY INTERVENTION THAN GENERIC SOCIAL WORKERS	192



TABLE 5.34:	ARE SOCIAL WORKERS EQUIPPED TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHOSE BACKGROUNDS ARE DIFFERENT FROM THEM	193
TABLE 5.35:	ENCOURAGEMENT OF MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE	193
TABLE 5.36:	BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	196
TABLE 5.37:	ARE SOCIAL WORKERS DOING MORE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS FOR BLACKS THAN IN OTHER SCHOOL	200
TABLE 5.38:	QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS	209
TABLE 5.39:	TYPE OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCY	213
TABLE 5.40:	TYPE OF AREA OF WORK	215
TABLE 5.41:	PRESENT DESIGNATION	215
TABLE 5.42:	LINKING OF SOCIAL/BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN THE SCHOOL WITH LEARNERS CIRCUMSTANCES	218
TABLE 5.43:	PROBLEMS SPEEDILY ATTENDED	218
TABLE 5.44:	REFERRED IN TIME	220
TABLE 5.45:	SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND GENERIC SOCIAL WORKERS	221

TABLE 5.46:	ENCOURAGEMENT OF MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE BY AGENCY	223
TABLE 5.47:	BENEFIT OF SCHOOL IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	226
TABLE 5.48:	ARE SOCIAL WORKERS DOING MORE SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS FOR BLACKS THAN ANY OTHER SCHOOLS	231
TABLE 5.49:	ACCESSIBILITY OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES TO ALL SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	231

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 5.1	GENDER OF EDUCATORS	116
FIGURE 5.2:	AREA OF WORK	118
FIGURE 5.3:	PRESENT DESIGNATION	120
FIGURE 5.4:	PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY CHILDREN	121
FIGURE 5.5:	POSSIBLE CAUSES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE MAJORITY OF FAMILIES OF LEARNERS	125
FIGURE 5.6:	MAJOR PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL	126
FIGURE 5.7:	TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS	129
FIGURE 5.8:	TYPE OF TRAINING	130
FIGURE 5.9:	CHILD REFERRED TO	134
FIGURE 5.10:	SCHOOL POLICY	138
FIGURE 5.11:	FEEDING SCHEME AT SCHOOL	145
FIGURE 5.12:	PREVENTION PROGRAMMES	148
FIGURE 5.13:	GENDER OF EDUCATION MANAGERS	160
FIGURE 5.14:	PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE CHILDREN	163

FIGURE 5.15: POSSIBLE CAUSES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE MAJORITY OF LEARNERS	164
FIGURE 5.16: MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL	165
FIGURE 5.17: TRAINING RECEIVED BY TEACHERS TO IDENTIFY SOCIAL PROBLEMS	167
FIGURE 5.18: TYPE OF TRAINING RECEIVED BY TEACHERS	168
FIGURE 5.19: FEEDING SCHEME	173
FIGURE 5.20: PREVENTION PROGRAMS	176
FIGURE 5.21: TYPE OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCY	183
FIGURE 5.22: AREA OF WORK	184
FIGURE 5.23: TYPE OF AREA	185
FIGURE 5.24: PRESENT DESIGNATION	186
FIGURE 5.25: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	187
FIGURE 5.26: REFERRAL OF CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO AGENCY	190
FIGURE 5.27: PARENTS PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL MATTERS	194

FIGURE 5.28: SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN IMPACT ON CHILDREN COMPETING IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY	197
FIGURE 5.29: PREVENTION PROGRAMME	199
FIGURE 5.30: ACCESSIBILITY OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES TO ALL SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	201
FIGURE 5.31: FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER THAT YOU HAVE RENDERED TO SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	203
FIGURE 5.32: AREA OF WORK	214
FIGURE 5.33: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN	217
FIGURE 5.34: CHILDREN REFERRED BY	219
FIGURE 5.35: SOCIAL WORKERS EQUIPPED TO WORK IN MULTI CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS	222
FIGURE 5.36: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS	224
FIGURE 5.37: SOCIAL PROBLEMS IMPACT ON CHANGES OF COMPETING IN THE GLOBAL MARKET	227

FIGURE 5.38: LINKING OF HIGH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT WITH COUNTRY'S VIABLE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY	228
FIGURE 5.39: PREVENTION PROGRAM	230
FIGURE 5.40: FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER	233
FIGURE 5.41: QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER	237

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The young generation is entering a world, which is changing in all spheres: scientific and technological, political, economic, social and cultural. Education too is changing; once seen as a factor of unity and integration within societies, capable of overcoming social and economic differences and destinations between societies in a global economy which rewards those who possess more advanced skills and limits the opportunities of those who do not (World Education Report 1998:6). Since 1994, South Africa attained democracy and as part of the global economy it has to prepare its students for global markets, yet some children are still affected by the legacy of the past.

The dilemma of our time is that although new knowledge, technology and social change have increased, the possibility for more people to attain higher levels of individuation and empowerment, yet the social, political and economic support networks necessary to achieve just these outcomes have become out of reach of the ordinary citizen. Easton & Winters (1983) avail evidence that without adequate personal and social skills it is not

for one to achieve just the cognitive and technical skills required to cope in a fast changing mechanised and technological environment.

Coming to the South African set up, the situation is more complicated.

During the time of apartheid far more money was spent on the education of white children than on any other race group. In the early 1990s almost all white adults could read while only 50 percent of Black adults could do so (World Book Encyclopaedia, 1995:61).

The well being of children depends on the ability of families to function effectively. Children need to grow up in nurturing and secure families that can ensure their optimal survival, development and protection as well as participation in full family and social life. However deviating from the ideal situation, in the South Africa of today large numbers of children still live in social and economic circumstances and conditions that negate the post-apartheid democratic achievement.

In the South African context the majority of school going children comes from economically deprived families, among other factors as a result of economic imbalances rooted in our social past. As a result of this existential or socio-economic background one cannot talk of education provisioning in isolation from the historical factors that



have shaped the present realities. In light of these observations the responsibility of welfare and health in relation to school going children cannot be overemphasised.

Happily since the inception of the democratic order in 1994, the government introduced a unitary education system, based on the triple values of democracy, equality and equity especially as regards the distribution of resources and collaboration in the utilisation of inter-sectoral services, in order to best cater for the needs of all school-going children. As a case in point a developmental perspective has come in the wake of the sweeping changes. The latter changes have brought a paradigm shift to address the inequalities of the past in all its spheres. Hence the Ministry of Social Development committed resources to extend existing services, whilst at the same time redirecting more funds for further capacity building in the school sector (White Paper, 1997:4). Happily such a development has helped to centralise developmental social work to broaden holistic, planned developmental strategies thus placing social welfare and human rights at the centre of social planning (Gray, 1996).

The socio-economic imbalances seen throughout society have negative outcomes on the educational possibilities of children. Against this background the writer's studied view is that the South African response could be a system of school social work intervention advocated as a practical necessity where education and social work form partnership in an effort to achieve a holistic development of the growing child. School social work can also make a positive contribution to optimise educational goals. Through its prevention

strategies it can help address socio-welfare problems in time. In the converse however, when children experience psychosocial or physical problems, their educational development becomes thwarted. In turn their possibilities of deriving maximum benefit from the school facilities become seriously compromised.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:68) highlights the problems experienced by school going children and the youth in general. It states that they represent more than 30 percent of the economically active population. Yet 3 million are unemployed. Large numbers having dropped out of school means that a large sector of the population is destined to hopeless poverty and social instability.

It is common knowledge that poverty and lack of social stability interact to multiply disadvantage. By the same token the absence of a viable social work intervention programme at the school level could intersect with other factors to exacerbate further social problems such as the exposure of school going teenagers to sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancies and unplanned parenthood.

By way of response to the situation described above, and especially to the extent that a lack of focus on school social work intervention might pose a threat to the well being of the school going population, the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:68) emphasised action in order to improve the situation through redress in the following broad frameworks:

- (a) A secure family life
- (b) Protection from violence and abuse
- (c) Opportunities to reach their full educational and human potential
- (d) Opportunities for career guidance
- (e) Information and education on reproductive health needs and rights
- (f) Enabling conditions considered essential to meet the specific life tasks necessary for the development of adolescents and young adults
- (g) Provision of basic amenities such as water, housing and access to affordable sources of energy.

In light of the above, this study aims to look at the developmental perspective of school social work with special reference to the extent to which it would benefit children.

## **1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

While working as a social worker in a multicultural welfare agency in Durban, I realised that the majority of referrals received at the agency concerned social problems affecting children attending black schools. Unfortunately the schools lacked the capacity to anticipate and identify problems in advance of occurrence. In such circumstances, it is unfortunately always difficult to roll out protective services to save endangered children in time.

However this difficulty had a positive side to it in the sense that I then conceptualised a research project along the lines of probing the possibilities of school social work practice with a particular focus on the special needs of the children from economically deprived sections of our communities.

I had the first opportunity to put my preliminary ideas into practice in 1996 when I joined the staff of the Social Work Department at the University of Zululand. In that year I designed and introduced modules on life skills for second year social work students. For the student the project implementation carried the incentive that participating students earned much desired credits for their practical work assessment. The students were tasked to conduct life skills education in the form of group work in the five local schools of KwaDlangezwa, a rural community situated just a ten-minute walk from the Department of Social Work.

Because these schools are rural in the country side, it bears mention that not much has hitherto been documented on the developmental backlog plaguing children attending in rural schools. The sheer location of these schools in the country-side further tends to intensify the disadvantages of children attending there in comparison to their urban counterparts.

The five local schools that participated and benefited from life skills instructional project were:

- (a) KwaDlangezwa High School
- (b) Qhakaza High School
- (c) Mantshangule Higher Primary School
- (d) Khandisa Higher Primary School
- (e) Vulindlela Higher Primary School

In these schools the second year social work students were expected to integrate group work and life skills theory into practice. While conducting group work sessions these students had to identify learners with social problems. The most common observations that influenced the preliminary conceptualisation of this research topic were the following:

- (a) Child Abuse, especially cases of sexual abuse
- (b) HIV/AIDS affected children (Aids orphans or children living with HIV/AIDS infected parent(s))
- (c) Substance abuse
- (d) Lack of school necessities such as uniform, stationery etc.
- (e) Poverty at home
- (f) School dropouts
- (g) Behavioural problems

The social work students would then refer learners to the field instructor for further social work intervention. The local school principals and teachers now refer cases to the field instructor.

In sum the topic for my research study crystallised as a result of my present and previous work experience in school social work practice as well as my engagement as a teacher of school social work theory to University of Zululand second year social work students.

### **1.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

In undertaking this study, the researcher hopes to make the following contributions:

- (a) The study should provide valuable information about the special needs of Black children as little might be known about their social conditions and impact on scholastic achievement. Most of the previous research studies conducted locally have not focussed on the situation of Black children in rural areas.
- (b) The insights gleaned from the research findings should inform policymakers in both Departments of Education and Social Welfare to ensure that legislation and the provision of school social work services result in maximum benefit to school going children as the primary stake holders (Du Toit, 1997:90; 1997:90).

- (c) Recommendations would be made on the training of school social workers in the paradigm shift towards social development.
- (d) Findings and recommendations emanating from the proposed study would be made available to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Population and Development as well as the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Unions.
- (e) Findings would be of significance for future policy makers in education and welfare sectors for collaborative services in the school setting.

#### **1.4 THEORETICAL APPROACH**

The theoretical framework of the research is the ecosystem and ecological approach. The key to understanding human ecology is the notion of interaction. Human ecology focuses on the human ecosystem as the basic unit of analysis. The human ecosystem functions in terms of change and stability with the central questions relating to how humans maintain themselves in continually changing yet restricted surroundings (McKendrick ,1991:155).

Human ecosystems' theory provides an excellent cognitive framework for understanding the realities of South African social work practice. In human ecology, the person-in-

environment orientation constitutes the totality of relationships between individuals and their environments.

The primary purpose of social work is to enable individuals, families, groups and communities to deal with their life problems by utilizing society's resources in the context of their social environment. This purpose also applies to social workers rendering services to school going children with problems. The ecosystems' perspective calls attention to more aspects of the actual world before social workers take action. As the whole ecosystem exerts greater impact than the sum total of its component parts, the social worker should be concerned with what level of interventions best meets a particular problem. In light of the above the question could be asked what is happening nation-wide and world-wide to affect the functioning of persons.

The school is seen not only as a complex social system but also as a microcosm of a larger society. As a result the problems of society are reflected in the schools and social problems thus inevitably affect the daily roles and tasks performed by the school social worker and other educational staff like guidance teachers. As mentioned already, societal forces such as violence, poverty, unemployment and family dysfunction, affect the educational process, and in some instances undermine the capability of schools to offer equal educational opportunities to all its children.



The ecological approach directs attention to all the significant systems and individuals rather than any one part, system or aspect of pupils' situation. The focus is on the social process of interactions and transactions between students and their different environments (Hartman, 1996). In the context of school going children the ecological approach focuses on the environmental forces, denying them the resources necessary for a healthy social functioning and fulfilling existence (Coates, 1992:20).

In this study the problems and needs of school going children and the intervention of educators and social workers occur at different levels but are seen as interconnected.

## **1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of the study were conceptualized as follows:

- (a) To highlight the problems and needs experienced by the majority of school going children in South Africa.
- (b) To explore whether school social work services are accessible to all South African school going children.
- (c) To explore the possibilities of collaboration of services in the school setting by both departments of Education and Social Welfare.

- (d) To investigate whether or not the Department of Education uses social work services to address the needs and problems of school going children.
- (e) To undertake an investigation into the implementation of a support services policy in schools.
- (f) To investigate how school social work intervention through the Department of Welfare can contribute towards promoting effective learning in the school.
- (g) To provide researched evidence as to what is lacking in the school system, and thereby inform future policy decision making.
- (h) To examine how the findings of the study can contribute to the existing knowledge and theory on school social work.
- (i) To explore the link between the academic achievement and socio-economic status of pupils.
- (j) To suggest recommendations on the training of school social workers in the suggested paradigm shift to social development.

## 1.6 KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

This study presupposes several key questions. The key questions are listed under the two phases:

- (a) What are the social problems experienced by the majority of children in school(s)?
- (b) Are teachers equipped to identify the diversity of social problems impacting on learning in schools?
- (c) Are social workers delivering adequate social work services in the schools for Blacks?
- (d) What are the functions of the school social worker in addressing the needs and problems of school going children?
- (e) How can the Department of Welfare and Population Development promote effective learning in schools?
- (f) What can be done jointly by the Departments of Education and Social Welfare to alleviate social problems that impact on the child's academic performance?
- (g) How can the Departments of Welfare and Education ensure that legislation on support services in schools is implemented?
- (h) What could be your recommendations to the Department of Welfare to make social work services accessible to all South African children?

## 1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method that was used to implement the research process involves the following research stages: (1) the design of the research, (2) a sampling and research tool, (3) the collection of data, and (4) the analysis of data.

### 1.7.1 Research Design

The researcher has utilized an exploratory and descriptive research design. Babbie (1995:85-86) states that a major purpose of many scientific studies is to describe situations and events. Although the research design in this study is descriptive, it does make use of exploratory research methods to identify crucial variables in the problem area under study. Miller (1983:55) argues for the accumulation of empirical and theoretical knowledge and states that:

*The research progress on a central problem usually proceeds through stages first, exploration of the social setting of the problem, the factors involved and the criteria that may be used to measure or appraise the problem, then descriptive and diagnostic study may be possible.*

Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were utilised.

### **1.7.2 Sampling and Research Tool**

The sample was divided into two phases. Phase one consisted of 45 educators and 5 education managers, while phase two consisted of 45 social workers and 17 social work managers.

### **1.7.3 Data Collection Method**

The research tool to collect data was the interview schedule. The researcher and research assistants interviewed educators and social workers. Focused group discussions were held for education managers and social work managers.

Triangulation has been utilized in this study. It is the use of multiple data gathering techniques to investigate the same phenomenon. This is interpreted as a means of mutual confirmation of measures and validation of findings (Berg 1995:4-5). Fielding and Fielding (1986:31) specifically addresses this aspect of triangulation. They suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats of validity identified in each.

#### **1.7.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis was compiled through computer processing and analyzed through a separate selected computer software package.

### **1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Conceptualisation is necessary to enable the researcher to study, organise and differentiate the variables of the study. Heilbroner (1990) argues that "it is necessary to explain the concept used fully because our general agreement exists about the meaning of terms used".

In discussing concepts central to this study its background linkages found in literature would come forward and would be explained.

#### **1.8.1 School Social Work**

Allen-Meares (1986:68) states that school social work is the application of social work principles and methods to the major purpose of the school. School social work is thus a specialist branch of general social work where the social worker utilises specific knowledge combined with the values and principles of the social work profession, to

complement the educational function of the school. The school social worker is thus an integral part of the school system.

Germain in Constable and Flynn (2000) describes the school social worker's role as working at the interface area of coping patterns between the pupil, parent, school and the community. It would be interesting to look at the impact of the social problems from an ecological perspective, how the family, school and community impact on the child's academic performance.

### 1.8.2 Development

Development carries a range of meanings from basic economic well being to broad notions of economic development, incorporating wholesale societal change, modernisation and industrialization. Thomas (1992:117) states that development demands a high degree of moral and political commitment. It is based on the idea of equity and justice and on the notion of rights. The developmental perspective on school social work will be looked at in this aspect of development.

According to Scheepers (2000:8)

*"development is a people centred process of change, depending for its ultimate success on the capacity of people to manage the process, through a variety of critical steps and phases within the limits of an*

*institutional, and value framework that will guarantee meaningful and lasting improvement of quality of life for all in a peaceful, stable and well governed environment".*

Development discourages dependency and promotes the active participation of the people concerned. The local people might participate in the school activities and they might also look at the obstacles that affect their participation in school matters. Ideally communities and families participate in schools in order to make a change in their functioning.

### **1.8.3 Globalization**

Globalisation or internationalisation as it is also known, is an increasingly important feature of modern life. Although the term is not well defined, it is widely used to connote a process of global integration in which diverse peoples, economies, cultures, and political processes are increasingly subjected to international influences. It also refers to a greater awareness of the role of these influences in everyday experience. The importance of globalization is now generally recognised (Midgely,1997:21). South Africa is part of the global economy. This term will be looked at in this study and how globalisation might affect the school going child positively or negatively.



Globalisation is the forging of a multiplicity of linkages and other interconnections between the states and societies that make up the modern world system. It is the process by which events, decisions and activities in one part of the world come to have significant consequences for individuals and communities in distant parts of the globe (Allen & Thomas, 1992:262).

The ecological perspective holds that people are active participants in vested and overlapping systems that influence developmental outcomes. This perspective is also applicable to the global world. In South Africa we are affected by what is happening worldwide. For example the crisis in Zimbabwe affects our economy. Investors decided against investing in Africa because of the Zimbabwe crisis. Because of the weak economy investors might decide not to invest in the Southern Development Community.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

There exist limitations in this study that need to be taken into consideration when assessing the results of this study. The sample of the study was confined to educators and social workers from KwaZulu-Natal but excluded educators and social workers from

other provinces. Because of the time factor the researcher did not interview school going children and their parents.

#### **1.10 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

Chapter One now being concluded introduced the study, disclosed the researcher's motivations, aims and objectives and outlined the methodological aspects driving the investigation. As was noticed the methodological approach must be seen against the theoretical presuppositions mentioned above. The rest of the report will be organised along five further chapters.

Chapter Two begins the review of literature and includes approaches and theories in use. Chapter Three concludes the review of literature and discusses selected problems and examines related practice intervention approaches. Chapter Four discusses the methodology used in the study. Chapter Five presents, analyses and discusses data from which the interview schedule and focused groups were completed. Chapter Six discusses the main findings. The report closes with recommendations following from the investigation.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW OF THEORIES AND APPROACHES**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main purpose of the present chapter is to identify and discuss, although in brief, the theories and approaches that drive social work intervention choices.

The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (1991:80) defines social work as an accountable professional activity which enables individuals, families and groups to identify personal social and environmental difficulties adversely affecting them. Social work enables individuals, families and communities to manage these difficulties through supportive, rehabilitative, protective or corrective action. It seeks to promote social welfare and responds to wider social needs promoting equal opportunities for every age, gender, sexual preference, class, disability, race, culture and creed. Social work strives to protect the needy and vulnerable as best as possible within the available legislation.

Within the profession of social work different ideologies influence the manner in which

social workers conceptualise and approach their work. Ideologies differ significantly in their explanation of social problems. The differential leads to different approaches to problem solving within social work praxis.

Each approach to social work practice influences what social workers accept as the roles and purposes, approaches and understanding of social work theory and practice. Coates (1991:17) illustrates how the different ideological perspectives reflect substantially different assumptions of social work practice as well as emphases on certain values, roles and interventions. For example, in a child abuse case, different social workers use different approaches to solve the case. Their choice of intervention strategy is determined by what they perceive to be in the child's best interest in the circumstances. Hence the objective of the school social worker will be to assist the child to gain maximum advantage from his school experience, in preparation for his future role as an adult in society.

In theory and practice school social work still remains social work. As a result the knowledge, skills and values school social workers use still remain social work values, knowledge and skills, based on social work approaches and theories.

Some of the theories and approaches underpinning social work intervention strategies will be discussed in the ensuing section.

## **2.2 THEORIES AND APPROACHES**

The following are some of the more prominent theories and approaches used by school social workers in their intervention. In this section I deal with (1) the multicultural approach, (2) the ecological theory, and (3) the systems theory, in that order.

### **2.2.1 Multicultural Approach**

The South African population is diverse in terms of race, gender and religion. Before the demise of apartheid in 1994 service providers in various disciplines and sectors served the population along racial lines. Because of this history service providers are now more than ever before challenged to work with groups from diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence this culture sensitive orientation has been called the multicultural competence approach (Vasquez & Han, 1995:109–127). Most South African universities have developed modules on the multicultural practice approach to prepare their students to work meaningfully in diverse cultural communities.

Toseland and Rivas (1998:127-137) highlight the conceptual framework which can be used for working with diverse cultural groups. They pin point three main advantages of the multicultural approach. These advantages are (1) to develop cultural competitiveness, (2) to assess the influence of culture on individual action, and last,

but not least (3) to offer a tool to handle various population groups while remaining sensitive to cultural differences. These three advantages are analysed briefly below:

(1) Developing Cultural Competence

The terms identity and culture are often used to refer to the variegated ways in which people can differ. One's identity consists of the sum total of the answers a person would give to the question: 'who am I'. Social psychologists frequently or traditionally distinguish between two separate sub systems of identity.

The first identity sub system is personal identity which specifically refers to those aspects of one's identity that are unique. The second identity sub system is personal identity derived from one's membership of a social grouping.

Tomm , (in White 1990) describes identity as follows:

*Our personal identity is constituted by what we know about ourselves as persons, but what we know about ourselves is defined for the most part, by the cultural practices in which we are embedded.*

Critical social psychologists posit that all identity is social in nature. They argue that it is meaningless to assume that there is such a thing as a purely personal identity conceived of separately from social identity. According to this view, even those aspects of ourselves that determine our most personal idiosyncrasies take place within a socially defined set of limitations and possibilities.

Helman (in Swartz, 2002:6-7) states that culture can be viewed as a set of guidelines (both explicit and implicit) which individuals inherit as members of a particular society, and which tells them how to view the world, how to experience it emotionally and how to behave in it in relation to other people, to supernatural forces or gods, and to the natural environment. It also provides them with a way of transmitting these guidelines to the next generation -by the use of symbols, language, art and ritual.

Culture, then, is about the process of being and becoming a social being within the bounds of the rules of a society and the ways in which these rules are enacted, experienced, and transmitted. Culture then is about how a group of people organise their beliefs

and make sense of it. It can be the unifying element that holds a community or group together. Cultural variations reflect what people hold to be worthwhile and help to determine what is valued about what is worth knowing and doing.

Applied to the social work situation, developing a cultural competence means that the social worker should be able to engage in a process of self exploration. First and foremost she should become aware of her own limitations as a new comer to the group at hand. At the same time she should be open to cultural differences and acknowledge the integrity of other cultures. She can also explore her feelings about her own identity. There may be little acknowledgment of identity issues and how these issues affect values, beliefs and skills of the worker. She can also benefit from knowledge about how other people define and identify themselves. It is also important to understand how different cultural backgrounds affect how assertive people can be in their every day life. Allied to the foregoing observation is reflecting on how different ethnic backgrounds go about solving a particular problem.

The second positive aspect of the multicultural approach is being



able to assess how culture influences personal action.

(2) Assessing Cultural Influence on Behaviour

Answering the question of the relationship between culture and action is important because the cultural backgrounds of children can have a profound effect on how they participate and behave at school. A child might not be able to raise her concerns to the teacher or school social worker especially when she comes from a culture that does not allow discussion of family matters with strangers. Non-verbal communication such as body language can also mean different things to different people. A teacher might refer the child to the school social worker because she thought the child was shy, whereas as a matter of fact such behaviour is expected by her culture as a sign of respect to older people.

Thirdly mention needs be made of the ethos of sensitivity to cultural diversity as an important aspect of the multicultural approach. This ethos leads to the need to carry out interviewing with sensitivity to diversity.

### (3) Interviewing with Sensitivity to Diversity

One of the expectations of sensitivity to cultural difference is that the social worker should approach her subjects with an open mind. Sensitivity to diversity means that she must be non-judgemental, sensitive to feelings and respect information entrusted to her. These qualities might well enhance a social worker seeking to master a culturally sensitive practice. Similarly effective communication and listening skills can also compensate for wide differences in cultural backgrounds between the school social worker and children at school.

Cultures have strengths which can be tapped as sources of empowerment for children and their families. For example in the case of HIV/AIDS as well as teenage pregnancy the school social worker can find out from children how these social problems can be prevented culturally.

Some cultures do not attach the same meanings to certain phenomena such as social problems or medical conditions. For example when I worked in a psychiatric hospital in Pietermaritzburg, I would observe patients being granted leave of

absence from the hospital so as to go home to observe a ritual to be performed there at the weekend. The rationale for the leave from hospital is that the patient's family members would not acknowledge that the patient was sick but would ascribe her condition to metaphysical agents such as ancestors demanding propitiation.

A common cause of physical or mental dysfunction was spirit possession when a person is said to be entered by the spirits of his or her departed relatives. Hence in the Isizulu language people would say "so and so is about to be a *sangoma* or spirit medium".

In addition, working as a probation officer in Durban, I experienced how some families responded to the problem of juvenile delinquency by appeal to ancestor intervention through rituals. They believed that the juvenile was misbehaving because the ancestors wanted some animal sacrifice to be made in their honour. These examples illustrate that different cultures may not necessarily choose identical solutions to identical social problems.

The above remarks on the positive features of the multicultural

approach bring us to the second theoretic approach, the ecological approach.

### **2.2.2 Ecological Theory**

Ecology refers to the study of organisms. It investigates the relationship between the living organisms and the environment (Welch, 1987:154; Germain, 1985:34). In social work science the ecological theory holds that problems of society are reflected in the schools and that social problems thus inevitably affect the daily roles and tasks performed by a school social worker and other educational staff. In other words the societal forces such as violence, poverty, family dysfunction and other social problems affect the educational process, and in some instances undermine the capability of schools to offer equal educational opportunities to all its pupils.

Welch (in Lombard 1992:15) gives guidelines for possible social work interventions from an ecological perspective: For him social work interventions are brought into relation with the various levels that make up the human ecosystems. The individual child (in the case of a school social worker) occupies the most central position in the ecosystem. All events and experiences are eventually interpreted in the manner in which they are related to and have an impact on the individual. It is always the individual within his society that matters, but individuals cannot be seen in isolation from the system as a

whole. The behaviour and actions of the individual influence the family, the extended family, the group, and the community. By the same token the actions of the family, the extended family, the group, and the value systems of the community in turn influence the behaviour and actions of the individual.

In light of the above the ecological approach means that the child's problem could only be understood within the context of the family, community, or society within which he lives. The complexity of human ecosystem justifies an integrated approach to social work, based on the ecological perspective. This approach influences social workers to intervene at the micro level (individual, family), the mezzo level (group) and at the macro level (community) or on all three levels simultaneously.

The primary value of the ecological approach is that it helps school social workers to focus their attention on all the significant systems rather than on any one part, system or aspect of a pupil's situation. The focus is on the social process of interactions and the transactions between students, and their different environments. In light of this approach the practitioner's role is to effect changes in individuals and the environment or even both.

The next section considers the system theory.

### **2.2.3 System Theory**

The major value of the system theory is that it enables practitioners to examine and understand the structures and functions of the school as an institution. The theory is based on certain assumptions, namely that human action takes place in a situation, is goal directed and is rule bound.

The systems theory reinforces the notion of wholeness. The notion helps explain the interrelationships among various systems and individuals. It provides a framework for looking at the school as a social system. It is a view that helps the school social worker examine the daily ongoing interrelations and interdependent relationships among the various components of the school, such as the students, parents, the society and government.

In contrast to system theory the institution theory considers social work intervention from the perspective of political decision making.

### **2.2.4 Institutional Theory**

In seeking to understand schools and their influence on society institutional theory takes into account three elements: political decision making, social history and

organisational theories. It acknowledges that the demands and expectations of the institutional environment in which the organisation exists, shape the school. Thus because the school is subject to political influences, it must be expected that these political influences may not always be rational (Dimaggio & Powell, 1995). For example a variety of interest groups such as parents, business leaders, teachers' unions and politicians can influence the functioning and norms of the school either positively or negatively.

The interest groups may influence the school negatively if they are motivated by self-interest. Conversely interest groups may be of positive influence on the school when they are concerned to correct tendencies in it which may obstruct progress in the school but also the well being of the country and its future economic prosperity.

### **2.2.5 The Political Economy Approach**

The political economy approach is largely a critique. It assumes that the social problems encountered by all people can be blamed directly on the liberal, capitalist and patriarchal social order in which people struggle to exist (Coates, 1991:22). The first priority of social work intervention is to reduce suffering mainly through the provision of basic needs. According to the political economy approach the long-term goal of social work intervention is social transformation through the fundamental change of the social

structure.

A political economy approach is most consistent with socialist and feminist ideologies, which advocate for a social order based on social justice, egalitarianism and humanitarianism. It defines social problems as inescapable outcomes of a system, which supports the exploitation of one group by another (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

Social work practice within the political economy approach embodies a decision to define problems as originating in the environment rather than the client. It requires that social problems be understood in a holistic way, in their social, political and economic context. According to the political economy approach social workers should focus on the interrelationship between personal problems, the dominant ideology and the material conditions. The overall purpose of this approach is to help people meet their needs through awakening, and after awakening, to work toward the development of social structures that promote and safeguard social justice, humanitarianism, and egalitarianism.

Guidelines of this approach are tabulated by Allen Meares (2000) as follows:

- (1) To maximise support from the client's environment so that needs can be met.



- (2) To help people reflect on their personal and political situation and, through such reflection, to develop their own personal and political plans of action.
- (3) To maintain accountability to the client.
- (4) To promote the development of personal skills that increase people's ability to deal effectively with their environments.

The political economy approach assumes that most, if not all clients, are victims of social inequality. In consequence it encourages social workers to work toward client self-empowerment, to work with them as equals to raise political awareness, and to help people make connections between their personal problems and the social conditions that are experienced as embedded in political inequalities.

#### **2.2.6 Sutherland's Theory of Differential Association**

Sutherland's theory attempts to explain the process whereby a person comes to engage in criminal behaviour. According to this theorist when the social influences persons encounter through their lifetimes are inharmonious and inconsistent, such persons become involved in contacts with persons of criminal tendencies and become criminals

as a consequence. This process is known as "differential association" (Gibbons, 1982:196-198). The theory has nine interrelated propositions:

Some of the nine propositions are first that criminal behaviour is learned. Second, that criminal behaviour is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication. The third proposition is that the principal part of the learning of criminal behaviour occurs within intimate personal groups. The fourth is that when criminal behaviour is learned, the learning includes (a) techniques of committing the crime, which may be either simple or complicated (b) the specific direction of motives and drives, rationalisations and attitudes.

The specific direction of motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes seen as favourable or unfavourable. A person becomes delinquent as a result of an excess of definitions favourable to the violation of the law over definitions unfavourable to the violation of the law. This differential association means that the more the person associates with criminals and the less with non-criminals the greater the probability that he will adopt a criminal behaviour pattern.

Differential association may vary in frequency, duration, priority and intensity. The more frequent a person associates with criminals, the longer the duration and the quicker will criminal behaviour be learned. The process of learning criminal behaviour

by association with criminals involves all the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning. While criminal behaviour is an expression of general needs and values, some non-criminal behaviour is also an expression of such needs.

Sutherland's theory will be applicable in this study when the investigation involves understanding some of the learners' behaviour.

In the next section we must consider consultation theory.

### **2.2.7 Consultation Theory**

Consultation is an in-direct service which takes place between equal professionals of co-ordinate status. It is initiated by the consultee who has total freedom to accept or reject the services at any point (Aubrey, 1990:3). Aubrey further argues that consultation involves the consultant and the consultee in a confidential, collaborative relationship shaped by consultant goals to offer an objective point of view, to increase the problem solving process and to help extend the client's freedom of choice in action as well as to assist the consultee in choices made. Finally the consultation approach increases the consultee's awareness of the resources available to deal with persistent problems.

The first step in consultation is to clarify the problem for which the consultant's services have been solicited. This entails ensuring the consultant can concur with the consultee's definition of the problem situation. What follows is that the consultee and consultant must establish the exact nature of the consultancy assignment, what should be achieved and how the desired goal will be measured. A direct contact between the consultant and the consultee is essential.

School social work consultants operate in the area of interdisciplinary collaborative contact with other professionals such as teachers, school administrators and other personnel in the school. They also offer consultation to parents as well as school going children.

The school personnel can seek consultation in either of the following types of consultation: Client centred consultation refers to helping the consultee deal with work problems he has encountered with the child about the diagnosis, treatment and case disposition. Consultee-centred consultation has to do with helping the consultee with his own personal difficulties so that he becomes effective in dealing with problems of the clients. Program-centred administrative consultation means helping the consultee's agency make administrative policy changes to increase its effectiveness. The approach includes developing, planning, implementing and researching agency policy and programs. Consultee centred administrative consultation involves helping to change the

nature of staff interpersonal relationships, cliques, communication and barriers, so that the consultee's agency can operate effectively.

### **2.2.8 Crisis Theory**

A crisis is defined as a situation that demands immediate resolution because it may seriously impair the safety of those in the school and prohibit continuation of the educational process. Crisis creates stress, which can trigger impulsive or otherwise unreasonable behaviour. Schools are generally unprepared for crises. Sometimes school social workers are asked to intervene in crisis situations, for example in the case where both parents have died suddenly.

The school crisis situation can be the optimal point of entry for improving school-community relations. Some schools have a crisis policy while others do not.

## **2.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter briefly explored a number of practice theories which can be used by the school social worker in addressing a variety of needs and problems of the school going children. These theories have an influence on how the school social worker will view the problems and their impact on the child. The school social worker's intervention

would also be based on the theory or theories he might use.

In chapter three, the problems experienced by the school going children as well as the practice interventions that could be used by the school social worker will be discussed in detail.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: PROBLEMS AND SOCIAL WORK**

#### **PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS**

##### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Public education and social work share a common concern for social problems confronting children and families. Both public schools and human services are challenged to rethink and redesign their efforts to educate, socialise, and intervene in the problems of children and their families.

Strengthening family life is at the centre of developmental social welfare. Social work with its family centred approach to service delivery, has a major contribution to make. Social workers have experience and expertise in working with families and with individuals as part of the family.

Social work has principles and values which are entirely consistent with the vision, mission, goals and principles of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:16-17), which forms the basis of developmental social welfare. Problems which hamper the education and teaching of the child can be attributed to a multiple and complex totality of factors. Pretorius (1991:476) states that the complexity and the multi-causality of problems call

for an all embracing and multidisciplinary approach in order to understand and resolve educationally hampering factors in a problematic educational situation. Pretorius further states that the total child should be seen as a psychological–spiritual–physical–social entity in his total life and educational situation as field of study.

### **3.2 THE LEGACY OF THE PAST**

South Africa, which is the most industrialised country in Africa, is often referred to as a first world country in a third world continent. Although it is seen by many as a leader in the rest of Africa, the overwhelming effects of the legacy of colonialism and racism experienced by Africans as a whole are still visible, even in this advancing economy. In South Africa the former apartheid rule served to “under develop” the majority of South Africans by monopolizing power through social, political and economic inequalities. The democratically elected government faces the mammoth task to “reconstruct and develop” (Tavis, Mc Farlin, Van Rooyen & Gray, 1999:178).

After 1994, the South African government introduced the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which endorsed the developmental approach to social welfare.

Social Welfare encompasses the following areas of activity:

- Health
- Social work



- Public Education
- Housing
- Welfare programmes

The Republic of South Africa (RSA) is administratively divided into nine provinces namely: Northern Province, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Orange Free State, North-West Province, Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape. The provinces came into being after the 1994 elections when KwaZulu and Natal became one province. The new provinces are a combination of former black homelands and white settlements (Quattara & Graham, 1996).

Geographically the focal area of this study covers KwaZulu-Natal which is situated in the east of South Africa and lies along the Indian Ocean. It boasts three major functional regions of Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Ulundi. With a population in excess of 8,5 million or 21 percent of South Africa's population as a whole, it is the most populated province in South Africa. Along with being the largest province, KwaZulu-Natal carries some of the most substantial social, political and economic complexities under its belt, and is one of the poorest provinces. One of its major problems is the steadily increasing rate of HIV infections (with resultant children headed families), affecting a reported 14,4 percent of the population (Tavis *et al.*, 1999). The indigenous population of KwaZulu-Natal is almost entirely Zulu speaking.

Poverty remains an issue of concern for all South Africans. In KwaZulu-Natal over 40

percent of the population lives in impoverished households. By 1994, 37,9 percent of rural and 26,6 percent of urban communities were unemployed and in 1995, 26,7 percent of the population in KwaZulu-Natal were considered illiterate (SA Institute of Race Relations Report, 1995-6).

It is against this background that this investigation attempts to describe and explore the plight of school going children in South Africa and the possibility of social work interventions in schools. The interventions should be attempted against the background of this total picture of the socio-economic standing of the province of KwaZulu-Natal in particular.

### **3.3 EDUCATION FOR ALL**

Since 1990, a new development in this area has emphasised education as the right of all learners. During the *World Conference on Education for all: Meeting Basic Learning Needs*, held in Jomtien, France, in 1990, the theme Education for All was adopted as the goal for the year 2000.

In 1994, at the *World Congress on Special Needs in Education: Access and Quality*, held in Salamanca, Spain, the vision was expanded and the policy of inclusion was adopted as the official international policy for the education of Learners with Special Needs. Delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing 92 governments and 25 international organisations reaffirmed their commitment to Education for All. They came

up with the following aspects:

- (a) Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.
- (b) Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs. Educational programs should be designed and implemented to take into account the diversity of these characteristics and needs. Children with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.
- (c) Regular schools with the inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, they provide an effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (Van Wyk, 1997:16-17).

### **3.4 DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WORK**

Gray (1998: 58) refers to developmental social welfare as a welfare system based on the philosophy and policy of social development, and developmental social work refers to the practice of social work within the social development policy model. Both require a sincere

commitment to alleviating poverty.

### **3.5 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**

The school going children can experience a number of social problems. In this chapter the researcher focuses on the following problems:

#### **3.5.1 Problem: Child Abuse**

The high incidence of child abuse in South Africa indicates that current child protection services are not adequate as the available child protection services cannot solve this problem alone. They need the involvement of total communities, who have to realise that child abuse is not an individual problem, but that of the community. Thus communities have a legal, moral, and ethical responsibility to play an active role to respond to the abuse of children.

Child abuse can be approached from three perspectives: physical, psychological and sexual.

For this study the researcher has concentrated on child sexual abuse, as it has predominated the media. Child sexual abuse has become difficult to break due to the wrong assumption that sleeping with children can cure Aids.

Before we analyse child sexual abuse, one has first to discuss problems of interviewing young children on this aspect. Obtaining clinical information from young people, especially children under the age of 12, requires special technical skills and clinical experience in interviewing different from those normally used for interviewing adults.

Children's vocabularies are relatively limited, and their perspectives are somewhat more circumscribed than those of adults. Young children have not yet begun to think in abstract terms. Their thought processes tend to be concrete. Thus an interviewer requires considerable sensitivity to use terms appropriate to a young child (Morrison & Anders, 1999:1).

Sexual abuse is a subject on which it is difficult to gather information comfortably. Legislation and parliaments in many parts of the world have mandated the compulsory reporting of child abuse. However, what must be reported, to whom, and within what time varies depending on the jurisdiction of Medical and Mental Health Professionals. Also teachers have an ethical duty to protect children from physical and mental harm. Clinicians must acquaint themselves with the requirements pertinent to their practice and determine how to balance the requirements of the law against the need to maintain confidentiality.

In a meeting on school governance between Empangeni Education Managers and 2 staff members from the University of Zululand Social Work Department on 05 March 2002, the educators raised a number of issues, such as problems encountered after reporting an

Educator for child abuse. They expressed the view that they did not know what to do if that Educator decided to resign and his whereabouts were to become unknown. Such occurrences had become common.

The 1993 annual data from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect indicated that 140,000 children, the majority of whom were female, were sexually abused (Children's Defense Fund 1996). Victims of sexual abuse exhibit a wide range of behaviours such as seductive sexual behavior, poor performance in school and involvement in delinquency and substance abuse. Social workers in the child and family service may work with school social workers to prepare a child to give testimony.

But identification, reporting and preventive intervention remain the tasks of the school social worker. The social worker can work with the police department, the child protection agency and community agencies to assist the families and the child.

#### **3.5.1.1 Practice intervention in child abuse**

In trying to look at the social work intervention in the case of child abuse, one has to look at the child as part of an interacting social system, which includes the family, the child's peers, the school, and community. A successful approach to child protection must be comprehensive and multifaceted. The increasing stress on families who have little economic and social support systems creates a situation in which the family as an institution is placed in peril.

School systems are strained by children who bring to school problems related to their abuse, and who may not be receiving services to help them deal with their abuse. School social workers as well as educators need to understand the dynamics of child abuse and have a good knowledge of school based interventions to help abused children (Graham, 1993:197).

Providing services to children following child abuse requires a holistic approach. School social workers are in the best position to co-ordinate services for schools based on training and ability to interact on many levels with the community, the school, the family, and the child. In rendering services to children with problems of abuse, the school social worker can perform such roles as the

- (i) consultancy role
- (ii) curriculum development and gatekeeper role
- (iii) educational planning role
- (iv) support system role
- (v) community liaison role

Each of the roles listed above can be unpacked in the context of their function and relevance for interventions.

### 3.5.1.1.1 ***Consultancy Role***

As children spend most of their time in the school environment, it is naturally the teachers who in most instances are the first to identify child abuse. A study by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1988) revealed that approximately 80 percent of teachers see abused or neglected children in their classrooms and yet, for a variety of reasons, are reluctant to report suspected cases of abuse.

The report further states that the teacher's reluctance to report stems from a variety of reasons such as fear of getting involved in the situation, concern about interfering with private family relationships and child rearing practices, anxiety about parents' potential retaliation as well as caution about alienating families.

Reporting may also depend on the teacher's training on areas of child abuse in early detection and identification.

The school social worker can intervene in this problem of reporting abused cases by assisting in the development of educator's role in the prevention and detection of child abuse and neglect. The social worker is not only familiar with the problem of abuse, but is also accustomed to the system designed to redress the problem. Social workers, because of their training and expertise (skills, knowledge and values) are in a unique position to provide in-service training to the entire school staff on issues such as identification, reporting, coping with disclosures, legal and ethical matters, confidentiality,



family dynamics, interviewing children, life skills training (implications for life development) and treatment approaches.

#### 3.5.1.1.2 ***Curriculum Development and Gatekeeper Role***

In redressing the imbalances of the past the democratically elected government in South Africa (1994) through the Department of Education has introduced life skills (orientation) modules in all the schools as from 2001. All the teachers had to attend training workshops on life orientation skills as from 2000. These teachers are required to include such life orientation modules in their curricula.

It would be to the benefit of the child if social workers participating in the design of the modules. Social workers can use their experience together with information provided, as teachers would not know, for example, what to do if the child discloses information on abuse in a classroom situation (Barth & Derezotes, 1990). The curriculum should include information about available resources.

As he has been trained to be culturally sensitive, the social worker would be able to review available curricula content on life, its cultural sensitivity and probable acceptance by school staff and community members. In some cases teachers and parents are not comfortable to discuss sexuality matters with children.

As a gatekeeper the school social worker would ensure quality control on material used

for life orientation modules, and insist on the quality of teachers trained in life orientation matters.

#### 3.5.1.1.3 ***Educational Planning***

Students who have been abused experience problems in concentrating and learning new information. School social workers can encourage evaluations for such children and can help develop individualised education sessions that provide students with additional time to complete assignments or for special testing (Graham, 1993:197).

#### 3.5.1.1.4 ***Support Systems***

Early disclosure of abuse if without social support may not be helpful to a child's mental development. Family preservation which offers a safe and stable environment is necessary. When disturbed a child may not be returned to his home, but he may need a supportive person like a school teacher or school social worker.

The school social worker can facilitate policies and procedures to make investigations of child abuse as she is more responsive to the needs of the child and the school (Berrick & Barth, 1991:195).

#### 3.5.1.1.5 ***Community Liaison Role***

One of the functions of the school social worker is to link home and school whereby school policies and procedures will be interpreted to the family. Secondly he must investigate how the home circumstances impact on the child's learning. The school social worker can also work with the nearby community around prevention strategies in order to be successful. He has to use a number of theories like the systems theory, ecological theory where the child's environment is important.

In this role he can be an active participant in community child abuse campaigns or forums. Through working with community leaders, he can design an integrated response to cases of child abuse. Since the school social worker knows all the existing resources in the community, he has to work with various organisations either directly or have an interest in organisations that might help the child with social problems reflected in the school system. The role of the school social worker is also that of collaborating services with those organisations to avoid duplication of services in areas of child abuse.

#### 3.5.2 **Problem: Substance Abuse**

Drug abuse is a global phenomenon, and there is hardly any country in which it does not take place. According to the United Nations Drug Report (2000), at least 134 countries were faced with a drug abuse problem in the 1990s. Alcohol and drug abuse is recognised as one of the greatest health and social problems in South Africa. Their abuse

has many consequences, ranging from physical injuries, marital problems, child abuse, violence in families and communities, traffic accidents and economic costs.

It is estimated that 5,8% of the South African population over the age of 15 is dependent on alcohol (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:81). While we in South Africa have a serious drug problem, we are not alone and certainly are far from being the worst offenders.

According to drug counsellors, the average of teenagers using drugs is steadily decreasing, and whereas in the past they started with dagga and moved on to heavier drugs, cocaine is now their first choice. According to the South African Narcotics Bureau, seizures of cocaine nationally increased from a mere 78kg in 1993 to 636kg in 1998.

In a recent survey involving South African teenagers of all races between the ages of 12 and 19, more than one in five claimed that some of their friends had experimented with drugs. Nearly 90% felt that drugs were becoming a real problem among young people in South Africa and only 4% of teenagers claimed to have been offered "hard drugs" at school (Straight Talk About Drug Abuse, 2001, vol.11).

The Teenagers Against Drug Abuse (TADA) movement is one of the exciting developments in the fight against ignorance which still prevails about drugs and provides young people with an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. It is a programme for young people, run by young people in South African schools, but not all

the schools have adopted this programme.

### **3.5.2.1 Practice intervention in substance abuse**

A multi-disciplinary approach to the problem of substance abuse appears to be most effective because the problems are often complex, thus requiring flexibility and individualisation of treatment procedures. The school social worker can refer the person who is abusing substances for medical treatment if his physical condition warrants such service.

The school social worker can see all the members of the family (family therapy). Family involvement is essential because they can give support to the person who is abusing substances. They can also help to monitor and record observations of the desired behaviour. The school social worker can see the learner individually or in a group setting where all the learners with the substance abuse problem are seen (group therapy).

### **3.5.3 Problem: HIV/AIDS affected children**

A decade ago HIV/AIDS was regarded as a serious health crisis. Estimates from 1991 predicted that 9 million people in sub-Saharan Africa would be infected with HIV and that 5 million people would die by the end of the decade. We can now see that the actual rate of infection at the present moment is three times higher than the projection made at that time. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century dawned, 71%(24,4 million) of all people in the world with HIV

lived in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa's 12,1 million AIDS orphans represented 95% of the AIDS orphans in the world (Van Dyk, 2001: 6).

The AIDS epidemic has created more than 13 million orphans under the age of 15 years who have lost a parent or both to AIDS. All these children live in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2000). The stigma associated with AIDS deaths in many communities makes families not to want to have anything to do with these children.

A significant and growing number of children and adolescents have been identified as HIV/AIDS affected by parental death and chronic illness from AIDS and are exposed to major psychological risk factors. School is often the first place where behavioural and emotional problems of HIV/AIDS affected children and adolescents are exhibited. School social workers are in a unique position to meet the intervention needs of HIV/AIDS affected children.

Children from HIV/AIDS affected families are exposed to major psychological risk factors, including "stigma", secrecy, exposure to acute and chronic illness, death of parents and or siblings, orphan-hood, and placement in a foster home.

In a pilot study of 40 HIV affected families, including 59 children between the ages of 10 and 19, 43 percent of the children were reported as having problems at home, 73 percent had problems in school, and 58 percent had experienced lower grades (Draimin *et al.*, 1999:44). The researchers note that the HIV affected children acted out their most

disturbing emotions. Such behaviour confuses and distracts parents, teachers, and case managers, who become preoccupied exclusively with understanding the behaviours. As a result they are unable to address the underlying emotional issues involved.

In the study quoted above only 43 percent of the children had received counselling, while the vast majority of those had obtained counselling through the school system (Drainin *et al.*, 1999).

#### 3.5.3.1 **Practice intervention with HIV/aids affected children**

The social worker can play a larger role in responding to the needs of HIV affected children. These roles will be discussed below:

(a) **Increased training and education**

School social workers should be familiar with emerging knowledge, particularly about how the psychological concerns of HIV affected children may differ from children affected by the death of parents through chronic illnesses other than AIDS. School social workers should take advantage of continuing education courses, community based educational programs, and the available literature to educate themselves about the psychological concerns of HIV affected children and adolescents.

(b) Individual and family counselling

School social workers are well placed to provide individual or family counselling to HIV affected families. They can equip parents to help children succeed and overcome behavioural and emotional problems. Parents may also look to the school counsellor for referrals for family based counselling and HIV/AIDS community services.

(c) School based aids awareness programs

School social workers can initiate and help implement school based AIDS awareness programs. They should be prepared to respond to students' reactions as parents hardly disclose their HIV status to their children. Aids awareness information may inadvertently divulge the nature of the parent's illness by describing symptoms. The child might be in a better position to help a parent to accept and understand his or her condition.

(d) Collaboration with community based HIV/AIDS programs

Some school social workers might not be in a better position to implement AIDS related counselling or programs in the schools. However, they should be aware of community based programs that can provide counselling and similar HIV related services. They can also collaborate with AIDS services organisations on pregnancy prevention, and sexuality or drug awareness programs to provide



training and education for school staff.

(e) **Advocacy for HIV affected students**

Advocacy includes educating teachers and school administrators about the needs of HIV affected children and ensuring that students are accurately assessed in respect of behaviour reflecting problems emanating from their AIDS related grief or anxiety.

### **3.5.4 Problem: Poverty**

Poverty is characterised by the inability of individuals, households or communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable standard of living. In South Africa it is commonly perceived to mean alienation from the community, food insecurity, crowded homes, use of unsafe and substandard forms of energy, lack of adequately paying and secure jobs as well as fragmentation of the family (May & Govender, 1998:4).

In addition to the above identifying features of poverty there are alternative understandings of poverty which include:

- **Poverty line:** A simple definition where poverty is identified as an income below a minimal standard.

- Consumption based poverty line: "The expenditure necessary to buy a minimum standard of nutrition and other basic necessities and further amount that varies from country to country, reflecting the cost of participating in the life of society' (World Bank, 1990:26).

O'Neil in Potgieter (1998) says poverty can be viewed as a condition caused by society, which allowed the conditions that created poverty to flourish. From this perspective the structural problems of society are blamed for creating poverty. The poor are seen as being handicapped by a lack of resources in the environment, such as limited opportunities for employment or educational advancement.

One study, which examined child poverty rates in seventeen developed countries, indicates that the child poverty rate is 50 percent higher than the next highest country. The child poverty rate for the country as a whole has hovered at or above 20 percent for more than a decade (Annie E. Casey Foundation). In 1995, 24 percent of children under the age of six lived in poverty, compared to 18 percent of older children.

Childhood poverty has both immediate and lasting negative effects. Children who are poor are more likely to have difficulty in school, to fall pregnant, and, as adults, to earn less and be unemployed, if at all (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1997).

#### **3.5.4.1 Practice intervention with poverty**

Poverty alleviation strategies should be introduced in the schools and the nearby communities. The South African government has introduced the Feeding Scheme Programme only in primary schools, in order to help children coming from poverty-stricken families have something to eat. In some situations, the meal at school might be the only meal the child receives for the day.

The school social worker might collaborate her services with other sectors in order to combat poverty. The Social Welfare Department, which is now known as the Department of Social Development has a developmental strategy which emphasises self-help and participation by local people to address poverty in contrast to hand-outs.

#### **3.5.5 Problem: Teenage Pregnancy**

Although few studies have specifically explored sexual behaviour in representative samples of young teenagers, available evidence does suggest worse consequences at earlier ages. Chilman (in Freeman *et al.*, 1998) states that young teenagers are more likely to engage in sporadic and unplanned sexual activity.

The risk of early pregnancy and other negative outcomes of illicit sexual activity is lower for girls with high educational aspirations and positive attitudes toward school. Similarly the risks are lower for girls where interventions that help teenagers improve school

experiences and life coping skills (Edelman, 1987:496-509).

### **3.5.5.1 Practice intervention in teenage pregnancy**

Clancy (in Freeman *et al.*, 1998) states that school social workers are well positioned to enhance the community school and family-school linkages that encourage school-involvement and skills.

The school social worker can assist parents with the skills to discuss sexuality matters with their teenagers. As family environment plays a role in adolescent sexual behaviour, efforts to involve and support the families are critical in managing and modelling responsible sexual behaviour.

### **3.5.6 Problem: School Dropouts**

Third World countries are faced with a significant and alarming rate of school dropouts as a result of economic, political and social upheavals encountered by families in a rapidly changing and challenging world, resulting from advanced technology compounded by migration, industrialisation and urbanisation. School dropouts occur even among the potentially gifted pupils.

### **3.5.6.1 Practice intervention in school drop-outs**

School social workers can work proactively on the problem of school drop-outs by looking analytically at the educational program of the school and working towards change. For example in some schools under-achievers are not allowed to participate in sports even if they are good at it. This might compel the child to lose interest and decide to quit schooling. The school social worker can assist in this matter by influencing change in this policy.

Thus school social workers need to be actually involved in the planning of the school policy, in the curriculum and classroom management in order to reduce school drop-outs.

### **3.5.7 Problem: School Violence**

The expression of violence in our schools serves as a warning that change must occur. Responsibility for creating a climate for change rests with educational leaders.

A single act of violence within the school has the potential to destroy any prospect of a safe orderly environment. School violence deters the fundamental purpose of the schools.

It can result in the following:

- decline in academic performance and morale,
- decline in public support,

- decline in enrolment figures.

According to Greer and Greese (in Freeman, 1998) essentials for school wellness include the following:

- creating a sense of community,
- an underlying ethos of care and consideration within each classroom,
- maintenance and protection of school facilities, and
- development of parental and neighbourhood relationships and commitment.

#### **3.5.7.1 Practice intervention in school violence**

As microcosms of their communities schools have different needs and strengths. The school social worker should treat each school as unique in her intervention. The school social worker can assist in leadership training of teachers as well as students, parents and communities.

Greer and Greese (1998) further state that a school social worker's intervention in schools provides positive indicators for a school climate to be established. These are:

- A smile on the face of students
- Clean and well tended facilities
- A warm welcome

- Teachers, principal and staff interacting with students
- Visible evidence of learning
- Students behaving courteously to one another.

All the above elements contribute to the positive indicators that enhance the school climate.

The studies of effective schools indicate that there is a correlation between students' chances for academic success and a climate that is collegial and collaborative.

### **3.5.8 Problem: Crime and Juvenile Delinquency**

Tappan (in Bartol, 1995:17) states that crime is an intentional act committed without defence or excuse in violation of the criminal law and penalized by the state as a felony or misdemeanour. Criminal behaviour therefore is intentional behaviour that violates the criminal code.

Differing from crime, juvenile delinquency is an imprecise, nebulous, legal and social label applied to a wide variety of law and norm violating behaviours. Legally a juvenile delinquent is one who commits an act defined by law as illegal and who is pronounced as delinquent by a court of law. He is usually a person under the age of 18 years (Bartol, 1995:117-118).

Studies have shown that more often than non-delinquents, delinquents usually come from homes where parents are divorced or separated (Flynn, 1983:7-42). The relationship between a broken home and delinquency is confounded by so many other variables and influences. There appears to be an inverse relationship between divorce rates and social, economic class or status.

#### **3.5.8.1 Practice intervention with crime and juvenile delinquency**

The school social worker could play an important role in the sense that long before learners engage in crime, he or she can conduct crime prevention programs or initiate crime awareness campaigns. The prevention can target those at risk of becoming delinquents. Secondary as well as tertiary prevention will be rendered to those who have started committing crimes.

Life as well as leadership skills can also help them say "no" to criminal behaviour. The school social worker can work hand in hand with the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO).

NICRO renders services to offenders in pre-imprisonment, imprisonment and post imprisonment phases. It also works with the family of offenders in order to facilitate the re-entry of an ex-convict into the fabric of society.



### **3.5.9 Problem: Absenteeism**

Absenteeism remains a serious problem in many schools. It consumes a disproportionate amount of a social worker's time. The schools should develop procedures for parents to be in touch with the school periodically, when the child is absent. The class teacher may contact parents if the child is absent for more than 2 days without any letter of excuse. Sometimes it is difficult for teachers to contact parents as they have school-work to attend to. Here the services of a social worker can come in handy.

#### **3.4.9.1 Practice intervention in absenteeism**

One of the functions of the school social worker is to act as a link between home and school. The social worker can do home visits if the child has been absent from school for two consecutive days without any report from parents. Children with similar problems can be grouped together to solve this problem. They might be involved in some school activities, which might reinstate their sense of self-worth and boost their morale for school attendance.

### **3.5.10 Problem: Lack of Parent-school Collaborations**

The Department of Social work at the University of Zululand visited more than eight High Schools around KwaDlangezwa and Esikhawini areas, at Umthunzini Circuit, concerning a program the University intends to conduct in those schools. More than half of the schools

visited expressed their biggest concern at the lack of cooperation on the part of parents in school matters. Sometimes schools send letters to parents so as to discuss something about a child. But parents neither acknowledge letters nor come to school.

Walberg and Lai (1999) state that parent participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children is an important factor in academic achievement. Schools cannot educate children, particularly vulnerable children, without the co-operation of families.

In light of the above, a low level of parental involvement is cause for concern. In 1996, parental attendance at parent-teacher meetings decreased from 84 percent in the elementary schools to 47 percent in middle schools. Forty one percent of elementary and middle schools reported that parental input is considered when making policy decisions in three or more areas. Although 62 percent of students in grades 3 through to 12 reported that they participated in two or more activities in their child's school, this percentage dropped from 73 to 53 percent between the elementary and high school grades. A report by the US Department of Education in October 1997 showed that it is not merely contact between fathers and children that is important. Rather it is active participation in their children's lives through involvement in their school outcomes (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1997,p xi).

In light of the above finding it may be assumed that schools need a more active involvement, particularly among lower income and vulnerable families. The literature

states that parent school collaboration is valuable because it can:

- Solve many of the problems, such as discipline, that tend to overwhelm the schools
- Facilitate communication between the school and parents
- Contribute ingredients considered essential to a learning-socialising environment of children and
- Result in activities that foster parent-teacher support (Winters & Easton, 1983:107).

Parents need to become familiar with the entire process of decision making and how to make appropriate choices among numerous options. True implementation of parental involvement necessitates the development process where parents can learn about and simultaneously become involved in their children's school activities.

It is desirable for school authorities and parents to begin working together on neutral tasks rather than on contentious problems where each has taken a side. Winters and Easton (1983:108) state that collaboration between parents and staff is the key to addressing school problems.

#### **3.5.10.1 Practice intervention in parent school involvement**

The school social worker usually co-ordinate this type of involvement and is responsible for the overall implementation of the process and engages school personnel and parents

in planning and carrying out collaborative activities. Initially, a needs assessment is conducted to establish priorities, identify tasks, and initiate a parent-school problem solving team.

The common concern of parents and teachers is the child. Thus they should collaborate in the interest of the child.

Parent-school collaboration develops as school personnel and parents interact in problem solving endeavours, planned tasks, and reciprocal activities. In the final analysis mutual trust and understanding are enhanced through such working together.

The role of the school social worker is that of a co-ordinator in parent school involvement. He or she provides direction, facilitates the planning and implementation of activities and guarantees communication.

### **3.5.11 Underachievement**

The child who lives in poverty and whose parents find the fulfilment of basic needs difficult to accomplish often enters the school system lacking some of the requisite skills. Academic handicaps are in large part attributable to strained home situations in which the acquisition of the basic necessities such as food and shelter has to take priority over books, health care, and educational experiences. Thus, a developmental back lag may take root from birth with the result that these experiences become difficult to make up as

time passes (Allen-Meares, 2000). In such circumstances learning problems give rise to underachievement. This means that a child does not do as well as the child without those handicaps. There is thus a gap between the child's achievement and what he or she is actually capable of.

It becomes evident that teachers should do everything in their power to assist underachievers to achieve what they are capable of. Thus the teacher should attempt to bridge the gap that has arisen. Thus any child, even the intellectually gifted may, for a variety of reasons, experience difficulties with a subject, thus showing signs of underachievement.

### **3.6 LEGISLATION AND POLICIES**

Legislation is fundamentally important, for it is in legislation that the policy makers of a country give a written guarantee of their intentions regarding social development and support services.

The school social worker must acquire as much knowledge and understanding of legislation pertaining to schools and the resultant school policies by continually researching new legislation. School social workers take advantage of policies in ways that are responsive to students' needs.

School social workers' responsibility include helping to modify school conditions and

policies which seem to be obstacles to successful school experience for children. At times school policy and the nature of school authority needs to be interpreted to pupils.

At times a school policy might somehow either support or hinder prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of pupils. For example, the researcher was called in at Mantshangule school, in KwaDlangezwa, to help educators decide on an appropriate punishment as corporal punishment was abolished. I explained what I had seen in Model C schools. There authorities would deter the child's undesirable behaviour by making the child to remain at school on Friday afternoons with teachers taking turns to supervise those children, who had done something wrong during the week.

### **3.6.1 White Paper on Education and Training, 1995**

The White Paper on Education and Training indicates the values and principles on which education must be based. These include the following:

- (a) the basic right to education, regardless of race, class, gender, religion or age
- (b) lifelong, good-quality education and training
- (c) free access to education
- (d) the redressing of existing inequalities in education
- (e) a unitary education system
- (f) the total development of all learners (which development includes providing for their academic and occupational training, as well as for their overall psychological,

health and social needs).

In terms of legislation and policies the South African education landscape was changed not only the White Paper on Education and Training (1995) but also by subsequent legislative provisions. One of the most far reaching was the South African Schools Act of 1996.

### **3.6.2 The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996**

In terms of this Act

- (a) Every parent is responsible for ensuring that every learner attends school from the first day of the year in which such learner attains the age of seven (the age has now changed to six).
- (b) A public school must admit learners and provide their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating against any learner in any way.
- (c) In determining the placement of learners with special educational needs (LSEN), the Head of the Department and the Principal must take into account the rights and wishes of the parents of such a learner.
- (d) a recognised sign language enjoys the status of an official language for the purposes of learning at public schools.

In this report one can deduce the following from the foregoing legislative provision:

- (a) Education support services will serve all learners.
- (b) Interest groups such as national councils, parent bodies, relevant non-government organisations, teachers' associations and labour unions should be involved in policy making.
- (c) Persons who are themselves disabled should also be involved in decisions making.

The present education system is a unitary education system, which is responsible for the education of all South African learners, regardless of their educational needs. There is a shift away from the earlier medical-clinical model towards one in which the principles of inclusion, and community involvement feature prominently and which seeks to eliminate existing inequalities (Du Toit, 1997:113-116).

### **3.6.3 Basic School Functionality, School Safety Security and Discipline Policy**

This policy deals with the level of absence, lateness, and truancy and the procedures for dealing with them. It also deals with the school procedures to enhance safety, security and discipline and their implementation. It also deals with a school's disciplinary procedures. Corporal punishment was abolished in South Africa, schools are no longer



allowed to use corporal punishment. Recent research indicates that corporal punishment violates the psychological and physical boundaries of children (Allen-Meares, 2000). In addition South Africa is in a constitution era in which no person may be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment as corporal punishment would be a direct transgression of a fundamental provision of our constitution.

### **3.7 RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES**

In discussing Education for All, the educational support services previously available in special schools only should be made available to all learners. Hence the forthcoming discussion will look at the restructuring for support services in order for all learners to benefit from such services.

Adelman (1996:431-445) highlights major gaps in the movement to restructure education and community health and social services with a view to accelerating reform by addressing gaps and the concept of the enabling component. The movement to restructure schools often makes reference to school-line services, when in fact initiatives to link community health and social services to schools are not informed by educational reform but stem from efforts to restructure community services.

To correct this, schools must deal with factors interfering with students' learning and performance. Adelman(1996:445) affirms that such factors must be addressed if the educational aim is to succeed. Despite widespread recognition of the need for services

that enable students to benefit from instruction, the school reform movement continues to pay scant attention to education support programs and services.

Practitioners at a school site operate in relative isolation and usually are not included in new governance bodies as schools move toward school based management and shared decision-making. It seems reasonable to conclude that the prevailing view of pupil services in policy and practice is that they are desirable but not essential. Because of their devalued status in the educational priority list, such support services are deemed dispensable in response to economic constraints. This further limits the ability of schools to address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development.

If the restructuring of education support services continues to be a low priority, emerging social provisions probably may not encompass school reforms and may even exacerbate deficiencies in school provisioning.

### **3.7.1 Problems with Initiatives to Reform Community Services and Link Them to Schools**

Community based agencies are being encouraged to enhance accessibility through better linkages with schools, and where feasible, to make schools a context for a significant segment of the basic programs and services that constitute a comprehensive system of care. These agencies bring additional practitioners to the schools. Some schools have implemented an interagency case management team and established an on-site resource

(Adelman, 1996:432-434).

Some pupil service professionals view the involvement of community agencies as discounting their skills and jeopardising their jobs. Such tension is a major impediment to enhancing co-ordination between community and school services.

Successful school community collaborations are described as requiring the empowerment of children and families and the capability to address diverse constituencies and contexts. School community efforts should be designed to complement and enhance each other in ways that evolve a comprehensive, integrated approach to address barriers to learning and enhancing healthy development.

Adelman makes the point that there is a consensus that significant barriers to learning are encountered by a majority of students whose families are poor (Adelman, 1996;434). He further states that it is evident that an overemphasis on providing services for individuals is an insufficient strategy to address the full range of factors such as those causing poor academic performance, dropouts, violence, teenage pregnancy, and substance abuse.

Comprehensive models recognise that an extensive continuum of community and school interventions is required to address complex problems. A comprehensive integrated continuum of learning activity is essential in addressing the needs of the many youngsters who encounter barriers that interfere with their benefiting satisfactorily from instruction.

Reform should include programs that promote healthy development and foster positive functioning as the best way to prevent much learning behaviour, emotional, and health problems as necessary adjuncts to corrective instruction.

For schools to provide desired student outcomes, school and community reformers must move beyond restructuring instructional and management functions, and focus on enabling function as well as teaching and learning (Adelman, 1996:437-439).

Adelman identifies six interrelated clusters of programmatic areas. He presents them according to the following enabling functions:

#### **3.7.1.1 Classroom focus enabling function**

When a teacher encounters difficulty in working with a youngster, the first step is to see whether there are ways to address the problem within the regular classroom and perhaps with added home involvement. The effort is on enhancing classroom-based efforts to enable learning by increasing teacher effectiveness and handle problems in the classroom.

This function is accomplished by providing personalised help to increase the teacher's array of strategies for working with a wide range of individual differences.

### **3.7.1.2 Student and family assistance**

Some problems cannot be handled without special interventions. The emphasis is on providing special services in a personalised way to assist with a broad range of needs. To begin with, available social, physical and mental health programs in the school and community are used. Community outreach brings in other resources with which they are linked to existing activity in an integrated manner.

### **3.7.1.3 Crisis assistance and prevention**

This type of service ensures that immediate emergency and follow-up care are provided to students and that students are able to resume learning without undue delay. Prevention activity outcomes are reflected in indices showing that there is a safe and productive environment and that the students and their families acquire the type of attitude and capacities needed to deal with violence and other threats to safety. Work in this area involves:

- programs for emergency/crisis responses at the site, and throughout school complex and community;
- prevention programs for school and community to address safety and violence reduction, suicide prevention and child abuse.

#### **3.7.1.4 Support for transactions**

This involves planning, developing and maintaining a comprehensive focus on the variety of transactions confronting students and their families. Anticipated outcomes are to reduce alienation and increase positive attitudes and involvement related to school and various learning activities. Work in this area requires:

- programs to establish a welcoming and socially supportive school community, especially from new arrivals,
- counselling and articulating programs to support grade to grade and school to school transactions, moving to and from special education.

#### **3.7.1.5 Home involvement in schooling**

Efforts to enhance home involvement must range from programs to address specific learning and support needs for adults in the home to approaches that empower legitimate parent representatives to become full partners in school governance. The work focus is on:

- programs to address specific learning and support needs of adults in the home;
- programs to help those in the home meet their basic obligations to the student,

- such as instruction for parenting and for helping with schoolwork;
- systems to improve communication about matters essential to the student and family;
- programs to enhance the home-school connection and sense of community;
- interventions to enhance participation in making decisions that are essential to the student;
- programs to enhance home support related to the student's basic learning and development;
- intervention to elicit support, collaborations and partnerships with others at home with respect to meeting classroom, school, and community needs;
- interventions to mobilise others at home to solve problems related to student needs.

#### **3.7.1.6 Community outreach for involvement and support**

Community out-reach is used to build linkages and collaborations to develop greater involvement in schooling and enhance support for efforts to enable learning. Work in this aspect covers such areas as:

- programs to recruit involvement and support (e.g., linkages and integration with community health and social services, local business to adopt a school and provide resources, awards, incentives, and formal partnership arrangements);
- systems and programs specifically designed to train, screen, and maintain

- volunteers;
- outreach programs to involve students and families;
- programs to enhance community-school connections and sense of community.

### **3.8 INCREASING SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK'S VISIBILITY WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

The presence of social workers in the school is important to ensure the successful education of children. Yet their contribution is often ignored or devalued by some stakeholders in education. The school principal, focussing on the educational experience of the child, sometimes experiences difficulty connecting social work intervention with the learning process. Germain (1982:3-12) points to the difficulty of defining the role of school social work function from other professional services available in the school.

The goals of school social work remain poorly advertised and often misunderstood by its important consumers, administrators and teachers in the school system, and even by students and parents.

Staudt and Craft (1983:119-131) in their analysis of the perceptions by school personnel of the social worker's performance found the following two weak points:

- There was a lack of communication between social workers and school staff; and
- There was a lack of awareness by school staff of the program and services



provided by the social workers.

According to them the school social worker should be concerned with: How to improve her visibility with school personnel so that the latter can understand, appreciate, and support social work services in their schools. The school social worker needs to have the approval and encouragement of the school administrator.

German (in Alexander, 1986:152) defines the school social worker's role from an ecological perspective, as action at the interface between a student's coping patterns and patterns in the environment.

School social workers and educators need to be responsible to understand each other and to recognise that they share a common goal in enhancing the growth and learning of students (Alexander, 1986:154). They can alert school personnel about particular areas of expertise that are available through the social worker.

### **3.9 THE PROVISION OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

The Department of Welfare will negotiate with the Department of Education about the implementation of social support and development services including life skills training programmes which could run throughout the school going years and incorporated into the curriculum. This training should include personal relationship skills, education regarding sexuality and awareness programs against substance abuse and other programmes. It

should be aimed at teaching interpersonal skills, the development of self-esteem, decision-making and problem solving skills (White Paper for Social Welfare).

### **3.9.1 The Functions of the School Social Work**

A study of Kasiram (1988) reveals the following functions of the social work programs:

Traditionally the role of the school social worker focused on the individual child, his adaptations to school and his use of learning opportunities. But there is now a shift in emphasis, as school social workers have to intervene also at the social environment level when it might affect the child's potential to perform well in school.

Social workers should critically examine the need for change in the service delivery as well as place focus for change in the provision of social work away from the First World Model which is predominantly urban. In USA it was seen that this model benefits the middle class White population while leaving the majority of the Black population to battle to survive under conditions of massive urban and rural poverty. It should be the responsibility of every social worker to become expert in developmental social welfare.

It is disturbing that some agencies do not have a copy of the White Paper for Social Welfare in their agencies. The researcher found this out while referring her Masters part-time students (who are employed by welfare agencies) to that policy guideline document.

Three main functions performed by the school social worker can be mentioned. These are the prevention services, the identification of target groups, and advocacy.

### **3.9.1.1 Prevention services**

In their practice generally social workers are involved in the prevention of the problem before it starts. Hence the school social worker is in a better position to dispense this type of service. He or she will be able to reach out to a number of school-going children through awareness campaigns such as life skills programmes that target HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, crime prevention and teenage pregnancy to mention but a few. The Child Care Act, Act no. 74 of 1983 and the Child Amendment Act, Act no. 96 of 1996, emphasise the importance of prevention services.

The second year, Social Work students at the University of Zululand conduct life skills training programme in the form of group work. In these training programmes learners in the local schools of KwaDlangezwa are taught skills necessary for successful living, as a prevention service. Hence such a service is developmental in nature, as it identifies and flags down problems such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and early sexual activities long enough before they start.

### **3.9.1.2 Identification of target groups**

The school social worker has the responsibility to identify children in need of special

services. As a co-ordinator of the training of second year Social Work students in skills training in the schools, I have also received reports from teachers and principals as well as from parents about a particular child who needs special service.

### **3.9.1.3 Advocacy**

The school social worker is expected to advocate on behalf of the child. This advocacy may include clarifying the problem of the child to others. A child might not have school necessities due to financial problems at home. The school social worker can advocate on behalf of the child in this matter. The principal could then not expel the child from school.

### **3.9.1.4 Extending direct service to pupils and parents**

The school social worker's role includes discharging the following responsibilities in that he or she:

- Provides emotional support and offers educational counselling.
- Assists families to understand their children's educational needs and resources.
- Enables families to interpret their concerns to school personnel and, to open lines of communication in this regard.
- Provides information to facilitate the family's use of community resources.
- Helps pupils overcome barriers to school attendance and achievement and thus promoting responsible behaviour.

- Counsels pupils or parents on various factors that affect learning.
- Intervenes early in problem situations to prevent them developing into serious difficulties.
- Provides medical attention for children.

#### **3.9.1.5 Interpretation**

People or agencies that have referred the child may need to understand the causes, effects, prognoses and plans of treatment regarding particular problems. The school social worker may also need to interpret the problems to representatives of other professions.

#### **3.9.1.6 Linking home and school**

The school social worker ensures that the child attends school regularly and enjoys, at least, the minimum basic maternal requirements. The school social worker also interprets to the home, the problems of the child at school, the school's concerns in the light of school policy.

#### **3.9.1.7 Team-work with school personnel**

The school social worker can collaborate with teachers to modify classroom approaches to meet special needs of pupils. He can consult with teachers and pupil services about

student life and home circumstances.

He can also participate in staff conferences related to the pupil's behaviour, social adjustment and academic progress. He can also contribute to staff development on subjects such as parent interviewing, barriers to attendance, the problem of withdrawn or disruptive children and class management.

#### **3.9.1.8 Personal service to the teacher**

This kind of service is indirect in the sense that the social worker helps the teacher with his or her personal problems to ensure that ultimately the performance of the teacher is not necessarily affected by his or her private life. The child also benefits in this kind of service albeit in an indirect way.

#### **3.9.1.9 Supervision**

Supervision is the traditional method of transmitting knowledge of social work skills and practice from the trained to the untrained and from the experienced to the inexperienced worker.

School social work supervision provides the social worker with the necessary guidance and support to ensure professional and personal growth.

The Goals of Supervision are to:

- Ensure that the agencies provide adequate services and maintain a standard of service.
- Help the worker to function to the fullest capacity.
- Help the worker to achieve greater professional independence and autonomy.

#### 3.9.1.10 **Collaboration**

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:10) highlights the principle of intersectional collaboration in service rendering, involving various sectors in solving a particular problem.

- (a) Collaboration denotes an exchange of information that results in joint problem solving efforts. The ability of team members to link their unique contributions to those of other professionals is essential to interdisciplinary practice.
- (b) The social worker often sets up collaborative meetings between teachers and students with behaviour problems.
- (c) In school social work the process of interaction takes place when two or more persons work together on the solution of a problem and share responsibility for the results.

- (d) Because of her training and knowledge the school social worker is able to help the teacher get a better understanding of the child's behaviour, problems and needs.

#### **3.9.1.11 Consultation**

The consultant is sought by the consultee regarding some problem which the latter is experiencing in his work. Consultation takes two goals. The first goal is of enabling the consultee to understand his current work problem better and to handle it effectively. The second goal is to improve his ability in managing future work problems.

This is an indirect method of offering service to those who carry direct responsibility for action.

#### **3.9.1.12 Referral system**

The school social worker will have to refer pupils to other agencies if she is unable to help them. Some of the children's problems might need the intervention of a specialised professional, for example if the child needs to be seen by a clinical psychologist because of some mental problem (Adapted in Kasiram, 1988).

### **3.10 CONCLUSION**

The input of social workers in dealing with problems which are in some way related to the



social situation of learners, such as unstable domestic circumstances, poverty, and orphans to mention a few cannot be over emphasized.

Social workers are trained to try and prevent social problems. That means that they are able to assist with preventative programmes such as those designed to prevent teenage pregnancies and learners from dropping out of school.

They also work in close co-operation with a variety of welfare organisations and other government departments. Being so placed they are in a position to refer learners with special problems to the appropriate agencies where necessary. Against the expositions traversed in the literature review on the subject, attention will now be given to the research methodology. This aspect is the main focus of the next chapter.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In every study an appropriate research design enables the researcher to gather the data required, in order to achieve the aims of the study.

This chapter on research methodology explains the way in which the research was conducted and how the data was collected. Additionally, more background information is given on the research design. Quantitative as well as qualitative methods are discussed in detail.

In this study the main objectives were to highlight the needs and problems experienced by the majority of children in South Africa with particular reference to the schools located in the Durban, Empangeni and Pietermaritzburg areas against the background of services rendered by both the Departments of Education and Social Welfare.

## 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan which includes every aspect of a proposed study from conceptualisation of the problem right through to the dissemination of findings (Grinnell, 1988:219). In short, research design refers to the structure or plan, which the researcher uses in order to carry out his study properly and achieve the objectives and goals planned. The research design will be both exploratory and descriptive. McKendrick(1990:256) states that an exploratory study acquaints the researcher with the characteristics of the research target. It aims at gaining familiarity with a phenomenon or achieving new insights into it, in order to formulate a more precise research problem or to develop hypotheses. Babbie (1992:90) outlines three purposes of the exploratory study:

- To satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding of the problem issues;
- To test the feasibility of the study being undertaken;
- To develop methods to be employed in a more careful study.

Although the study will be exploratory and descriptive in nature, there will be comparative analyses in respect of the findings from different phases and sample groups as well. Babbie (1995:85-86) states that a major purpose of many scientific

studies is to describe situations and events.

The literature in social science research presents two philosophical debates, which form the basis of social science research. These are positivism and anti-positivism. The basic point about positivism on the one hand is that it is a philosophy, which both proclaims the suitability of the scientific method in comparison to other forms of knowledge and gives an account of what that method entails (Bryman, 1996:14). Logical positivism on the other hand is a variant of positivism. It is a theory of meaning in which a proposition is acceptable only if there is a quantitative research method for deciding whether the proposition is true or false. Thus, in following the widely held convention of regarding quantitative research as embraced in positivism, a researcher presumably subscribes to the view that positivism reflects the aims and tenets of the latter (Bryman, 1996:14).

While quantitative research relies primarily on assumptions from the positivist approach to science (Neuman, 1997:106) the qualitative approach examines differences among cases, but with a different aim to explain the conversation of one variable with another, usually across many cases. The qualitative researcher typically has only a broad familiarity with cases (Ragin, 1994:107). The qualitative research also examines patterns of similarities and differences across cases and tries to come to terms with their diversity (Neuman, 1997; 419). The qualitative approach tends to use narrative

descriptions of persons, events and relationships. Qualitative research uses content analysis and discourse analysis. Palmquist (in Babbie & Mouton, 2001:98) states that content analysis examines words or phrases within a range of texts, including books, book chapters, essays, interviews and speeches as well as informal conversations and headlines. By examining the presence or repetition of certain words and phrases in these texts, a researcher is able to make inferences about the philosophical assumptions of a writer, a written piece and even the culture and time in which the text is embedded.

Traditionally, content analysis is usually divided into two types namely conceptual analysis and relational analysis. In this study content analysis is used to interpret the qualitative data collected.

#### **4.2.1 The Tenets of Positivism**

Bryman (1996:14-15) posits that the tenets of positivism entail first the belief that the methods and procedures of the natural sciences are appropriate to the social sciences, second a belief that only observable phenomena can validly be warranted as knowledge. This second tenet suggests that so called scientific knowledge is arrived at through the accumulation of verified facts. Seen in this light positivists regard scientific theories as providing a kind of validation of empirical research in the sense that the

hypotheses are derived from them. Positivism is also assumed to entail a particular stance in relation to values according to Bryman (1996:14 –15).

## **4.2.2 The Tenets of Qualitative Research**

Holliday (2002:123) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:270–274) highlight the following tenets of qualitative research:

### **4.2.2.1 The qualitative areas of social life**

Qualitative research describes actions within a specific setting and invites rather than tries to control the possibility of an array of variables. It presents research in terms of human relationships, and invokes the need to discover as much about what the research subjects feel about the information they provide.

It is in these qualitative areas of social life, that is, the backgrounds, interests and broader social perceptions which defy quantitative research, that qualitative research fits. Qualitative research does not pretend to solve the problems of quantitative research, but does not see them as constraints.

It seeks to find ways to reduce the effect of uncontrollable social variables in order

thereby to investigate them directly.

#### **4.2.2.2 Managing subjectivity**

It is acknowledged that the researcher is the most important instrument in the research process. The researcher needs to be unbiased in his or her descriptions and interpretations. He needs to get close to the research subjects, gaining trust and establishing rapport, in order to generate legitimate and truthful description.

To understand human behaviour, it is insufficient to rely on quantitative survey and statistics. It is therefore necessary to delve into the subjective qualities that govern behaviour. Qualitative researchers are increasingly expected to come out and tell it as it really happened.

#### **4.2.2.3 Developing rigour through writing**

In quantitative research, the sequence of steps is prescribed. It is thus difficult to respond to uncontrollable variables. On the other hand, qualitative research has the resource to be liberated from a tight step by step approach. Decisions about research instruments are made in gradual response to the nature of the social setting being investigated as its nature is revealed. This means that every qualitative research

design will be different.

The rigour in quantitative research is in the disciplined application of prescribed rules for instrument design, whereas the rigour in qualitative research is in the principled development of strategy to suit the scenario being studied, as it is revealed.

#### **4.2.2.4      Judicious balance**

In qualitative research, there is a concern for how the research strategy suits the research setting, in terms of feasibility and the researcher-participant relationship. There are two sides to qualitative research. To meet the exigencies of the social situation being studied, the researcher is afforded the freedom to explore creatively the best way to approach a scenario. The two sides represent the judicious balance between taking the opportunity to encounter the research setting while maintaining the principles of social science.

#### **4.2.2.5      Research as social action**

Several issues are involved in the balance between creative opportunity and maintaining a scientific principle. Creative exploration makes qualitative research akin to the research we all do in everyday life. Approaching the research setting



appropriately involves interaction between the culture of the setting and the culture of research.

Like many aspects of professional and private life, research is part of social action. The written study becomes an account of a personal struggle to make sense of complex human situations within which the researcher herself may well become implicated.

#### **4.2.2.6 Research and everyday life**

Qualitative research is in many ways, what we all do in everyday life. We continually solve problems about how we should behave with other people in a wide range of settings. To do this, we need to research not only how others believe but also how we should behave with them.

#### **4.2.2.7 Discovering and observing culture**

To understand the nature of innate cultural competence and how the researcher is involved in culture as anyone else, it is necessary to explore what is meant by culture.

The qualitative researcher must avoid the prescriptive view of culture because it implies how things are before the research begins and does not allow meaning to emerge

(Holliday, 2002:12).

When the researcher looks at an unfamiliar social grouping, it can be said to have a "culture" when there is a discernible set of behaviours and understandings connected with group cohesion. Olmstead (in Toseland & Rivas, 1998:82) defines group culture as values, beliefs, customs, and traditions held in common by group members. When group membership is diverse, group culture emerges slowly. Members contribute unique sets of values, that originate from their past experiences as well as from their ethnic, cultural and racial heritages. These values are blended through group communications and interactions.

Qualitative research properly seeks answers to questions by examining various social settings. Qualitative researchers, then are, most interested in how human beings arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles and so forth (Berg, 1995:7).

Culture is a dynamic, ongoing group process, which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances. A basic difference between everyday qualitative research and scientific qualitative research is that the researcher must take on the discipline of making the

familiar situation strange, even where the research scenario is familiar.

To illustrate this point, I recount a SANPAD Workshop 3 on Qualitative Research that I attended in Durban from 08 to 12 July 2002. The participants had to do some exercises concerning this module. One of the exercises was to do participant observation in familiar areas such as The Workshop Mall in Commercial Street, the Victoria Street Market, The Museum and the Beachfront. As I have lived and worked in Durban I was not excited about the exercise. But the facilitator from the Netherlands stated that we should try and make the familiar unfamiliar. As a participant in that exercise I was able to explore what was happening at the Victoria Street Market, something I never noticed when I visited the Victoria Street Market several times before. I observed the group culture, the language used and the customers frequenting the area as well as what commodities the customers bought.

#### **4.2.2.8 Research as ideological practice**

Within the context of qualitative research the ideology which is particularly relevant is that of the scientific research community. The scientific community is a collection of people and a set of norms, behaviours, and attitudes that bind them together to sustain the scientific ethos. They are a community because they share ethical principles, beliefs and values, techniques and training, and career paths. This scientific community

includes both natural and social sciences.

How science is done depends very much on the ideology of the practitioners (Lanskeer *et al.*, 1997:2). Kuhn (in Holliday, 2002:14) states that within social science the internal politics, culture and ideology of a scientific community can have an immense impact on the development of scientific thinking.

#### **4.2.2.9 Naturalism**

The research setting is a physical, geographical place which the researcher can describe simply by "being there" long enough and ensure authenticity by focusing on what local characters say in interviews, personal accounts and conversations. The hardest form of data becomes a verbatim transcript of local people's actual words (Gubrim & Holstein, 1997:19–23). In naturalism, the researcher gets fully involved in the setting for an extended period.

#### **4.2.2.10 The language of cases and context**

The language of qualitative research is one of interpretation. Researchers discuss cases in their social context and develop grounded theories that emphasise tracing the process and sequence of events in specific settings. They explain how people attach

meanings to events and learn to see events from a variety of perspectives. They rarely go into discussion of variables.

Quantitative researchers try to convert concepts about various aspects of social life into variables that can be precisely measured with numbers. Few are comfortable with qualitative data.

Qualitative research methods assume that the subjective dimensions of human experience are continuously changing and cannot be studied using the principles of quantitative research methodologies. Instead emphasis is placed on fully describing and comprehending the subjective meanings of events to individuals and groups caught up in them.

The question could be asked with regard to the characteristics of quantitative research.

#### **4.2.3 Characteristics of Quantitative Research**

Bryman (1996:21-39) deals with the characteristics of quantitative research under the headings listed below:

- **Concepts and their measurements**

The measurements of concepts tend to be undertaken through the use of questionnaire devices or some form of structured observation.

- **Causality**

Quantitative research is often highly pre-occupied with establishing relationships between concepts.

- **Generalisation**

The quantitative research is invariably concerned to establish that the results of a particular investigation can be generalised beyond the confines of the research location.

- **Replication**

The replication of established findings is often taken to be a characteristic of the natural science.

- **Individualism**

Finally quantitative research tends to treat the individual as the focus for empirical enquiry (Bryman, 21-39).

As I have used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, I have used more in-depth interviews, as well as structured questionnaires.

#### **4.3 SAMPLING**

According to Bailey (1986:81) sampling is the process of drawing subjects from the population which will be used in the study. Sampling is a process of selecting observations (Babbie, 1989:191). He describes two types of sampling, i.e., probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling involves random sampling. Babbie (1992:93) states that in non-probability sampling methods, a sample is selected based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and research aims.

Moon, Margaret and Trevor (1990:360) explain that qualitative research does not use probability sampling. Subjects are chosen on the basis of whether they meet certain criteria. Seaberg (1988:251) also indicates that non-probability sampling methods are better suited to exploratory studies. He describes four methods of non-probability sampling, i.e., availability sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling. In this study I used purposive sampling because I have sufficient knowledge related to the research problem to allow for inclusion in the sample. The sampling will

be done in two phases.

#### **4.3.1 Phase One: Educators and Education Managers**

Phase one has been divided into two groups namely educators and education managers.

##### **4.3.1.1 Sample group one: Educators in KwaZulu-Natal**

The sample size of this group consisted of 45 educators (teachers and principals) in the three district offices, situated at Empangeni, Durban and Pietermaritzburg. I am familiar with the majority of the schools in these areas since I have worked in these areas. Non-probability purposive sampling has been used in this sample selection. Babbie (1995:25) states that in non-probability purposive sampling, a sample is selected based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of research aims.

##### **4.3.1.2 Sample group two: Education managers in KwaZulu-Natal**

Initially the sample size of this group was supposed to be 15 top education managers at the directorship level from KwaZulu-Natal's three Head Offices, situated at Ulundi,



Durban, and Pietermaritzburg, but only 5 education managers in the Durban region participated in the study. I tried to arrange appointments suited to the tight work schedules of the managers so as to be available for group interviews. Only the interviewees in the Durban region honoured the appointment. The managers in the other regions never responded in spite of several attempts to elicit their co-operation.

#### **4.3.2 Phase Two: Social Workers and Top Management in Regional Welfare Offices of KwaZulu-Natal**

Phase two is also divided into two groups, namely:

##### **4.3.2.1 Sample group one: Social Workers (supervisors, senior social workers and junior social workers)**

The sample size of this group consisted of 45 social workers in agencies directly involved with working with children of school-going age in the three areas mentioned earlier. As I have indicated already I have worked in these three regions. Non-probability purposive sampling was also used in this group.

#### **4.3.2.2 Sample group two: Top Management regional welfare officials in KwaZulu-Natal**

The sample size of this group consisted of 15 top management at the directorship level in the three Regional Welfare Offices of KwaZulu-Natal. It also included 2 directors at the non-government organisations.

The Minister of Social Welfare, Population and Development (at a Provincial level) was interviewed and informed personally about the then proposed study, concerning my observations of the problems of school-going children in the Kwa-Dlangezwa Schools near the University of Zululand.

Minister Prince Gideon Zulu responded and requested that I inform him in writing about the study's concerns. I was also requested to forward a copy to the Minister of Education for the province. The Minister of Welfare for the province responded to my letter indicating that he was looking forward for the study envisaged. The copy of the letter was sent to the Minister of Education as the Minister of Welfare had indicated.

#### **4.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

Arkava and Lane (1988:27) state that the most difficult time-consuming phase of the

research process is the collection of data. This process involved answering two parallel questions, namely which measuring instruments or tools to use to collect my findings for the study and how would I ensure that my findings were accurately measured. In order to collect the data, I needed an instrument to do so. For the purposes of this study I chose to use an interview schedule. In this study the collection of data is done in two phase groups, namely:

#### **4.4.1 Interview Schedule**

There were two sets of interview schedules. The first set was designed for educators and education managers. The second was designed for social workers and social work managers. The interview schedule for educators and education managers was divided into 14 sections, while the interview schedule for social workers and social work managers was divided into 12 sections.

#### **4.4.2 Phase One: Educators and Education Managers**

The research tool to collect data in phase one for educators was an interview schedule. The researcher and the research assistants interviewed the respondents for the purpose of data collection. The educators are in continuous contact with the learners. The rationale for the selection of respondents is first that issues can be explored with them,

second that they can identify learners with social problems and third, that they can use the referral system whenever they think school social work intervention would be beneficial to the learners and the school as a whole. The research tool to collect data in this group of education managers was the focused group interviews which were facilitated by the researcher. Krueger in Babbie(1995:20) identifies the five advantages of focus groups.

(1)The technique is a socially oriented research method capturing real life data in a social environment.(2) Its advantage is that it commands flexibility and(3) carries a high degree of validity. (4) Its results are procured speedily and(5) are less costly to manage (Babbie, 1995:250).

The group dynamics that occur in focus groups frequently brings out aspects of the topic that would not have been interpreted by the researcher and would not have emerged from interviews with individuals. This aspect might help the top education managers to think jointly of the policy/policies related to school social work services, and how it could be implemented. The responders might not have thought about this advantage if they were interviewed individually. In the content of the present investigation the other compelling advantage of the focus group approach is that it affords the researcher the opportunity to explore with Education Managers the link between economic circumstance and academic achievement.

Krueger in Babbie(1995:251) further notes some disadvantages the researcher should note. These are:

- Focus groups afford the researcher less control than individual interviews;
- Data are difficult to analyse;
- Moderators require special skills;
- Differences between groups can present difficulty in analysis;
- Groups are difficult to assemble; and, lastly,
- The discussion must be controlled in the interest of validity and reliability.

To overcome these obstacles I made the group small, only consisting of 5 members. In a small group participants usually interact with researchers more effectively compared to larger groups where they can elect to remain in the background undetected. I have conducted group interviews for a number of years where I was able to observe group dynamics, facilitate the group process and mediated when it became necessary. The discussion with the managers concentrated on policy level issues in relation to the plight of school-aged children, and the possible introduction of social work services in the schools where it was non-existent.

#### **4.4.3 Phase Two: Social Workers and Top Management in the Regional Welfare Offices of KwaZulu-Natal**

Data was collected differently in these two groups.

##### **4.4.3.1 Group One: Social Workers (i.e., supervisors, senior social workers and junior social workers)**

In collecting data with the group of social workers, my research assistants and I used the interview schedule when we interviewed the respondents. Since this group is directly involved with children issues, they contributed significantly towards the understanding of the plight of the school-going children. In addition they came with valuable suggestions and recommendations based on their experience in working with these children.

##### **4.4.3.2 Group Two: Top Management regional welfare in KwaZulu-Natal**

Focused group interviews were used to collect data in this group in the same manner I used with the sample of education managers. I observed group dynamics in this group with the possible intention of formulating policy relating to school social work services. This aspect might be difficult to address on a one-to-one basis. Appointments for

focused group interviews were made during slots suited to the work schedules of the managers.

#### **4.4.3.3 Validity and reliability**

To reinforce internal validity I used triangulation. In addition in this study I used a variety of research methods of data collection. Triangulation is the use of multiple data gathering techniques to investigate the same phenomenon. According to Berg (1995:4-5) triangulation can be interpreted as a means of mutual confirmation of measures and validation of findings. Fielding and Fielding (1986:31) specifically address this aspect of triangulation. They suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats that tend to compromise validity identified in each.

### **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Analysis of data answers the question of " How shall I arrange and order my findings? The data were qualitatively analyzed in terms of categories and also transformed into statistically accessible forms of quantitative procedures.

Data analysis was compiled through word processing and analysed through a separate

selected computer package.

#### **4.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

For ethical reasons the following limitations in the present study need to be placed on record. The first limitation is that the study concentrated only on service providers in the welfare and education departments. The children and parents were not part of the study. The second limitation is that because of funding constraints the sample of respondents came exclusively from the KwaZulu-Natal province. The third limitation is more on a theoretical level. It arises from the obvious paucity of local research output on the role of School Social Work Services in South African schools. This gap has forced me to render my report against the backdrop of American writers and researchers rather than South African or African.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented a full description of the research methodology that was employed in the study. The description was done with explicit explanations on sampling procedures as well as the data collection methods used.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

# **ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THE RESPONSES OF EDUCATORS, EDUCATION MANAGERS, SOCIAL WORKERS AS WELL AS SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the researcher presents an interpretation of the results of the empirical study pointing out also the way in which the results were processed and integrated with the findings of the theoretical study. Where possible, the information has been presented in tables, graphs and charts. The statistical methods used for the data analysis are in the simple form of frequencies and percentages.

### **5.2 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA**

There were two sets of interview schedules, one for educators and education managers, and the other for social workers and social work managers.

## **5.2.1 Phase One: Educators and Education Managers**

Phase one has been divided into two sample groups. Sample group one consisted of educators whereas sample group two consisted of education managers.

### **5.2.1.1 Sample group one: Educators**

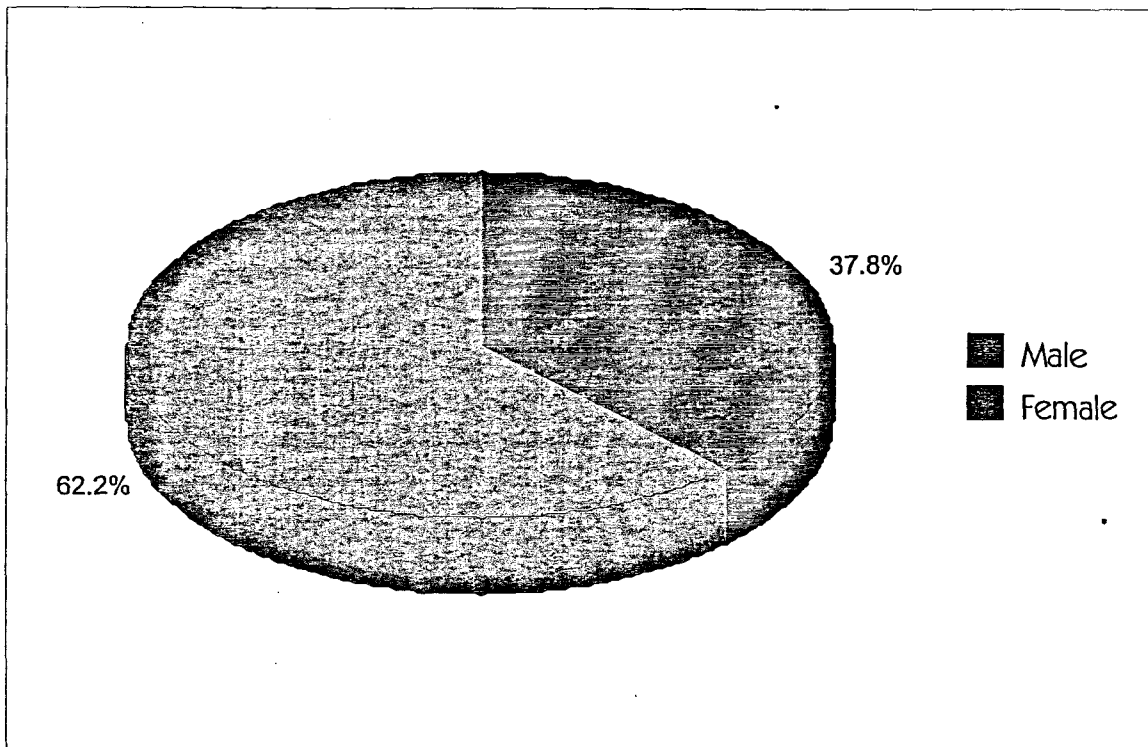
#### **5.2.1.1.1 Identifying particulars of Educators**

The background information on respondents' identifying particulars was obtained. Only aspects of gender, type of school, area of work, type of area of work and present designation were covered and regarded to be the important factors in influencing the views of the respondents. In this study, the researcher interviewed 45 educators from the three areas of KwaZulu-Natal, i.e., Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Empangeni.

##### **5.2.1.1.1.1 Gender of educators**

The question of the gender of respondents was asked in order to establish whether the respondents' views were gender related.

**FIGURE 5.1 GENDER OF EDUCATORS**



The number of female educators was 28 representing 62,2 percent of the total population and the number of male educators was 17 representing 37,8 percent of the total sample. The views of the respondents would differ according to their gender, which fact might influence the results of the study.

#### 5.2.1.1.1.2 Type of school

The question of type of school was asked in order to establish whether respondents' views differed according to their type of school.

**TABLE 5.1: TYPE OF SCHOOL**

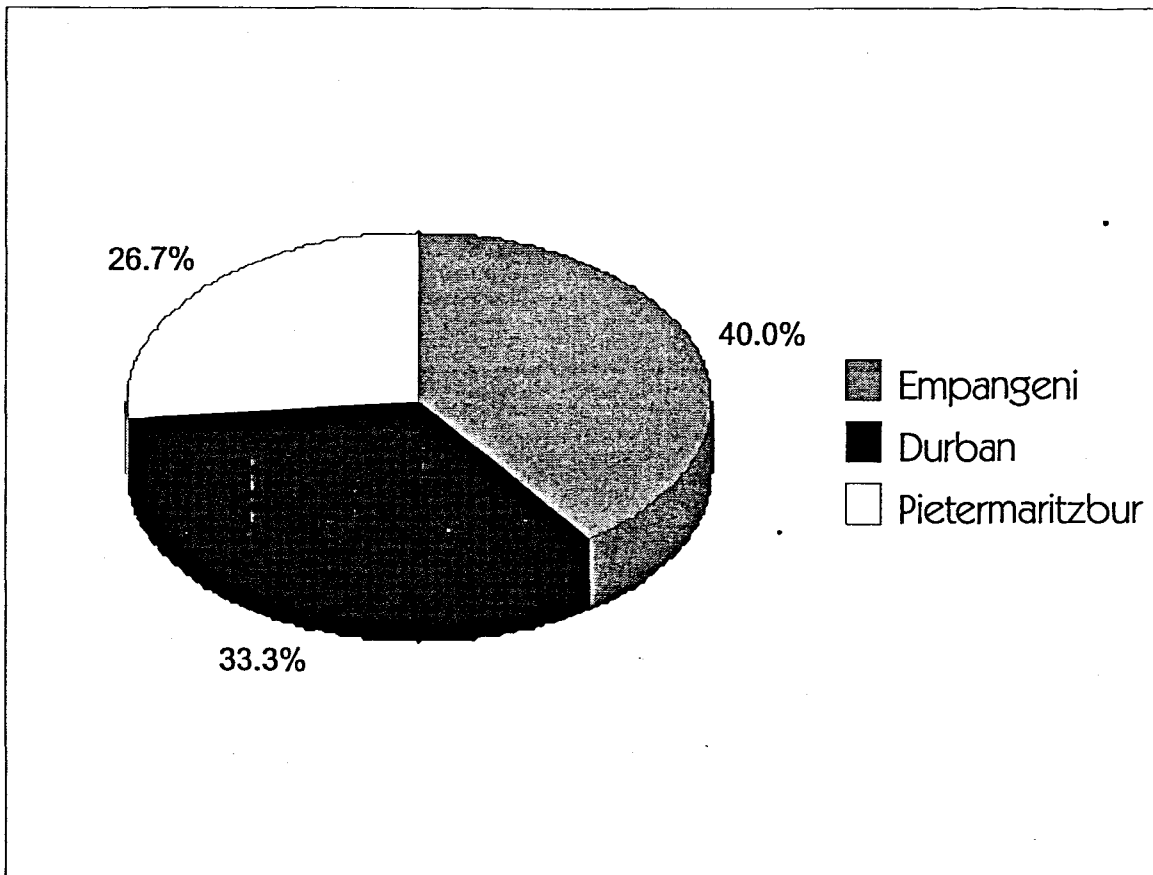
<b>TYPE OF SCHOOL</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Model C	5	11
Former House of Delegates	8	18
Former House of Representatives	8	18
Mainly for Blacks	24	53
Private School		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in Table 5.1 the majority of educators (53%) were working in the schools mainly for Blacks, while a very small percentage (11%) were working in the Model "C" schools. The views of the respondents would be influenced by the type of schools educators work for. Therefore, the majority of responses would reflect what is experienced by the majority of children in Black schools.

#### 5.2.1.1.1.3 Area of work

The question of area of work of respondents was asked in order to establish whether respondents' views differed according to their area of work.

**FIGURE 5.2: AREA OF WORK**



From Figure 5.2, it can be noted that the majority 40 percent (18) of educators was working in the Empangeni area. While 33,3 percent (15) of educators were working in the Durban area, and the smaller number 26,7 percent (12) of educators were working in the Pietermaritzburg area. As reflected in Figure 5.2 the results of the study would be influenced by majority of respondents who are working at the Empangeni area.

#### 5.2.1.1.1.4 Type of area of work

The question of type of area of work of respondents was asked in order to establish whether respondents' views differed according to their area of work.

**TABLE 5.2: TYPE OF AREA OF WORK**

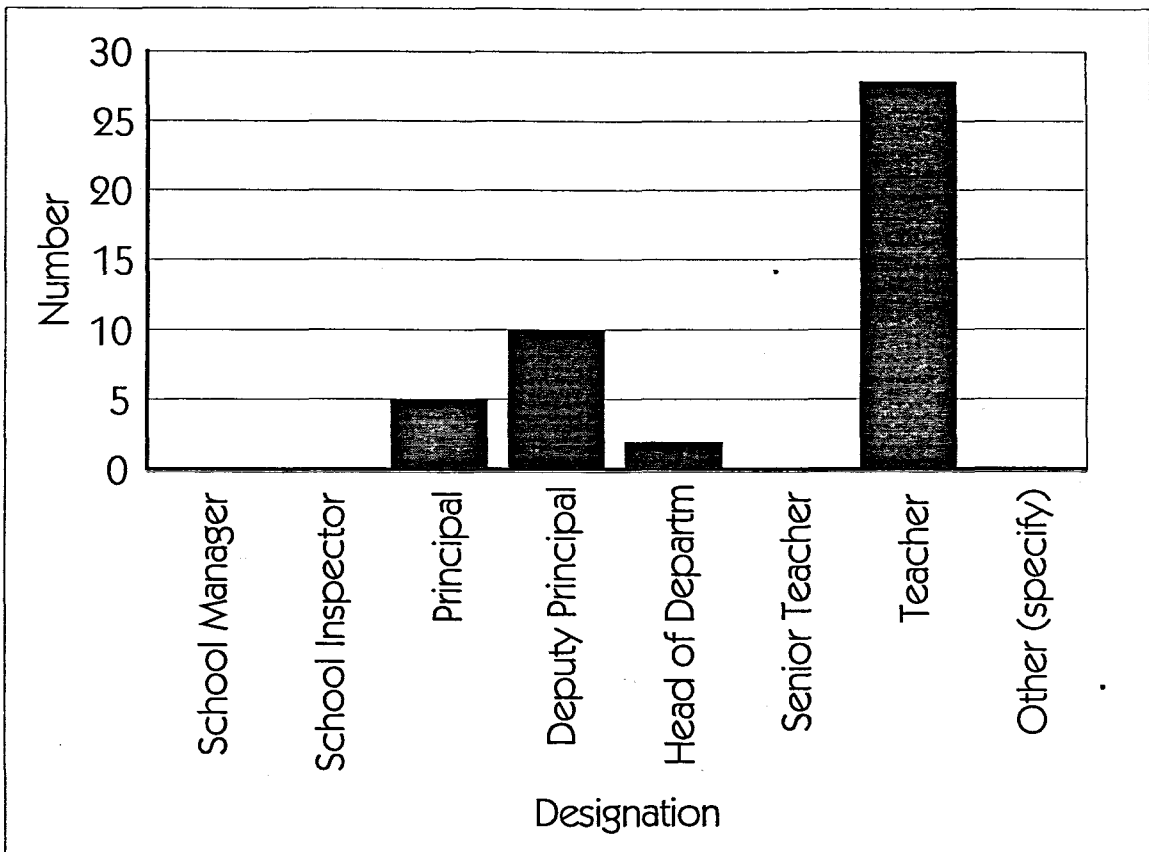
Type of Area of Work	Number	Percentage
Urban	21	47
Rural	14	31
Township	10	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in table 5.2, the majority 47 percent (21) of respondents were working in the urban area, whereas a very small number 22 percent (10) of educators were working in the Township. As reflected in table 5.2, the responses, would be influenced by the majority of respondents, who work in the urban area.

#### 5.2.1.1.1.5 Present designation

The question of present designation of respondents was asked in order to establish whether respondents' views differed according to present designation at the time of interview.

**FIGURE 5.3: PRESENT DESIGNATION**

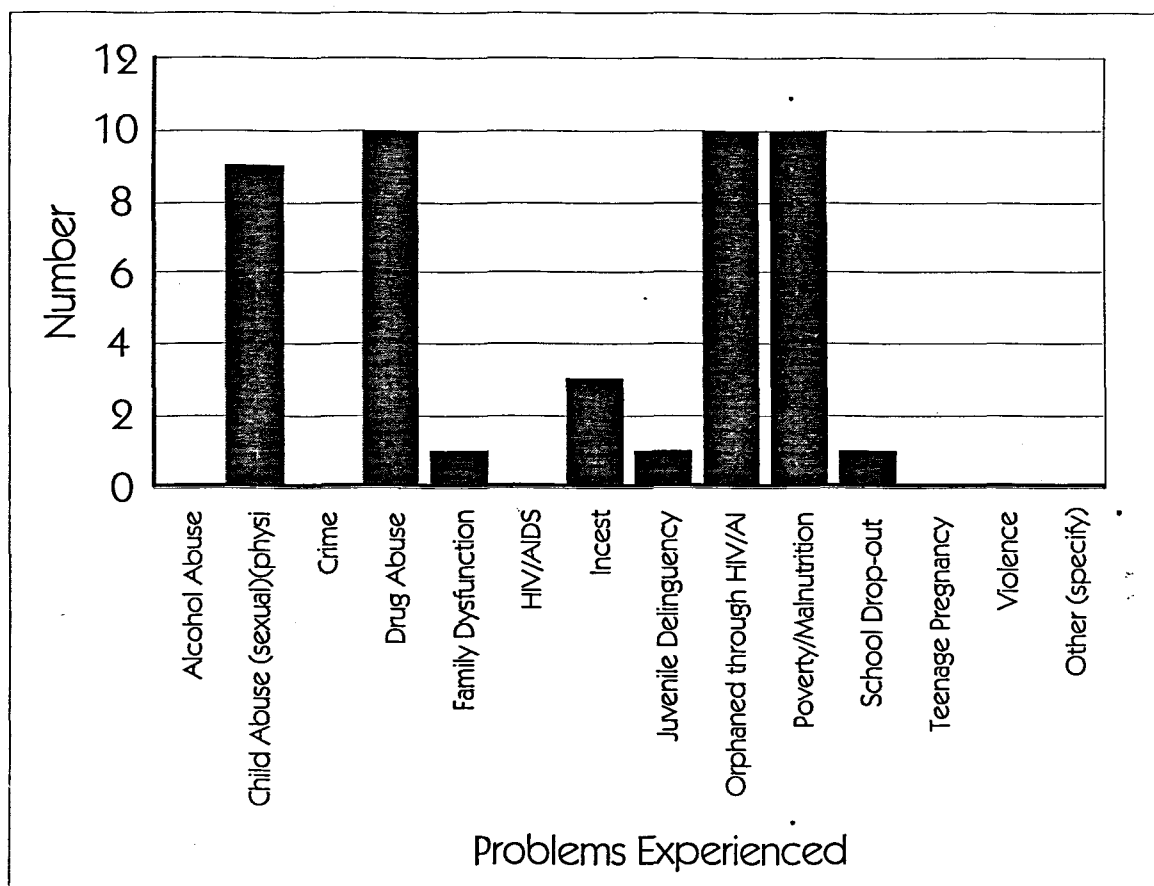


As indicated in figure 5.3, the majority 62 percent (28) of educators' present designation were teachers, where as 22 percent (10) were deputy principals while a very low percentage (5%) were Heads of Departments. As reflected in figure 5.3 the majority of respondents were teachers, who are always in direct contact with learners in a classroom situation, and able to give their views about children's problems, as they see them on a daily basis.

### 5.2.1.1.2 Problems experienced by children

Educators were asked about the social/medical/behavioral problems experienced by the majority of children in their school.

**FIGURE 5.4: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY CHILDREN**



From Figure 5.4, a high percentage (22%) of children experienced poverty as the major problem. The same percentage of children experienced the problem of being



orphaned through HIV/AIDS. Another 22 percent of children experienced the problem of drug abuse. Twenty-two percent of educators also reported child abuse.

A study by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1988) revealed that approximately 80 percent of teachers see abused or neglected children in their classrooms and yet, for a variety of reasons, are reluctant to report suspected abuses. The report further states that the teachers' reluctance to report stems from a variety of reasons such as:

- Fear of getting involved in the situation.
- Concern about interfering with private family relationships and child rearing practices.
- Anxiety about parents' potential retaliation.
- Caution against alienating families.

The views of this study on poverty are in agreement with the findings of the Federal Interagency Forum (1997) which states that in 1995, one in five children lived in families with incomes below the Federal poverty line. In 1995, 24 percent of children under the age of six lived in poverty compared to 18 percent of older children. Childhood poverty has both immediate and lasting negative effects. Children who are poor are more likely to have difficulty in school, to become teen parents, and as adults to earn less and be unemployed more.

The findings of this study on being orphaned through AIDS are also in agreement with the findings of Draimin *et al.* (1999) where they state that a significant number of children have been identified as HIV/AIDS affected because of parental death or chronic illness from AIDS and this population is increasing. In a pilot study of 40 HIV affected families including 59 children between the ages of 10 and 19, 43 percent of the children were reported as having problems at home, 73 percent had problems in school, and 58 percent had experienced lower grades (Draimin *et al.*, 1999:44).

In the Draimin study only 43 percent of these children had received counseling, while the vast majority had obtained counseling through the school system.

Van Dyk (2001:6) states that as the 21<sup>st</sup> century dawns, 71% (24,4 million) of all people in the world with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa's 12,1 million AIDS orphans represented 95% of the AIDS orphans in the world. The AIDS epidemic has created more than 13 million orphans under the age of 15 years who have lost either a mother or both parents to AIDS. All these children live in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2000).

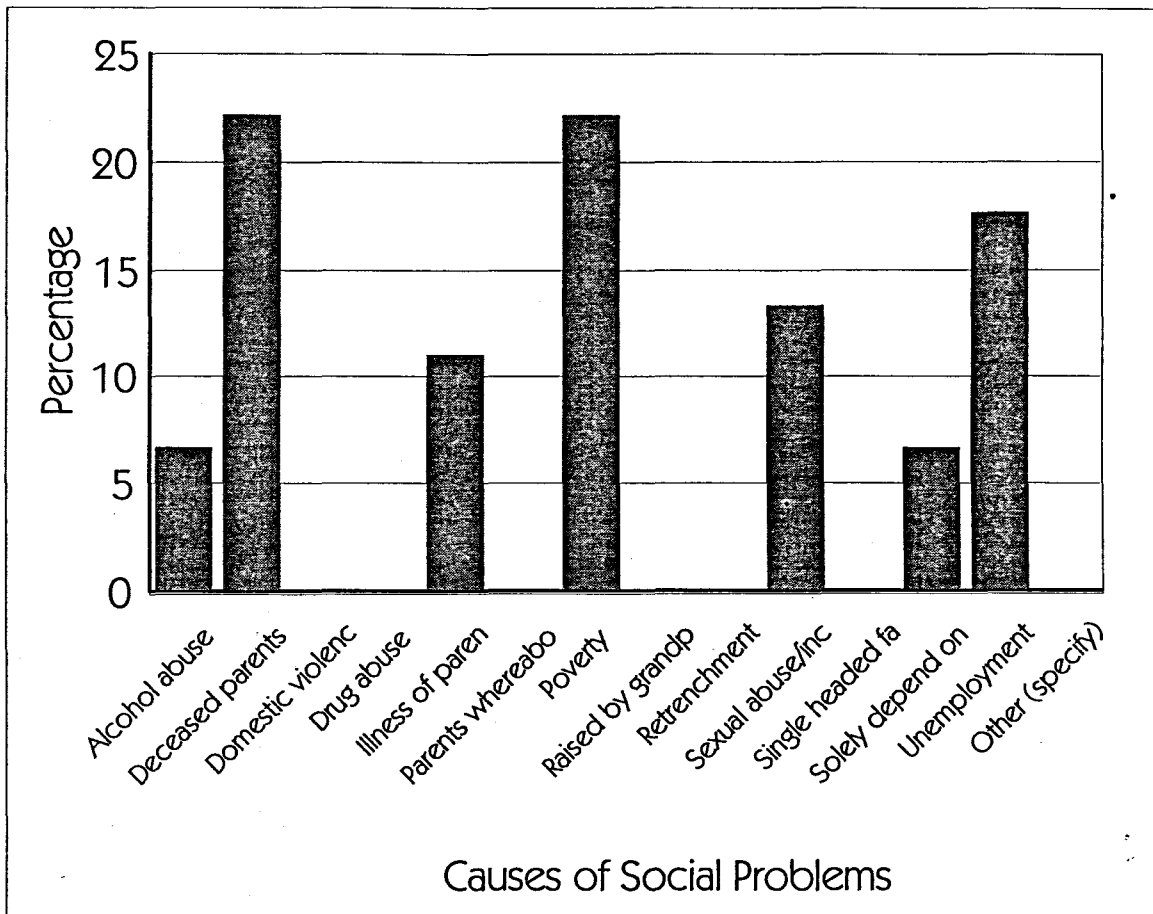
The findings of this study on drug abuse are in agreement with the findings of the Straight Talk About Drug Abuse (2001). South African teenagers of all races between the ages of 12 and 19 had experimented with drugs. More than one in

five claimed that some of their friends had used drugs. Nearly 90% felt that drugs were becoming a real problem among young people in South Africa and only 4% of teenagers claimed to have been offered hard drugs at school (Straight Talk About Drug Abuse, 2001, vol. 11).

#### **5.2.1.1.2.1 Possible causes of social problems experienced by the majority families of learners**

Educators were asked about the possible causes of problems experienced by the majority of families of learners.

**FIGURE 5.5: POSSIBLE CAUSES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE MAJORITY OF FAMILIES OF LEARNERS**

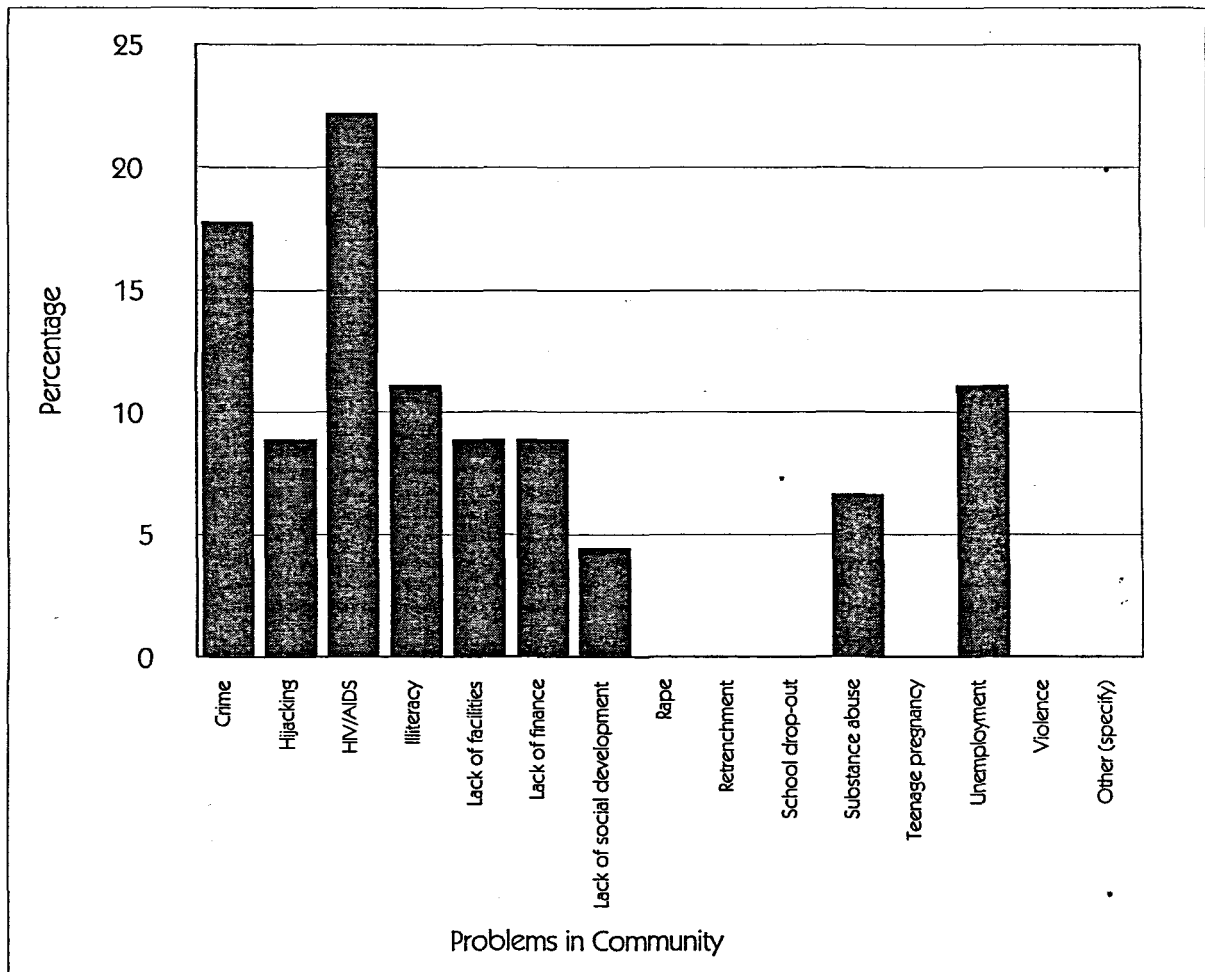


As reflected in figure 5.5, a high percentage (22%) of families experienced the problem of poverty. The same percentage (22%) experienced the problem of not having parents due to death.

Poverty in South Africa is an issue of great concern for all South Africans. In

KwaZulu-Natal more than 40 percent of the population lives in impoverished households. As of 1994, 37,9 percent of rural and 26,6 percent of urban communities were unemployed (SA Institute of Race Relations Report,1995-1996).

**FIGURE 5.6: MAJOR PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL**



It would appear from Figure 5.6 that the majority 22 percent (10) of community members experienced the problem of HIV/AIDS, whereas the other problem experienced by the community is delinquency, which is 18 percent (8).

Juvenile delinquency is an imprecise, nebulous, legal and social label for a variety of law and norm violating behavior (Bartol, 1995:17-118). Studies have shown that delinquents usually come from homes where parents are divorced or separated in comparison to non-delinquents (Flynn, 1987:7-42). The relationship between the broken homes and delinquency cannot be ignored in that it reflects so many other variables and influences. There appears to be an inverse relationship between divorce rates, social and economic class or status (Belsky, Lerner & Spanier, 1984:25).

Practice intervention with crime and juvenile delinquency indicates that the school social worker could play an important role. He could conduct crime prevention programmes or start awareness campaigns long before learners are engaged in crime. Prevention can target those who are at risk of becoming delinquents.

**TABLE 5.3: IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

<b>PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

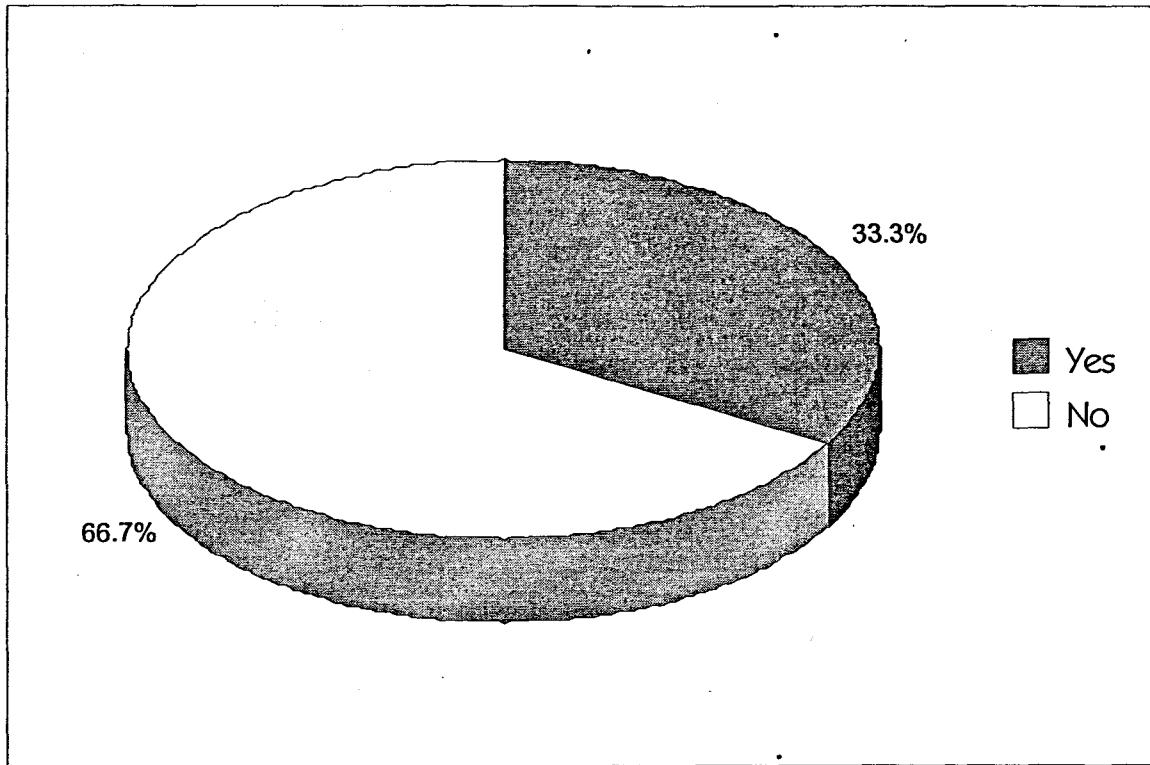
As reflected from Table 5.3, the majority of educators 67 percent (30) stated that they were not equipped to identify the diversity of social problems experienced by the school going children, while a smaller percentage (33%) stated that they were equipped to identify the diversity of social problems.

**TABLE 5.4: LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN SCHOOL WITH PROBLEMS IN THE NEARBY COMMUNITY**

<b>LINKING SOCIAL PROBLEMS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	45	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

From Table 5.4, it can be noted that all the educators (100%) stated that there was a link between social problems reflected in the school and the problems experienced in the nearby community.

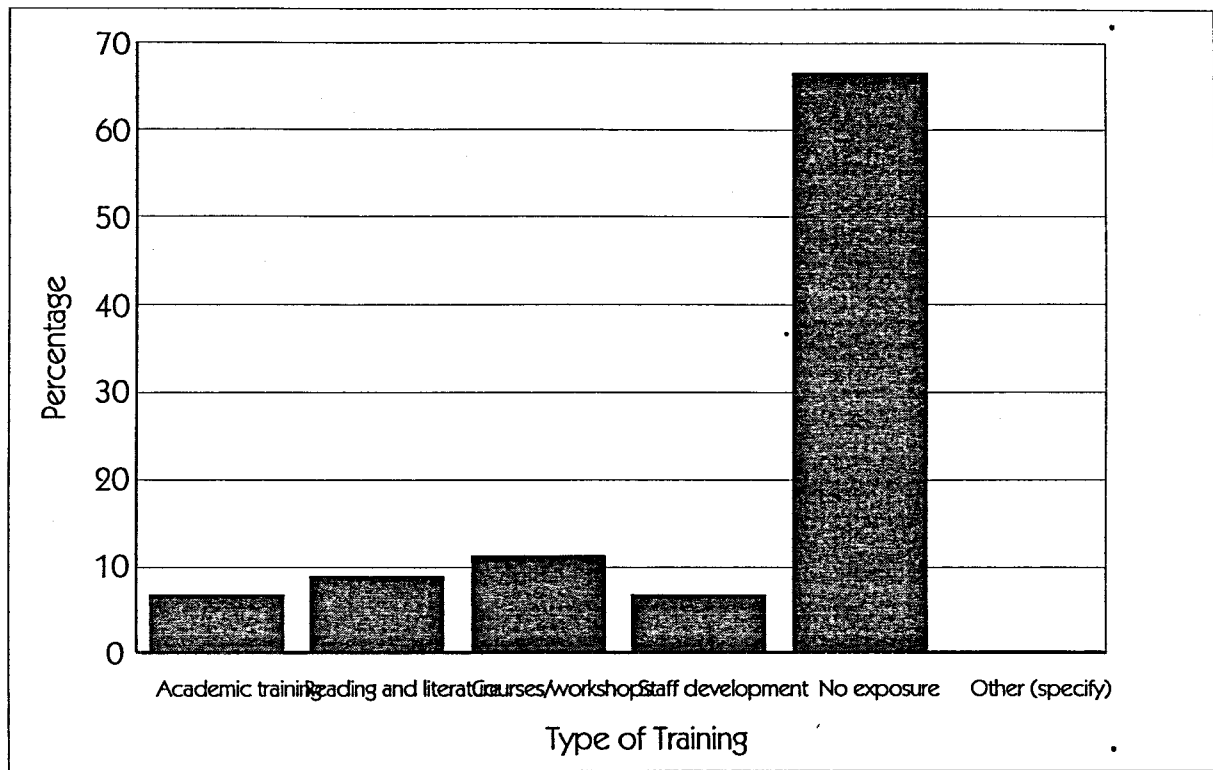
**FIGURE 5.7: TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS**



As reflected in Figure 5.7 the majority 66,6 percent (30) of teachers indicated that they did not receive any form of training in the identification of social problems of learners. A very small percentage (33,3%) indicated that they have received some form of training in the identification of learners with social problems.



**FIGURE 5.8: TYPE OF TRAINING**



As indicated from Figure 5.8, a very high percentage (67%) of educators, were not exposed to any kind of training. Eleven percent of educators indicated that they attended workshops and courses. A very low percentage (7%) stated that they received academic training and another very low percentage (7%) also stated that they attended staff development meetings.

**TABLE 5.5: ASSOCIATION OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNERS WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

<b>ASSOCIATE UNDERACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	45	45
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

All the educators stated that they associated the problem of underachievement of learners with social problems. Learning problems give rise to underachievement. This means that a child does not do well as one would expect of someone of his or her intellectual ability.

Academic disabilities are in large part attributable to overburdened home conditions where basic necessities such as food and shelter take priority over books, health care and educational experience. A developmental lag may begin from birth, and become more difficult to close up as time passes (Children's Defense Fund, 1997).

**TABLE 5.6: IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY ON THE CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROBLEMS**

<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PARENTAGE</b>
Yes	45	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from Table 5.6 all educators stated that social problems at home and

in the community impact on the child's academic performance. The educators gave varied reasons:

Hungry learners cannot perform well at school. Some homes are not conducive to home study for example where they run a shebeen. Violence in the community can disturb the school. Learners concentrate less in class if they are experiencing social problems at home. Due to the high rate of unemployment learners fail to achieve further education. The problem of malnutrition also hampers their progress at school. Where a child lacks nutrition and attention at home, he exhibits negative qualities at school. The ecological approach seemed to be applicable in this study as it focuses on the environment that impacts on the child.

As explained in the exposition of the ecological approach in Chapter 2, the child's problem can only be understood within the context of the family, community, or society within which he lives. The primary value of the ecological approach is that it helps school social workers to focus their attention on all the significant systems around the child rather than an isolated part, system or aspect of the learners' situation. Germain (in Alexander, 1986:152) defines the school social worker's role from an ecological perspective, as action at the interface between a student's coping patterns and patterns in the environment.

#### 5.2.1.1.2.2 **How problems in the families and communities can be addressed**

Educators in this study suggested the following: School social workers could make home visits and offer solutions. All relevant stakeholders should work together, i.e., educators, learners, parents, school governing bodies, the Department of Social Welfare, Department of Justice, health and correctional services. Educators recommended community development in terms of, for instance, improving skills for the community. They also recommended meetings to involve parents to discuss problems and seek solutions. In this regard it is necessary to come and help support groups to intervene. In this way communities gradually develop independence and self-sufficiency.

#### 5.2.1.1.3 **Referral system**

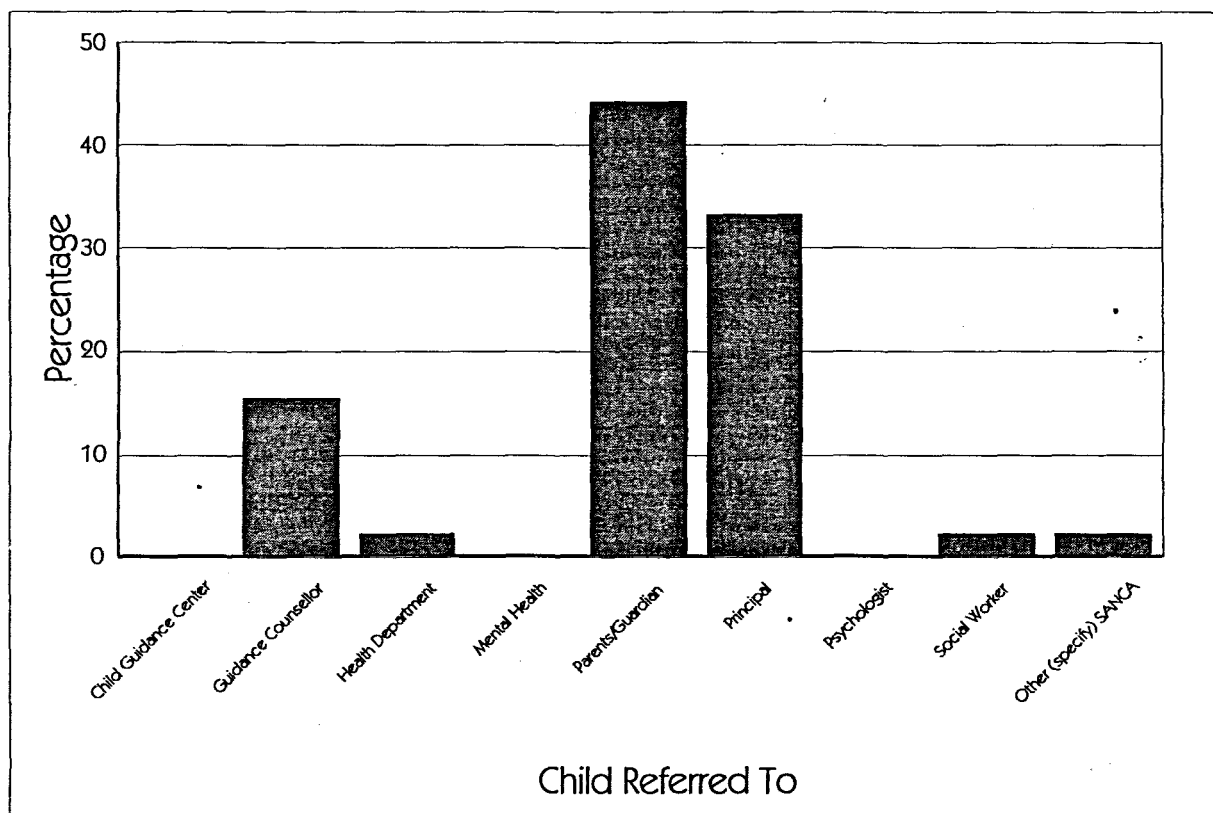
The educators were asked whether they have a referral policy in their schools for children with social/ behavioral problems.

**TABLE 5.7: REFERRAL OF CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

<b>REFERRAL POLICY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in Table 5.7 there appears to be no referral policy of learners with social problems in the majority of the schools (67%), whereas a very small percentage (33%) of schools had a referral policy.

**FIGURE 5.9: CHILD REFERRED TO WHOM**



As indicated from Figure 5.9, the majority 44 percent (20) of educators referred children with social problems to their parents/guardian. A high percentage (33%) of educators referred learners with social problems to their school principals. An alarming low percentage of educators (3%) refer learners with social problems to the social workers.

There seems to be a lack of awareness by the school teachers on the services rendered by social workers as very few have referred the children with social problems for the attention of the social workers. The presence of social workers in the school is important to achieve the successful education of children. The school principal, focusing on the educational experience of the child, sometimes has difficulty connecting social work intervention with the learning process. The goals of school social work remain poorly advertised and often misunderstood by its consumers, administrators and teachers in the school system, and ultimately students and parents. Germain (1983:3-12) points to the difficulty of defining the distinctiveness of social work from other professional services available in the school.

Staudt and Craft (1983:119-131) in their analysis of the perceptions of school personnel found two significant but weak points:

There was a lack of communication between social workers and school staff; and

a lack of awareness by school staff of the programs and services provided by social workers.

School social workers can alert school personnel about particular areas of expertise available through the social worker. The school social worker needs to have the approval and encouragement of the school administrator.

#### 5.2.1.1.4 **Multidisciplinary team**

The educators were asked whether they have a multi-disciplinary team in their schools.

**TABLE 5.8: MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM**

<b>MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	8	18
No	37	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from Table 5.8, the majority of educators 82 percent (37) reported that they do not have a multi-disciplinary team whereas a very low percentage of educators (18 percent) had a multi-disciplinary team in their schools.

Pretorius (1991:476) states that the complexity and multi-causality of problems calls

for an all embracing and multi-disciplinary approach in order to understand and resolve educationally problematical situations. Yet the majority of the schools as reflected in the study do not have a multi-disciplinary team.

The educators who have a multidisciplinary team in their schools reported having the following team members. A guidance teacher, psychologist, remedial teacher, school nurse, social worker, and speech therapist.

#### 5.2.1.1.5 **Utilization of multi-disciplinary teams**

The educators who reported having a multidisciplinary team were asked how they utilize the services of a multidisciplinary team. They stated that educators refer children to the PGSES committee who evaluates the reports made by individual educators and further refer the matter to the principal after filling in the necessary forms, refer the client to PGSES officials or paralegal services consultation.

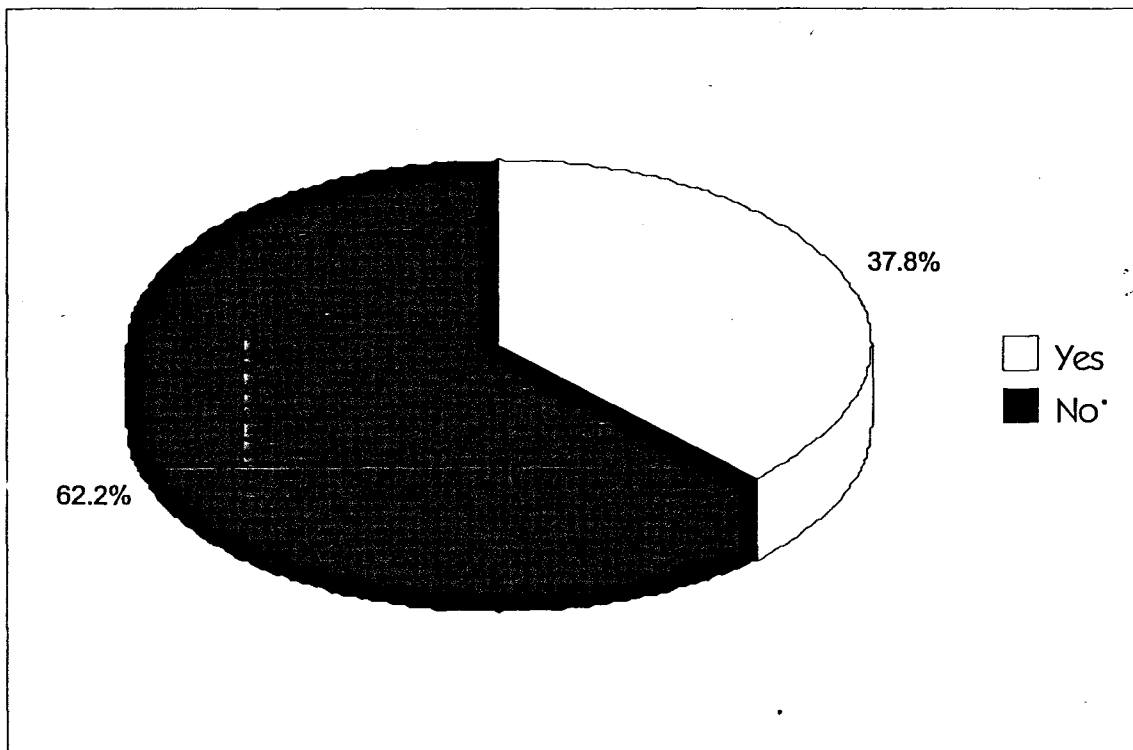
Toseland *et al.* (in Constable *et al.*, 2002) define a multidisciplinary team as a number of individual members of the school community, each of whom possesses a particular knowledge and skill, who come together to share their expertise with one another for a common purpose.



### 5.2.1.1.6 School policy

The educators were asked whether they have a school policy in their schools. Legislation is fundamentally important, because by it the policy makers of a country give a written indication of their intentions regarding a particular matter. Further questions posed were: Are school policies and practices fair? Does the staff provide equal support and assistance to children at risk? What factors interfere with engaging these children in learning (Allen-Meares, 2000:183)?

**FIGURE 5.10: SCHOOL POLICY**



As reflected in Figure 5.10, the majority of educators 62 percent (28) reported that they do not have a school policy, while the small number of educators 38 percent (17) reported that they do have a school policy. Educators who reported having a school policy, mentioned the existence of school policies covering an admission policy, a counseling policy, a safety and security policy, prohibition against alcohol within the school premises, a policy on HIV/AIDS, a policy on languages, a Code of Conduct Policy. The list is not exhaustive.

As indicated in Chapter 3, the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996 underpins all policy structures in the school. No school policy may be put in place running counter to the provisions of the South African Schools Act.

Having said so, it bears mention that education support services, as well as interest groups, such as national councils, parent bodies, relevant non-government organizations, teachers' associations and labour unions all derive their legitimation from the 1996 enabling statute (Du Toit, 1997:113-116).

#### **5.2.1.1.6.1 School attendance policy**

Educators indicated that minor punishment is given to the child if there is violation of the school attendance policy for the first time. In case of further violation the

parent is called in to discuss the matter. If minor punishment fails the School Governing Body may have to intervene. The parent is contacted for consultation with the SGB to find a solution.

#### **5.2.1.1.6.2 Lack of school necessities**

The respondents from Model C schools reported that children are expected to pay for all services. These respondents perceive Model C schools as promoting a culture of payment. The majority of respondents in schools mainly for Blacks reported the following. First teachers do adopt some extremely poor learners who need help even with clothes. Sometimes other learners donate their old clothes to needy learners while the school provides stationery to all learners.

For schools with no feeding scheme, respondents reported cases of having to buy lunch for children really in need. The schools mainly from former House of Delegates reported asking for help from business people.

#### **5.2.1.1.6.3 Control of late coming**

All the educators in the mainly for Blacks schools reported the following:

Late comers signed in at the office so that detention is used. Punishment like

cleaning verandas after school hours or during breaks is commonly applied. The other schools reported giving learners verbal warnings to enforce the code of conduct.

#### 5.2.1.1.6.4 **Violation of school policies associated with learners social problems at home**

All the educators 100 percent (45) indicated that violation of school policies is associated with learners' social problems at home.

Respondents confirmed that in most cases persistent late coming of children to school was indicative of their personal problems. They also confirmed that family violence affects the attitude of learners towards schooling. Alcoholism was the single worst offence as it has a negative impact on work output.

**TABLE 5.9: SCHOOL POLICY IMPACT ON THE CHILD'S LEARNING**

<b>POLICY IMPACT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	45	45
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from Table 5.9, all the educators 100 percent (45) explained that there were some policy impact on the child's learning. They mentioned some positive and

negative impacts.

- (a) The positive impacts highlighted were that learners are motivated to behave positively and to learn properly because they come to understand what the educators expect from them. Policy encourages them to become disciplined and mature future citizens.
  
- (b) The negative impacts drawn attention to were that policies do not cater for learners' differences, for example, all learners are expected to do homework irrespective of their backgrounds or conditions at home.

**TABLE 5.10: SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY**

<b>SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	11
No	40	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from Table 5.10, an alarming majority of 89 percent (40) of educators stated that there was no policy of support services in their schools, while only a very low percentage (11%) reported having a support service in their schools. The educators who responded that they have support services indicated that they would

ensure that legislation on support services was implemented by identifying and helping needy children and by inviting other support groups to help. A large percentage without support services stated that they would wait for the Department of Education to introduce it. They further mentioned that personnel from the Support Services do come to their schools.

#### 5.2.11.7 Corporal punishment

The educators who participated in this study were asked whether they still used corporal punishment.

**TABLE 5.11: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

<b>CORPORAL PUNISHMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes		
No	45	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As indicated from Table 5.11, all the educators responded that they were no longer using corporal punishment to deter unacceptable behaviours. They mentioned varied alternative methods such as cleaning classrooms or verandas or detention after school, giving more work to do at home, or extra work to do during breaks under the supervision of an educator. In serious cases calling in parents is resorted to if misbehaving continues. Sometimes a misbehaving learner is excluded from

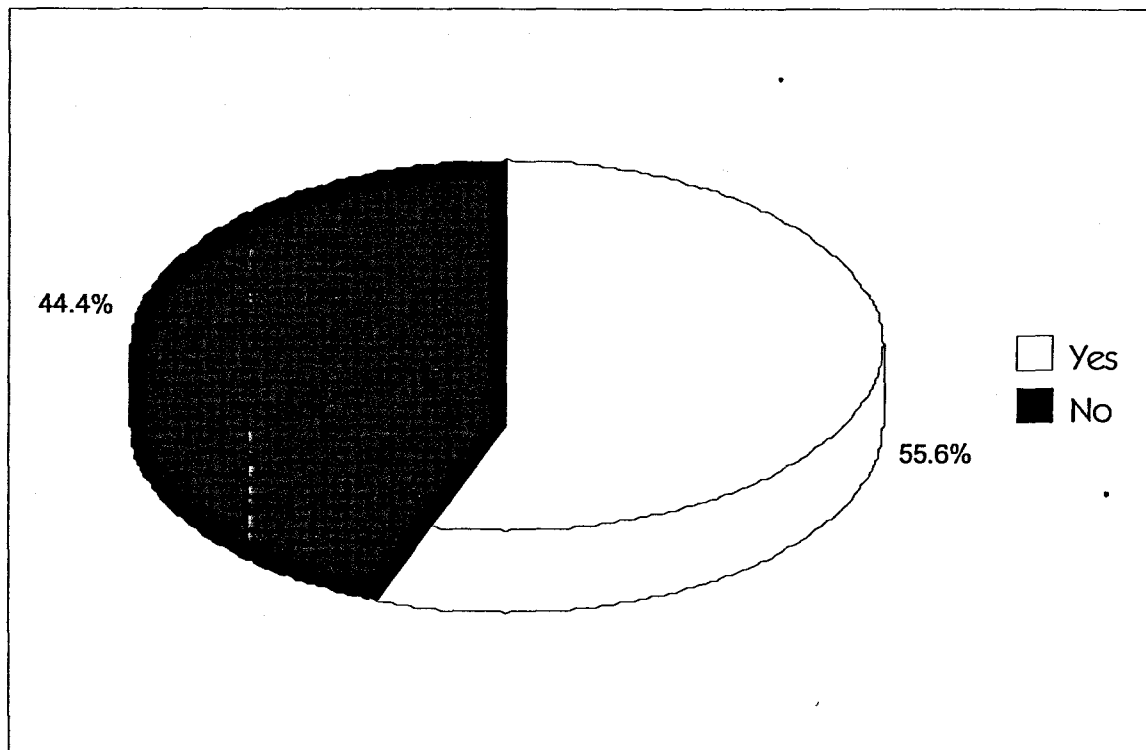
sports and trips.

Sometimes making a deviant write lines enforces the code of conduct. At other times correctional supervision is implemented at a Saturday school. Recent research indicates that corporal punishment violates the psychological and physical well-being of children (Allen-Meares, 2000). As seen already, corporal punishment has been outlawed by the constitution and is a criminal offence.

#### **5.2.1.1.8 Feeding scheme**

The educators were asked whether they have a feeding scheme in their schools and what benefit it has on children.

**FIGURE 5.11: FEEDING SCHEME AT SCHOOL**



As reflected in Figure 5.11 a higher percentage (56%) of educators indicated that their schools have a feeding scheme. A substantial number of educators stated that they do not have a feeding scheme in their schools. Those who stated that they have a feeding scheme mentioned that absenteeism has decreased, children have healthier bodies and tend to concentrate better on their work.

Poverty alleviation strategies have been introduced in the schools. The South African Government has introduced feeding schemes only in primary schools in order to help children coming from poverty-stricken families to have something to



eat. In some situations this service might be the only meal the child receives for the day. The school social worker might collaborate her services with other sectors to combat poverty. The Social Development Department has a developmental strategy which emphasizes self-help and the participation of local communities to address poverty rather than hands-outs (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997).

#### **5.2.1.1.9 Promotion of academic excellence**

Educators were asked how they promote the culture of learning in their schools.

Educators gave varied attempts how they promote the culture of learning in schools. Excellence is rewarded. Learners who are not learning are called in or parents are informed. Grade 8s are on the Reading (Remedial) programme. They are made to own the projects, to work individually, and in groups. Educators plan according to the curricula, i.e., Curriculum 2005 with an Outcome Based Education (OBE) approach. Teachers run workshops every week to equip every educator to do his/her best. Learners are taught to read independently and given extra classes ready for tests monthly.

#### **5.2.1.1.9.1 Promotion of the culture of academic teaching**

Educators were asked how they promote the culture of teaching in their schools.

Varied attempts were given by educators to promote a culture of teaching by ensuring that all educators honour contact time. Guidance is given to educators if necessary by providing workshops. In addition educators attend external workshops. Management monitors and also evaluates educators' work. To ensure that educators do teach, staff members plan together as a team and share ideas.

Staff Development meetings include the provision of teaching aids so as to promote the culture of learning and encourage a Developmental Appraisal System.

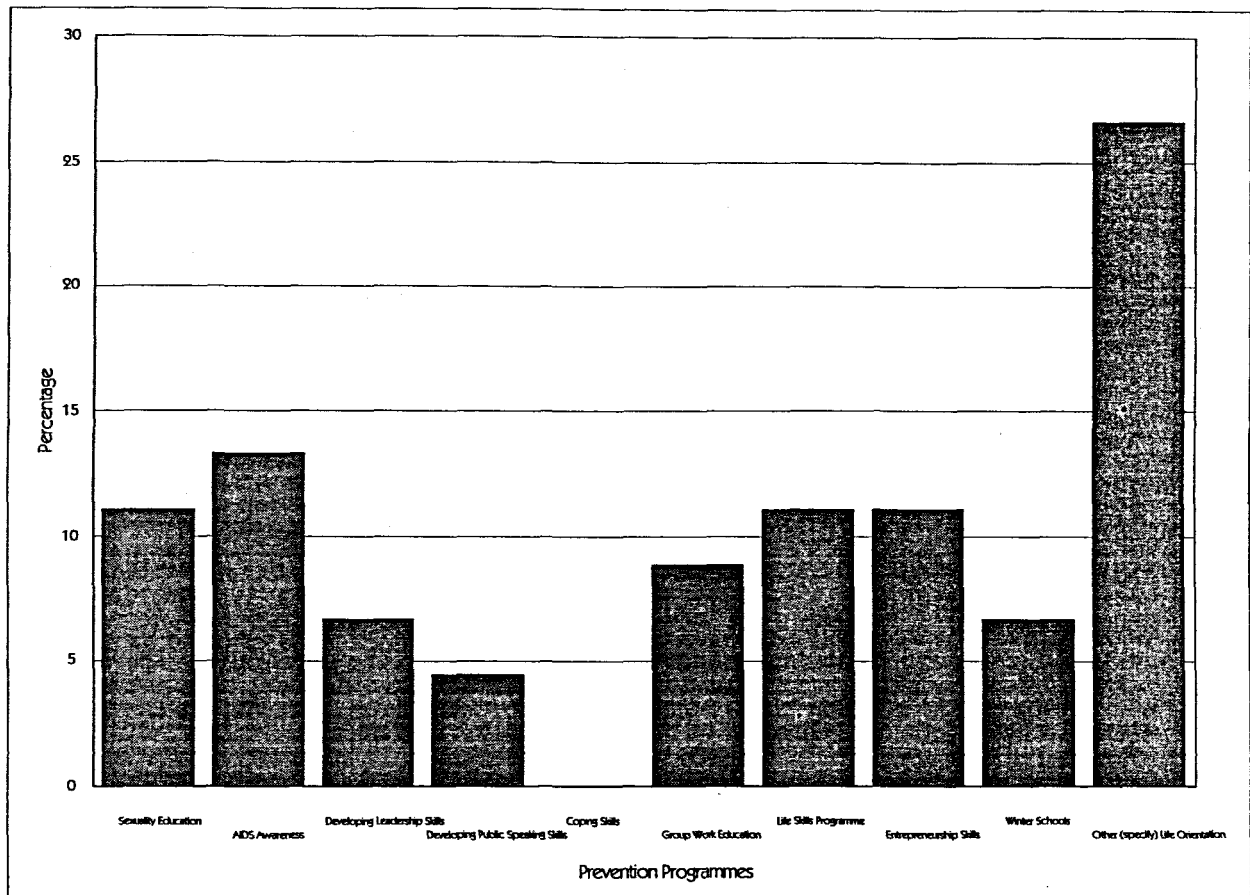
#### **5.2.1.1.9.2 Measures/programmes to promote academic excellence**

The measures or programmes used to promote academic excellence include giving awards to those learners who have done best at the end of each year. There is short, medium and long term planning. Teaching is reinforced by educational tours, workshops and staff development meetings. Personnel from the Human Resources Development with expertise in curriculum development and management are invited to give talks. A compulsory study time is implemented in addition to winter and spring schools.

#### **5.2.1.1.10 Prevention programmes**

Educators were asked about the prevention programme that they have in school to equip learners with life issues.

**FIGURE 5.12: PREVENTION PROGRAMMES**



As indicated in Figure 5.12 the majority 26 percent (12) of educators reported that in their schools they have life orientation modules which educate learners about aspects of life and doubles up as a prevention programme. Another larger percentage (13%) indicated that they hold AIDS awareness prevention programmes. A very low percentage (4%) indicated that they do hold winter schools. The same percentage stated that they help learners develop public speaking skills.

#### 5.2.1.1.11 Preparation of learners for the global economy

Educators were asked how they prepare learners for the global economy. Responses from educators were that learners are taught entrepreneurship skills as the curriculum caters for the needs of the outside school world. The learners are taught how to grow vegetables to sell or eat so that they learn to economize. In this manner the teachers imbue the learners with the importance of economizing the resources they have. Technology is introduced in the curriculum. The recycling of used materials is encouraged.

**TABLE 5.12: PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AT SCHOOL**

<b>PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	30	67
No	15	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

A higher percentage (67%) of educators stated that they promote science and technology in their schools, while a very small percentage stated that they do not promote science and technology. They further stated that exposure is ensured through excursions to science centers. They also mentioned change of the curriculum to cater for organized trips to science and technology industries.

Learners perform science experiments and hand-work for technology. Schools provide well-qualified teachers and well-equipped laboratories. Pupil participation in Olympiads and expos where they present models of electrical appliances like TV, Radio, and Transport are encouraged. When they learn about plants they bring in live plants. They make animal collage (projects).

#### 5.2.1.1.11.1 Subjects equip learners with market related skills

Educators were asked how they equip learners with market related skills. They mentioned aspects such as teaching learners subjects like Economic and Management Sciences. Some respondents answered both positively and negatively stating that they teach learners to get a good matric which enables them to find better paid jobs. A number of learners are now enrolled in Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Commercial classes. All these subjects are useful in the job market.

**TABLE 5.13: GLOBAL IMPACT ON CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

<b>GLOBAL IMPACT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	40	89
No	5	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

An overwhelming number (89%) of educators indicated that what is happening in

the global world has a ripple effect on life in South Africa. A number of parents have lost their jobs due to the Rand picking up in the global markets. A large number of firms lose profits if the Rand is strong, as a result parents are retrenched and children suffer. The high rate of unemployment affects learners when parents lose jobs.

Developments in the global economy result in bigger demands on the curriculum offered in schools. Both educators and learners would keep on improving their performance in preparation for the global economy.

#### 5.2.1.1.12 Cooperation and involvement of parents

Educators were asked whether or not parents and communities around their schools are participating in school matters.

**TABLE 5.14: COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS, IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

<b>PARTICIPATION BY PARENTS AT SCHOOL</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

A very high percentage (67%) of educators responded that parents and

communities do not participate in school matters, whereas a low percentage stated that parents and communities do participate in school governance. Those who are in a better position to involve parents and communities stated that they promote their participation by involving parents in school activities such as Cultural Activities, gardening, and parents also help in painting the school. Community leaders are also involved in school matters. Adelman (1996) discusses parent involvement in school matters. He says that efforts to enhance parent involvement must range from programs to address specific learning and support needs for adults in the home to approaches that empower legitimate parent representatives to become full partners in school governance.

#### **5.2.1.1.12.1 School's benefit in the participation of parents and communities in school**

Educators were asked how the school was benefiting from the participation of parents and communities in school matters.

The educators expressed their views on this aspect by saying that parents spend time on projects within the school. Burglary in schools tends to drop if parents get involved. Children are helped with homework. Parents and community leaders have a lot of influence on learners. Parents and communities also benefit by knowing the things that are happening in school. Parents become very responsible for the

school.

As stated in Chapter 3, Winters and Easton (1983:107) discuss parent school collaboration and say that it is valuable in the sense that it solves many of the problems that overwhelm the school such as discipline. It also facilitates communication between parents and the school personnel. It also contributes essential ingredients to a learning-socializing environment with children. It also results in activities that foster parent-teacher support.

#### 5.2.1.1.13 **Governing body**

Educators were asked whether they have a school governing body in their schools and how it would help in the running of the school.

**TABLE 5.15: GOVERNING BODY AT SCHOOL**

<b>GOVERNING BODY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	45	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

All the educators (100%) responded by saying that they do have a Governing Body in their schools.



#### **5.2.1.1.13.1 Functions of the governing body to promote the culture of learning and effective teaching**

Educators indicated that the Governing Body employs extra teachers for smaller classes. It also draws school policies, provides resources for the school, as well as helps in selecting management positions. The school governing body also sits in the tribunal for discipline of staff and learners. They encourage parents to send their children to school. They decide on the school policy, development, administration and finances. Furthermore they help educators in choosing the correct language to communicate with parents.

#### **5.2.1.1.13.2 Cooperation between the governing body and the school management or whether overlap exists**

Educators were asked whether the School Governing Body works in a cooperative manner with the school management and whether there is an overlap.

A very high percentage of educators (62%) explained that there is a good working relationship between the School Governing Body and school management. Although sometimes there is role confusion which results in disharmony, the majority of educators emphasized the harmonious working together of these two bodies.

#### 5.2.1.1.14

#### **Role of the social worker**

In this study educators were asked about the roles or possible roles of a school social worker. The majority of respondents seemed to know the role of the social worker in terms of the following list: identifying learners with social problems, counselling learners with social problems and their referral to various specialists, e.g., psychologists or remedial practitioners, resolving social problems of domestic violence, and child abuse that affect the performance of children at school, identifying social problems and seeking assistance on behalf of the child, visiting schools and homes when problems arise, and giving advice to people with social problems. The list is not exhaustive.

#### 5.2.1.1.14.1 **Utilization of the services of a social worker**

Educators reported that they would use the services of a social worker after reporting the problems like child abuse and domestic violence. Educators also commit themselves to the following aspects: to also resolve problems encountered by learners with learning disabilities and to help parents that do not get a social grant by referring them to the social workers. When welfare type service was needed they would help implement the Child Care Act in respect of child abuse cases. They would help with children presenting problems.

#### **5.2.1.1.14.2 Role that could be played by social workers in promoting effective teaching and learning**

Educators were asked about the role that could be played by social workers in promoting the culture of effective teaching and learning. Educators' responses were that:

By helping learners with problems and solving them, the learners would then be able to concentrate on their academic work. By solving social problems, which impact on teaching and learning, the social worker would assist in ensuring harmonious running of the schools. They can provide assistance that would benefit the schools, more especially with regard to solving social problems.

#### **5.2.1.1.15 Recommendations to the Department by the Educators**

##### **5.2.1.1.15.1 To equip educators to identify the needs of school going children**

The educators were asked to recommend to the Department of Education means to deal with learners with social problems. In analyzing this data, content analysis was used. Educators recommended that school social workers should be

employed, with each school being provided with a school counsellor. According to them there should be workshops to help teachers identify learners with social problems. In conclusion they pointed out that there should be training in basic counselling.

#### **5.2.11.15.2 To promote the culture of learning**

Educators were asked to suggest some recommendations to the Department of Education as to the best way to promote a culture of teaching and learning. The following are their recommendations: school social workers should be employed as a matter of urgency. There should be provision of necessary support services, such as social workers, psychologists and safety and security. The Education Department should reward excellence in performance. The Department should ensure service delivery early in the year. The Department of Education should also provide information through workshops of the relevant channels of working hand in hand with the Department of Social Welfare.

### **5.1.1.15.3 Recommendations to the Department of Welfare to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems**

Educators were asked to suggest recommendations to the Department of Welfare to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems in schools. Educators recommended the following: Social workers must visit the schools to find out about social problems experienced by children. They should provide workshops for educators to help them identify children's social problems. The strongest recommendation is that the two departments should work cooperatively, so as to deal with children's social problems effectively. The Department of Welfare should allocate sufficient human resources to service all schools in their respective areas. There should be effective measures to ensure follow ups. The Department of Welfare must be more user-friendly and thus employ more social workers, as it is counter productive to wait 5–10 days for a social worker to phone back when there is a problem.

### **5.2.1.2 Sample group 2 Education Managers**

The education managers for the three regions namely Pietermaritzburg , Durban and Empangeni were targeted to be part of this study. Several attempts were made

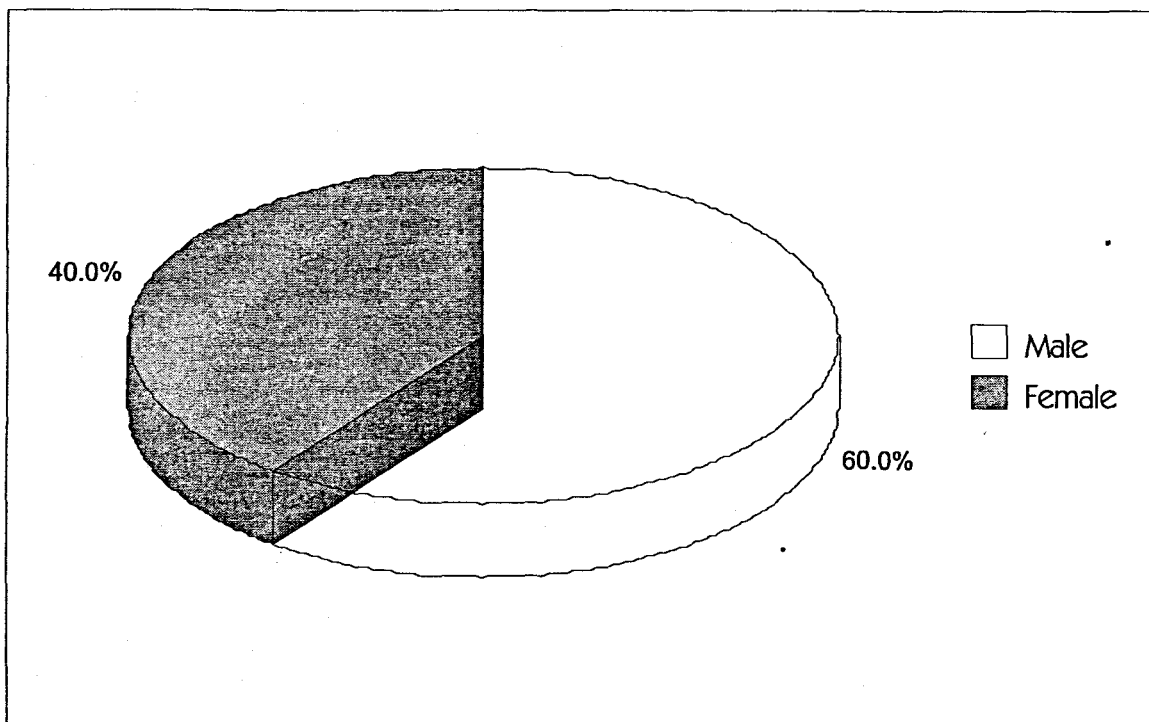
with all the three regions, but only the Durban region took part in the study.

A focused group interview was held with this group.

#### **5.2.1.2.1 Identifying particulars of education managers**

The information identified problems which was obtained from the respondents. Only aspects of gender, type of school, area of work, type of area of work and present designation were covered and regarded important factors in influencing the views of the respondents. In this study, the researcher had focused group interviews with 5 education managers in the Durban Regional Office only.

**FIGURE 5.13: GENDER OF EDUCATION MANAGERS**



As reflected in figure 5.13 the majority 60 percent (3) of education managers who participated in the study were males, while 40 percent (2) of education managers were females. The views of male education managers tended to be gender related.

**TABLE 5.16: AREA OF WORK**

<b>AREA OF WORK</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Empangeni	-	-
Durban	5	100
Pietermaritzburg	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers, 100 percent (5) who had the focused group were from the Durban Regional Office. As the respondents were coming from the same area, their responses would seem to be influenced by the area in which they work.

**TABLE 5.17: TYPE OF AREA OF WORK**

<b>TYPE OF AREA OF WORK</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Urban	2	40
Rural	1	10
Township	2	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in table 5.17 the education managers stated that they work in the three types of areas. About 40 percent of education managers work in the urban area. The same percentage work in the Township. A very low percentage (10%) works in the rural area. The responses of the respondents would be balanced as the same percentage of respondents work either in an urban area or township area.



**TABLE 5.18: PRESENT DESIGNATION OF EDUCATION MANAGERS**

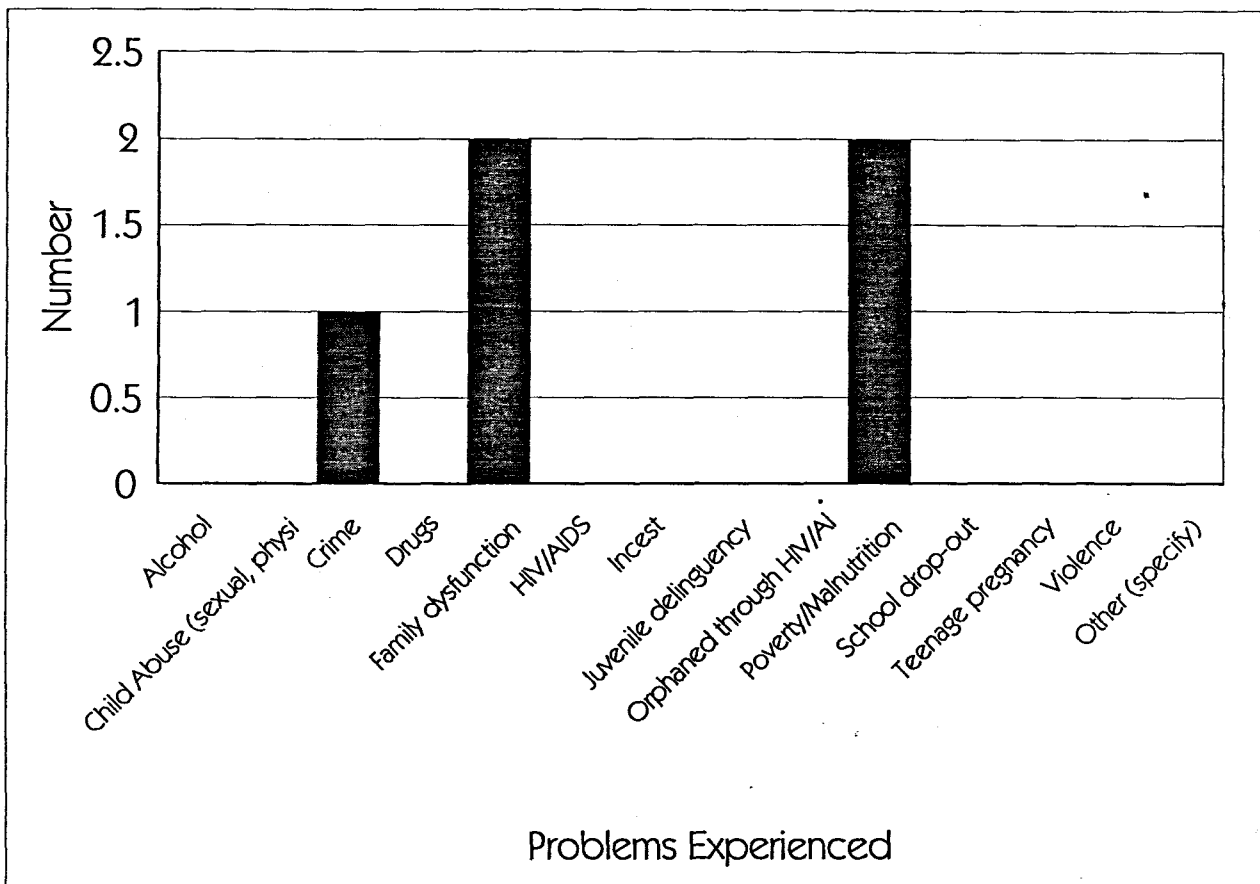
<b>PRESENT DESIGNATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
School Manager		
School Inspector		
Principal		
Deputy Principal		
Head of Department		
Senior Teacher		
Teacher		
Regional Officials	5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in Table 5.18, the education managers classified their present designation as Regional Officials. Being in the regional office daily, the education managers were not in daily contact with the learners. This factor affected their responses to the issues that deal with learners.

#### **5.2.1.2.2 Problems experienced by children**

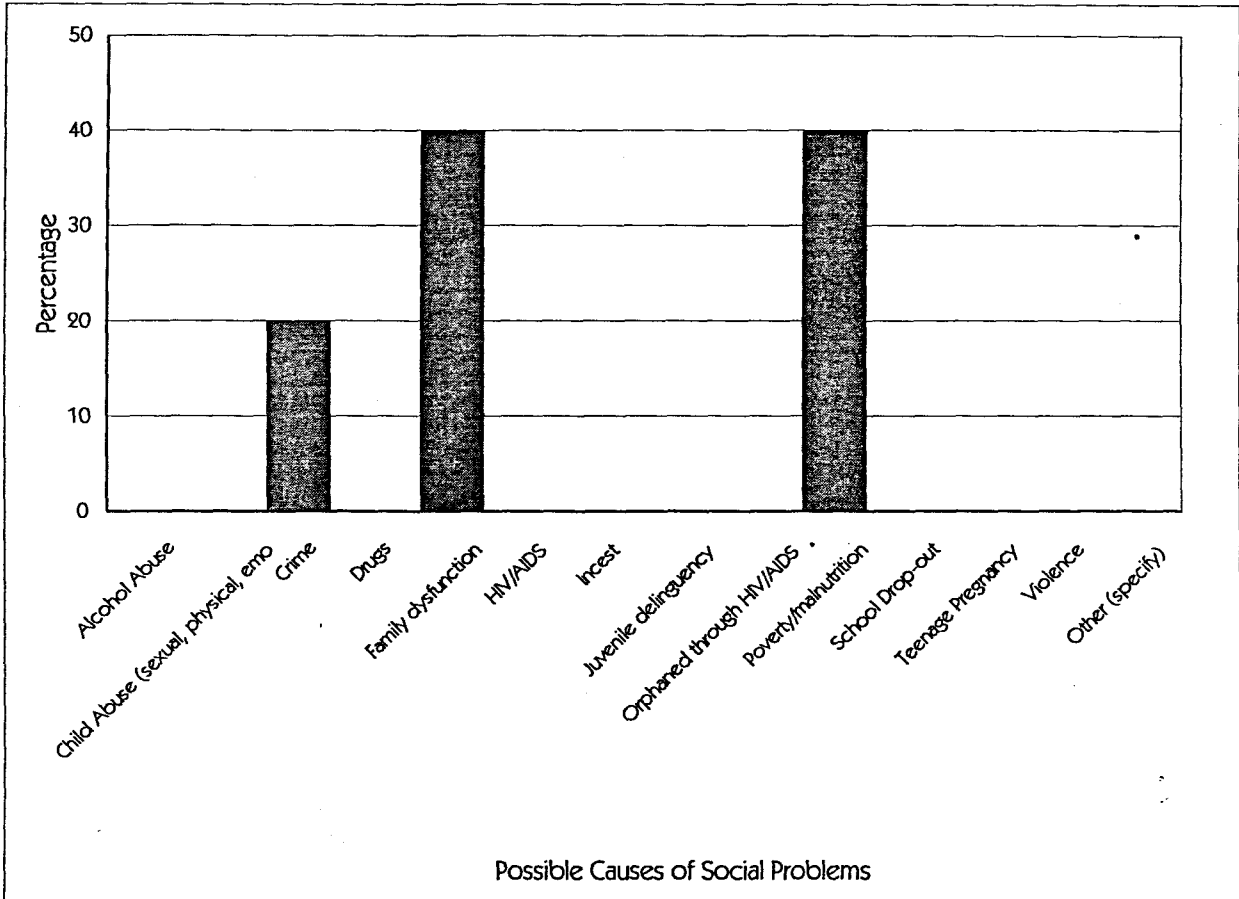
Education managers were asked about the problems experienced by the majority of children in schools under them.

**FIGURE 5.14: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE CHILDREN**



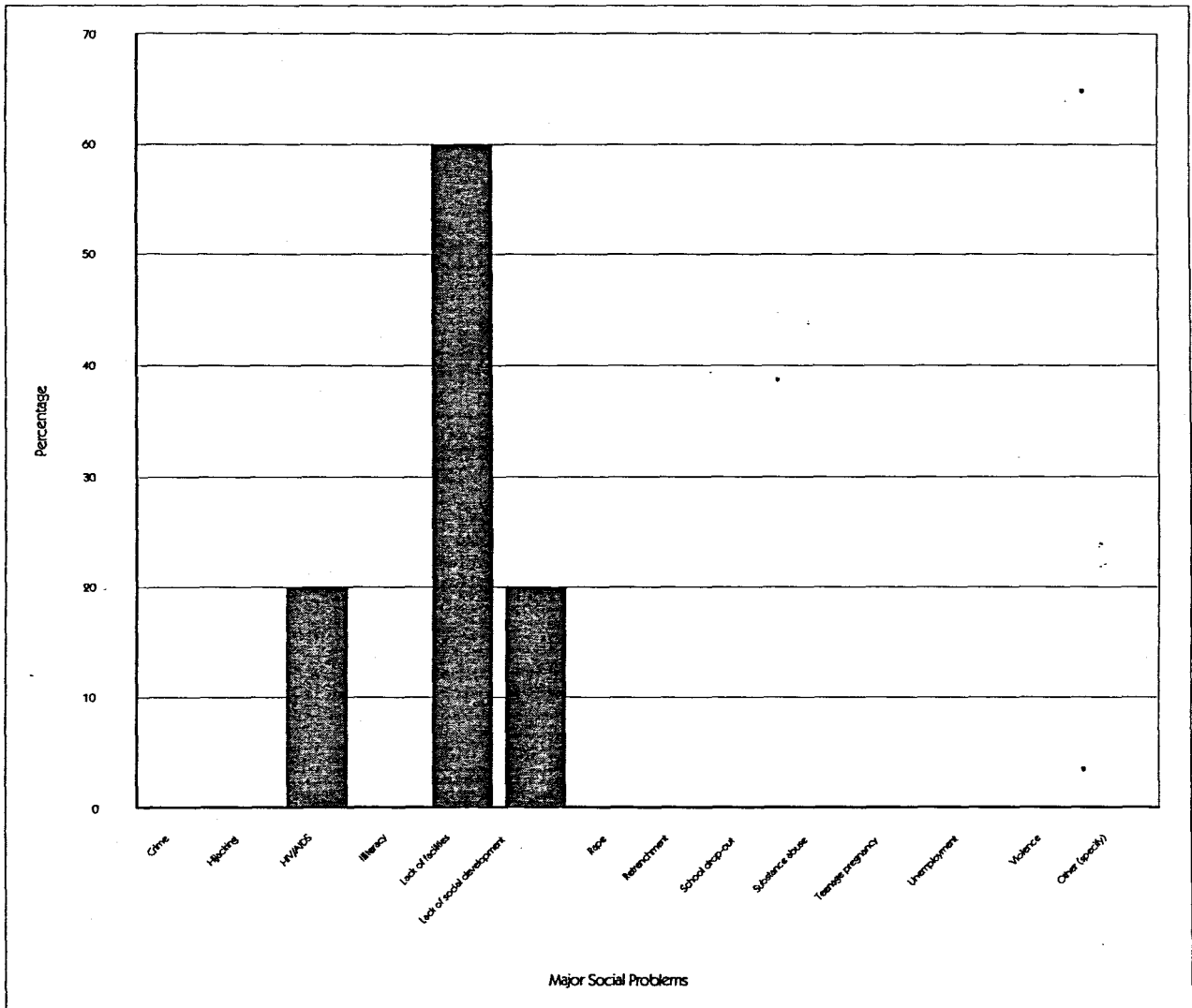
As reflected in figure 5.14, the majority 40 percent (2) of education managers stated that poverty seemed to be the main problem. The same percentage reported that family dysfunction was the main problem experienced by the majority of children in the schools under them. A very low percentage (20%) reported that crime was the main problem experienced by the school children.

**FIGURE 5.15: POSSIBLE CAUSES OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE MAJORITY OF LEARNERS**



As reflected in figure 5.15, the majority 60 percent (3) of education managers indicated that children had lost their parents through death. Twenty percent of the education managers reported poverty as a problem. Also, 20 percent mentioned child sexual abuse as an additional cause of social problems experienced by a majority of learners.

**FIGURE 5.16: MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY AROUND THE SCHOOL**



The majority of respondents 60 percent (3) reported that there is lack of facilities in the community around their schools. Twenty percent of respondents reported lack of social development, while another 20 percent reported the problem of HIV/AIDS in the community.

**TABLE 5.19: ARE EDUCATORS EQUIPPED TO IDENTIFY THE DIVERSITY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS?**

<b>EQUIPPED</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers reported that teachers were equipped to identify the diversity of social problems experienced by the school, whereas the majority of educators in table 5.3 reported that they were not equipped to identify learners with social problems.

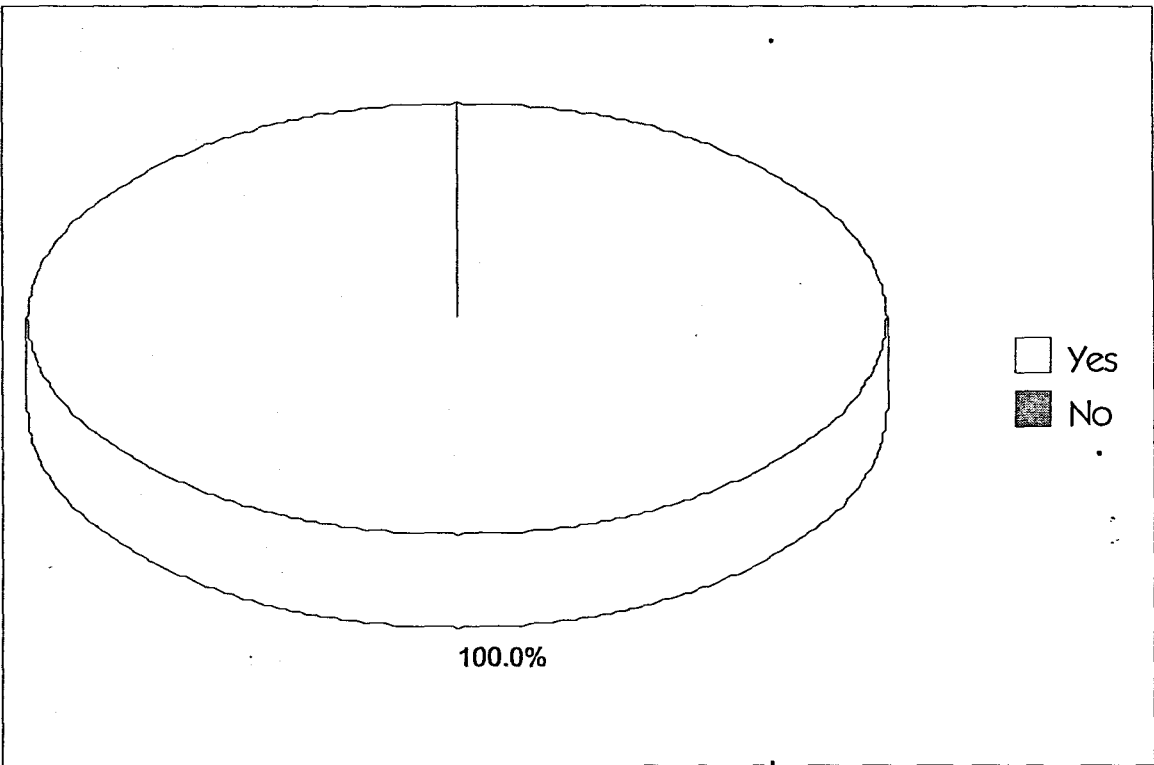
**TABLE 5.20: LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS WITH PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY**

<b>LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers (100%) expressed the view that there was a connection

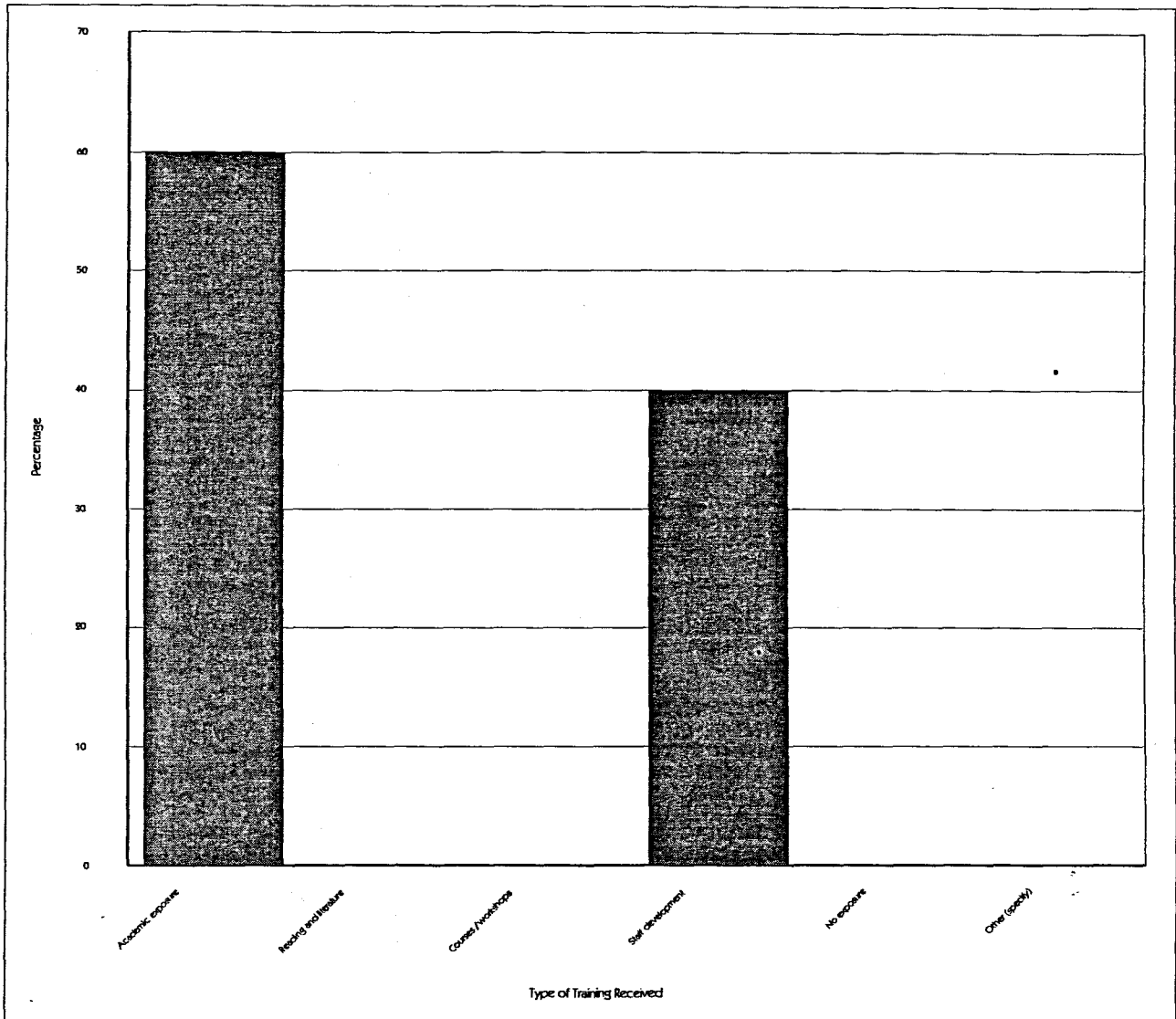
between social problems and the problems in the community. The education managers also reported that there was a connection between social problems and the problems in the community as they affect the performance of the child at school.

**FIGURE 5.17: TRAINING RECEIVED BY TEACHERS TO IDENTIFY SOCIAL PROBLEMS**



All the education managers explained that teachers receive some form of training to identify social problems experienced by school going children.

**FIGURE 5.18: TYPE OF TRAINING RECEIVED BY TEACHERS**



The majority 60 percent (3) of education managers explained that teachers do have academic exposure as a type of training in identifying children's social problems, while a smaller percentage (40%) stated that teachers attend staff development meetings as the type of training to identify children's social problems.

**TABLE 5.21: ASSOCIATION OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNERS AND PROBLEMS AT HOME**

<b>ASSOCIATION OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers (100%) associated the underachievement of learners with problems at home. This view was repeated in the responses of educators.

Allen-Meaures (2000:189) state that the child who lives in poverty and whose parents find the fulfillment of basic needs a difficult accomplishment often enters the school system lacking some basic skills. Academic handicaps are in large part attributable to poverty in the home. The poverty taxes the ability of parent to love, protect and nurture a growing child.

**TABLE 5.22: IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY ON CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table 5.21, all the education managers 100 percent (5) reported those



social problems at home, and in the community which impact on the child's academic performance.

The education managers explained that if one looks at the learner's performance, it would show what type of environment she comes from. There is a consensus that significant barriers to learning are encountered by a majority of students whose families are poor (Adelman, 1996:434). He further states that it is evident that overemphasis on providing services for individuals is an insufficient strategy for addressing the full range of factors such as those causing poor academic performance, dropouts, violence, teenage pregnancy and substance abuse.

#### **5.2.1.2.3 How problems in the families and communities should be addressed**

Education managers explained that the problems could be addressed by educating the families and communities through awareness programs and news media such as newspaper, radio, etc.

#### **5.2.1.2.4 Referral system**

Education managers were asked about the referral policy in the schools for children with social/behavioral problems. They stated that this question was not applicable

to them as they were confined in the Regional Office. Teachers who work with children on a daily basis would best answer it.

#### 5.2.1.2.5 Multi-disciplinary team

The education managers were asked if they have a multi-disciplinary team in the schools under them.

**TABLE 5.23: MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM**

MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	2	40
No	3	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers stated that although they were at the regional office they did know that a few schools have multi-disciplinary teams (40%) whereas a very large number of schools do not have multi-disciplinary teams (60%).

#### 5.2.1.2.6 School policy

The education managers were asked whether the schools under them have a school policy.

**TABLE 5.24: SCHOOL POLICY**

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers responded that the question was not applicable to them as they were at the regional office, but they indicated that schools do have policies. They were then unable to answer subsequent questions related to school policy.

#### 5.2.1.2.7 Corporal punishment

The education managers were asked whether corporal punishment in schools was still being used.

**TABLE 5.25: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

<b>CORPORAL PUNISHMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes		
No	5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

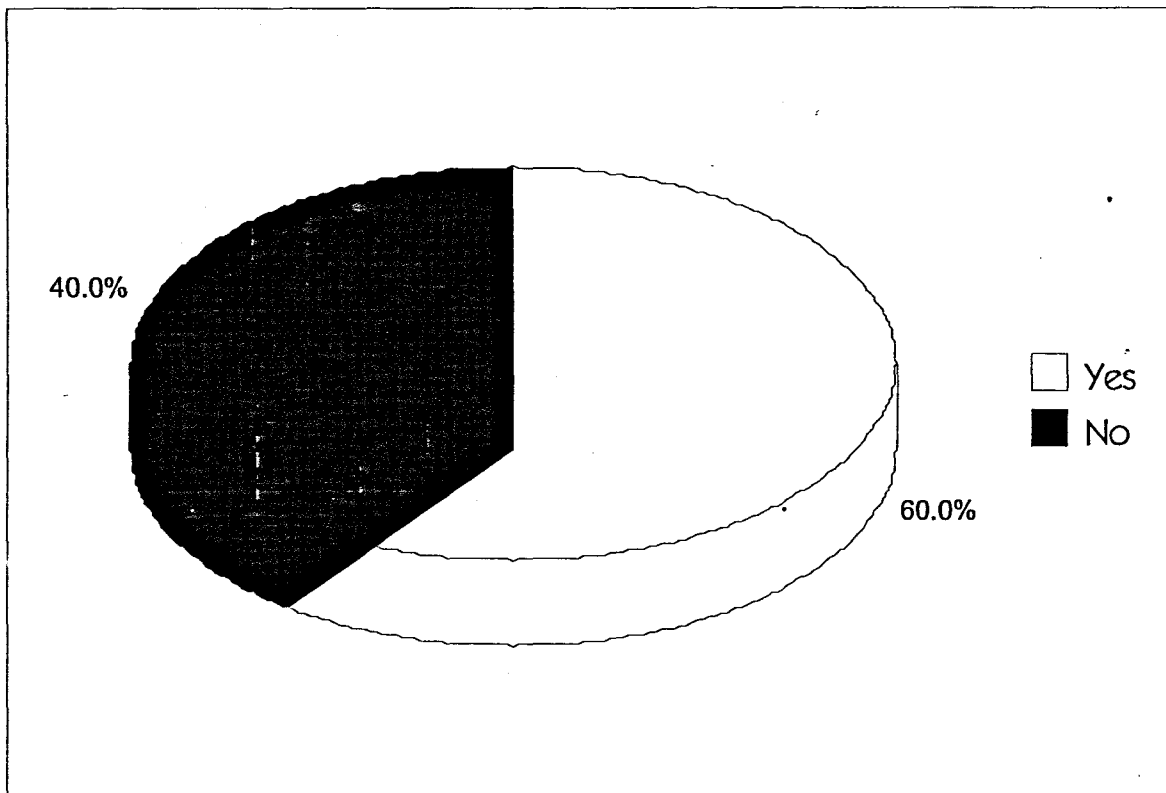
All the education managers explained that corporal punishment was abolished so they expect that all their schools no longer used it.

Education managers further explained that they would be unable to know what alternative methods teachers use to deter unacceptable behavior, as they are at the regional office, they could not speak on behalf of the teachers.

#### 5.2.12.8 Feeding schemes

The education managers were asked about the feeding scheme in their schools.

**FIGURE 5.19: FEEDING SCHEME**



Although the education managers were not directly involved in the feeding scheme, they stated that about 60 percent of their schools ran a feeding scheme, against 40 percent, which do not get the feeding scheme.

The benefits of the feeding scheme is that it improves learner's concentration in class. Not only has the feeding scheme decreased absenteeism but also it has nourished the children.

#### **5.2.1.2.9 Academic excellence**

Education managers were asked how they promote the culture of learning in their schools.

The education managers stated that this responsibility was left to the schools. At the regional office they only ensure that books are delivered on time. They also have an open door policy with their teachers.

##### **5.2.1.2.9.1 Promotion of the culture of teaching**

Democratic style of leadership is used. The schools are always given feedback about their performances.

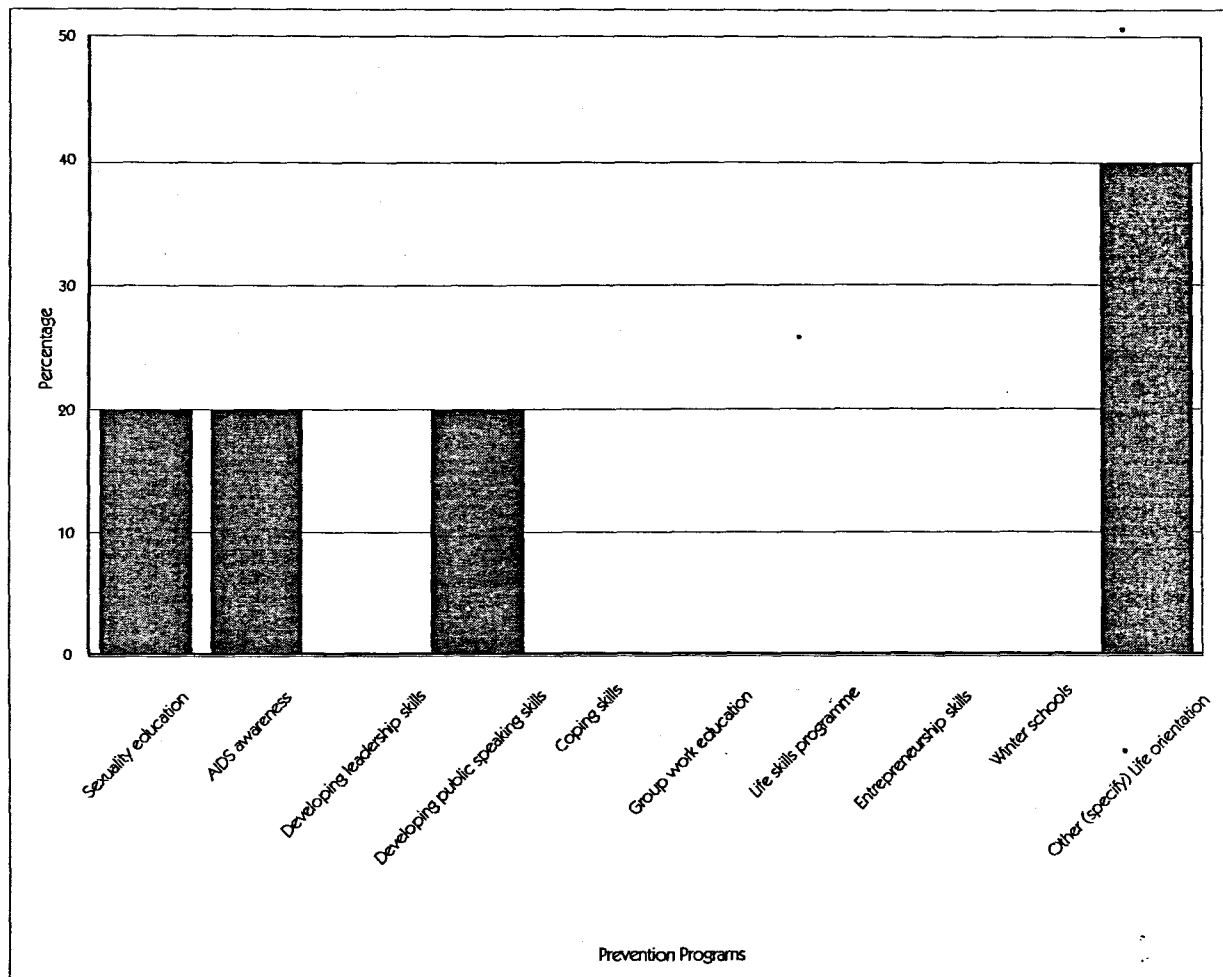
#### **5.2.1.2.9.2 Programs to promote academic excellence**

Teachers are encouraged to attend training seminar workshops and other courses to help them improve the quality of teaching.

#### **5.2.1.2.10 Prevention programs**

The education managers were asked about the prevention programs in use in the schools under them.

**FIGURE 5.20: PREVENTION PROGRAMS**



As reflected in figure 5.20 the majority education managers (40%) indicated that learners attend life orientation modules to equip them to cope with life issues. The regional office encourages teachers to discuss life issues during the life orientation modules. There is a need for effective school-based prevention programmes. As substance abuse has escalated in recent years school social workers should advocate for and take the lead in implementing programmes that have been shown

to be effective or appear to be promising (Allen-Meares, 2000).

#### 5.2.1.2.11 **Global economy**

The education managers were asked how they prepare learners for the global economy. The education managers mentioned that they encourage staff and learners to compete with other schools in activities like debates, and they should select subjects which are considered relevant for this present global economy.

**TABLE 5.26: PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

<b>PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from table 5.25, all the education managers explained that they promote science and technology. They encourage schools to expose learners through excursions to science centers and encourage schools to motivate learners to take technology courses.

#### 5.2.1.2.12 **Subjects equip learners with market related skills**

The Department of Education encourages learners to take science and technology



courses as well as mathematics.

**TABLE 5.27: IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY ON THE CHILD'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

<b>IMPACT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the education managers mentioned that what is happening in the world affects the child at school. For example a person may lose employment and his child might drop out of school due to a shortage of finances.

**5.2.1.2.13 Cooperation and involvement of parents**

The education managers were asked about the involvement of parents in schools.

**TABLE 5.28: COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS**

<b>COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes		
No		
Do Not Know	5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

All the educators stated that they would not know about the involvement of parents in schools. They stated that the educators would be in a better position to answer

that question.

#### 5.2.1.2.14 **Governing Body**

Education managers were asked whether their schools had governing bodies.

**TABLE 5.29: GOVERNING BODY**

<b>GOVERNING BODY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PARENTAGE</b>
Yes	5	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from table 5.29 all the education managers reported that schools do have governing bodies

#### 5.2.1.2.14.1 **Functions of the Governing Body**

School Governing Bodies in general help in teacher recruitment and selection. They act as a link between teachers and parents.

#### **5.2.1.2.14.2 Management of the school and the governing body working together**

The education managers were asked how the school management and the governing body work. They stated that they would be unable to know, as they are not directly involved with the governing bodies.

#### **5.2.1.2.15 Role of the social worker**

The education managers were asked about the role or possible roles of the school social worker.

All the education managers did not answer the question. However, they mentioned that they are in the regional office and teachers would be in a better position to answer that question.

#### **5.2.1.2.16 Recommendations**

##### **5.2.1.2.16.1 Departments of Education recommendations to equip educators to identify social problems**

Education managers were asked about their recommendations to equip educators

to identify social problems in learners. The respondents recommended that courses and workshops be conducted for staff development. There should also be training in basic counselling.

**5.2.1.1.16.2 Department of Welfare to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems in the school**

The education managers were asked to make recommendations to both Departments of Welfare and Education regarding partnership and for effective solving of children's problems in the school. The education managers could not respond as they stated that it was not applicable to them.

Triangulation: The researcher in this study has used a variety of research methods of data collection (interview and focused groups). Triangulation has been utilized in this study, in collecting data from the educators and education managers (phase one: educators and education managers). Triangulation used the multiple data gathering technique to investigate the same phenomenon. This is interpreted as a means of mutual conformation of measures and validation of findings.

## **5.2.2 Phase Two: Social Workers and Social Work Managers**

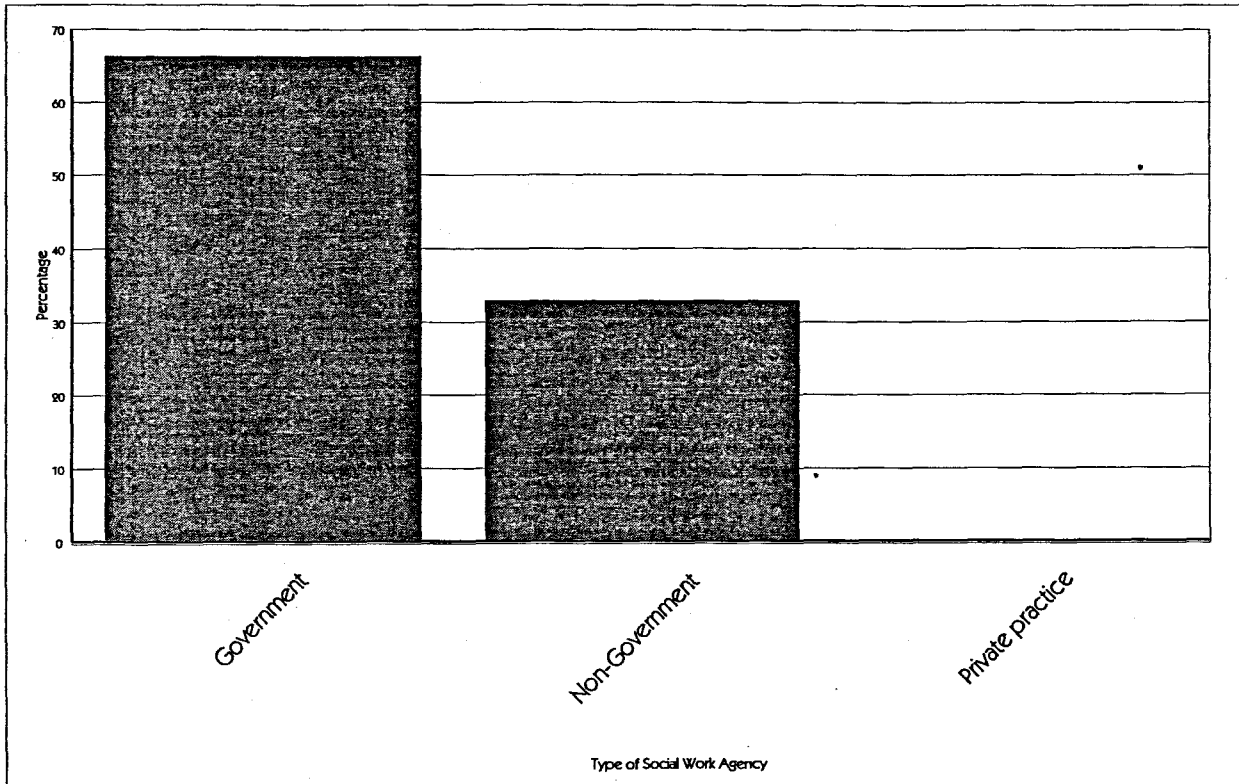
This phase is divided into 2 sample groups. Sample group one consists of 45 social workers, while sample group two in this phase consists of 15 social work managers.

### **5.2.2.1 Sample group one: social workers**

#### **5.2.2.1.1 Identifying particulars**

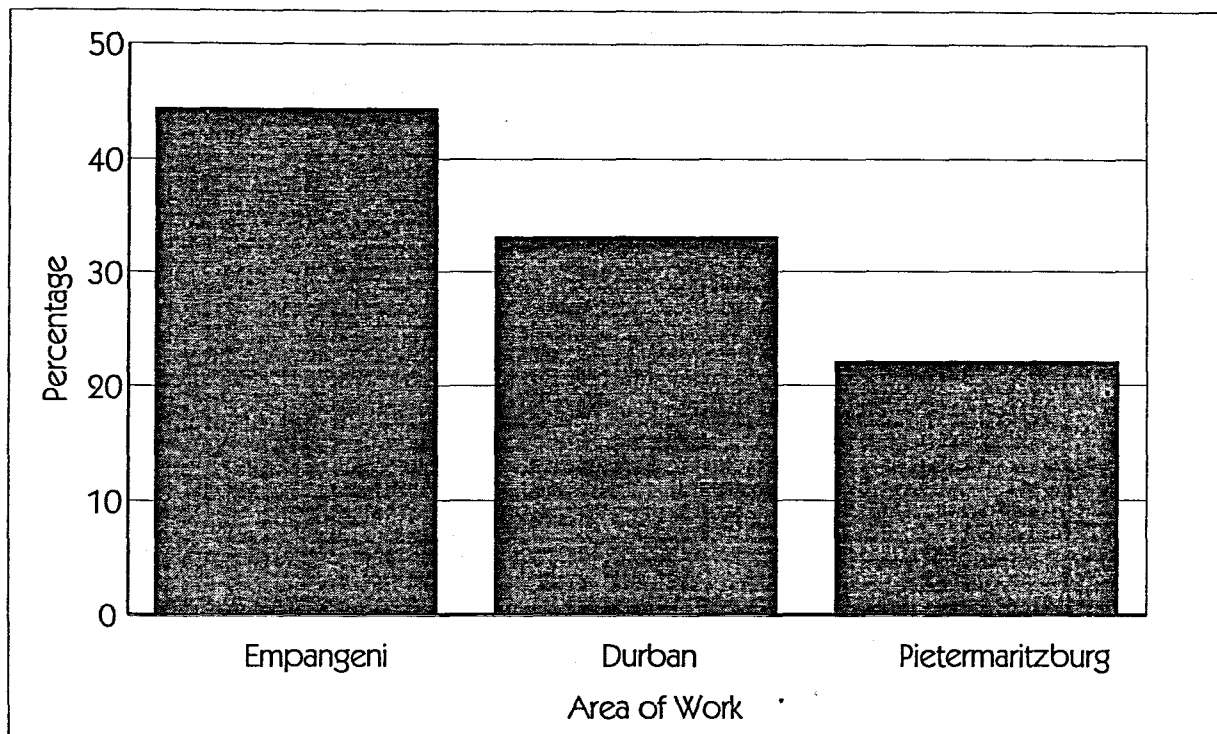
The information regarding the respondents identifying particulars was obtained. Only aspects of type of social work agency, area of work, type of and present designation were covered and regarded to be important factors in influencing the views of the respondents. In this study, the researcher interviewed 45 social workers in KwaZulu-Natal's three regions namely: Pietermaritzburg, Durban and Empangeni.

**FIGURE 5.21: TYPE OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCY**



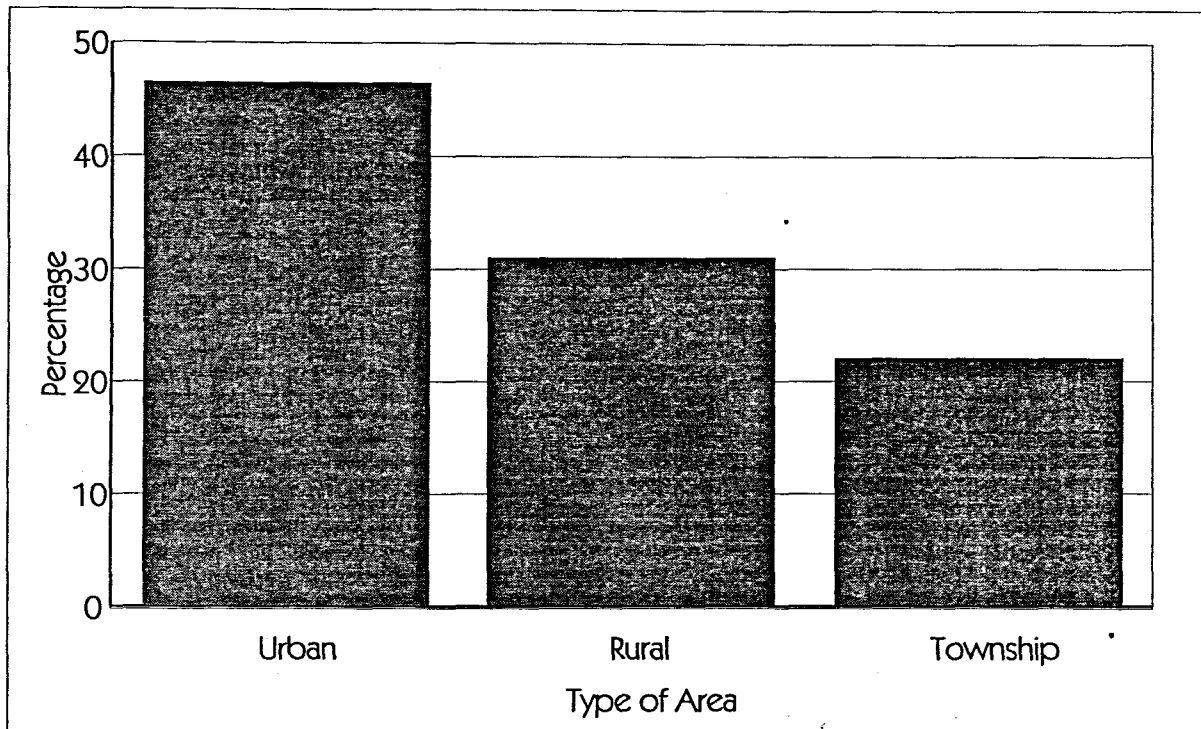
As indicated in figure 5.21 the majority 67 percent (30) of social workers were working for the government, while a smaller percentage (33%) were working for the non government organizations. The work situation differs from government to non-government organizations. The response would therefore be determined by where the respondent works as the majority of respondents work for the government. The welfare departments in government tend to concentrate more on statutory provisions. It would be interesting to explore this aspect further.

**FIGURE 5.22: AREA OF WORK**



From table 5.22, it is reflected that a larger number (44%) of social workers who participated in this study were working in the Empangeni area. Thirty-three percent of social workers that participated in this study were working in Durban, while 27 percent of social workers were working in Pietermaritzburg.

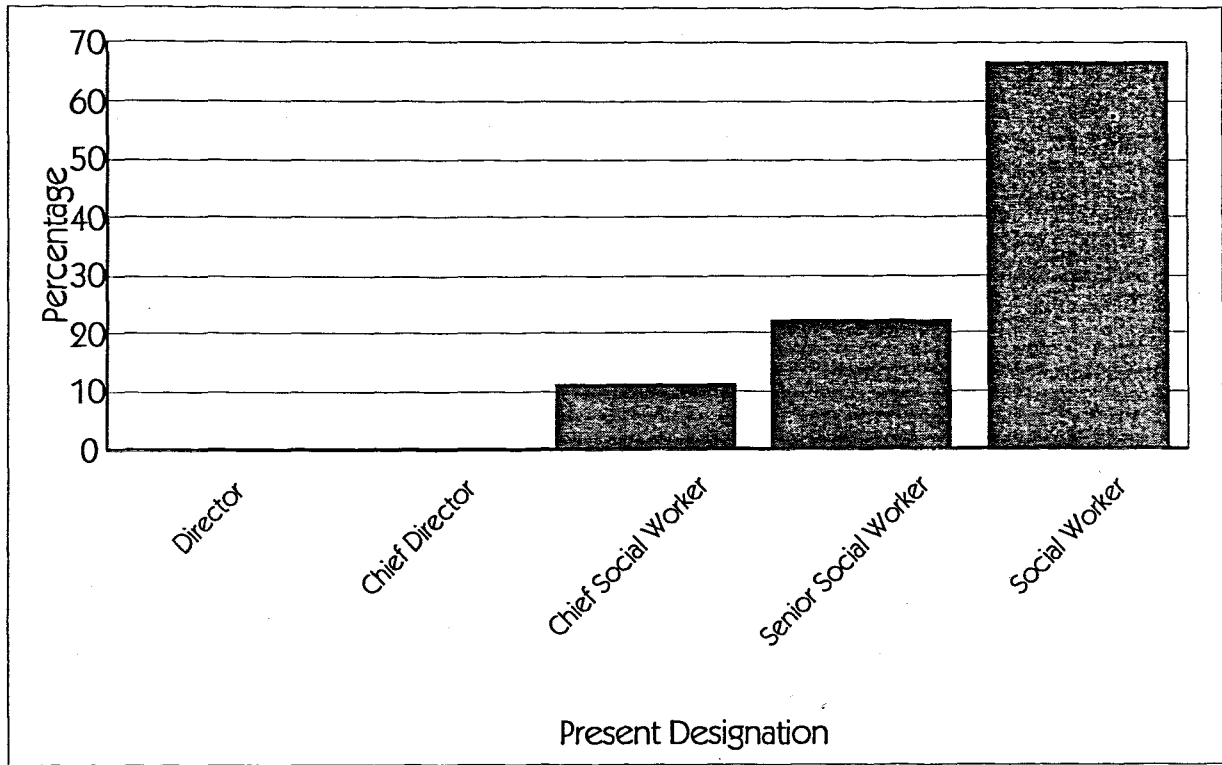
**FIGURE 5.23: TYPE OF AREA**



As indicated from Figure 5.23, the majority 47 percent (21) of social workers who participated in this study was working in the urban area. Smaller percentages of them were working in the rural or township areas. The results might show an urban bias, as the majority of respondents were from the urban area.



**FIGURE 5.24: PRESENT DESIGNATION**

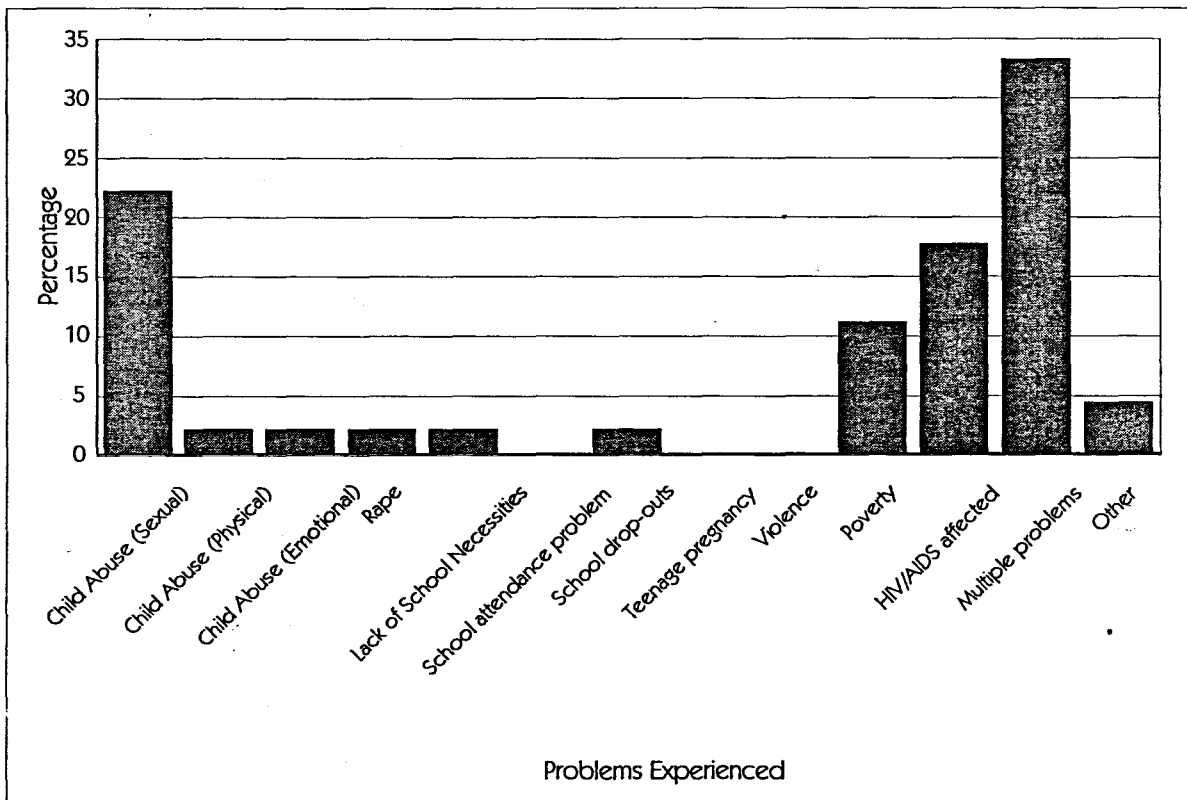


The majority 67 percent (30) of respondents who participated in the study were in the level of social workers, while a smaller percentage of respondents were in the level of chief social workers. The respondents who were in the level of social workers are in direct contact with children experiencing social problems.

### 5.2.2.1.2 Problems experienced by the school going children

Social workers were asked about the problems experienced by the school going children referred to their agencies.

**FIGURE 5.25: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**



From this figure, it can be noted that the majority (33 percent) of children seemed to experienced multiple problems, while (22%) of children experienced the problem

of child sexual abuse. The 1993 annual data from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect indicates that 140,000 children were sexually abused (Children's Defense Fund, 1996). The majority were females. Victims of sexual abuse exhibit a wide range of behaviours, e.g., sexual play, excessive masturbation, seductive sexual behaviour, poor performance in school and social involvement. Social workers in the child and family service and the court system may work with school social workers to prepare a child to give testimony.

**TABLE 5.30: LINKING SOCIAL/BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN THE SCHOOL WITH LEARNER'S HOME CIRCUMSTANCES**

<b>LINK SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
YES	45	100
NO		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

In this table it is evident that all the social workers (100%) indicated that there is a link between social problems reflected in the school and the home circumstances of the learner. The social workers gave a variety of reasons for the link between social/behavioural problems reflected in schools with the learner's home conditions. Poor role models by parents and lack of parenting skills are common factors. This was worsened by parents' inability to understand the aims of outcome based education coupled with a lack of visible means of support and lack of financial ability

from family members. The systems approach is noticeable here. If one subsystem is affected, the whole system is affected.

**TABLE 5.31: DOES YOUR AGENCY DEAL WITH CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS SPEEDILY, DESPITE YOUR AGENCY'S CASELOADS?**

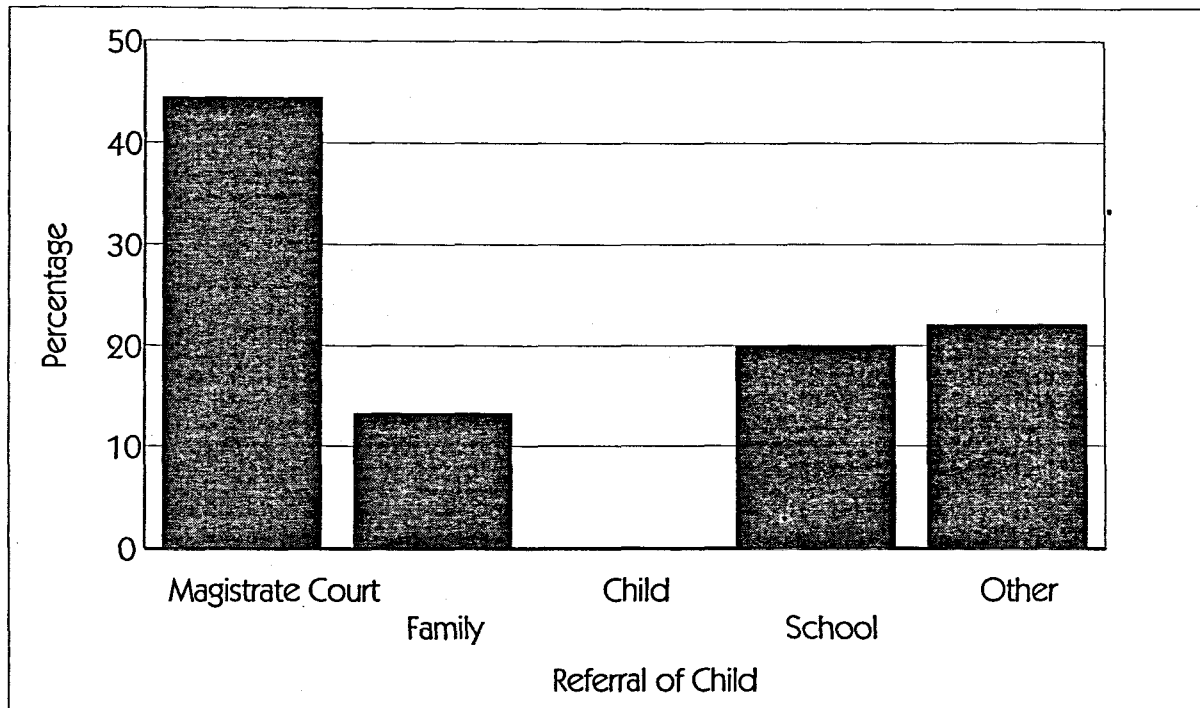
<b>Case Done Speedily</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in table 5.29 the majority 67 percent (30) of social workers indicated that they were unable to attend to children's cases speedily due to their workload. A lower number stated that they managed to attend to children's problems speedily despite their caseload.

#### **5.2.2.1.3 Referral system**

The social workers were asked about the system, which refers children with problems to them

**FIGURE 5.26: REFERRAL OF CHILDREN WITH SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO AGENCY**



From table 5.26 above, it can be seen that the majority of referrals received by social workers comes from the magistrate's courts after children have committed crimes. The findings reflect what is being done in government social work agencies, as they do a lot of statutory work.

**TABLE 5.32: ARE CHILDREN REFERRED IN TIME TO AGENCY TO RENDER PREVENTIVE SERVICES**

<b>Referral in Time</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in table 5.30, the majority 67 percent (30) of social workers responded by saying that children are not referred in time to their agencies to allow them to put in place prevention services. It seems the education staff is not fully aware of the power of social work services available to school going children, as they seemed not to be referred in time.

The social workers recommended that children should be referred in time for prevention purposes, early identification and referral for substance abuse cases, as well as awareness programmes on life skills. The need for school social workers so as to identify children with social problems was also stressed.

**TABLE 5.33: WOULD SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DO EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS AS WELL AS EARLY INTERVENTION THAN GENERIC SOCIAL WORKERS**

<b>Early Identification by School Social Workers</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	45	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

All the social workers who participated in this study explained that school social workers would be in a better position to identify the children's problems earlier than general social workers.

#### **5.2.2.1.3 Multicultural practice in service delivery**

The social workers were asked about multicultural practice in service delivery whether they are equipped to work with people whose backgrounds are different from them.

**TABLE 5.34: ARE SOCIAL WORKERS EQUIPPED TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHOSE BACKGROUNDS ARE DIFFERENT FROM THEM?**

<b>Equipped multicultural</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	20	45
No	25	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority 55 percent (25) of social workers stated that they were equipped to work with people whose backgrounds are different from theirs. Forty-five percent stated that they were not equipped to work with people whose background were different from them due to lack of training by the agency personnel.

**TABLE 5.35: ENCOURAGEMENT OF MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE**

<b>Encouragement of Multicultural Practice</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	30	67
No	15	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

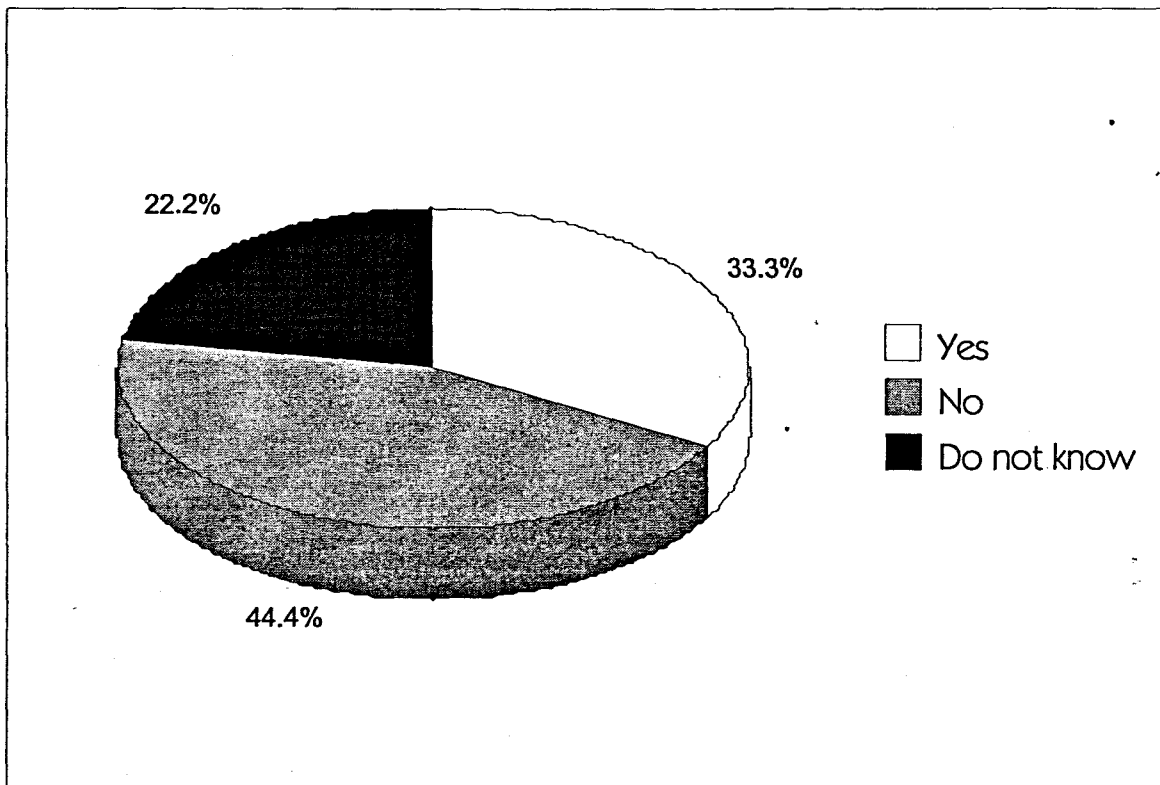
The majority 67 percent (30) of social workers stated that their agencies encourage multicultural practice in service rendering. A small percentage (33%) stated that their agencies do not encourage multicultural practice.



#### 5.2.2.1.4 Parental involvement in schools

The social workers were asked about parents' involvement in school matters and the benefits thereof.

**FIGURE 5.27: PARENTS PARTICIPATING IN SCHOOL MATTERS**



The majority of respondents (45 percent) indicated that parents were not participating in school matters. Thirty-three percent of respondents stated that parents do participate in school matters. Social workers who saw parents as not participating in school matters put this down to lack of commitment in school

matters, insufficient time for schoolwork due to pressure from their own work. As a result parents could not consult with teachers or attend parent meetings conducted at awkward times. Parents participate only in Model C Schools.

Parent participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children is an important factor in academic achievement. Schools cannot educate children, particularly vulnerable children without the cooperation of families (Walberg & Lai, 1999). The findings of the US Department of Education (1997) have corroborated the findings of this study. These findings state that a low level of parental involvement is cause for concern. In 1996, parental attendance at parent- teacher conferences decreased from 84 percent in elementary schools to 47 percent in middle schools. Forty-one percent of elementary and middle schools reported that parental input is considered when making policy decisions in three or more areas. Although 62 percent of parents of children in grades 3 to 12 reported that they participated in two or more activities in their child's school, this percentage has dropped from 73 to 53 percent between the elementary and high school grades. A report by the US Department of Education in October 1997 showed that it is merely contact between fathers and children that is important, rather than active participation in their children's lives through involvement in their schools that makes a difference in school's outcomes (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 1997b, p xi). Schools are finding that they need a more active outreach to get this involvement, particularly of lower income

and vulnerable families.

**TABLE 5.36: BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

<b>Benefit in Parental Involvement</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	45	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

All the social workers (100%) stated that the school could benefit if parents participated in school matters.

The social workers gave a number of benefits if parents participate in school matters such as: Teachers would more easily understand the child if there was co-operation between parents and teachers. Communication between parents and teachers would be improved. Sharing of information is beneficial. Parents can contribute in all structures of the school. Parent participation would decrease school dropouts. As a minimum requirement school social workers or child and youth care workers with a Technikon Diploma/Degree should be employed by the Department of Education to re-unite the school with the family.

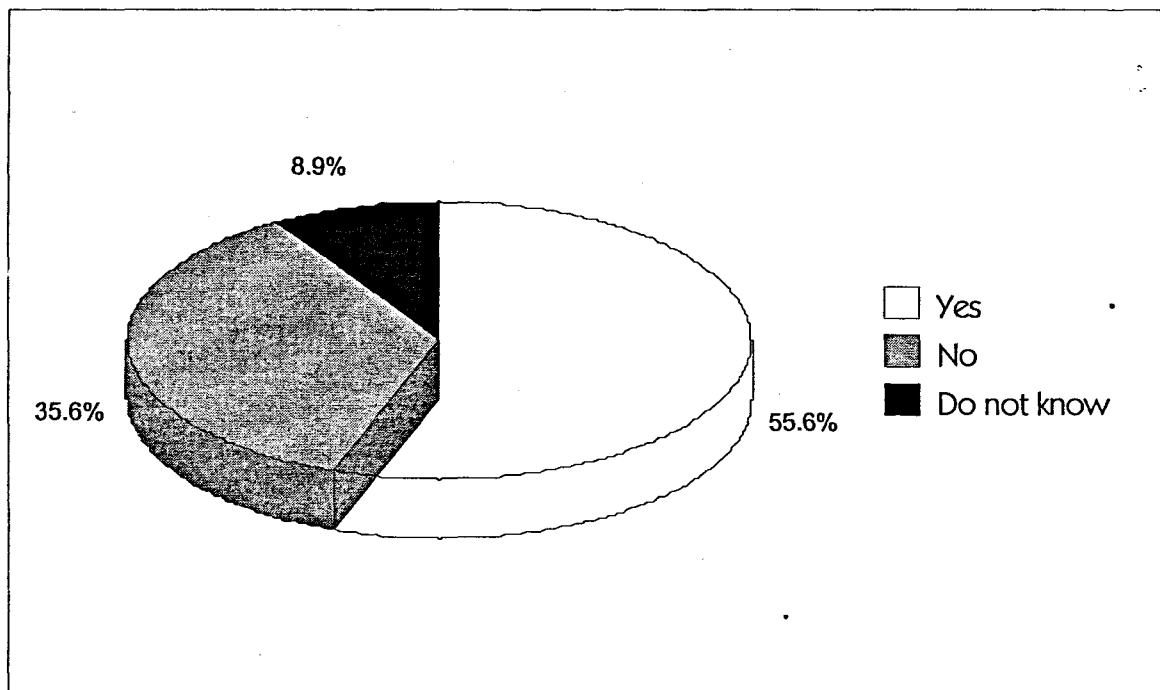
The literature states that parent-school collaboration is valuable because it could solve many of the problems that overwhelm the schools, such as lack of discipline and thus facilitate communication between the school and parents. Parent

involvement contributes an essential ingredient to a learning-socializing environment of children and results in activities that foster parent-teacher support (Winters & Easton, 1983:107).

#### 5.2.2.1.5 Global competition of students

Social workers were asked to express their views about social problems experienced by school going children and how they impact on the child to compete in the global economy.

**FIGURE 5.28: SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN IMPACT ON CHILDREN COMPETING IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY?**



As reflected from table 5.28 the majority of respondents (55%) indicated that social problems experienced by school going children impact on children competing in the global economy. A low percentage (9%) stated that children are not affected by their problems to compete in the global economy.

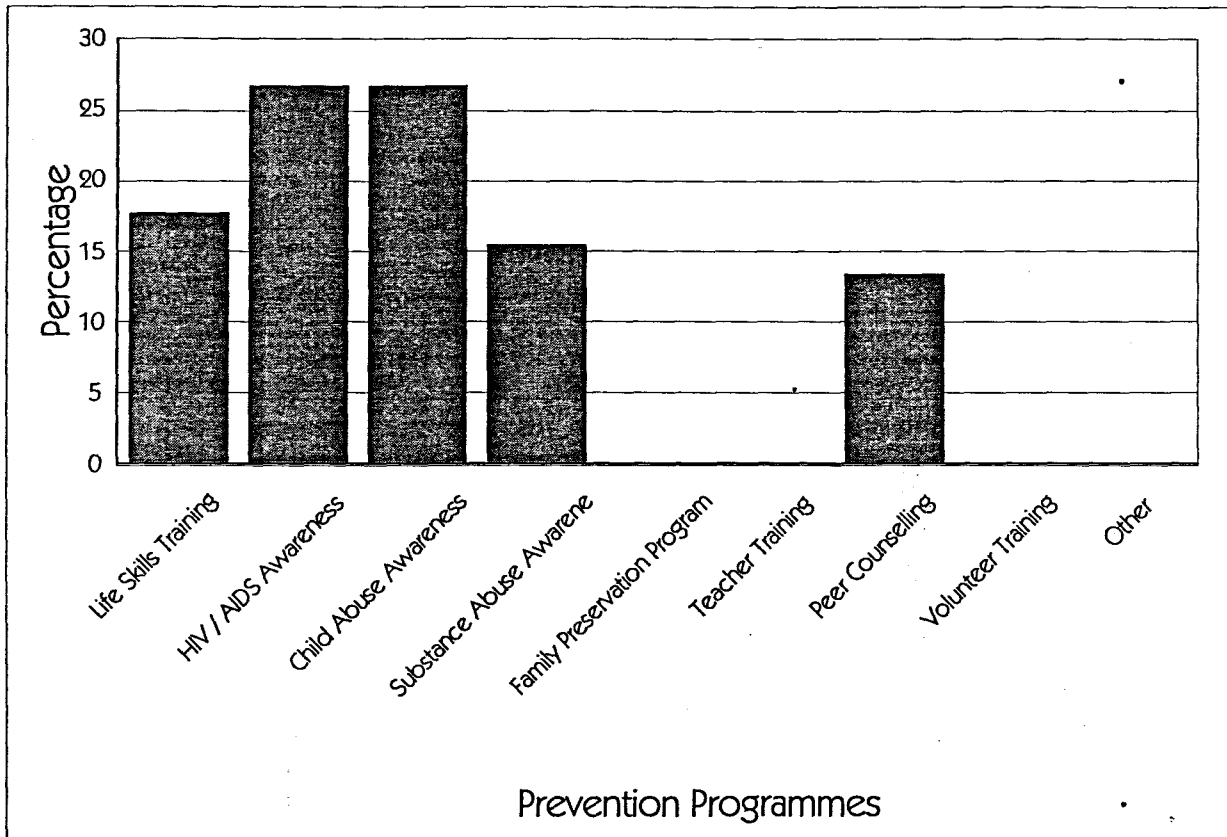
A variety of impacts were stated by social workers. The problems experienced by children interfere with the child's academic and social achievement. Outcome Based Education (OBE) requires a great deal of parental involvement; children without parents are disadvantaged. Lack of resources in certain areas limit life chances of children. There are so many challenges facing the new South Africa. Thus schools should be equipped to ensure well educated and well behaved children that can compete globally with market related skills. The child who has no school necessities does not perform well at school as a result he or she drops out early in school, and is unable to compete in the global economy. There should be advanced teacher training. The impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will make the attainment of these goals difficult. Schools need to have an action plan for children without support or orphaned by HIV/AIDS. School dropouts due to alcohol and drug abuse exacerbate the problem of unemployment, poverty and crime

#### **5.2.2.1.6 Prevention programmes**

The social workers who participated in this study were asked about the (possible)

prevention programme(s) rendered by social workers in schools.

**FIGURE 5.29: PREVENTION PROGRAMME**



As indicated in figure 5.29, 27% of social workers expressed the view that they render HIV/AIDS awareness programmes as a prevention strategy, while the same percentage of social workers indicated that they render child abuse awareness as a prevention programme. Twenty-percent of social workers stated that they render life skills training as a prevention programme.

### 5.2.2.1.7 Accessibility of social work services in schools

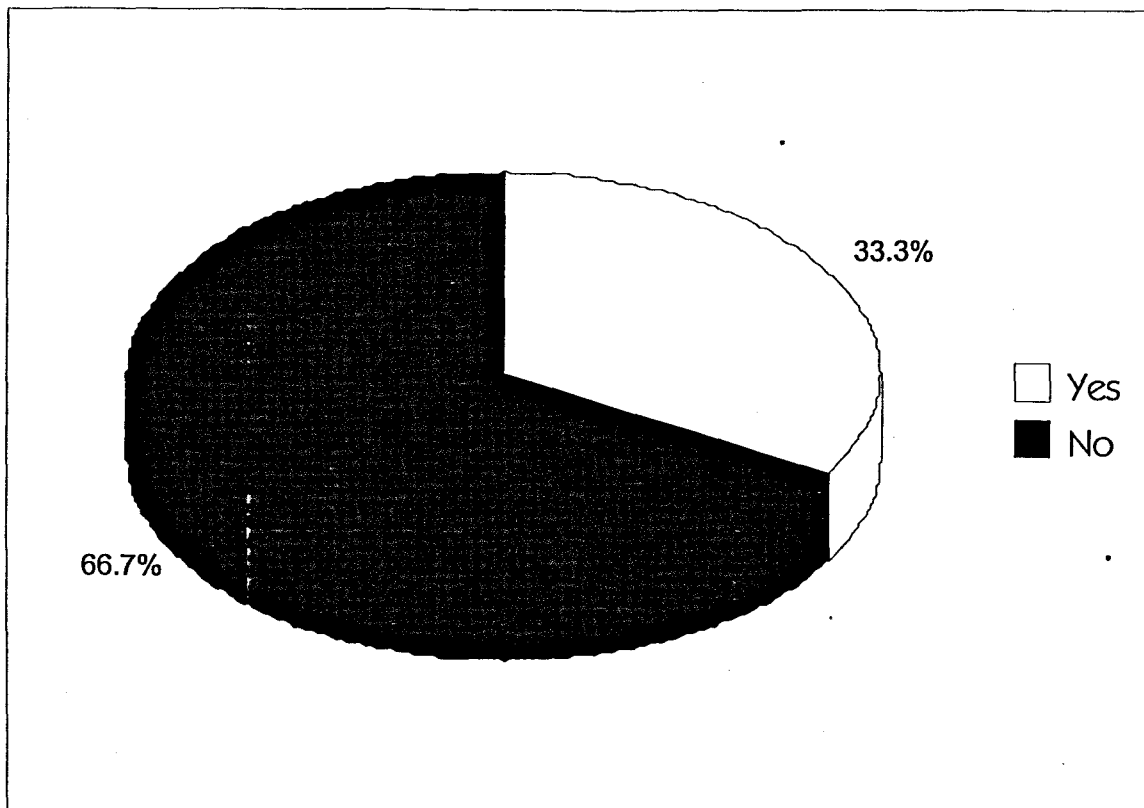
The question being looked at is the accessibility of social workers to all school going children in the area where social workers operate.

**TABLE 5.37: ARE SOCIAL WORKERS DOING MORE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS FOR BLACKS THAN IN OTHER SCHOOLS?**

<b>More Social Work Services in Schools for Blacks</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	15	33
No	30	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of respondents 67 percent (30) stated that they are doing more social work services for Blacks than in other schools. They reported that there are not enough social work services for children generally. Most of the schools for Blacks do not have guidance teachers as a result the volume of social problems referred to social workers have increased tremendously. Child abuse cases are on the increase as well as probation services (Social Crime Prevention) are being strained by the needs of HIV/AIDS affected children.

**FIGURE 5.30: ACCESSABILITY OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES TO ALL SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**



As indicated in figure 5.30 the majority of social workers 67 percent (30) stated that social work services are not accessible to all school going children, while a low percentage (33%) stated that social work services are accessible to the school going children.

Social workers who stated that social work services are not accessible to school going children gave varied reasons that there were not enough social workers in

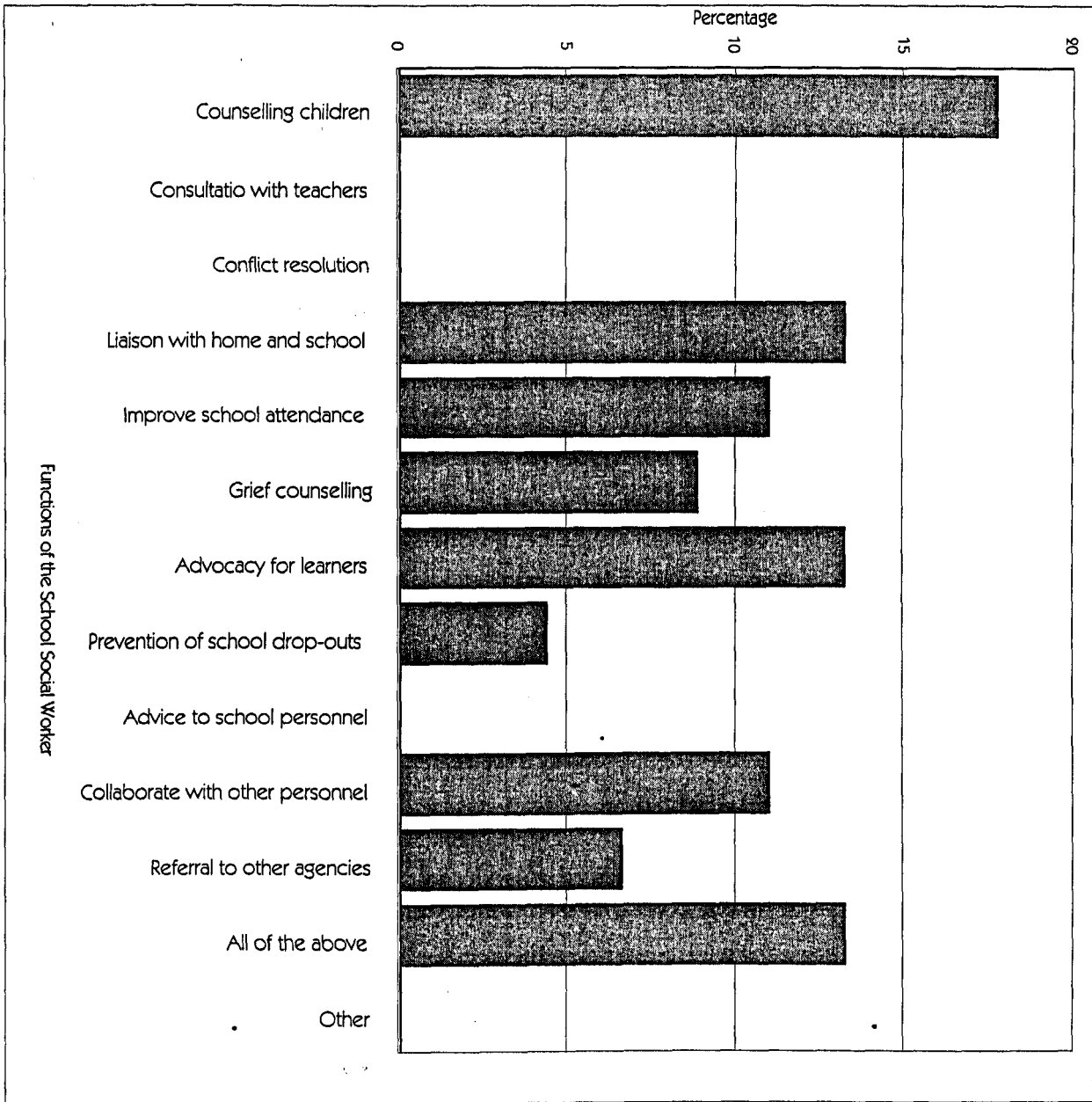


schools, that some of the schools had not been reached because of agencies' heavy caseloads. Social workers had not had time to go to schools because the department cannot make it possible for them to do services in schools. This kind of service needs trained people, as it is a specialization kind of service.

#### **5.2.2.1.8 Functions of School Social Work**

Social workers were asked about the functions of the school social worker, and how they have discharged the functions of the school social worker in the schools nearby.

**FIGURE 5.31: FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER THAT YOU HAVE RENDERED TO SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**



As reflected from figure 5.31 the majority 18 percent (8) of social workers stated that they have counselled school going children. About 13 percent (6) of social workers indicated that they have performed all the functions mentioned in the above table. A further 13 percent of them stated that they had advocated for the child, while another 13 percent conducted liaisons between home and school.

The social workers further explained how they had carried out these school social work functions. They had been performed as follows:

- Through presentation of video shows in schools.
- In specific cases through the opening of files.
- Through awareness programmes against child abuse, HIV/AIDS as well as substance abuse.

The functions of the school social workers, which have been performed, by social workers in this study, are briefly discussed following Kasiram's scheme (1988). The traditional role of the school social worker has focused on the individual child, his adaptations to school and his use of learning opportunities. There is now a shift in emphasis as school social workers have also to intervene at the social environment level, which might affect the child's potential to perform well in school. Hence the ecological approach is used by the school social workers. This approach holds that

the problems of society are reflected in the schools and that social problems thus inevitably affect the daily roles and tasks performed by the school social worker and the education staff. The societal forces such as violence, poverty, family dysfunction affect the educational process, and in some instances undermine the capability of schools to offer equal opportunities to all its students.

(a) Advocacy of learners

The school social worker is expected to advocate on behalf of the child. This may include clarifying the problem of the child to others. Advocacy on behalf of populations can take place on several different levels; in school and community committees established to develop programs for pupils, at the state and national levels (advocating the rights of high risk pupil groups); and within the school and community systems (identifying inadequate services and unfair policies and practices (Allen-Meares, 2000)).

A child might not have school necessities, because of financial problems at home. The school social worker can advocate on behalf of the child on this matter. The principal would then not expel the child from school.

(b) Extending direct services to pupils and parents. The school social worker does the following:

- Provides emotional support and offers educational counseling
- Assists families to understand their children's educational needs and resources
- Enables families to interpret their concerns to school personnel and, opens lines of communication in this regard.
- Provides information to facilitate the family's use of community resources
- Helps pupils overcome barriers to school attendance and achievement and responsible behavior
- Counsels pupils or parents on various factors that affect learning
- Intervenes early in problem situations to prevent problems developing into serious difficulties (in this study this function is not happening as the social workers mentioned that cases are not referred in time to allow for early intervention)
- Provides medical attention for children.

(c) **Collaboration**

Collaboration denotes an exchange of information that results in joint problem solving efforts. The ability of team members to link their unique contributions to those of other professionals is essential to interdisciplinary practice. School social workers would often set up collaborative meetings between teachers and students to help students with behaviour problems (Allen-Meares, 2000:279).

**5.2.2.1.9 Developmental social work**

The social workers were asked about their understanding of developmental social work. Developmental social work as understood by the respondents (social workers) means applying an integrated service delivery approach, networking with key stakeholders and sharing resources. Prevention and early intervention should be done at schools by providing programmes to children and building their family capacity building, as well as helping every person and community develop its full potential. Referring clients at earlier stages as they grow up means the social work professional develops other programmes according to their ages. Improving one's knowledge and developing new skills to relate to present existing circumstances together with alleviating poverty to promote sustainable development are both part of prevention.

#### **5.2.2.1.9.1 Benefits of the school going child from a developmental social work perspective**

In this study, social workers mentioned the following benefits: developmental social work will always be available; therefore, children will be able to tell the developmental social worker their problems. The holistic approach, reduces overlap in service delivery ensuring that the child will receive a holistic integrated service. Participation of the child, the family and school with the assistance of the school social worker can minimize a large number of issues affecting young children generally. Development work empowers. Problems experienced by the child will easily be understandable to the social worker.

Gray (1998:58) defines developmental social welfare as a welfare system based on the philosophy and policy of social development, and developmental social work as the practice of social work within the social development policy model. Both require a sincere commitment to alleviating poverty. Basically developmental social welfare and developmental social work are advanced as the strategies most likely to increase welfare coverage to previously marginalized sectors of the population, to redistribute services and resources and to achieve a more and equitable system of welfare provision.

#### 5.2.2.1.10 **Training of school social workers from a developmental perspective**

Social workers who participated in this study recommended the following towards the training of social workers from a developmental perspective. The training of school social workers should form part of the curriculum in universities and tertiary institutions training in child and youth care. In addition there should be critical analysis of service delivery in order to improve on the provision of school social work. There must be a buy in by all the key stakeholders.

#### 5.2.2.1.11 **Qualifications of school social workers**

Social workers who participated in this study were asked about the qualifications of school social workers. They expressed views on this matter.

**TABLE 5.38: QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS**

<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
BA(SW)	15	33
MSW	10	23
DSW		
Post Graduate Diploma in School Social Work	20	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected from table 5.36 the majority 44 percent (20) of social workers felt that the qualifications of school social workers should be a post graduate diploma in



school social work. Fifteen percent (15) of social workers felt that school social workers should possess the BA (SW) which is a junior degree.

The majority of social workers expressed the view that those practicing at schools should specialize in school social work and command advanced skills. At the same time social workers at the undergraduate level should be trained to deal with problems of children and youth. In addition they must be familiar with school/educational policies and procedures.

In summary trainees need to familiarize themselves with the school environment to be able to counsel children on basic life skills in light of the prevalence of child abuse in South Africa. Poor child-parent communication has created family problems and disintegration.

Social workers must receive more extensive training on school social work.

#### **5.2.2.1.11.1 Social work services rendered by school social workers or general social workers**

Social workers expressed views concerning social work services rendered in schools whether it should be done by general social workers or by school social workers. A large percentage of social workers 71 percent (32) felt that social work services

rendered in schools are a specialized field, thus necessitating school social workers trained to do it. They also felt that at this point general social workers fall short to render full services in schools. They are unable to attend to children's problems speedily. For example in a case of child abuse they take up to two weeks to investigate the child's case.

A low percentage of social workers 29 percent (13) felt that social work services in schools should be rendered by both general and specialised social workers because social workers from the agencies might run prevention programmes such as AIDS awareness and child abuse awareness during the child protection week. They further mentioned that both generalistic and specialised social workers have acquired skills in working with children within the ambit of their professional experience and training.

#### **5.2.2.1.11.2 Recommendations to the department of welfare and the department of education**

The social workers were asked what could be done jointly by the Departments of Education and of Social Development.

Social workers who participated in this study stated that there should be an interdepartmental liaison and partnership. This view means that they should be

working in partnership towards the development of social services in schools offering life skills training and awareness campaigns by both departments. The Department of Education needs to design policies that will address cases of marginalised children. Both Departments need to share more information by working together and formulating programs and meeting regularly to evaluate the impact. All service providers must work together as a team and create a Welfare Wing in the Education Department.

Social Welfare must market its services to the Department of Education and its role in terms of the ethos of 'people first' or Batho Pele. The Education Department must sponsor social work students for postgraduate studies in school social work to improve service delivery in schools.

#### **5.2.2.2 Sample Group Two: Social Work Managers**

This sub-section relates to focused groups with social work managers in KwaZulu-Natal's three government regional offices and the non-government directors.

##### **5.2.2.2.1 Identifying particulars**

The information regarding the respondents identifying particulars was obtained. Questions asked ranged from aspects of type of social work agency, area of work,

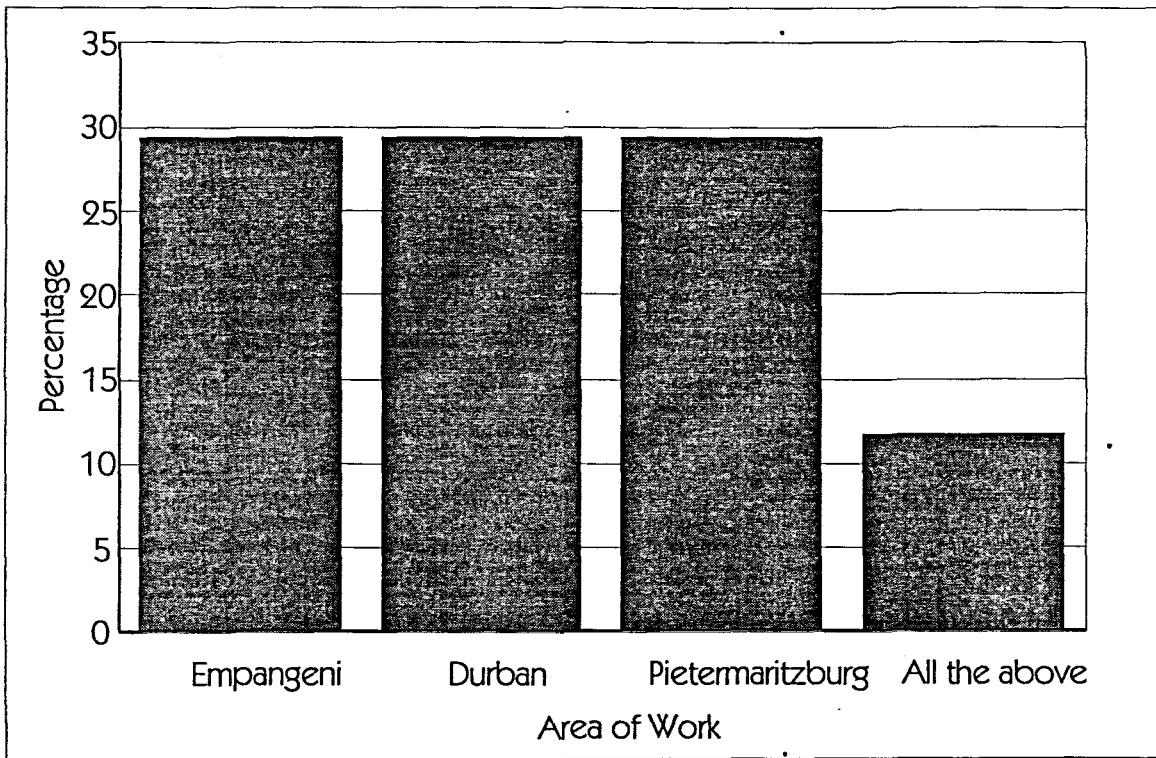
type of area of work and present designation as these were regarded as important factors in influencing the views of the respondents. The focused groups were held with the social work managers in KwaZulu-Natal. There were five social work managers in each regional office and 2 social work directors in the non-government agencies.

**TABLE 5.39: TYPE OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCY**

<b>TYPE OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Government	15	88
Non-government	2	12
Private Practice		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

An overwhelming number (88 percent) of social work managers work in the government department, whereas a small number (12%) works for the non-government department. The findings of the study would have a government bias, as the majority of respondents work for the government.

**FIGURE 5.32: AREA OF WORK**



As reflected in figure 5.32 about 29 percent (5) social work managers are in the Empangeni area. The same number of social work managers works in the Durban area as well as Pietermaritzburg areas. About 13 percent (2) of social work managers work in all the 3 areas for the non-government agency. The area of work is fairly well distributed. Therefore the possibility of bias is minimised.

**TABLE 5.40: TYPE OF AREA OF WORK**

<b>TYPE OF AREA OF WORK</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Urban		
Rural	5	29
Township		
ALL types of areas	12	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of social work managers are spread in all the types of areas, i.e., urban, rural and townships. A small percentage (29%) is located in the rural areas. The responses seemed to be fairly distributed as the majority of respondents cover all the areas.

**TABLE 5.41: PRESENT DESIGNATION**

<b>PRESENT DESIGNATION</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Director	4	24
Chief Director		
Chief Social Worker	13	76
Senior Social Worker		
Social Worker		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

An overwhelming number of social work managers interviewed in focused groups were chief social workers, 13 representing 76 percent of the total sample. A small percentage (24%) of social work managers who were interviewed were Directors. Although the Chief Directors did not participate in the study, due to their work schedule, they approved of the study, and were planning to open a file on school social work services in their offices. They further stated in a brief discussion with

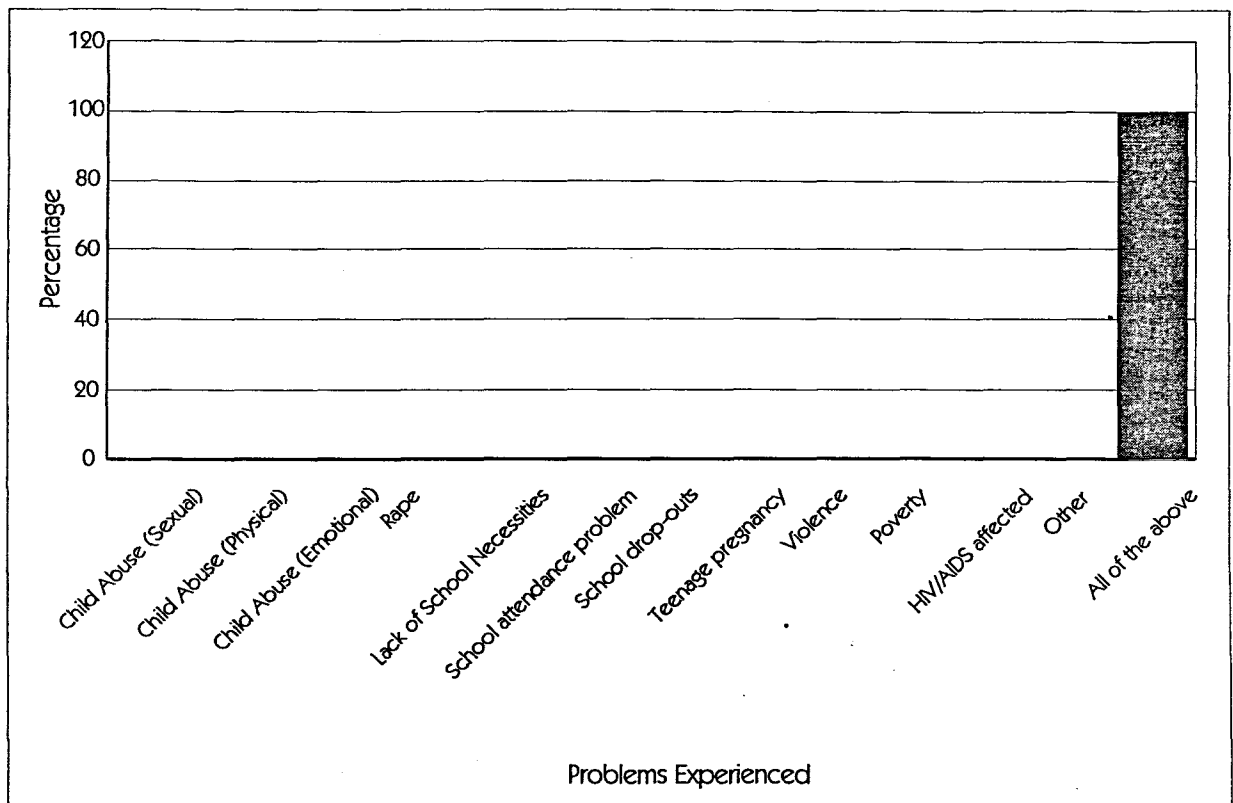
them that they would appreciate getting feedback about the sessions from their Directors and Chief Social Workers.

Being at the regional office the respondents were not in continuous contact with children experiencing social problems. They were only involved with them at the policy making level.

#### **5.2.2.2.2 Problems experienced by the school going children**

The social work managers were asked about the problems experienced by the school going children that are being referred to the agencies under them.

**FIGURE 5.33: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**



All the social work managers (100%) explained that their agency social workers deal with all the problems mentioned above. They also stated that in the urban areas they deal a lot with street children and abandonment. The social work managers also expressed the problem of sexual abuse of children by educators and peers.



**TABLE 5.42: LINKING OF SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS REFLECTED IN THE SCHOOL WITH LEARNERS CIRCUMSTANCES**

<b>LINKING OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	17	17
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

All the social work managers (100%) stated that they linked social problems reflected in the school with problems at home. The social work managers mentioned domestic violence, poverty, alcoholism, drug abuse by parents and sexual abuse. From the perspective of systems theory, if members of the family have a problem the child is also affected. There is absence of parenting through AIDS related diseases. In such cases respondents indicated that they try to help sick parents. Poor parenting skills and a lack of involvement in school related activities including lack of homework supervision, failure to follow up on noted behavior problems were also listed as prevalent factors exacerbating problems with some school-going children.

**TABLE 5.43: PROBLEMS SPEEDILY ATTENDED**

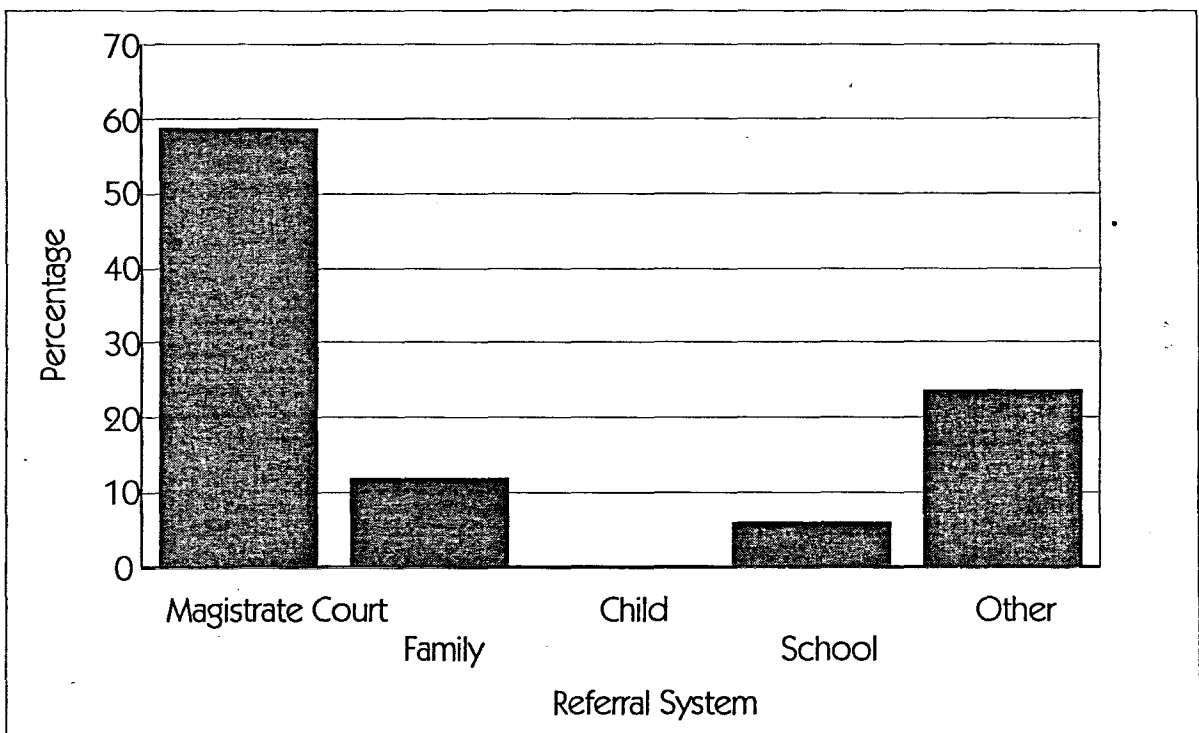
<b>PROBLEMS DONE SPEEDILY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes (we are trying)	17	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

All the social work managers (100%) explained that their social workers were trying hard to attend speedily to children with social problems.

### 5.2.2.2.3 Referral system

Social work managers were asked the frequency of referrals of children with social problems to their agencies.

**FIGURE 5.34: CHILDREN REFERRED BY SOCIAL WORKERS**



An indication was given that an overwhelming number of referrals (59%) comes from the magistrates' courts. A very low percentage (6%) of referrals comes from the schools.

**TABLE 5.44: REFERRED IN TIME**

<b>REFERRED</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	1	6
No	16	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

A high percentage (94%) of social work managers stated that cases were not referred in time to allow for prevention services. Only a smaller fraction (6%) of social work managers stated that cases were referred in time.

The social work managers recommended that cases should be referred immediately. Awareness campaigns such as Child Abuse, Youth Care, HIV/AIDS and childcare must be ongoing. Educators rarely report cases of abuse. They need to report all referred cases immediately to lessen the effect of public apathy and lack of parent participation.

**TABLE 5.45: SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND GENERIC SOCIAL WORKERS**

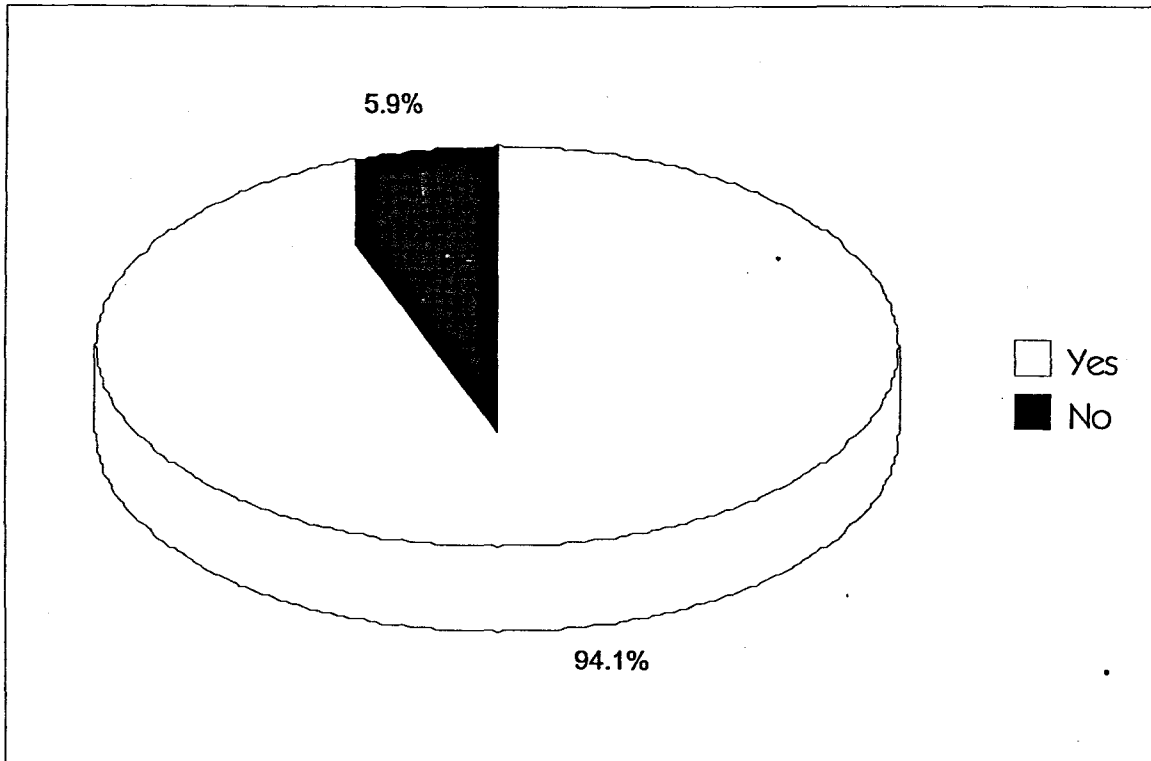
<b>SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	17	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

As reflected in table 5.43 all the social work managers 100 percent (17) expressed the view that school social workers would be in a better position to do early identification of children's problems as well as early intervention than the general social workers.

#### **5.2.2.2.4 Multicultural practice in service delivery**

Social work managers were asked whether social workers are equipped to work with people whose backgrounds are different from theirs.

**FIGURE 5.35: SOCIAL WORKERS EQUIPPED TO WORK IN MULTI CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS**



As indicated in figure 5.35 an overwhelming number of social work managers (94%) reported that social workers were equipped to work with people whose backgrounds are different from theirs. A very low percentage (6%) reported that social workers were not equipped to work with people from a different cultural background.

**TABLE 5.46: ENCOURAGEMENT OF MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE BY AGENCIES**

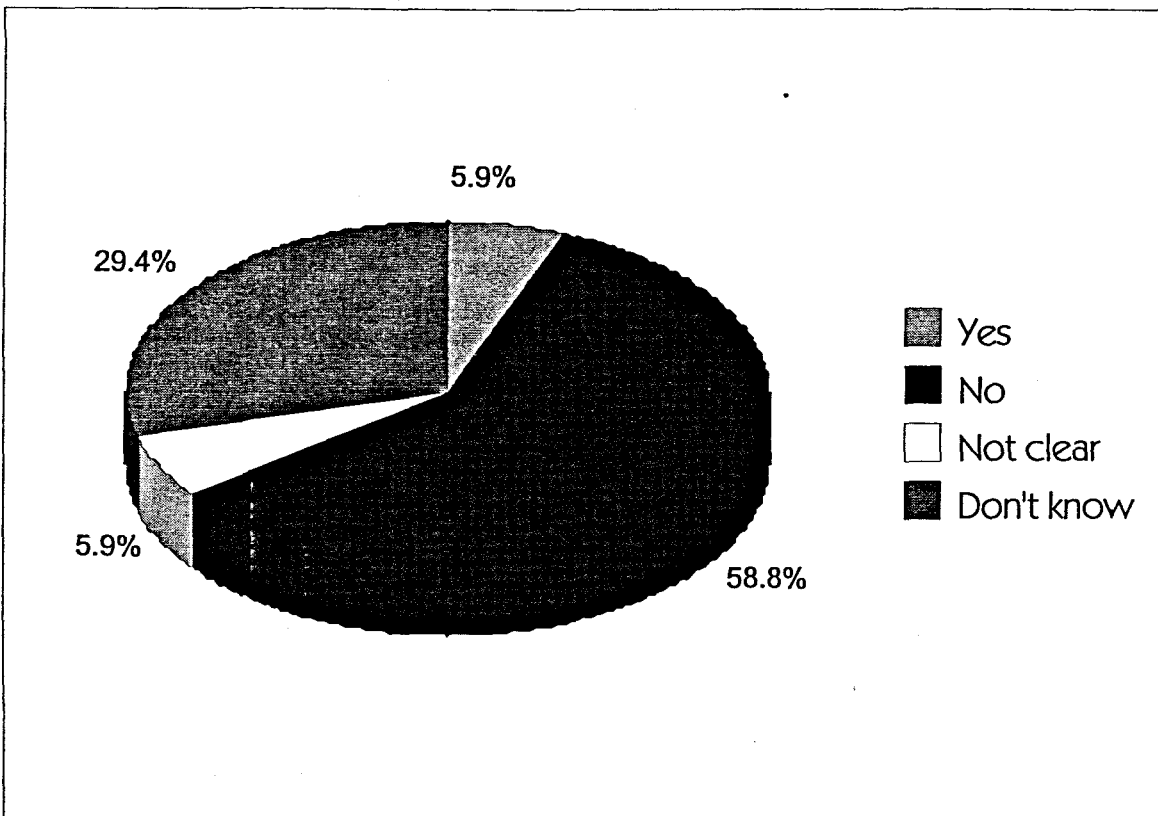
<b>ENCOURAGEMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	17	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 5.44 it is evident that social work agencies encourage multicultural practice, as all social work managers expressed it.

#### **5.2.2.2.5 Parental involvement**

The social work managers were asked about parental involvement in school matters.

**FIGURE 5.36: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS**



About 59 percent of social work managers stated that parents were not participating in school matters. Twenty-nine percent of respondents said that they did not know. About 6 percent of social work managers said the question was not clear, and another 6 percent stated that parents were participating in school matters. *Inter alia* reasons given for parents not participating were:

- Meetings held at awkward times.
- Failure to understand the value system of the school.

- Lack of commitment.
- Lack of parent-teacher consultation.

Adelman (1996:437-439) discusses home involvement in schooling: efforts to enhance home involvement must range from programs to address specific learning and support needs for adults in the home to approaches that empower legitimate parent representatives to become full partners in school governance.

The work focus is on programs to address specific learning and support needs of adults in the home. Programs to help those in the home meet basic needs of the pupils such as instruction for parenting and for helping with school work. To this list can be added the following: systems to improve communication about matters essential to the student and family; interventions to enhance participation in making decisions considered essential to the student as well as programs to enhance home support related to the student's basic learning and development. Finally, interventions to elicit support, collaborations and partnerships from others at home with respect to meeting classroom, school and community needs together with interventions to mobilize others at home to address problems.



**TABLE 5.47: BENEFIT OF SCHOOL IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

<b>BENEFITS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	17	100
No		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

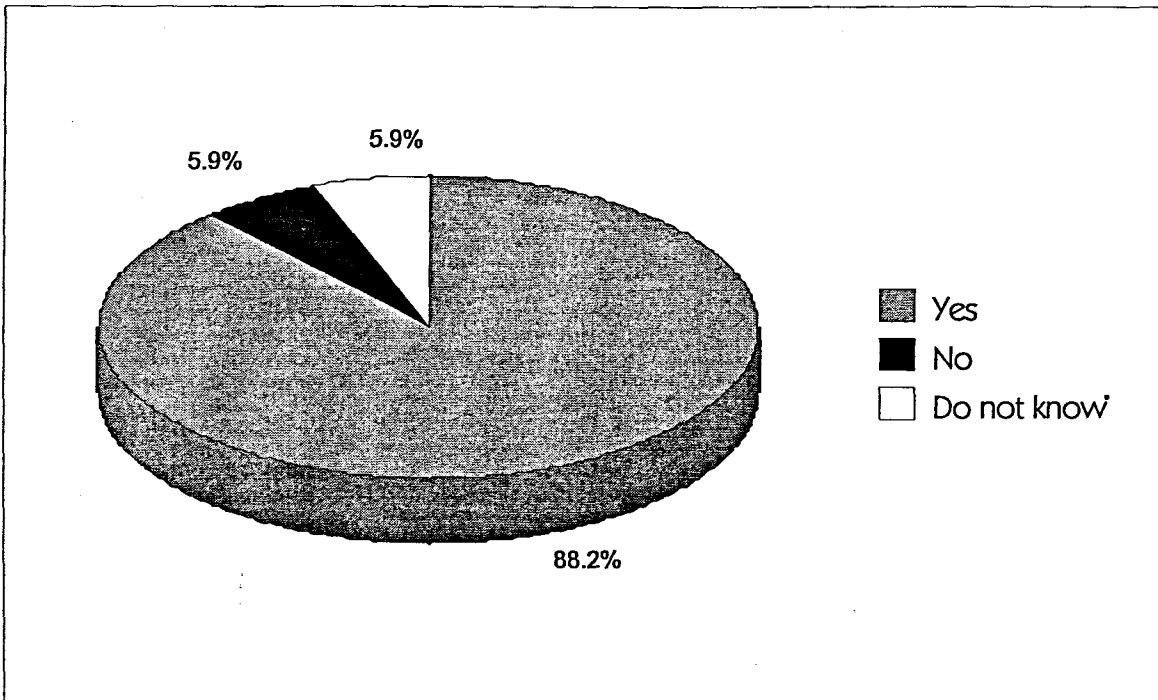
All the social work managers (100%) who participated in the study expressed the view that schools would benefit if parents were involved in school matters.

Parents could assist in taking the school forward. They would see value in paying school fees and provide practical help.

#### **5.2.2.2.6 Global economy**

The social work managers were asked whether the social problems experienced by school going children impact on children competing in the global world.

**FIGURE 5.37: SOCIAL PROBLEMS IMPACT ON CHANGES OF COMPETING IN THE GLOBAL MARKET**

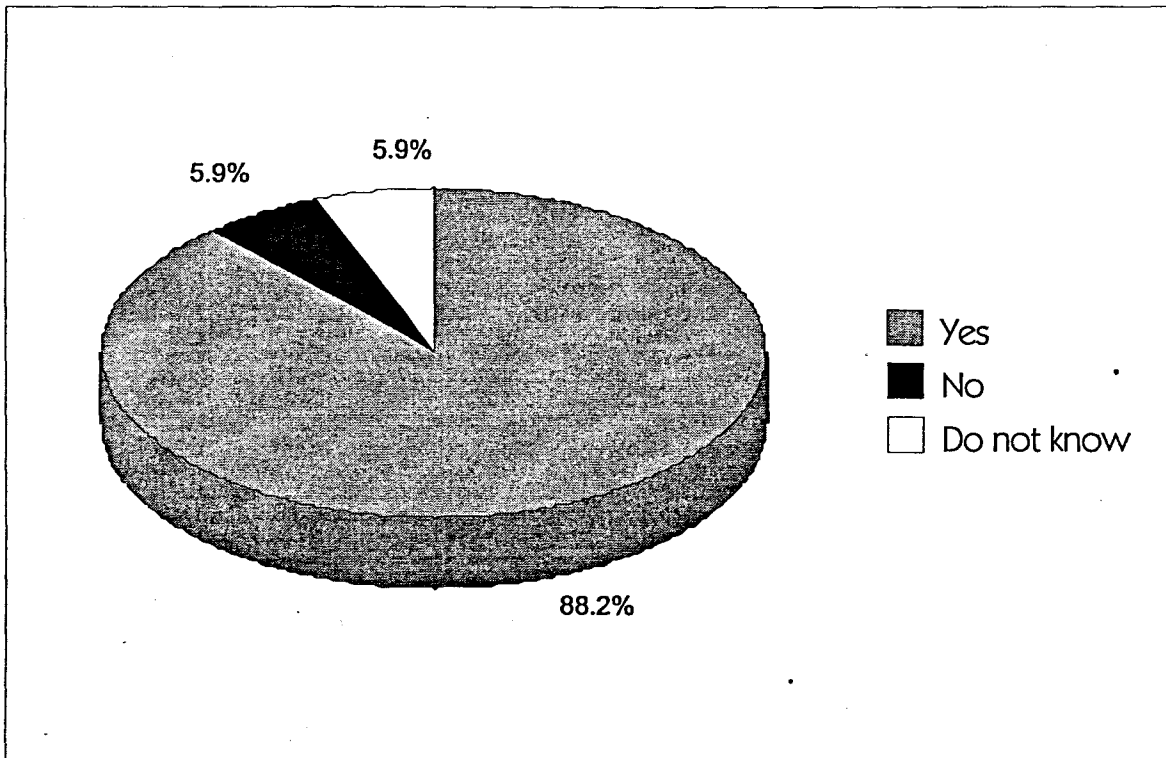


As reflected in figure 5.37 the majority of social work managers (88,2%) said that social problems experienced by the school going child prejudice children's chances to compete in the global economy. Social work managers mentioned the following problems: the problems experienced by the children such as poverty interfere in both academic and social achievement.

It does have an impact because the child who has no school requirements does not function well in class. The social work managers who responded that lack of school

requirements does not have a negative impact gave several reasons. The main reason was that our standard of education is high.

**FIGURE 5.38: LINKING OF HIGH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT WITH COUNTRY'S VIABILITY IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY**



A very high percentage (88%) of social work managers indicated that there was a link between the high educational attainment of children with the country's economic viability in the global economy. A very low percentage (6%) stated that they did not see the link between the high educational attainment of children with

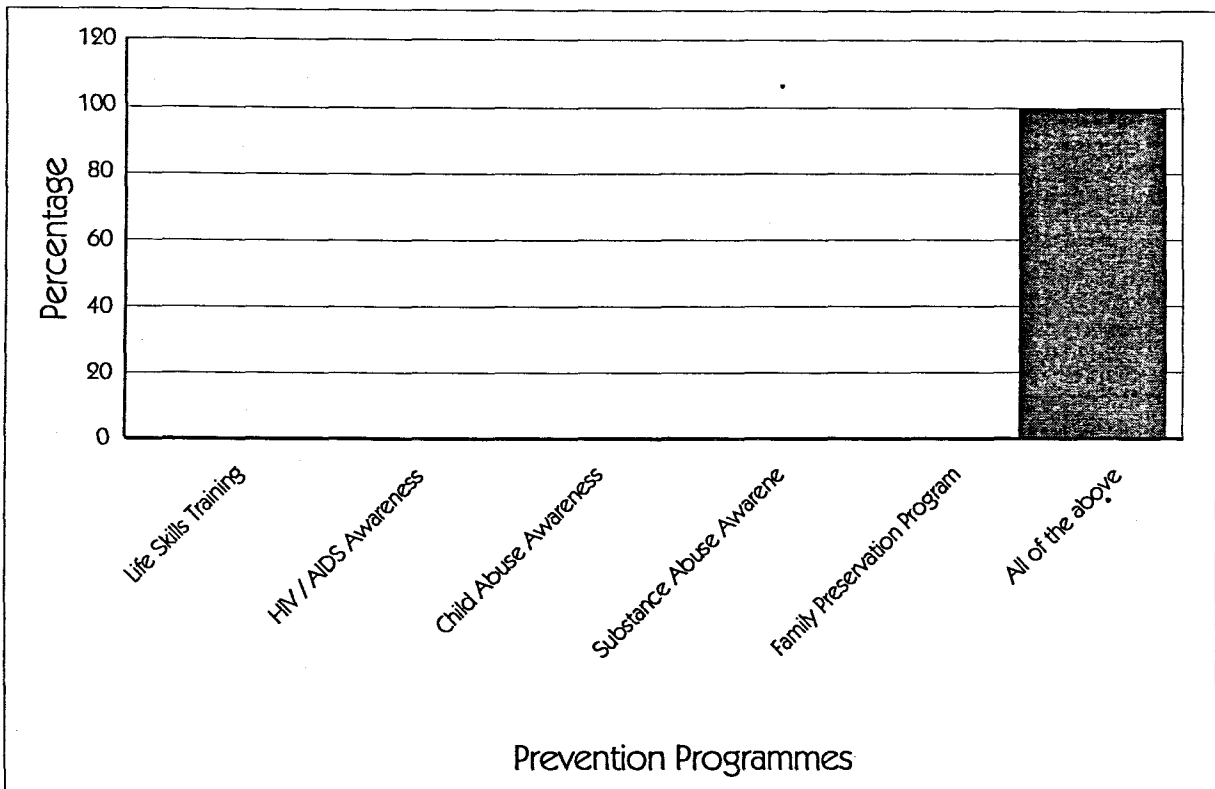
the country's economic standing in the global economy. A low percentage (6%) stated that they did not know.

The education managers gave reasons such as that education is the core of the economy because a society with highly educated people promotes the country's economy. To achieve this effect education facilitates meaningful participation and the confidence to participate in skills training in technology. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) sees to it that a high qualification standard is maintained. School children should be provided with the necessary skills to enable them to compete globally.

#### **5.2.2.2.7 Prevention programmes**

The social work managers were asked about the prevention programmes that have so far been rendered by social workers in schools.

**FIGURE 5.39: PREVENTION PROGRAMMES**



All the social work managers stated that all the programs that have been discussed in this study, were already in operation. They meant such programs as sexual responsibility, children's rights, parenting as well as training and peer-counseling.

#### **5.2.2.2.8 The accessibility of social work services in schools**

The social work managers were asked how accessible are the social work services in the schools.

**TABLE 5.48: ARE SOCIAL WORKERS DOING MORE SERVICES IN THE SCHOOLS FOR BLACKS THAN ANY OTHER SCHOOLS?**

SERVICES FOR BLACKS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	15	88
No	2	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority 88 percent (15) of social work managers felt that social workers were doing more social work services in the schools for Blacks than in any other schools. They gave the view that Black schools do not have guidance teachers. As a result the volume of cases referred has increased and the Magistrate Court refers most of the cases. They mentioned Social Crime Prevention (previously known as Probation Services). Most of the cases have increased due to HIV/AIDS and Child Abuse (Child Line). Another reason was that there were not enough social services for children generally.

**TABLE 5.49: ACCESSIBILITY OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES TO ALL SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN**

ACCESSIBILITY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	3	18
No	14	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

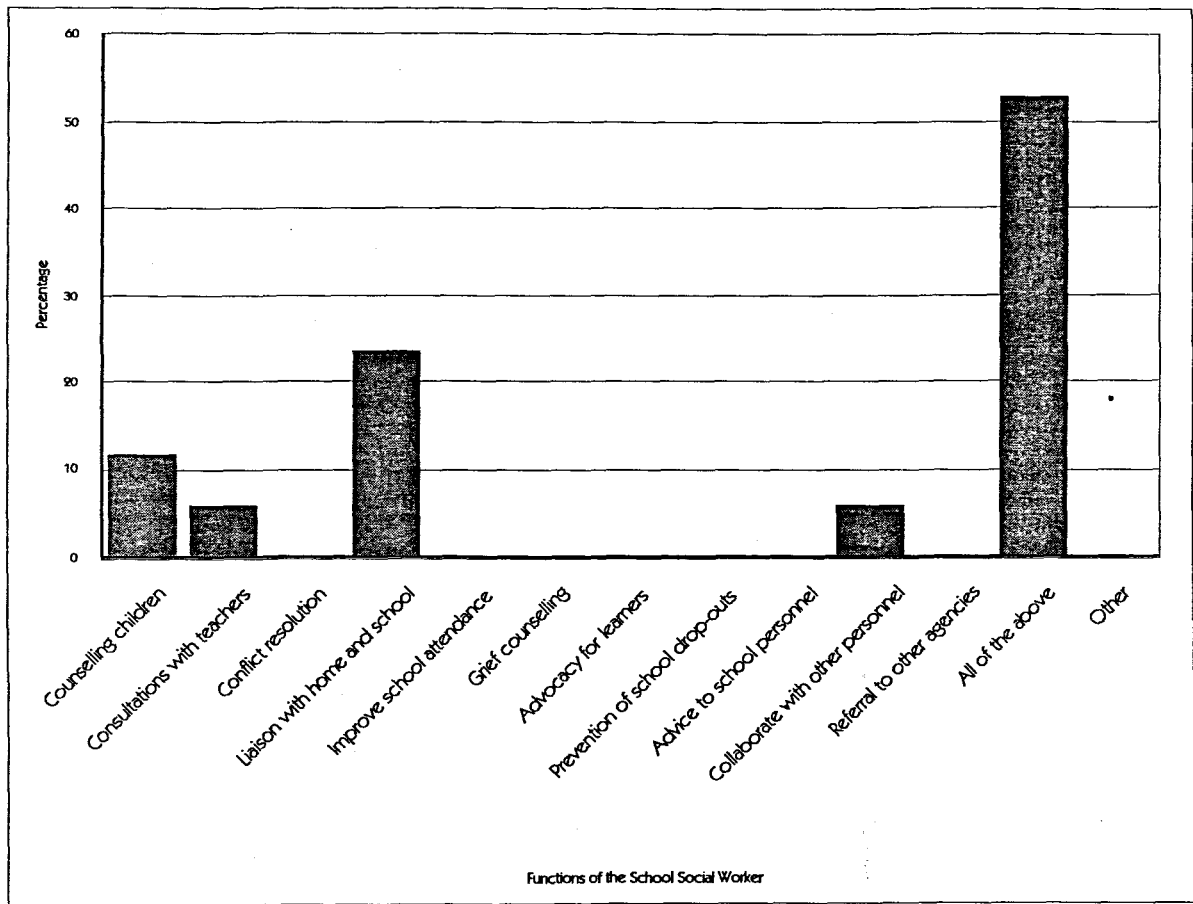
From the above table 5.47, it has been noted that a large number (82 percent, 14) of social work managers reported that social work services are not accessible to all

school going children. A small percentage (18%) of social work managers reported that social work services are accessible to all school going children.

#### **5.2.2.2.9 Functions of the school social worker**

The social work managers were asked about the functions of the school social worker.

**FIGURE 5.40: FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**



As indicated in figure 5.40, fifty percent of social work managers said that agency social workers have performed all the functions of school social work as it is shown in this table. About 24 percent of social work managers reported that their social workers had made liaison between home and school.



The social work managers also mentioned other functions as:

- Prevention programmes as established in section 7.
- Awareness Creation Programmes
- Life Skills Teaching.
- How the programmes have been rendered. Social work managers stated that they would need a page per programme. Social workers do a lot of counselling to children with social problems. In counselling parents and sometimes teachers are involved. Liaison with statutory work is also being done. Programmes should be designed with Teachers' Strategic Planning in mind.
- Operation plan to be put in place. Community Development is also being done in working with families and children.

#### 5.2.2.2.10 **Developmental social work**

Social work managers were asked about their understanding of developmental social work. The social work managers gave varied responses to their understanding of developmental social work. They see it as:

- (1) Alleviation of poverty and promotion of sustainable development.

- (2) Stimulation of economic and social growth through:
- a) projects on poverty
  - b) managing the programmes and
  - c) community participation to improve people's life chances.
- (3) It is a moving away from the clinical approach, which emphasized treatment of symptoms to a more developmental one, which looks at the causes of the problems.

It is more strength based than weakness oriented. Focus is on the need of the individual and sees child welfare intervention developmentally in terms of the three kinds of prevention, i.e., primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

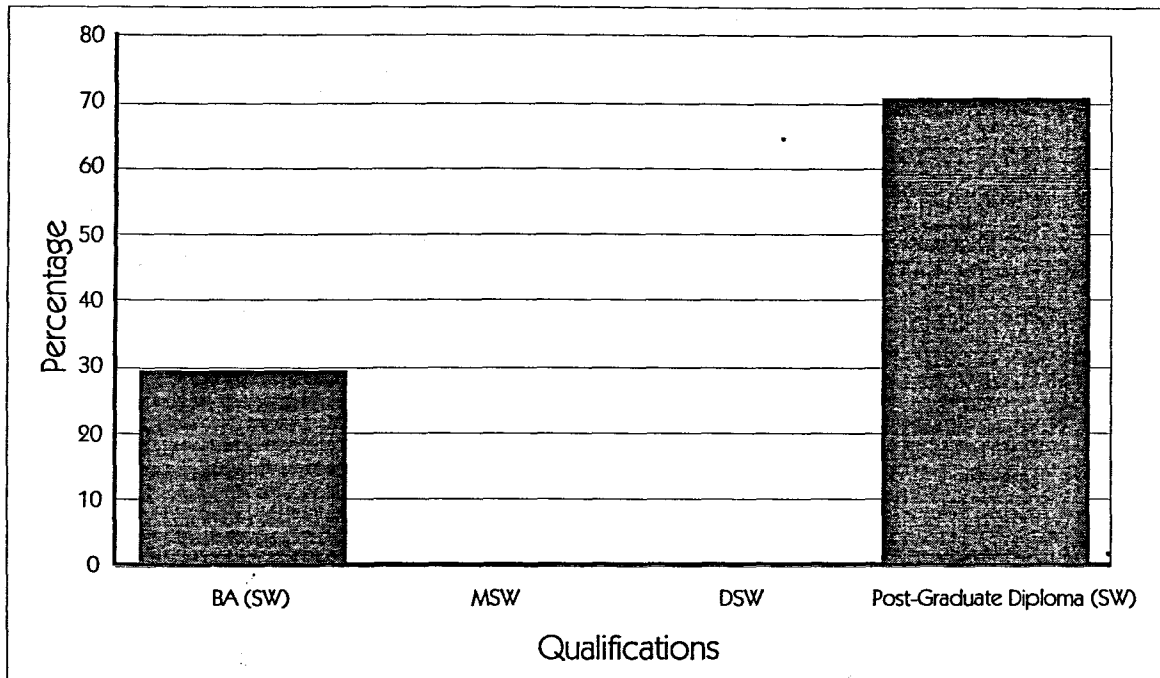
#### 5.2.2.2.10.1 **How could the child benefit from developmental social work**

In the prevention programme, poverty alleviation can be introduced. Children's problems would be identified early. Participation of the child, the family and the school with the assistance of a school social worker could reduce the number of problems affecting children.

#### **5.2.2.2.11 Training of school social workers**

Social work managers were asked their recommendations towards the training of social workers from a developmental perspective. The response of the social work managers was that a think tank should crystallize the design of a policy and a curriculum. School social work should form part of the curriculum at the tertiary institution training students on child and youth care. Developmental assessment of youth and families should be involved in their training. Students must be able to understand the development of a problem and how to deal with it before it magnifies and becomes insurmountable.

**FIGURE 5.41: QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**



As indicated in figure 5.41, social work managers responded to the question on the qualifications of a school social workers. The majority 71 percent (12) of respondents suggested a post-graduate diploma in school social work, while a small percentage (29%) suggested that a BA (SW) degree was necessary for a person to practice as a social worker.

The main reason for post-graduate qualifications was that school social work called for a specialized type of training. The incumbent would need to be knowledgeable about the school system, its structures and policy. He must be well versed with the

teaching environment.

**5.2.2.2.12 Social work services rendered in schools to be done by school social workers or generic social workers**

The majority of social work managers (60%) suggested that social work services rendered in schools should be done by school social workers, as they would have more time to intervene early if the child had a social problem.

**5.2.2.2.13 Recommendations made by social work managers**

The social work managers were asked to recommend what could be done jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development to alleviate social problems that impact on the child's academic performance.

The recommendations included interdepartmental liaisons and partnerships between the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development.

The two departments should:

- (a) Share problems and come up with a strategy, e.g., training teachers how to identify problems. Child Support Grants are to be accessible to all school

going children in need. The policy of school fees should be humanely applied or abolished in light of widespread poverty. The Department of Education needs to design policies that will make the life of marginalized children more bearable.

- (b) Both Departments need to share information through working together and formulating programmes and meeting regularly to evaluate the impact. With the foregoing in mind a welfare wing in the Department of Education would need to be created.

As stated earlier, triangulation has been used in this study with educators and education managers. The writer has also used it with social workers and social work managers. Fielding and Fielding (1986: 31) specifically address this aspect of triangulation. They suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to avoid the danger of compromising the validity of data.

### **5.3 SUMMARY**

The findings of this study definitively showed that the major problems experienced by the school going children were poverty, death of parents through HIV/AIDS and child sexual abuse. It also revealed that social/behavioral problems reflected in

schools are linked to the child's home circumstances. Findings showed that the majority of the schools do not have multi-disciplinary teams.

The findings of this study also revealed that educators were rarely referring children to social workers for counselling. Most of the referrals received by social workers were coming from the Magistrates' Courts, where it was impossible to do early intervention as the child had already either committed a crime or was a child in need of care. Parental involvement in school related activities was lacking.

The findings of this study also clearly showed that social work services in schools should be done by school social workers. Findings also revealed that school social workers should possess a post-graduate diploma in school social work.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The key questions posed in chapter one will form the framework for the discussion of the main findings. One of the key questions of this study was to highlight the social problems experienced by the majority of school going children. The second key question of the study was to find out whether teachers were equipped to identify the diversity of social problems that impact on the learning in schools and lastly to explore the question of accessibility of social work services in schools.

The research was both exploratory and descriptive and utilized both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The focus group discussion and interview schedules were used as methods of data collection. The researcher visited respondents in their place of work and homes.

The sample was chosen from KwaZulu-Natal's Education Department and the



Department of Social Development (Welfare) in the three areas namely Durban, Empangeni, and Pietermaritzburg. The sample consisted of Phase One 45 educators and 5 education managers while Phase Two consisted of 45 social workers and 17 social work managers (working in government and non-government organizations). The sample results were assumed to be normally distributed.

In this chapter the main findings of the study are presented, followed by some recommendations.

## **6.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY IN TERMS OF THE OBJECTIVES**

On the basis of empirical evidence, the findings of the study have been presented as follows:

### **6.2.1 Problems Experienced by School- going Children**

The analysis of the findings revealed that a high percentage (22%) of children experienced poverty as a major problem, and further experienced the problem of being orphaned through HIV/AIDS. Twenty-two percent of children had the problem of drug abuse. About 20 percent of educators reported the incidence of

child abuse.

The views of this study on poverty are in agreement with the findings of the Federal Interagency Forum (1997) which states that in 1995, one in five children lived in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Line. In 1995, 24 percent of children under the age of six lived in poverty compared to 18 percent of older children. Childhood poverty has both immediate and lasting negative effects. Children who are poor are more likely to have difficulty in school, to become teen parents, and as adults to earn less and more frequently join the ranks of the unemployed.

In this study, on being orphaned through AIDS, these findings are in agreement with the findings of Draimin et al(1999) where he states that a significant number of children have been identified as HIV/AIDS affected through parental deaths or chronic illness from AIDS. In a pilot study of 40 HIV affected families including 59 children between the ages of 10 and 19, 43 percent of the children were reported as having problems at home, 73 percent had problems in school, and 58 percent had experienced lower grades (Draimin, 1994:44).

In the Draimin et al (1999) study only 43 percent of these children had received counseling, while the vast majority of others had obtained counseling through

the school system.

By the dawn of the century, as confirmed by Van Dyk (2001:6), 71% (24,4 million) of the world population living with HIV, were found in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa's 12,1 million AIDS orphans represented 95% of the AIDS orphans in the world. As a matter of concern the AIDS epidemic has created more than 13 million orphans under the age of 15 years who have lost a mother or both parents to AIDS. As already mentioned, these children live in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, 2000).

The findings of this study on drug abuse are in agreement with the findings of the Straight Talk About Drug Abuse (2001). In that study South African teenagers of all races between the ages of 12 and 19 (more than one in five) claimed that some of their friends had experimented with drugs. Nearly 90% felt that drugs were becoming a real problem among young people in South Africa and only 4% of teenagers claimed to have been offered hard drugs at school (Straight Talk About Drug Abuse, 2001, vol. 11).

The responses revealed that the majority of educators were not equipped with the skills to identify children with a diversity of social problems.

### **6.2.2 Accessibility of Social Work Services to School- going Children**

The findings of the study revealed that the majority (67%) of schools did not have social work services, while a very small percentage (33%) ran social work services in their schools. The schools that reported having school social workers were model C schools while schools for Blacks did not have school social workers. The former House of Delegates and House of Representatives had guidance teachers doing the role of social workers.

The majority of educators who were not utilizing the services reported that they would use the services of a social worker by reporting the problems such as child abuse and domestic violence. To also resolve problems encountered by learners with disabilities. To help parents that do not get a social grant. They could help when welfare type of work is needed. They would help implement the Child Care Act with abuse cases. They would help with children presenting problem behaviour.

### **6.2.3 Collaboration of Services in the School Setting by both Departments of Education and Welfare**

The educators in this study recommended the following:

- School social workers must visit the school to find out about social problem experienced by children
- Provide workshops for educators to help them identify children's social problems.
- Provide school social workers and school counsellors to help educators, children and parents
- Two departments should work cooperatively.
- There should be effective measures to ensure follow-up.
- The Department of Welfare should be user-friendly. Thus it must employ more school social workers, as there was no use waiting 5-10 days for a social worker to phone back when there is a problem.

The findings of the study also revealed that social workers and social work managers recommended the following:

- There should be interdepartmental liaison and partnership.
- Working in partnership towards the development of social services in schools.
- Training and awareness campaigns from both departments to improve basic life skills.
- The Department of Education needs to design policies that will make life easier for marginalised children.

- Both Departments need to share information.
- To work together and formulate programs and meet regularly to evaluate the impact.

#### **6.2.4 The Use of Social Work Services by the Department of Education**

In this study the responses as shown in figure 5.9 indicated that the majority (44%) of educators did refer children with social problems to their parents/guardians. The results revealed that a very low percentage (3%) of teachers referred learners with social problems to the social workers.

According to these research results there seems to be little awareness by school teachers on the services rendered by social workers as very few have referred the children with social problems to the attention of social workers. The presence of social workers in the school is important to the successful education of children, yet their contribution is often ignored and devalued. The school principal, focusing on the educational experience of the child, sometimes has difficulty comprehending social work intervention within the learning process. The goals of school social work remain poorly advertised and often misunderstood by its consumers, administrators and teachers in the school system and ultimately by students themselves and their parents.

In their analysis of the perceptions by school personnel of the social worker's performance Staudt and Craft (1983:119) found two weak points namely that:

There seems to be a lack of communication between social workers and school staff, and a lack of awareness by school staff of the programs and services provided by social workers. School social workers can alert school personnel about particular areas of expertise that are available through the social worker.

Germain (1983:12) points out the difficulty of defining the distinctiveness of social work from other professional services available in the school.

The results of this study revealed that social workers receive a lot of referrals from the Magistrate Courts of children who have violated the law. They then experience problems in rendering prevention services at this stage.

All the social workers expressed the view that they were unable to deal with children's problems in time. While social work managers as reflected in table 5.41 stated that social workers were able to deal with social problems speedily. Both social workers and social work managers stated that cases of children were not referred to them in time.

All the respondents felt that school social workers would be in a better position to identify the children's social problems earlier than the generic social worker.

#### **5.1.5 Support Services Policy in Schools**

As reflected in table 5.10, an alarming 89 percent (40) of educators stated that there was no policy on support services in their schools, while only a small percentage (11%) reported having a support service in their schools. The educators who responded that they have support services indicated that they would ensure that legislation on support services was implemented by identifying and helping needy children and inviting other support groups to help.

A large percentage who reported that they do not have support services stated that they would wait for the Department of Education to introduce it. They further mentioned that personnel from the Support Services do come to their schools.



### **5.1.6 How School Social Work Intervention Through The Department of Welfare can Contribute towards Promoting Effective Learning in Schools**

In this study the educators recommended the following: The Department of Education should:

- Employ school social workers as a matter of urgency.
- Provide support services like social workers.
- Reward excellent behaviour and performance.
- Provide knowledge through workshops.

### **6.2.7 Research Evidence as to What is Lacking in the School ?**

A slightly higher percentage of respondents revealed that there was a lack of parental involvement in schools for Blacks, while by contrast a very low percentage indicated that parents participated in Model C schools. The literature states that parent-school collaboration is valuable because it had a potential to solve many of the problems that overwhelm the schools, such as discipline as well as facilitation of communication between the school personnel and parents.

It also contributes essential ingredients to learning-socializing environment for children. It also fosters parent teacher support (Winters & Easton, 1983:107). The authors further state that it is desirable for school personnel and parents to begin their work together on neutral tasks rather than on problems where each has taken a side. Collaboration between parents and staff is the key to addressing school problems.

Walberg and Lai (1999) state that the school cannot educate vulnerable children without the co-operation of families. The findings of the US Department of Education (1997) have corroborated the findings of this study in that a low level of parental involvement is cause for concern. In 1996, parental attendance at parent teacher conferences decreased from 84 percent in elementary schools to 47 percent in middle schools.

All the respondents indicated that schools could benefit from parental involvement. Adelman (1996:437) states that efforts to enhance home involvement in schooling must range from programs to address specific learning and support to needs in the home to approaches that empower legitimate parent representatives to become full partners in school governance.

### **6.2.8 To Examine How the Findings of the Study can Contribute to the Existing Knowledge and Theory on School Social Work**

The findings of this study revealed how the global economy impacts on the school going child in a negative as well as in a positive way.

An overwhelming number (89%) of educators indicated that what is happening in the global world impacts on the child's academic performance in South Africa. A number of learners' parents have lost their jobs due to the Rand picking up in the global markets. Due to the high rate of unemployment in our country learners in schools do not perform well.

Globalization or internationalization is an important feature of modern life. It is used to connote a process of global integration in which diverse peoples, economies, cultures and political processes are increasingly subjected to international influence. It also refers to a greater awareness of the role of these influences in everyday experience. Economic and political changes arising from globalization are having a direct impact on social work programs. Many social problems that government programs have conventionally addressed at the domestic level are also being influenced by these impacts. Social problems arising from migration, conflict and other international events demand responses

that transcend the efforts of national governments. In this way global forces have a direct impact on school social work practice in our country.

The results of this study revealed that social problems experienced by school going children impact on the child to compete in the global world, as in the case of HIV/AIDS affected children, if parents are dead, a child might drop out of school, due to financial difficulties.

#### **6.2.9 The Link between the Academic Achievement and Socio-economic Status of Pupils**

The results of the study revealed that there was a link between academic achievement and socio-economic status of learners. The child who lives in poverty and whose parents find the fulfillment of basic needs a difficult accomplishment often enters the school system lacking some prerequisite skills. Academic handicaps are attributable to overburdened home conditions in which the acquisition of the basic necessities such as food and shelter takes priority over books, health care and educational experience (Allen-Meares, 2000:189).

## **6.2.10 Training of School Social Workers in the Suggested Paradigm Shift to Social Development**

The findings of this study indicate that the training of school social workers from a developmental perspective should be:

- School social workers should form part of the curriculum in universities and tertiary institutions training students on child and youth care.
- Analyze the need for this service delivery.
- Need to approve the provision of school social work.
- There must be a buy in by all the key stakeholders.
- Design a policy.
- Call a conference.
- Design a curriculum as a specialist.
- Human Resource Development in School Social Work.

### **6.2.10.1 Qualifications of School Social Workers**

The findings of this study revealed that the qualifications of school social workers should be a post graduate diploma in school social work. The majority of the respondents expressed their views that those practicing at schools should:

- Specialize in school social work. Need Advanced Skills.
- Social workers at the undergraduate level are trained to deal with problems of children and youth.
- They must be familiar with school/educational policies and procedures.
- They must be familiar with the school environment. Counseling children on all basic life skills is important since child abuse is rife in South Africa.
- Social workers must receive more extensive training in school social work.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

On the basis of the research and results obtained in this study, the following recommendations are suggested, namely that the Education Department

- (a) should employ school social workers – this is no longer a need but a must;
- (b) should provide support services that include social workers;
- (c) should provide workshops for educators to help them identify children's social problems;

- (d) should work co-operatively with the Department of Welfare and Population Development.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

On the basis of the findings of this study the researcher wishes to recommend that:

- (a) Future research should involve parents and children in order to test validity of these findings.
- (b) The life history method should be explored so as to tap the subjective reality of school going children, i.e., to get at the phenomenology of these children's everyday experience.

#### **6.5 CONCLUSIONS**

In South Africa, families have been affected by the social, economic and social policies of the past. The inequitable distribution of resources, social changes, migration patterns, growing subculture of violence and changes in the traditional

roles of women and men, has had negative effects on social life. Past policies redefined the household structures in South Africa (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:92). In light of the past imbalances, state intervention in rendering services to school going children and their families is required.

The findings of this study revealed that there is under-utilization of social work services by the Education Department. The findings also revealed that social work services were not made accessible to all school going children, and mainly practicing social workers perform the task of the school social workers.

In conclusion the findings of the study revealed that children would benefit from a developmental school social work as it would be holistic and reduce overlap in service delivery. Parental involvement in school matters was also seen to be a cause for concern.



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# ANNEXURE A

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### SAMPLE GROUP ONE: EDUCATORS AND EDUCATION MANAGERS

#### SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING DETAILS

##### 1.1 Gender

Male	
Female	

##### 1.2 Type of school

Model C	
Former House of Delegates	
Former House of Representatives	
Mainly for Blacks	
Private School	

##### 1.3 Area of work

Empangeni	Durban	Pietermaritzburg
Urban		UrbanUrban
Rural		RuralRural
Township		TownshipTownship

##### 1.4 Present designation

School manager	
School Inspector	
Principal	
Deputy Principal	
Head of Department	
Senior Teacher	
Teacher	
Other (Specify) .....	

## SECTION 2: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY CHILDREN

2.1 What are the social/medical behavioural problems experienced by the majority of children in your school?

Alcohol	
Child abuse (sexually, physically, emotionally)	
Crime	
Drugs	
Family dysfunction	
HIV/AIDS	
Incest	
Juvenile delinquency	
Orphaned through HIV/AIDS	
Poverty/Malnutrition	
School drop-out	
Teenage pregnancy	
Violence	
Other (Specify) .....	

2.2 What could be the possible causes of social problems experienced by the majority of families of your learners?

Alcohol abuse	
Deceased of parents	
Domestic violence	
Drug abuse	
Illness of parents	
Parents whereabouts unknown	
Poverty	
Raised by grandparents	
Retrenchment	
Sexual abuse/incest	
Single headed family	
Solely depend on old age pension	
Unemployment	
Other (Specify) .....	

2.3 What could be the major social problems in the community around your school?

Crime	
Hijacking	
HIV/AIDS	
Illiteracy	
Lack of facilities	
Lack of finance	
Lack of social development	
Rape	
Retrenchment	
School drop-outs	
Substance abuse	
Teenage pregnancy	
Unemployment	
Violence	
Other (Specify) .....	

2.4 Are you equipped to identify the diversity of social problems experienced by the school going children?

Yes	
No	

2.5 Do you link social problems reflected in the school with the problems in the nearby community?

Yes	
No	

2.6 Do teachers receive any training/learning to help them to identify social problems?

Yes	
No	

**2.7 Type of training?**

Academic Training	
Reading and Literature	
Courses/workshops	
Staff Development	
No Exposure	
Other (Specify) .....	

**2.7 Do you associate under achievement of learners with social problems experienced by children at home?**

Yes	
No	

**2.8 What recommendations would you make to the Department of education to equip educators to effectively identify/handle/deal with the diversity of problems at school?**

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**2.9 Do you think social problems at home, and in the community impact on the child's academic performance?**

Yes	
No	

**2.9.1 If the answer is YES, explain in detail how?**

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**2.10 How could the problems in the families and communities be addressed? Explain in detail:**

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**SECTION 3: REFERRAL SYSTEM**

**3.1 Do you have a referral policy in your school for children with social/behavioural problems?**

Yes	
No	

**3.1.1 If YES, who refers the child for help to various professional organisations?**

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**3.2 Where do you refer the child with social/behaviour problems?**

Child guidance centre	
Guidance counsellor	
Health department	
Mental health	
Parents/Guardian	
Principal	
Psychologist	
Social worker	
Other (Specify) .....	

**SECTION 4: MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAM**

**4.1 Do you have multi-disciplinary team in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**4.1.1 If the answer is YES, who are members of your multi-disciplinary team?**

Guidance teacher	
Psychologist	
Remedial teacher	
School nurse	
Social worker	
Speech therapist	
Other (Specify) .....	

**4.2 How do you utilise the services of your multi-disciplinary team? Explain in detail:**

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**SECTION 5: POLICY**

**5.1 Do you have a school policy in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**5.1.1 If the answer is YES, explain in detail what are your school policies?**

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**5.2 What are you supposed to do if children violate school attendance policy?**

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**5.3 What are you supposed to do if children lack school necessities such as a school uniform, stationery, etc.?**

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**5.4 How do you control late coming from school?**

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**5.5 Do you associate the violation of any of the school policies by children with social problems at home?**

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**5.6 Do you think some school policy/policies impact on the child's learning?**

Yes	
No	

**5.6.1 If the answer is YES, explain in detail how this could happen:**

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**5.7 Does your school have support services policy?**

Yes	
No	

**5.7.1 If the answer is YES, how are you going to ensure that what is legislated on support services, is implemented?**

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**SECTION 6: CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

**6.1 Are you still using corporal punishment in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**6.1.1 If the answer is NO, what other methods are you using to deter unacceptable social behaviour presented by children at school?**

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**SECTION 7: FEEDING SCHEME**

**7.1 Do you have feeding scheme in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**7.1.1 If the answer is YES, how is the feeding scheme beneficial to children/learners?**

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**SECTION 8: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

**8.1 How do you promote the culture of learning in your school?**

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**8.2 How do you promote the culture of teaching in your school?**

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**8.2 What measures/programmes do you have to promote academic excellence in your school?**

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**SECTION 9: PREVENTION PROGRAMMES**

**9.1 What prevention programmes do you have in school to equip learners with life issues?**

Sexuality education programme	
Aids awareness	
Developing leadership skills	
Developing public speaking skills	
Coping skills	
Group work education	
Life skills programme	
Entrepreneurship skills	
Winter schools	
Other (Specify) .....	

**SECTION 10: GLOBAL ECONOMY**

**10.1 How do you prepare learners for global economy?**

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**10.2 Do you promote science and technology in your school?**

Yes	
No	

**10.2.1 If the answer is YES, how do you promote science and technology in your school?**

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**10.3 Do subjects in your school equip children with market related skills?  
Explain in detail:**

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**10.4 Do you think what is happening in the global economy impact on the school academic performance in South Africa?**

Yes	
No	

**10.4.1 If the answer is YES, explain how the school academic performance could be affected by what is happening in the global economy:**

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**SECTION 11: COOPERATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS**

**11.1 Are parents and communities around your school participating in school activities?**

Yes	
No	

**11.1.1 If the answer is YES, how do you promote their participation?**

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**11.2** How is the school benefiting with the participation of parents and communities, *vis-a-vis*?

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**SECTION 12: GOVERNING BODY**

**12.1** Do you have a governing body in your school?

Yes	
No	

**12.2** What are the functions of the governing body to promote the culture of learning and effective teaching?

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**12.3** Are the management of the school and the governing body working in a co-operative manner or is there an overlap of functions between the two that create tension?

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**SECTION 13:      ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKER**

**13.1    What are roles or possible roles of a school social worker?**

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**13.2    How can you utilise the services of a social worker in your school?**

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**13.3    What role can social workers play in promoting effective teaching and learning?**

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**SECTION 14:      RECOMMENDATIONS**

**14.1    What are your recommendations to the Department of Education in order to promote the culture of learning?**

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**14.2 What are your recommendations to the Department of Welfare to promote partnership between the Department of Welfare and Education for effective solving of children's problems reflected in the school?**

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*Thank you for participating in the study*



## ANNEXURE B

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### SAMPLE GROUP 2: SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS

#### SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

##### 1.1 Type of social work agency

Government	
Non-government	
Private practice	

##### 1.2. Area of work

Empangeni	
Durban	
Pietermaritzburg	

##### 1.3.Type of area

Urban	
Rural	
Township	

##### 1. 4. Present designation

Director	
Chief Director	
Chief Social Worker	
Senior Social Worker	
Social worker	

## SECTION 2: PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN

2.1 What are the social problems experienced by school going children referred to your agency?

Child Abuse: (a) Sexual (b) Physical © Emotional	
Rape	
Lack of school necessities e.g school uniform	
School Attendance problem	
School drop out	
Teenage pregnancy	
Violence	
Poverty	
HIV/AIDS Affected	
Other	

2.2. Do you link social/behavioural problems reflected in the school with learner's home circumstance?

YES	
NO	

2.2.1. If the answer is yes, please explain in detail why?

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2. 3. Does your agency deal with children's problems speedily, despite your agency caseload?

YES	
NO	

**SECTION 3: REFERRAL SYSTEM**

3. 1. Who refers children with social problems to your agency?

Magistrate Court	
Family	
Child	
School	
Other	

3. 2. Are children referred in the time to your agency to render preventive services?

Yes	
No	

2.2 If the answer is no, what could be your recommendations towards referral of children to social workers?

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3.4 Do you think school social workers will be in a better position to do early identification of children's problems as well as early intervention than the generic social workers?

Yes	
No	

#### SECTION 4: MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE IN SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1. Are social workers equipped to work with people whose backgrounds are different from them?

Yes	
No	

4.2 Does your agency encourage multicultural practice in service rendering?

Yes	
No	

#### SECTION 5: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

5.1. Are parents children participating in school matters?

Yes	
No	

5.1 If the answer is no, what could be the reason for their non-participation?

5.2. Do you think the school could benefit in parental involvement in school matters?

Yes	
No	

5.2.1 If the answer is yes, how could the school benefit?

## SECTION 6: GLOBAL COMPETITION OF STUDENTS

6. 1. Do you think social problems experienced by school going children impact on children competing in the global world?

Yes	
No	

6.1.1 If the answer is yes, please explain in details, in what way?

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6.2. Do you link high educational attainment of children with the country's economic viability in the global economy?

Yes	
No	

6.2.1 If the answer is yes explain in detail?

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## SECTION 7: PREVENTION PROGRAMME

7.1 What are the (possible) prevention programme rendered by social workers in schools?

Life Skills Training	
HIV/AIDS Awareness	
Child Abuse Awareness	
Substance Abuse Awareness	
Family Preservation Programme	

## SECTION 8: THE ACCESSIBILITY OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

8.1 Are social workers doing more social work services in the schools for blacks than any other schools?

Yes	
No	

8.1.1 If the answer is yes, explain in detail?

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8.2 Are social work services made accessible to all school going children in your area?

Yes	
No	

8.2.1 If the answer is no, explain in detail why?

## SECTION 9 FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

9.1 What are the functions of the (school) social worker that you have rendered to school going children?

Counselling children	
Consultations with teachers	
Conflict Resolution	
Liaison with home and school	
Improve school attendance	
Grief Counselling	
Advocate for learners	
Prevention of school drop-outs	
Advice to school personnel	
Collaborate with other personnel	
Referral to other agencies	
All of the above	
Other	

9.2 Explain in detail how these functions have been rendered?

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## SECTION 10: DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WORK

10.1 What is your understanding of developmental social work?

10.2. How could the school going child benefit from developmental social work?

## SECTION 11: TRAINING OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

11.1 What could be your recommendations towards the training of school social workers in South Africa, from a developmental perspective?

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11.2 What qualifications should they hold in order to practice as school social workers?

BASW	
MSW	
DSW	
POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK	

11.2.1 Please give reasons for your answer?

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11.3 Do you think social work services rendered in schools should be done by school social workers only or by generic social workers? Please support your answer.

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## SECTION 12: RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 What can be done jointly by the Department of Education and Social Development to alleviate school problems that impact on the child's academic performance?

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*Thank you for your co-operation in the study}*

# KWAZULU NATAL

Regional Map

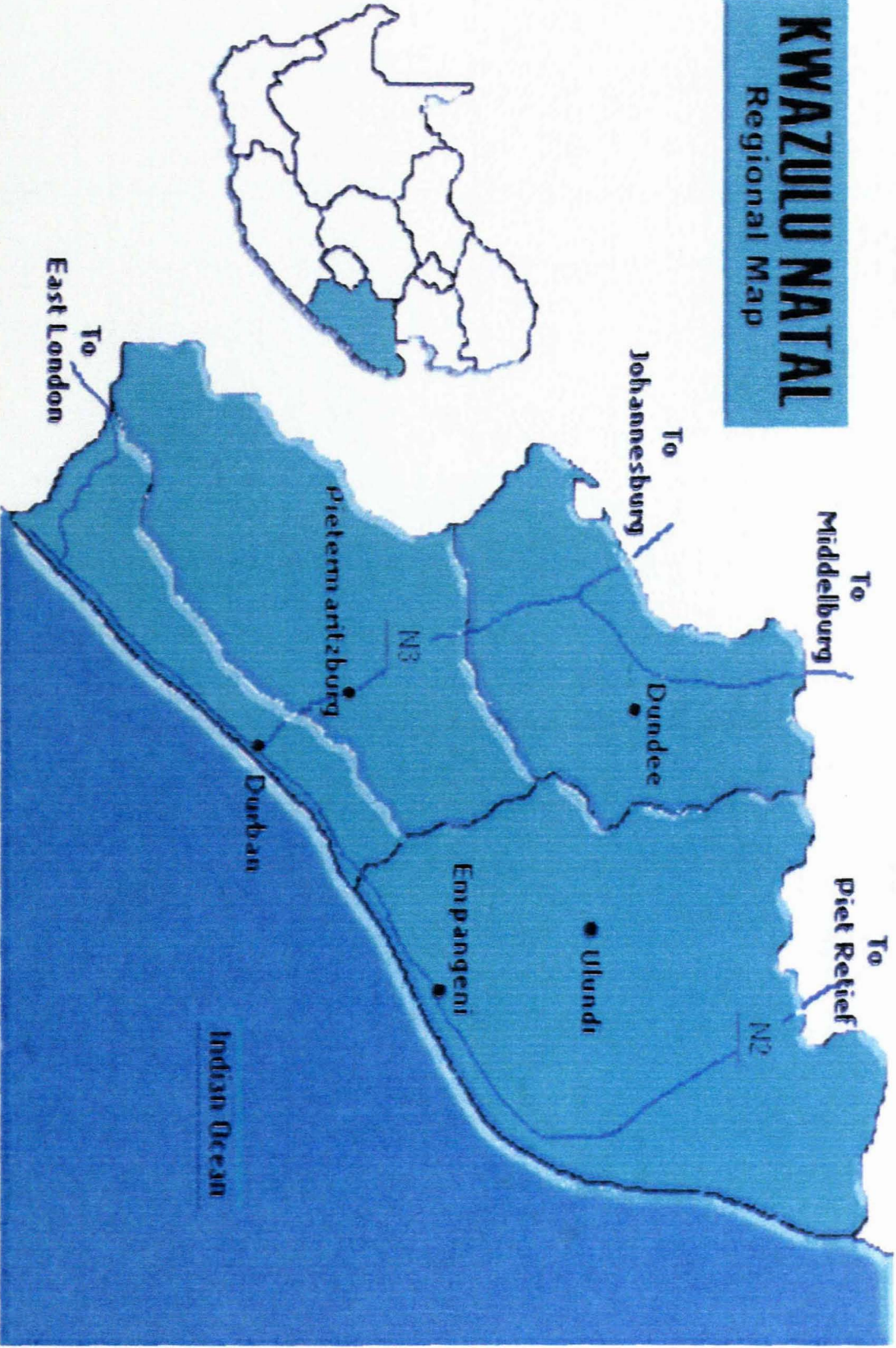


Figure 1: KwaZulu-Natal Regional Map