

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
EXPOSING SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE POLICY IMPERATIVES
FOR SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

Kevin Lance Gustave Teise

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EXPOSING SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE POLICY IMPERATIVES

FOR
SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

by

Kevin Lance Gustave Teise
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Promoter: Dr. A. le Roux
Co-Promoter: Dr. L. Jacobs

June 2013

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, sincerely declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree:

Philosophiae Doctor

is original and entirely my own work, except where other sources have been acknowledged. I also certify that this thesis has not previously been submitted at this or any other faculty or institution.

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.....

Kevin LG Teise

Bloemfontein

June 2013

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Soli deo Gloria

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my mother Anna Magdalena with
love and gratitude;

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Hierdie studie word verder ook opgedra aan al die kinders
van Luckhoff vir wie sosiale geregtigheid steeds net 'n
droom is.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	-	Conceptual analysis
CAPS		Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CPA	-	Critical policy analysis
CT	-	Critical theory
DBE		Department of Basic Education
DoE	-	Department of Education
ESD	-	Education for sustainable development
RDP		Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA		Republic of South Africa
SA	-	South Africa
SD	-	Sustainable development
SSD	-	Social sustainable development
UN	-	United Nations
WCED		World Commission on Environment and Development
WPET		White Paper on Education and Training
WSSD		World Summit on Sustainable Development

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development acquired wide international currency since it was first mentioned in 1980 in the document *World Conservation Strategy* and later reinforced by the World Commission on Environment and Development in the *Brundtland Report* of 1987 (Summers, Corney & Childs, 2004:163). Despite many controversies and contestations surrounding the concept, sustainable development (SD) was defined in the *Brundtland Report* as a form of development that meets “the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987:43). Concurring with this definition, the general and broad aim of SD is to provide a better life for all, not only in present-time but also in the future (Agyeman, Bullard & Evans, 2003:2; Munslow, FitzGerald & McLennan, 1995:4). It appears also that this endeavour to improve the quality of life should be driven in a just and equitable manner. SD is subsequently concerned with justice for all because it strives to improve the quality of life in an equitable manner.

Although SD was initially only concerned with environmental and economic sustainability, the concept was expanded to include the notion of social sustainable development (SSD). Through this inclusion, social issues such as human rights, social justice, poverty, racism, inequity, gender equity, democracy and peace were recognised as indispensable requirements for sound SD. However, note should be taken that SD supposes an interdependency of, and an interconnectedness between the social, environmental and economic spheres of human existence. This implies that SD cannot be obtained unless these spheres are equally developed through a harmonious relationship (Larsen, 2009:48; King, 2009:83). Although the three spheres of SD are interrelated and mutually dependent, the primary focus of my study will be on SSD, and more specifically on SS within the context of South African education policy and practice.

Like other countries around the world, South Africa not only adopted SD as a policy goal, but also endorsed international agreements (*Agenda 21*, 1992; and *Johannesburg Plan on Implementation*, 2002), pertaining to the implementation of the principles and practices of SD. South Africa's endorsement of the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG) adopted by the UN at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, included the acceptance of Target 9, which emphasises the urgent need for every government to "integrate the principles of SD into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources" (Hirono, 2003:21). As a signatory to these agreements, South Africa has a moral and legal responsibility to adopt national policies that would secure the achievement of sustainability, thus including SD. However, social realities and challenges such as *inter alia* HIV/AIDS, severe poverty, economic inequality, inequity, discrimination, violence, low quality of life, unemployment and high drop-out rates from schools are currently threatening South Africa's vision for SD.

In acknowledgement of a current development path characterised by unsustainable elements and which is not viable in the long run (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 2008:7), the South African government enacted various national policy documents and acts articulating sentiments towards SD. Amongst these are the *Constitution of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996); the *National Framework for Sustainable Development* (NFSD) that was announced in 2008; the *United Nations Millennium Development Goals* signed in 2002; the *National Environmental Management Act* (NEMA) of 1998 and amended in 2004; and the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD), which was launched in 2002. Although these official documents signal a commitment to SD and by implication to an improved quality of life for South African citizens, the question remains whether this is only political rhetoric, or whether the South African government is striving towards SD in the true sense of the word.

One way for a country to improve the quality of its citizens' lives is through education orientated towards SD. The central role of education in the achievement of SD was clearly declared in Chapter 36 of *Agenda 21* (UNCED, 1992): "education is critical for promoting SD and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues". The endorsement of education as indispensable to promote

SD draws a clear and unambiguous link between education and Social Sustainable Development (SSD) (cf. also Fien in Masahisa, 2006:1; Huckle & Sterling, 1996:xiii; Pigozzi, 2007:27; Scott & Gough, 2003:xiv). However, grave concerns about current education (also referred to as traditional education) as being part of the problem of unsustainable development rather than its solution (Gadotti, 2008:21; Calder & Clugstone, 2005:7; Sterling, 1996:18), have led to a call for the *re-orientation* of traditional education to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Rohweder (2007:25) underscores this call by arguing that ESD has in recent years been recognised as one of the main strategies in the process of SD.

Soon after its first democratic elections in 1994, South Africa followed the call for the re-orientation of education with the introduction of a new curriculum. Whilst the new *Curriculum 2005* and the later *National Curriculum Statement* (2011) represented a break with an educational system characterised by gross inequalities, it also introduced a new educational approach as part of the government's extensive project of social transformation. With reference to SD and SSD the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) embraces social transformation and aims at promoting the values and principles of democratic citizenship, such as human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c); DoE, 2003a:4). The curriculum for FET (Grades 10-12) also appears to be sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability and other social factors (DBE, 2011a; DoE, 2003a).

As part of the Department of Education's endeavour to deliver citizens who are equipped to meet the challenges of a democratic South Africa, Life Orientation (LO) was introduced as one of the learning areas/subjects in the school. LO focuses on the development of the self-in-society, and this is said to encourage the development of balanced and confident learners who will contribute to a just and democratic society, a productive economy, and an improved quality of life for all (DBE, 2011a; Section 2.1; DoE, 2003a:9). The content base of LO consists of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills about the self, the environment, responsible citizenship, a healthy and productive life, social engagement, recreation and physical activity as well as career choices. The consistency of LO with the aims of SSD is affirmed particularly by its explicit focus on social issues such as discrimination, gender, diversity,

xenophobia, social justice, human rights, democracy, the prevention of social ills such as violence and abuse, HIV and AIDS and environmental issues (DBE, 2011a, Section 3.1; DoE, 2003a:11). Although the articulation of such contents creates the impression that South African education and specifically LO might be geared towards SSD, there is no guarantee that it will indeed promote these values or achieve the aims and objectives that it sets for itself. This also resonates with my original question regarding the extent to which education policy is political rhetoric or truly strives towards SD?

1.2 RATIONALE, PURPOSE AND VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

As a teacher educator, my interest in SD is informed by the contribution of education towards the improved quality of life for all South Africans. It is generally accepted that the South African government is responsible for and also committed to improve the quality of life of its citizens. There also seems to be consensus that the government embraces SD and acknowledges the latter as the route to rid society from social realities which prevent most South Africans from enjoying a good quality of life. This study was, on the one hand, inspired by the government's commitment to social justice, the eradication of poverty, the improvement of the quality of life and the commitment to SD, including SSD. On the other hand, however, the study was primarily inspired by the realisation that South African education is, in one way or the other, currently failing many South Africans since it does not seem to succeed in breaking the cycle of poverty and social injustice. It is therefore my concern with current education and the extent to which it is equipped to promote SD and SSD, but also the responsibility of the re-orientation of education towards SD and SSD that initiated this study.

My interest in pursuing the role of education in the promotion of SD and SSD was further informed by a preliminary literature review which yielded no comprehensive research in South Africa on SSD or ESD. Searches on different data bases such as ERIC, Academic Search Complete, the NRF, Africa-Wide: NiPAD yielded no results on South African research conducted on ESD or the impact thereof on education policy in South Africa. Research on SD in South Africa has primarily been done from an environmental education (EE) perspective, and extended research has been

devoted to economic and environmental sustainability only. The lack of research on SSD and ESD also motivated me to embark on the theme of the study.

Based on the foregoing, the purpose of my research was firstly to problematise ESD and SSD within the South African context. My contention is that by problematising the latter, the extent to which current education policy and practice are aligned with the aims of SD and SSD can be exposed. Secondly, and against the background of the gap in existing literature on ESD and SSD in South Africa, I hope to make recommendations that could be of use to policy-makers in increasing the responsiveness of education policy and practice towards SD and SSD. I also work with the assumption that my research findings might be extrapolated to other similar contexts.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The history of apartheid South Africa was characterised by a development path that resulted in inequality, poverty, inequity, discrimination and many other social challenges which rendered the South African society unsustainable (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2003:xv). The democratic elections of 1994 not only signified a dramatic new period of transformation, but also compelled the newly elected government led by the African National Congress (ANC) to commit itself to:

[h]eal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
[i]mprove the quality of life of all citizens...;
[l]ay the foundations for a democratic and open society...; and
[b]uild a united and democratic South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996: Preamble).

Various educational acts and education policies have been enacted since 1994 to contribute to the realisation of the newly set democratic ideals and the transformation of the broader South African society into a just, equitable, democratic society, based on the values of “human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms” (RSA, 1996: Chapter 1, Section 1). Formulated in line with the democratic ideals of the people of South Africa, it is anticipated that such acts and policies would not only pave the way for a transformed education

system, but could also assist with plans to build a nation free of racial, gender and every other form of discrimination (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 2). Given the Ministry of Education's (DoE, 2007: Section 13; also DoE, 2001(b): Section 1.2.1) vision to "build a world-class education system suitable to meet the challenges of the 21st Century", the assumption is that the challenges would also pertain to SD and SSD. In line with this, Peden (2008:13) posits that the post-apartheid curriculum policy shows a strong affinity with ESD, including the principles of human rights, inclusivity, and environmental and social justice across all subjects. This also collaborates with the view of Lotz-Sisitka, Schudel, O'Donough and Irwin (n.d.:46) that since the curriculum framework creates a platform for schools to engage with environmental and sustainability issues, it gives effect to UNESCO's (2005a) objectives of re-orienting education towards sustainability. Because the principles and values of ESD appear to be reflected in South African education policy, it can be assumed that it has the potential of equipping learners with the values, skills and dispositions required for SD and SSD.

However, Jansen (2000:46) warns that education policy in South Africa "is best described as a struggle for the achievement of a broad political symbolism that would mark the shift from apartheid to post-apartheid society", and that "every single case of education policy-making demonstrates, in different ways, the preoccupation of the state with settling policy struggles in the political domain rather than the realm of practice". The mere inclusion of principles and themes related to ESD, SD, and by implication SSD in education, is no guarantee that education will necessarily lead to SD or SSD, or sensitise learners to the demands of SD and SSD. Gadotti (2008:22) also cautions that it is not sufficient to introduce the theme of sustainability without rethinking other school subjects under a different logic, namely a communicative and emancipatory logic that helps to change habits. The mere and random inclusion of principles and themes of SD into education policy and practice might very well support Thomas's (in Meadowcroft, 1999a:220) notion that the "politics of sustainable development represents little more than rhetoric". Against this background, and heeding Jansen's warning of political symbolism, care should be taken that the inclusion of SD is accompanied by the sincere intent to bring about change.

However, although South African education aims at transforming society at large, and aims of SSD have been introduced into education policy and the curriculum in general, current difficulties in schools might provide an unsuitable climate to foster SSD. As mentioned previously, continued reference is made to a 'crisis' in South African education, citing inter alia the following reasons for this situation:

- Education prescriptions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, which have been uncritically incorporated into the new education system, thus rendering the curriculum content irrelevant to South Africa (Nekhwevha, 1999:122);
- the tendency of OBE to reproduce and exacerbate educational and societal inequalities (Fakier & Waghid, 2004:60);
- a curriculum based on modernist principles constructed to fit the needs of the capitalist economy (Bredlid, 2003:98);
- schools that are not functioning satisfactorily (Van Wyk in De Wet & Wolhuter, 2009:360);
- the poor performance of South African learners compared to other countries (Rosenberg, 2008:25-26); and
- an insufficient education system which is producing skills of low quality (Taylor in Rosenberg, 2008:25).

If there is indeed a crisis in South African education, the above-mentioned conditions can hamper the effectiveness of ESD and the ideals of a social sustainable South African society. In line with this, Imber (1997:9) warns that schools are strongly influenced by the inequitable distribution of knowledge, power, and resources in society and that they tend to reproduce the same inequalities within their educational policies and practices. Chisholm (2004:13) regards an emphasis on the role of education as an agent of transformation at the expense of consideration of its role in maintaining the status quo, as equally inadequate. Although South African education and education policy are proposed within a context of transformation, there is always the possibility that the latter could continue to perpetuate the inequalities of the past. If this is the case, the South African community will continue to be rendered socially, economically and environmentally unsustainable. My concern is that although policies appear to focus on aspects of SSD, in practice

South African education might not succeed in contributing towards the realisation of the aims and objectives of SD, and improving the quality of life of its citizens. Jansen's (2000:6) reference to the reliance of South African policy on political symbolism should therefore not be taken light-heartedly. Given our unjust society as one of the grave consequences of apartheid South Africa and the urgency for education to assist in bringing about SD and SSD, it is necessary to expose the extent to which South African education policy is currently responsive to the challenges of ESD. It is my contention that such an exposition can also assist in bringing about the change required to enhance ESD. My central research question is therefore: *Is South African education policy and practice responsive towards the challenges of Education for Sustainable Development in order to realise a social sustainable community?*

Following my research question, I pose the subsequent sub-questions:

- 1.3.1 What is the nature and status of SD and SSD in South Africa?
- 1.3.2 How can ESD be conceptualised to serve as a framework for understanding the implications of ESD and particularly SSD for education policy and practice in South Africa?
- 1.3.3 How consistent are South African education policies with ESD and SSD?
- 1.3.4 What are the views of Free State teachers, regarding the ways in which education practices respond to the challenges of ESD and of the realisation of a social sustainable society in South Africa?
- 1.3.5 What recommendations can be made to change current education policy and practice to enhance ESD as an endeavour to contribute to a social sustainable society in South Africa?

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

It was noted earlier that due to South Africa's history of social inequality, we are faced with many social challenges, including the possibility of continuing the perpetuation of social inequality, which feeds into an unsustainable society characterised by a lack of SD. However, it was also indicated that education, especially ESD has the potential to contribute towards SSD. Against the background of the foregoing, my research is aimed at determining the extent to which education

policy and practice in South Africa are responsive towards the challenges of ESD. My contention is that a social sustainable society depends on education policy and practice that are sensitive to SD and responsive to ESD.

In alignment with the foregoing aim, this research will be guided by the following specific objectives:

- 1.4.1 to explore the nature and status of SD and SSD in South Africa;
- 1.4.2 to conceptualise ESD as a framework for understanding the implications of ESD and SSD for education policy and practice in South Africa;
- 1.4.3 to expose the extent to which South African education policies are consistent with ESD and SSD;
- 1.4.4 to explore the views of Free State teachers, regarding the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and of the realisation of a social sustainable society; and
- 1.4.5 to make recommendations to change current education policy and practice so as to enhance ESD as an endeavour to contribute to a social sustainable South African society.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

1.5.1 *RESEARCH METHODOLOGY*

Bogdan and Biklen (2003:31) view methodology as a generic term that refers to the general logic and theoretical perspectives for a research project. As such, Harding (in Le Grange, 2007:423; also Bogdan & Biklen 2003; Harvey, 1990:1) defines methodology as the theory of knowledge and the theoretical framework guiding a particular research project. Methodology subsequently refers to the way in which we approach problems, seek answers (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984:1), and it helps to justify the purpose of social research (Leonardo, 2003:75).

Methodology is further influenced by a view of reality (ontology) and of the nature of knowledge (epistemology), and as such stands in direct relation to a paradigm or theoretical orientation. Guba and Lincoln (1994:105) define a paradigm as a basic belief system or worldview that guides a researcher not only in the choice of a

method, but also in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways. The relevance of a paradigm in research is further underlined by Bogdan and Biklen (2003:22), who assert that, “whether stated or not, whether written in what we have come to think of as theoretical language, or not, all research is guided by some theoretical orientation”. Taking my queue from this, I locate my research within Critical Theory as a critical social science, and I particularly draw on the ideas of Jürgen Habermas.

The notion of a ‘critical social science’ originated with Jürgen Habermas (Held, 1980:256; Carr & Kemmis, 1986:144) who embarked on developing an idea of a theory of society conceived with a practical intention, i.e. the self-emancipation of men from the constraints of unnecessary domination in all its forms (Habermas, 1974:1; Habermas, 1975:xviii, also Held, 1980:250). Guided by an emancipatory interest, a critical social science is concerned with determining when “theoretical statements grasp invariant regularities of social actions as such and when they express ideologically frozen relations of dependence that can in principle be transformed” (Habermas, 1972:310). Furthermore, since it is critical of ideology, a critical social science is particularly concerned with what lies behind consensus, since the latter is often presented as a fact supporting the dominant tradition of the time (Habermas, 1974:11).

With the above as starting point, various conceptualisations of critical social science have emerged. For example, Neuman (2000:76) views critical social science as a critical process of enquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structures in the material world to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves. As such, it does not take the apparent social structures, social processes, or accepted history for granted, rather an attempt is made to dig beneath the surface of appearance (Harvey, 1990:6). With reference to education, Popkewitz (1990:46) is of the opinion that critical science gives reference to schooling as a socially constructed enterprise that contains continual contradictions. Whilst there are noble dreams and hopes about creating a better future and more equal society, social differentiations often maintain unequal power relations and subtle forms of social regulation. Questions regarding the role of education in maintaining unequal power relations could and should be asked. My choice for a critical methodology is

therefore primarily prompted by my belief that education is an ideologically-formed historical process (Carr & Kemmis, 1986:220), which contains certain contradictions and illusions that perpetuate oppressive structures. Education could thus be used to maintain prevailing structures of inequality and oppression, including a possible distorted view of education towards SD and of SSD.

1.5.1.1 CRITICAL THEORY

To locate my study within Critical Theory and to conceptualise the way in which the research will be informed by this theoretical orientation, an exposition of Critical Theory is required. As indicated earlier (cf. 1.5.1), this thesis largely draws on Habermas' conceptualisation of Critical Theory.

Habermas' conceptualisation of Critical Theory is informed by his belief that there is no single model of science, rather there are several forms of inquiry, each of which is governed by its own particular "anthropologically deep-seated" interests (Habermas, 1972; also Dews, 1999:8; Thompson & Held, 1982:6). As such, Habermas works with the assumption that knowledge is never a "pure reflection of reality", but is always guided by some interest (Romm, 1993:181). A distinction is therefore made between three different types of knowledge-constitutive or cognitive interests, namely technical knowledge, practical knowledge and emancipatory knowledge. These types of knowledge further find expression in the empirical-analytical sciences, the historical-hermeneutical sciences and the emancipatory sciences respectively (Habermas, 1972:308, also Carr & Kemmis, 1986:136; Thompson & Held, 1982:8). Although he does not reject the former two sciences, Habermas' particular interest lies in the latter, since it is guided by a reflexive interest that enables human beings to gain greater autonomy and self-determination (How, 2003:117; also Bubner, 2004:52; Outhwaite, 1994:27; Ritzer & Goodman, 2004:143; Young, 1990:33).

As a critical social theory, Critical Theory is based on the premise that human beings should be free, that any domination is an infringement on such freedom, and as such it is oriented towards critiquing and changing society. Drawing from Habermas, Tormey and Townshend (2006:169), posit that Critical Theory informs an attempt to eliminate human-made suffering that is intimately built into the various social

structures (including the school) necessary for the reproduction of human life. Kellner (1989:46; also Bronner, 1994:3; Layder, 1994:187) also maintains that Critical Theory is rooted in critical activity which is oppositional and involved in a struggle for social change, the unification of theory and practice, and the abolition of social injustice. As such, it is aimed at diagnosing those ills of modern society which prevent people's fulfilment, and also at identifying the nature of the social changes necessary for bringing about a just and democratic society. Having said this, Critical Theory does not primarily seek to increase knowledge, but to improve human existence by liberating human beings from the circumstances that enslave them (Kellner, 1989:49; also Bohman, 1999:53; McLaren & Giarelli, 1995:2). Therefore, Critical Theory will not let us accept existent social stratification (Hoy & McCarthy, 1994:111), but expects us to challenge and transform such stratification and the inequalities associated with it.

Characterised by an activity of *critique* or *relentless criticism*, Critical Theory subsequently resonates with Foucault's (1988:155; also How, 2003:4) perception that criticism is:

[a] matter of flushing out that thought (which imitates everyday behaviour) and trying to change it; to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see that what is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such. As soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes both very urgent, very difficult and quite possible.

Drawing on Habermas' postscript to *Knowledge and Human Interest*, Dews (1999:11) asserts that not only is critique directed at objects whose 'pseudo-objectivity' is to be revealed, but it is also concerned with the deformations of particular identities; and the creation of possibilities to make conscious something unconscious, while altering that which determines a false conscious with practical results. As such, Critical Theory is not simply critical in the sense of voicing disapproval of contemporary social arrangements; rather it attempts to distil the historical processes which have caused subjective meanings to become systematically distorted (Carr & Kemmis, 1986:137). As Connerton (1976:17-71) indicates, critique in this sense is associated with oppositional thinking as an activity of unveiling or debunking. To reveal how beliefs and attitudes might be ideological

illusions perpetuating a social order alien to collective experiences and needs, Critical Theory requires relentless criticism of oppression and exploitation (Carr & Kemmis, 1986:138; Kellner, 1989:46). In this regard, How (2003:5) views Critical Theory as an attempt to pull reality towards what it ought to be, what is imminent to it and what, if all other things were equal, it would become.

Thus, by means of exposing and displacing existing structures of domination, and in order to bring about social change, critical social theory aims at being part of the self-consciousness of oppressed social groups (Hoy & McCarthy, 1994:16; also Connerton, 1976:20; Gephart, 1999:6; Kellner, 1989:46). By taking a dialogic approach to eliminate false consciousness, Critical Theory does not regard theory and practice as opposites. Rather, theory and practice are mutually informing and constitutes what Paolo Freire (in McLaren & da Silva, 1993:55; also Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999:93) referred to as a dialectical praxis. For Habermas (1974:253), praxis takes the form of liberation from an externally imposed compulsion. Whilst Gadotti (1994:166) regards the notion of praxis to the unity between what one does (practice) and what one thinks about what one does (theory), Harvey (1990:22; also Rasmussen, 2004:3) concurs that praxis is what changes the world. hooks (1994:48) conceptualises praxis not as “a blind action, deprived of intention or of finality. It is action and reflection”. Regarded as one of the defining characteristic of praxis, reflection is used to unmask domination in its many forms (Held, 1980:256).

Although the process of emancipation requires engaging in critical reflection, it is in particular self-reflection and its intimate connection with praxis and the emancipation and liberation from oppressive structures and powers that is considered as important for Critical Theory. Since self-reflection leads to self-knowledge, it is regarded as a prerequisite for emancipation (Habermas, 1972:22-23 and 310). Furthermore, as the “emancipatory process of thought” (Weber, 1976:79), self-reflection allows for individuals to become aware of forces which have exerted an unacknowledged influence over them (Held, 1980:398). Whilst self-reflection yields a type of knowledge and is governed by an interest in emancipation from domination (Weber, 1976:94),

[it] brings to conscious those determinants of a self-formative process of cultivation and self-formation (Bildung) which ideologically determine a contemporary practice

and conception of the world. [It] leads to insight due to the fact that what has previously been unconscious is made conscious in a manner rich in consequences: analytic insights intervene in life (Habermas, 1974:22, cf. also Held, 1980:317).

It is this emancipatory nature of self-reflection that puts us in a position to use explanation and understanding in order to free ourselves – at least partially – from entrapment in the causal nexus of nature and from patterns of social life permeated by relations of power (Dews, 1999:8).

Following the above it appears that Critical Theory is not merely interested in giving an account of society, or to understand situations and phenomena. Rather it aims to emancipate the disempowered, to redress inequality and to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:27). Critical Theory is subsequently motivated by a dual interest in what is referred to as a rational society in which reason, freedom and justice would be harmoniously linked, and the liberation of the individual from the bondage of exploitation and domination (Kellner, 1989:49; also McCarthy, 1978:126; White, 1988:26). Drawing on the latter, Critical Theory will show us that our world-picture, including our picture of education, is ideologically falsified, and it will also make us aware of the unconscious determinants of such a consciousness (Geuss, 1981:61).

The value of praxis for education refers to the conception that no real transformation can take place without constant and deliberate reflection and action by educators and education practitioners on education practice. Although apartheid education appears to have been transformed in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the new South Africa and its people, we should not rest assured that these needs and aspirations will indeed be realised. Critical Theory compels us to not only continuously and critically interrogate and scrutinise education policies and education practice for structures of domination, but also to take action in order to change such oppressive activities.

1.5.1.2 WHY CRITICAL THEORY?

The decision to frame my research within Critical Theory was prompted by my contention that education in South Africa has certain defects that impede on the ideals of SSD and the creation of a better social order for its citizens. Given the emancipatory nature of Critical Theory, I assume that, guided by this theoretical orientation, such defects can be unmasked, questioned and interrogated. I also agree with Hammersley (1995:30) that by positioning my research within the context of Critical Theory I ought to be able to render “transparent what had previously been hidden, and in doing so initiate[s] a process of self-reflection in individuals or groups, designed to achieve liberation from the domination of past constraints”.

Premised on the critique of the oppressive nature of institutional structures and other arrangements that reproduce and maintain oppressive ideologies and social inequalities (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit; 2004:23), Critical Theory promotes a critical consciousness. Drawing from this critical position, I adopt a critical stance towards what is generally accepted as the social convention of schooling, and existing contradictions in which power relations dominate (Guba, 1990:49). It is my contention that such a consciousness will enable me to critically reflect on education policy and practice to expose existing contradictions which could possibly prevent education from giving effect to the vision of SD and a social sustainable society. Because education could be used as an instrument of domination and the maintenance of unequal power relations, I draw on Critical Theory to interrogate and expose the way in which the rules and structures that govern education are designed in relation to SD and SSD. Such a critical stance is not only important in terms of critical thinking, but should be regarded as an indispensable component of the social change (Ward, 2007:1) that South Africans hope to achieve through education. Whilst SD is *inter alia* aimed at an improved quality of life, it subsequently translates into the eradication of social injustices. Thus, since Critical Theory expresses an explicit interest in the abolition of social injustice, it could be argued that it is in essence an emancipatory, participatory and empowering paradigm that could inform my criticism and critique to go beyond a narrow concern with subjective meanings of SD, SSD and ESD. Framed within the context of Critical Theory, my research will be an attempt to expose the contradictions and defects in education policy and practice,

especially in relation to SD, SSD and ESD. Since criticism is an indispensable requirement for transformation, Critical Theory will not only open up a space in which to critically engage with the notions of SD, SSD and ESD, but will also consider the way in which the (mis)interpretations of these notions find expression within the South African context. Furthermore, I am convinced that such a space can be expanded to make teachers and administrators aware of possible false ideals and hopes that are being created by education, and which restrict the bringing about of change.

It is the afore-mentioned characteristics of Critical Theory that makes it a suitable point of departure for this study. I therefore defend my choice of Critical Theory firstly on the basis that it employs critique to identify and expose those aspects of education over which its participants have no control and which frustrate and prevent SD and SSD. Secondly, since Critical Theory depends on the critical process of self-reflection, the fostering of a critical reflection on education policy and practice should enable me to identify ideologically distorted discourse on SD and SSD. Thirdly, whilst praxis strives towards bridging the gap between theory and practice, the critical consideration of issues of SD has the potential of creating a space where theory of SD and SSD is informed by the practice of ESD, and where practice is informed by theory. Lastly, the empowering and liberating features of Critical Theory could assist in the empowerment of educators and administrators to identify the actions they need to take in order to transform their own education practice to realise the aims and objectives of SD and SSD.

In general, I am convinced that the value of Critical Theory for this thesis is that it will, through criticism and reflection, provide an awareness of the ways in which the aims and purposes of South African education policies and legislation relating to SD, ESD and SSD may be distorted. Such insights would indeed have the potential to inform action aimed at emancipation from the possible constraints of education policies and practice towards reaching the intended goals of SD and SS for a better quality of life.

Based on the foregoing, my research will be guided by the following assumptions:

- South African education policy and practice are plagued with certain contradictions and disillusioning creating a false consciousness of education being transformed towards ESD and aimed towards SSD;
- contradictions and disillusioning regarding SD and SSD must be exposed and relentlessly critiqued;
- South African education policy and practice perpetuate inequalities in various ways and lead to further social injustices and enslavement of South African citizens;
- a critical reflection on education policy and practice can expose its responsiveness to SSD;
- a re-orientation of traditional education policy and practice to ESD will assist in the transformation of the South African society towards SSD;
- education policy can only be improved by revealing and exposing what is hidden in it; and
- space must be created for teachers to empower themselves to change their own education practice in order to give effect to the aims and objectives of SD and SSD.

1.5.2 RESEARCH METHODS

According to Cohen and Manion (1989:42; also Bogdan & Biklen, 2003:31; Harvey, 1990:1; Le Grange, 2007:423) research methods can be defined as the range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are to be used as the basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and for prediction. In their simplest form, methods are the techniques used for the gathering of data and refer therefore to the “practical side of research” (Leonardo, 2003:75). However, despite the differences between research methods and research methodologies, a logical link exists between them because the former is informed by the latter (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003:31; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:83; Leonardo, 2003:75). It could thus be argued that good research methods should be consistent with the logic embodied in methodology.

Informed by a critical paradigm, my research interest is not about merely giving an account of issues surrounding SD, ESD and SSD, or simply to understand these

phenomena. Rather, my research is aimed at emancipating the disempowered, the redressing of inequality and the promotion of individual freedoms (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:27). As such, research methods used within this tradition should go beyond the mere validation or testing of existing hypothesis and interpreting of data to generate understanding. The research methods employed in my research will subsequently be aimed at the critique of existing education policies and practices in order to explore possible distortions that might hamper ESD and the bringing about of SSD.

Consistent with the foregoing, I subsequently intend to make use of qualitative research methods since

[t]here is a pressing need to show how the practices of qualitative research can help change the world in positive ways ... it is necessary to re-engage the promise of qualitative research as a generative form of inquiry and as a form of radical democratic practice ... to show how the discourses of qualitative research can be used to help imagine and create a free, democratic society (Denzin & Lincoln in Cox, Geisen & Green, 2008:16).

Thus, within the context of this thesis, qualitative research methods will enable me to not only gain information that will illuminate an understanding of SD, ESD and SSD, but will also guide me to expose possible distortions about these issues within South African education policy and practice. This could free people from entrapment caused by education policy and practice that hamper the achievement of the aims and objectives of SD and SSD, and could move them towards improving their educational conditions to achieve such aims and objectives.

I further propose to use multiple qualitative research methods (cf. Springer, 2010:20), which will enable me to expose the extent to which education policy and practice is responsive to the challenges of ESD and SSD. As indicated earlier, such methods should open up a space in which I can critically engage with and reflect on policies and practices on SD and SSD. As such, qualitative data will be collected through a literature review, a conceptual analysis, and a critical policy analysis.

However, although Floden (2007:12) argues that an empirical research method, such as surveys, does not necessarily fit into the Critical Theory paradigm, I am

convinced that the use of empirical data obtained through surveys could also enhance the relevance of my research methodology. This is supported by McLaren and Giarelli (1995:2) who posit that Critical Theory is primarily “an effort to join empirical investigation, the task of interpretation, and a critique of this reality in order to improve human existence by viewing knowledge for its emancipatory-or repressive potential”. I therefore propose to use survey research in collaboration with qualitative research methods.

1.5.2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to contextualise this research, thus to argue a case for it and to establish the space that it should occupy within literature available on SD and SSD, a thorough literature study will be undertaken. A literature study is much more than a document analysis since it represents sources on the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2002:85). To justify my focus on SD and SSD, a literature review will subsequently be undertaken to reflect on the way in which my research will add to past research. Furthermore, a literature review will enable me to identify gaps in the exiting body of knowledge pertaining to SD and SSD. In line with the view of Creswell (2002:85; also Bless *et al.*, 2006:24-25; Kaniki, 2006:19; Marshall & Rossman, 1995:23; Mertens, 2005:88; Neuman, 2000:446; and Springer, 2010:42), a literature review on SD and SSD, will also assist me in identifying the weaknesses in previous studies, discover connections, contradictions or other relations between different research results or to explore the views of an underrepresented group. Various sources on SD and SSD will subsequently be interrogated and explored in order to come to an understanding of and to learn about SD and SSD. It is my contention that through a literature review, I should be able to position my research within the bigger picture of what is known about SD and SSD. Since SD and by definition SSD is context specific, information gathered during the literature review will be specifically contextualised to align with the South African scenario.

1.5.2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

As previously indicated, my research is primarily concerned with SD, ESD and SSD. However, a preliminary review of existing literature on these topics revealed a vagueness and even ambiguousness surrounding the character of these concepts, which render them contested. Since it is important in research that participants

speak the same language and attribute the same meaning to the concepts they use (Bless *et al.*, 2006:36, Kaniki, 2006:21), concepts should be defined in clear, precise, non-ambiguous and agreed-upon ways. Not only does the clear understanding of concepts lead to better analysis, but it could also contribute to meaningful conclusions of data. Although Goode and Hatt (1981:43) argue that definitions could have a paradoxical quality since it raises barriers to the lay understanding of scientific concepts, I argue that a proper examination of the use of the concept 'Education for Sustainable Development' might uncover, open-up and improve our understanding thereof. In order to explore the meanings, or come to a common understanding of the concept *Education for Sustainable Development*, a conceptual analysis will be undertaken. The conceptual analysis will then form the conceptual framework within which the remainder of this research will be undertaken.

1.5.2.3 CRITICAL POLICY ANALYSIS

In addition to a literature review and a conceptual analysis, a critical policy analysis of official South African education policies will be undertaken. Policy analysis has been defined in many ways. For McMillan and Schumacher (2001:545), policy analysis evaluates government policies to provide policy-makers with pragmatic action-orientated recommendations. Whilst Hanekom (1991:65) describes policy analysis as an attempt to measure the costs and benefits of various policy alternatives or to evaluate the efficiency of existing policies, Dunn (in Fischer, Miller & Sidney, 2007: Introduction) regards it as an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and arguments to produce and transform policy-relevant information to resolve policy problems. Codd (1988:235), on the other hand, regards policy analysis as a form of enquiry which provides either the informational base upon which a policy is constructed, or the critical examination of existing policies. Whilst policy analysis can be undertaken for several reasons, it is the framing thereof within the context of Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) that has reform and change as its primary concerns (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry, 1997:37). Since my research is also critical in essence and aimed at empowerment and transformation, CPA not only resonates with this theoretical orientation, but is also considered as a suitable method to employ in my research.

Assuming that policy is historically and socially situated and matured with the values of its authors (Torregano & Shannon, 2009:320), CPA poses questions that examine the social, political, historical, and economic realities that define and shape policy in a particular context. Because of the historic and social embeddedness of policies, CPA is interested in the identification of systems of power and control, as well as in the way in which such systems are legitimised and maintained. According to Prunty (in Shanks, 2006:27), CPA is not only concerned with the identification of the values of policy-makers and policy-users, but as a value-laden activity, it is also involved in determining whose values are confirmed and/or denied within the policy context.

Taylor *et al.* (1997:19) maintain that the major task of CPA is to investigate the extent to which particular policies and practices are consistent with our moral vision for education. As such, this critical orientation of policy analysis conceptualises education as a moral idea linked to the concerns of social justice. By framing policy analysis within the context of Critical Theory, I propose to conduct my analysis of South African education policies with the aim to uncover the extent to which such policies are consistent with the vision of a free, democratic South Africa based on the principles of SSD. It is assumed that an analysis of South Africa education policy documents will provide a setting in which the ethical and epistemological questions inherent in the relationship among knowledge, action and power are addressed (Jennings, 1983:8), and will allow for the penetration of values, assumptions, and tacit theories (Dror, 1971:55). Working with the assumption that policies are never neutral but embedded in values, the use of CPA should enable me to interrogate the values and assumptions by which such policies are informed. Since CPA is not merely another analysis of a policy, but a critical process of exposing and interrogation, it is my intention to utilise the framework of Taylor *et al.* (1997) for critical policy analysis to expose the extent to which current education policies are responsive to and orientated towards the challenges of ESD and the promotion of SSD.

1.5.2.4 SURVEY

In this section of my research I propose to collect empirical data through a survey. The aim of the survey is to explore the perceptions of teachers on the

responsiveness of South African education practice towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society.

This study is framed within a critical paradigm, and I am aware of the perceived dichotomy between positivistic and critical research paradigms and its associated research approaches and methods. However, I align myself with Bryman (1988:109) who asserts that the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is really a technical matter whereby the choice between the two has to do with their suitability in answering particular research questions. I also concur with Krathwohl (1998:27), who argues that:

[r]esearch is a creative act; don't confine your thinking about it to specific approaches. Researchers creatively combine the elements of methods in any way that makes the best sense for the study they want to do. Their only limits are their own imagination and the necessity of presenting their findings convincingly. The research question to be answered really determines the method.

Against this background I propose to utilise a survey as a research method since it appears to be most appropriate to answer the research question that I wish to address (Morgan & Drury, 2003:5). Within the context of education, the application of a survey is especially relevant since it will enable me to gain insight into educational issues by exploring the experiences, perceptions and beliefs of the individuals whose lives constitute education (Neuman, 2000:250; Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996:13). In this way a survey will shed light on the way in which teachers perceive education realities pertaining to ESD and SSD.

Also, since praxis defines the theoretical orientation of my research, questionnaires will create the space to reflect on education realities and to identify possible gaps that appear between theory and practice, specifically as related to ESD and SSD. Simultaneously, however, it is also assumed that this space for reflection provided by the survey will be extended to teachers and administrators to critically reflect on their own teaching practice and to identify challenges that might impact on the process of empowerment and liberation.

On a more practical note, I regard a survey as a suitable method to determine the extent to which education practices are responsive to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community. I further accept that the use of a survey will not only enable me to collect comparable data on ESD and SSD from the participants, but will also assist me to focus in such a way that it will lead to more specific data (cf. Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006:124).

As a data gathering instrument, I will develop a questionnaire based on the insights on ESD and SSD that I gained in the literature review and conceptual analysis. The questionnaire will be distributed amongst 500 teachers in fifty randomly selected secondary schools of the Free State Province. I will use the Education Management and Information System (EMIS) (2011) of the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) in selecting these schools. Not only will the schools be representative of the five quintile divisions of the FSDoE, but I will also select schools that are geographically located in the five educational districts of the Free State Province. As such, these schools will be representative of the socio-economic conditions as well as the geographics of the province. After obtaining permission from the FSDoE to conduct research in Free State secondary schools, I will contact the schools to obtain their permission. Questionnaires will then be distributed to ten teachers, selected through purposive sampling, in each of the participating secondary schools.

The collected data will be analysed against the background of a critical framework, which is based on the insights drawn from the literature review and conceptual analysis of SSD and ESD. It is my assumption that data quantitatively analysed within such a framework can assist in exposing the responsiveness of existing education practice to the implications of ESD and SSD, and also shed light on the way in which policy theory relates to policy practice.

a) Selection of participants

The selection of participants is an important methodological aspect of any research and needs careful consideration. Morrison (in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:100) warns that the quality of a research project is not only dependent upon the

appropriateness of the methodology and instrumentation, but also on the suitability of the participant selection strategy.

Participants will be selected purposively. The logic of purposive selection lies in selecting information-rich cases for the study (Patton, 1990:169), from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. Thus, in order to obtain information-rich data pertaining to issues of ESD and SSD, LO teachers in the Further Education and Training (FET) band in the Free State will be targeted to complete the questionnaires. The decision to target the latter population is substantiated by my earlier indication (cf. 1.1) that the aims and objectives of LO display an alignment with that of SD and SSD. Whilst LO seems to be best suited for the fostering of the faculties, values and virtues required by an equitable and just South African society, it is the LO teachers who deal with the realities of teaching LO, and are able to reflect on and share their experiences and practice(s), and can provide valuable information on the implementation of LO policies.

In addition, questionnaires will also be distributed amongst teachers offering other subjects in the FET band. These teachers are included in this study because ESD pre-supposes integration and interrelatedness. As such, teachers across the FET band are not only co-responsible for realising the vision of a social sustainable society, but they also hold particular views on education practice and its responsiveness towards ESD. It is my contention that information gained from these respondents could provide a comprehensive overview of the extent to which education policy and practice is consistent with ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society.

Although teachers will be drawn from both rural and urban areas of the Free State, and care is taken to select participants from representative schools, the aim of the participant selection is not to obtain a representative group from which generalisations can be made. Rather, I am concerned with gaining insight into the unique views and perceptions of the participants on ESD and SSD.

b) Ethical considerations

Ethics in research is an integral part of the research planning and implementation process (Mertens, 2010:12). However, due to the close link between method and methodology, ethical issues are also embedded in methodological considerations. It can be argued that Critical Theory opens up a space for the consideration of specific ethical issues related to this paradigm. Ozga (2000:46) concurs that “working within a critical frame places requirements on the researcher to pursue ethical research principles and to assess research activity in relation to what might be broadly termed social justice concerns”. In addition, Suskie (1996:1) also asserts that as professional researchers we have an obligation and a responsibility to adhere to the ethical and professional standards of our profession. Because of my involvement in the social lives of participants and in awareness of the requirement that sound ethics be intertwined with sound methodology (Mertens, 2010:29), I need to consider various ethical issues for my research enterprise.

In order to deal with ethical issues, I had to apply for permission from the Free State Department of Education to conduct the research at selected schools in the Free State; as well as for ethical clearance from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State. Ethical clearance was obtained on 24 February 2012 (reference number: UFS-EDU-20120011). The granting of permission, on both fronts, underscores my responsibility towards the participants in ensuring that no participant is compromised or threatened in any way during the research. Whilst the dignity of the participants will be ensured by treating them in a respectful and professional manner, privacy and confidentiality will be protected by the use of numbers (Bless *et al.*, 2006:143; Neuman, 2000:98-100). Since social research invades a person’s privacy, direct and informed consent from the participants will be sought (Bless *et al.*, 2006:1142-143; also McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:42; Neuman, 2000:96; Punch, 1994:90-94). To ensure informed consent, participants will not only be dually informed about the aim and objectives of the research, but they will also be briefed on the possible effect(s) that participation might have on them. Participation is voluntary and teachers have the right to withdraw at any time during the research.

Transparency and honesty are important ethical principles that need to be observed and respected throughout the research (Creswell, 1994:31; also Berg, 2004:64-65; Punch, 1994:90-94). These principles will be ensured in the administration and analysis of the data and a report of the research will be made available to, and communicated in an honest and trustworthy manner to the respondents. Since the participants' access to the results is a basic right (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2008 497), the Free State Department of Education, as well as the participating schools and other respondents will be informed of the results of this research. Closely linked to the aforementioned is the principle of trust, which broadly refers to my relationship with the respondents and my responsibility not to compromise the field of research (Ryen, 2004:234; Punch, 1994:93).

In addition to ethical considerations pertaining to the participants, I will ensure that the research is conducted with the highest level of professional and scientific integrity, and not to falsify or plagiarise any information. As such, I have to ensure the validity and reliability of my research enterprise.

Since research has real-world consequences (Krathwohl, 1998:336), and to ensure that reliable and valid knowledge is produced, particular attention needs to be given to specific quality requirements for enhancement of the reliability and validity of the research. A detailed discussion of the ethical aspects of the research project is given in Chapter 5.

It is with these empirical and ethical considerations in mind that I demarcate this study.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE RESEARCH

1.6.1 *SCIENTIFIC DEMARCATION*

Education policy research, also referred to as education policy studies or education policy science, is located within the larger arena of education research (Ozga, 2000:4). Waghid (2002:41; Desimone, 2009:163) indicates that this research area is concerned with various aspects related to education such as education systems, the

construction, restructuring and transformation of education, crises in education, treatment of minorities, access to education, funding of education, and the effects of education reform. However, by means of identifying the limitations and circumstances within which education policies work, education policy research is also undertaken to sustain the larger project of education for democracy and to prevent the reduction of education to conservative or economic ends (Ozga, 2000:6). As a critical and systematic inquiry, education policy research is subsequently aimed at producing knowledge that could be used to inform educational judgements and decisions on education, and to improve education action and practice (Bassey, 2003:111; Tunmer, Prochnow & Chapman, 2003:84).

South Africa is currently in the midst of a period of societal change and transformation and because of the role and significance of education, and its impact on society it could be argued that education policy should also contribute towards transformation in some way. For the last 17 years the South African education landscape has been flooded with numerous new policies aimed at correcting the wrongs of the past. Research of these new education policies is therefore deemed necessary in order to determine their impact on the transformation of not only the education system, but also on South African society at large (Codd, 1988). This imperative is further strengthened by the fact that education policies are never neutral, and as a representation of political commitment to a specific set of social ideas (Adams, 2004; Taylor *et al.*, 1997), they promote the internalisation of specific (government favoured) values, at the expense of others. It is precisely these characteristics of education policy that warrants a critical and thorough interrogation and research of existing education policies.

As previously mentioned, the overriding aim of this study is to determine the extent to which South African education policy and practice is orientated towards ESD and SSD. Informed by critical theory, this study resonates with education policy studies since I acknowledge that existing policies pertaining to issues of SD need to be critically scrutinised. Because such policies cannot be regarded as neutral, it is necessary to determine the extent to which they feed into the transformation of education, with specific reference to social development in particular, and within South African society at large. In agreement with Ozga (2000:5), I accept that the

value of education policy research lies within the autonomous and critical judgement of government policy. However, in addition to my critical analysis of South African policy in terms of ESD, my study will also utilise the space that education policy studies creates for reflection on the construction of education for sustainable practice by policy. It is my contention that the Critical Theory approach followed in this study will not only expose what might be hidden in policy and practice in terms of education for sustainability, but will also contribute to policy improvement. Thus, and in accordance with Floden (2007:13), my study is supported by the assumption that the stated intention of policy-makers should not be taken at face value, nor should current public agreement on educational goals be regarded as a given. Whilst my study can contribute to the existing body of education policy knowledge, there seems to be little doubt that this research can be located within Education Policy Studies.

1.6.2 *GEOGRAPHICAL DEMARCATION*

Ball (2006:18-19) criticises policy research for failing to convey a sense of region or community or setting: for 'ignoring' the 'place and context' of the research. As such, the empirical part of this research will be conducted in the Free State Province. The Free State is one of the nine provinces of South Africa, and is centrally located and surrounded by Lesotho, the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Northwest Provinces, as well as Gauteng, including both rural and urban areas. The province consists of 5 education districts: Motheo, Xhariep, Thabo Mofutsanyane, Lejweleputswa and Fezile Dabi (cf. Figure 1), and schools from all five of these districts will be targeted in the research. Although the policies earmarked for this research apply nationally, the survey will be restricted to the Free State Province only. The rationale for demarcating the research within the Free State is the fact that the researcher is based here and because the aim of the research is not to generalise, but to explore education practice in this province. However, the possibility exists that the findings could be applied nationally.



FIGURE 1: MAP OF THE 5 EDUCATION DISTRICTS IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE

1.7 RESEARCH PLAN

In order to reach the stated aim and objectives, the research will evolve as follows:

- In Chapter 2 the status and nature of SD and SSD in South Africa will be explored. This will be done through a literature review of sources relating to *sustainable development* and *social sustainable development*. To contextualise these issues within the South African context, various sources relevant to South Africa will be reviewed.
- In Chapter 3 a conceptual analysis of the concept *ESD* will be undertaken. This is regarded as pivotal to the study since a conceptual definition will be drawn from the analysis, which will not only form the basis of the research, but also the framework for the analysis of South African policies and acts in subsequent chapters.
- The focus in Chapter 4 will be on an analysis of current South African education policies. Through a critical analysis of the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Life Orientation FET (CAPS, LO FET) (2011)*, the *White Paper on Education and Training (1995)*, and other relevant national policy documents, the

extent to which education policy is responsive to the challenges posed by SD, ESD and the SSD, will be exposed.

- Chapter 5 will investigate the consistency of teachers' education practices with ESD and SSD. Through a survey, participants will be granted the opportunity for self-reflection on their practices. In this chapter the findings of the survey will also be captured.
- Following the findings of the preceding chapters, Chapter 6 will consist of recommendations concerning ESD and SSD. The recommendations made in this chapter will be informed by the literature study, the conceptual analysis and the critical policy analysis, and based on the findings from the survey.

1.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an orientation of the research project was given. I have indicated that a re-orientation of traditional education is regarded as a pre-requisite for SD and SSD in South Africa. Following from this pre-requisite is the aim of this research, i.e. to determine the extent to which education policy and practice in South Africa are responsive to the challenges of ESD and SSD. Framed within Critical Theory as the theoretical orientation for this research, a literature study, conceptual analysis, critical policy analysis and qualitative interviews were identified as appropriate research methods to be employed in realising the aim of this research.

A background study of SD and SSD is important for a better understanding of ESD. As such, the next chapter will be dedicated to a literature review of SD and SSD.

CHAPTER 2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – A LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As indicated earlier (cf. 1.7), the focus of this chapter is on the exploration of the nature and status of SD and SSD in South Africa. My contention is that unpacking of the concepts *sustainable development* and *social sustainable development* as portrayed in the literature, will lead to a better understanding thereof and will form the background of the study. It is also foreseen that a contextualised understanding of these concepts will not only feed into the conceptual analysis of ESD (cf. Chapter 3), but will also help to inform my analysis of South African educational policies concerned with ESD and SSD.

2.2 AN HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Contrary to popular belief, SD is not a recent phenomenon. Primarily associated with the natural environment, notions of sustainability can be traced back to ancient civilisations and histories (O’Riordan, 1990:31; also Pavlova, 2009:49; Rao, 2000:5), the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century, as well as to developments in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Clifton, 2009:3; also Rao, 2000:6; Springett, 2005:151; Van den Bergh & Van der Straaten, 1994:20). However, contemporary mainstream conceptualisation of SD involves a more inclusive paradigm whereby environmental issues are linked with economic imperatives such as development, growth and employment (Adams, 2009:59; also Blackburn, 2008:2; Edwards, 2005:15; Fernando, 2003:7; Kirby, O’Keefe & Timberlake, 1995:1). In response to the challenge to formulate international and national policies to bridge the gap between “environmental concerns about the increasingly evident ecological consequences of human activities and the socio-political concerns about human development issues” (Pavlova, 2009:49), the *World Conservation Strategy* (WCS,

IUCN, 1980) proposed a compromise between development and conservation in 1980. Although this strategy conceptualised SD as inclusive of both environmental and developmental concerns, its emphasis and approach was still strongly eco-centric and focused largely on environmental sustainability.

As a starting point to a more inclusive conceptualisation of SD, in 1987 the *Brundtland Report* (WCED, 1987:3; Adams, 2009:77) declared that it was “futile to try to tackle environmental problems without considering broader issues of the factors underlying world poverty and international inequality”. Not only was the link between the economy and the environment now accentuated, but the ideas of SD were significantly extended to the popular and political use of the term (Elliott, 1994:25; Adams, 2009:75). Both environmentalists and developmentalists could now claim ownership of SD and define it in ways that suit their own needs. With a concern for people as its starting point and based on the premise that environmental and developmental issues could not be separated, the *Brundtland Report* acknowledged the human or social dimension of SD (WCED, 1987:44; Reid, 1995:56). Whilst the notion was established that environmental sustainability is unlikely to be achieved without addressing issues of SSD (Brown, Dillard & Marshall, 2009:214), SD was now conceptualised in terms of three equally important and interrelated spheres; i.e. economic sustainability, SSD and environmental sustainability.

The *Brundtland Report* of 1987 was followed by a series of major conferences where SD and SSD were further conceptualised and articulated. Amongst these are the *Earth Summit* held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* held in Johannesburg in 2000. At these conferences the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992) and the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* (2002) were approved and adopted by various countries, including South Africa, as guiding documents in their efforts towards SD and SSD.

2.3 SUSTAINABLE Development

The literature review on SD opened up a mine-field of definitions, criticisms and concerns. For some SD is not only an abstract, vague and ambiguous concept, but

also a useless, elusive, contested and empty concept with ideological positions embedded in it (Bonnett, 2003:677-678; Castro, 2004:195, Clifton, 2009:4; Herremans & Reid, 2002:17; Tainter, 2003:215). Other authors consider the range of meanings, interpretations and the vagueness of the concept as beneficial and the source of its prevailing power and potency (Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:221; Summers & Kruger, 2003:159). However, the contested nature of SD has led to a divergence of what should be sustained and as a result some scholars place the emphasis on the balance of nature and the protection of the environment, while others emphasise social issues and sustainable economic growth (Bonnett, 2003:677; Purvis & Grainger, 2006:1; Pavlova, 2009:48). As such, it can be inferred that there is no single outlook on SD.

Nonetheless, SD is most commonly defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987:43). Implicit in this definition is the concept of ‘needs’, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor to which overriding priority should be given. Also inclusive in this definition is the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs (WCED, 1987:43).

Viewed as a dynamic on-going process rather than an end state (Varga, Kószó, Mayer & Sleurs, 2007:242; Rohweder, 2007:23), SD generally aims, within the context of environmental and economic constraints, at promoting human well-being now and in the future (Dujon, 2009:123). In collaboration with this, Pavlova (2009:46) asserts that not only does SD aim for a simultaneous resolution of the vast and complex issue of environmental deterioration, but also for the equally vast and complex issues of human development and poverty reduction. It is generally accepted that SD aims at reconciling the demands of economic efficiency, social equity, social justice, and environmental protection (Meadowcroft, 1999a:224; Hettne, 2008:xvii; Sekhesa & Kulati, 2000: Introduction).

Guided by these aims and objectives, SD is perceived to be a moral and ethical imperative (Bosselmann, 2001:167; also Rydén, 2007:29; Wals, 2007:35). Ethical and moral considerations seem subsequently to be present throughout all discourses

on SD (Adams, 2009:11; Dresner, 2008:2; O’Riordan, 1990:30). Since the *Brundtland Report* (1987) refers to this moral and ethical imperative, the latter is also found in all major policy documents such as *the Rio Declaration* (1992), *the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* (JPol) (2002) and *Caring for the Earth* (2002). Of these documents, *Caring for the Earth* is particularly important since it articulates the values and ethical considerations required for sound SD. Based on the assumption that our current value system is largely to be blamed for the unsustainable path that the world is presently on, *Caring for the Earth* suggests that SD can only be achieved when we revisit our current value system.

Drawing on the above, SD is regarded as a multi-dimensional concept that can be conceptualised in terms of economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and SS.

2.3.1 *ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY*

Guided by anthropocentric ethics and values (Rydén, 2007:29), economic sustainability represents a system of producing, distributing and consuming wealth, which is generally defined as the means of satisfying the material needs of people through money, property, possessions of monetary goods, or anything having economic value measurable in terms of price (Herremans & Reid, 2002:17; Pigozzi, 2007:28). Thin (2002:25) associates economic sustainability with GDP (Gross Domestic Product), growth, financial profit, efficiency and private utility motivations. Whilst economic sustainability seeks to maximise the flow of income that could be generated, it also explains SD in terms of interlinked global economic systems which demand an integrated approach to foster responsible long-term growth (Munasinghe & Swart, 2005:105).

Conceptualised in this way, SD is perceived to be aimed at satisfying the human and development needs of the poor and the developing world by reducing poverty (Meadowcroft, 1999b:17; also Atkinson, Dubourg, Hamilton, Munasinghe, Pearce & Young, 1999:3; Bell & Morse, 2003:3; Purvis & Grainger, 2006:6).

The reduction of poverty and the improvement of the quality of life of all people, specifically in poor and developing countries, is a development goal of many governments around the world (WECD, 1987; UNCED, 1992a: Principle 4; cf. also Adams, 2009:18 and 61; Dresner; 2008:35; Elliott; 1999:47; Haque; 1999:197). Moreover, the *Rio Declaration* places an unalienable responsibility on all governments to eradicate poverty through economic growth, to reduce disparities in worldwide standards of living and to better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world (UNCED, 1992a: Principle 5; also Adams, 2009:78; WECD, 1987:51; UNCEP, 1992: Principle 12; UN, 2002: Principle 18). As such, poverty eradication and economic growth appear to be positioned as indispensable requirements for SD.

It is against this background that Banerjee (2003:144) concludes that economic SD primarily translates into economic growth. Sauvé, Berryman and Brunelle (2007:46; Adams, 2009:78; Elliott, 1999:25) also state that every proposal for SD calls for some sort of economic growth to solve environmental and social problems. This is done without identifying the systemic causes of poverty, or exploring the notion that development and economic growth could be leading factors of the socio-economic problems at stake.

Despite their interdependence, growth and development are different processes with different aims and objectives (Van den Bergh & Van der Straaten, 1994:49; also Magis & Shinn, 2009:17; Pronk, 1981:3; The Report of the South Commission, 1990:13; Goodland, 1995:9). Economic growth does not necessarily translate into poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, unemployment, social equality, environmental protection and sound development (Redclift, 1987:56; also Beckerman, 2003:3; Castro, 2004:198; Wooltorton, 2003:59). Although economic growth appears to be a necessary requirement for SD, Rao (2000:102) claims that it is not a sufficient one because the view of perpetual growth as the defining characteristic of a healthy society is no longer regarded as tenable (Cortese, 1999:4).

The emphasis on economic sustainability and the subsequent growth paradigm has resulted in what is commonly known as weak SD. Within weak and economic SD,

the environment is simply regarded as another form of capital (Ross, 2009:34), while economic growth is seen as important for and not detrimental to the environment (Deb, 2009:283; Higgit, Haigh & Chalkley, 2005:15). Driven by the modernist paradigm and the capitalist means of production that have largely created unsustainability (Springett, 2005:151), weak SD promotes globalisation, free-trade, and the role of large corporations as key contributors to achieving a sustainable world. Since the *Brundtland Report's* conceptualisation of SD is perceived to be strongly anthropocentric and growth orientated, it could be agreed with Achterberg (1999:133) that it primarily embraces weak or economic sustainability. In a similar vein Clifton (2009:5) claims that weak SD is favoured by mainstream economists, and as such, is it the dominant espoused approach to SD.

Framed within the growth paradigm, SD is primarily interpreted as economic growth and associated with economic expansion. The general logic behind this conceptualisation of SD is that an increase in economic growth is necessary if sustainability were to be achieved (Davoudi & Layard, 2001:9). Aligned with this, poverty eradication is portrayed as a prerequisite for SD and the impression is subsequently created that SD has been accepted as the *only* effective route out of poverty (Bigg, 2005:7).

However, various authors warn against a simplistic view of the relationship between growth and poverty eradication, and they emphasise that economic growth ignores social equity (Banerjee, 2003:150; Barrow 1995:3; Elliott, 1994:5-6; Kambhampati, 2004:5). Similarly, Rees and Westra (2003:104) also observe that despite economic growth, chronic poverty prevails in many developing countries whilst the income gap between high income and low income countries is growing.

It is against this background that Fisher *et al.* (2008:8) blame the lack of progress with SD on the emphasis on developing the economy first and hoping that positive societal and environmental changes would follow. Consequently the current exclusive focus on (economic) growth as a prerequisite for SD does not seem to contribute positively towards SD efforts and poverty eradication - it appears that not only are the fruits of growth not equitably dispersed, but growth also seems to be promoted at the expense of the environment.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Notwithstanding criticism against the use of the notion *environment* as opposed to 'nature' (Sauvé, Berryman & Brunelle, 2007:42; also Escobar, 2004:213; Jones & Carswell, 2004:xxi; Le Grange, 2008:184; Springett, 2005:150), consensus seems to exist that within SD discourse *environment* refers to the natural environment. Jehan and Umana (2003:54) assert that environmental sustainability not only concerns renewable and exhaustible natural resources, but it also emphasises its proper use, as well as the regeneration of the ecosystem so that future generations have the same opportunities as the present ones. Environmental sustainability is therefore not only concerned with providing integrity and the preservation of ecosystems, the continued productivity and functioning thereof, or the regeneration of natural resources that sustain human ways of life (Herremans & Reid, 2002:17-18; also Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224; Van den Bergh & Van der Straaten, 1994:25). Rather, it also concerns the analysis and description of the interconnectedness between living organisms and their environment (Bosselmann, 2001:179). Environmental sustainability also recognises the intrinsic value of plants and animals (Herremans & Reid, 2002:18), and asserts that the environment has certain limits which are not to be overstepped (Langhelle, 1999:35). As such, the protection and conservation of the environment becomes a basic requirement and integral component of SD (Lélé in Baker, 2006:20).

Premised on the assumption that concern for life is not restricted only to human beings, and that human beings are not the only bearers of value, a concern for other forms of life is implicit in environmental sustainability. As such, environmental sustainability not only aims at developing respect and appreciation for diverse forms of life and the recognition of the intrinsic value of other living species in human beings. It is also aimed at the long term survival of the planet and its processes of dynamic evolution, including the wide range of species that currently live on it (Haughton, 1999:233; Hamm & Mutagi in Scott & Gough, 2003:XIV). Environmental sustainability subsequently strives to maintain a stable resource base, avoids the over-exploitation of renewable resource systems or environmental sink functions, and the depletion of non-renewable resources (Harris, 2000:6).

Ideas pertaining to environmental justice and environmental discrimination are therefore also encapsulated in the notion of environmental sustainability (Agyeman & Evans, 2004:160; Visser 't Hooft in Beder, 2006:81). According to Foley (2004:4), environmental justice not only implies justice to the environment in the ecological sense of protecting the use of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for people and other living things, but it also refers to the just distribution of environmental 'goods' and 'bads' amongst human populations. Bass (in Bowen, 2001:9) also states that environmental justice refers to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws. Moving beyond issues of racism to include others who are deprived of their environmental rights such as women, children and the poor, environmental sustainability also addresses class issues of exclusion, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic inequality and blatant discrimination that are evident in the distribution of environmental impacts and their costs (Blewitt, 2008:86; Agyeman, Dullard & Evans, 2003:8; Le Grange, 2008:185). Environmental sustainability also has a strong bearing on environmental justice. In addition to the foregoing, environmental justice requires environmental concerns not to be treated separately and apart from social issues such as health, employment, housing and education (Camacho, 1998:12; Agyeman & Evans, 2004:156).

Related to environmental justice is the issue of environmental discrimination which implies that ethnicity, race, social class and colour are determining factors in deciding who is exposed to environmental burdens and decision-making (Beder, 2006:74; Bowen, 2001:6-7). Not only is environmental racism therefore a direct result of institutionalised racism and directly responsible for the differences in environmental quality between black and white communities, but it also impacts on the enforcement of environmental regulations, the use of land, place to work, live and play.

Similar to economic sustainability, interpretations of SD in terms of the environment gave rise to the notion of strong sustainability. Where environmental sustainability questions the legitimacy of traditional business models and its supportive theories, strong sustainability holds that renewable resources must not be drawn down faster

than they can be replenished (Springett, 2005:152). Furthermore, it is argued that physical or human capital cannot substitute environmental resources (Barbier, 2005:16; Beder, 2006:88). Environmental sustainability subsequently demands a critique of the concepts of *economic growth*, *development* and the meaning of *progress* (Higgit, Haigh & Chalkley, 2005:15).

Informed by eco-centric ethics and values (Rydén, 2007:29; Pavlova, 2009:51), it can be concluded that environmental sustainability focuses primarily on society's threat to natural resources and its ecological stewardship function (Magis & Shinn, 2009:15).

2.3.3 SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Social sustainability is generally accepted as the sphere of SD which is largely ignored and which is still primarily obscured. Conceptualised in terms of social justice, SSD concerns the human dimension of SD. Whilst environmental justice (cf. 2.3.2) is associated with justice towards the environment, social justice addresses *inter alia* issues such as equity, human rights, racism, poverty and peace (Fernando, 2003:7; Foley, 2004:4; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:222). Harris (2000:6) also refers to SSD as the drive to achieve distributional equity, adequate provision of social services including health and education, gender equity and political accountability and participation. The principle of equity or justice is expressed in terms of intergenerational (between present and future generations) and intra-generational equity (between rich and poor) (Dresner, 2008:73; Selman, 1996:11; Achterberg, 1999:134).

chan Lean heng (2006:2) warns that no society can sustainably, nor can its members live in dignity and peace if there is inequality, injustice, prejudice or discrimination of any group. It can therefore be accepted that societies characterised by basic human rights abuses are not sustainable. Guided by a concern for future generations (cf. 2.4.1), it could be inferred that SSD aims to develop in the current generation a sensitivity to the environmental and social needs of future generations; thus, to secure a good quality of life for future generations. Since the focus of this

study is on SSD, the guiding principles of SSD will be explored and unpacked in a more detailed way in subsequent sections (cf. 2.4).

From the foregoing exposition it can be concluded that the concept *sustainable development* entails more than a mere reference to economic development or sustaining the environment: in essence, SD is also a 'human concept' involving issues pertaining to social justice. As a multi-dimensional concept, SD is based on three pillars, i.e. the economic pillar, the environmental pillar and the social pillar. Whilst SD aims to promote these pillars in an equitable fashion, there is also a call for the integration of these pillars into a single, unified conceptualisation of SD. Within the context of SD as an integrated and interconnected process, an over-emphasis of one pillar will inevitably be detrimental to the other pillars and will consequently result in unsustainable development. Regarded as a multi-dimensional concept, SD is simultaneously seen as an integrated and interrelated process.

2.3.4 *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS AN INTEGRATED AND INTERCONNECTED PROCESS*

Despite its multi-dimensional nature, the different spheres of SD do not function in isolation, nor are they inseparable or interdependent. On the contrary, SD is characterised by its interrelated, interconnected and comprehensive nature (Baker, 2006:5; also Bell & Morse, 2003:3; Hartmann in Huckle, 2008:343; Herremans & Reid, 2002:17; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224; Pavlova, 2009:47). This interrelatedness is further accentuated by Dillard, Dujon and King (2009:17), who assert that SD is premised on systems theory which stipulates that society, the environment and the economy are interrelated constituents of a larger system. It is therefore assumed that the larger system can only remain viable to the extent that each of the constituents functions properly. Since we cannot separate our understanding of the environment from our social and economic interaction, the interrelatedness and interconnectedness of these spheres is an important characteristic of SD.

Against the background of various schematic conceptualisations to illustrate the interconnected nature of the different pillars, I draw on only two schemes in this study. Bell and Morse (2003:3) maintain that the conventional view of SD is

illustrated by three overlapping circles representing the social, economic and environmental pillars (cf. Figure 2). According to this view, all three pillars of SD are regarded as equally important and interdependent since the one cannot exist without the other. This presentation of SD emphasises a circular and non-linear inter-linkage.

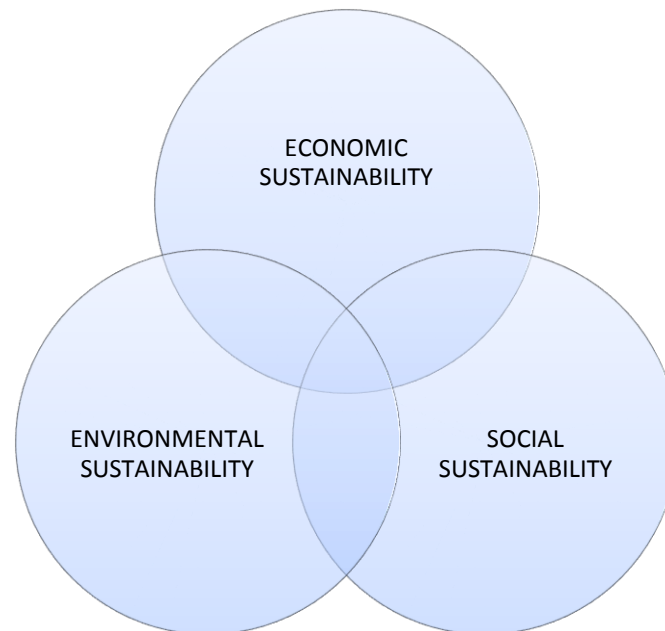


FIGURE 2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS INTERLOCKING CIRCLES (Bell & Morse, 2003:4; McKenzie, 2004:4; Agyeman & Evans, 2003:37; Herremans & Reid, 2002:17)

However, Webster (in Pitt & Lubben, 2009:168) criticises this representation, suggesting that it leads to a fragmented and indeed false perspective in which economic growth can be allowed to continue unchecked, and development in any one dimension can occur without necessarily impacting on the others. Contrary to the aforementioned representation, a concentric image of SD is proposed, arguing that the ecosphere (planet) encapsulates all human activity (cf. Figure 3). This representation, also known as the ‘strong’ model of SD, is less common and represents the environment as the outer most circle and social and economic systems as secondary to natural systems. According to this model, systems of human construction (cultural systems) cannot exist without natural support systems (Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:140). Both society and the economy therefore have to operate within the constraints of the ecosphere (Pitt, n.d.:39). This model presents the economy as the centre, serving the needs of society, which is depicted as the middle circle. It holds the view that economic systems are subsystems of social as

well as natural systems. Subsequently, natural goals are primary goals, and social and economic goals cannot be achieved if natural goals are not reached. The environment is therefore placed central to human society and the economy.

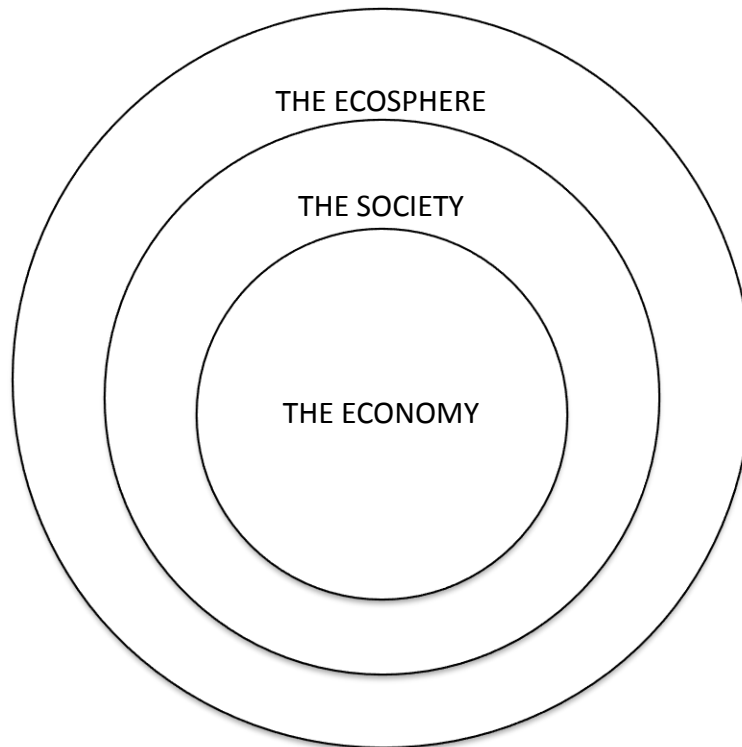


FIGURE 3: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS CONCENTRIC CIRCLES (Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:140; Pitt & Lubben, 2009:169; McKenzie, 2004:4)

It should, however, be stated that despite this interconnectedness, agreement seems to exist that the three pillars of SD are not equally prioritised, promoted and developed. In fact, it appears that since the least attention is given to SSD, the cultural, spiritual, political-institutional and social dimensions in society are neglected (Chan Lean Heng, 2006:3; also Boschmann & Kwan, 2008:141; Colantonio, 2007:3; McKenzie, 2004; Melén-Paaso, 2007:111; Koning, 2001:5).

Although this study is primarily concerned with the social dimension of SD, I acknowledge that human existence is in essence interrelated and interconnected with society, the economy and the environment. In recognition of this interrelatedness, my study is premised on the assumption that achieving SD is only possible if the interdependence of social development, the economy and the environment is recognised and accounted for.

2.3.5 *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, GLOBALISATION AND LOCALISATION*

Sustainable development, however, extends across national boundaries (WECD, 1992) and can therefore not be confined to a specific place or location. Rather, it has been indicated that SD is closely linked to the agenda of globalisation (Jacobs, 1991:80; Gillis & Vincent, 2000:11).

Globalisation is a process of primarily economic, but also social and political change that encompasses the planet, resulting in greater homogeneity, hybridisation and interdependence – “a global enmeshment, of money, people, images, values and ideas that has entailed smoother and swifter flows across national boundaries” (Voisey & O’Riordan, 2001:26). N’zimande (in Kallaway, Kruss, Donn & Fataar 1997:i) defines globalisation as “the transformation of the world into a single market that is controlled by multinational companies”. Similarly, for Morrow and Torres (2002:29) globalisation represents the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away. Globalisation is furthermore regarded as an opportunity for (economic) growth, development, prosperity and peace (Tlali, 2010:39); all of which are closely related to and required for SD and SSD.

Conceptualised as a global imperative, SD is not about the achievement of environmental and development ends in any single location or for any group of people. Framed within globalisation, and because of the emphasis placed on economic growth, every location is connected in some way to what is happening elsewhere in the world (Elliott, 1994:26; also Adams, 2009:78; Baker, 2006:20). Whilst SD establishes a link between the fulfilment of the needs of the world’s poor and the reduction in the wants of the world’s rich, Jackson (in Selby & Kagawa, 2010:39) is not convinced about the possible positive impact of globalisation on SD. As such, the acceptance of globalisation without questioning it as a viable agenda for a sustainable and just future for all is challenged. Embraced by neo-liberalism, globalisation is also perceived to be a threat and a danger, specifically to local cultures, government independence, democracy, social diversity, civil society, whilst simultaneously associated with the promotion and domination of Western culture, capitalism, global culture and society and the accumulation of wealth and power in

the hands of certain people (O’Riordan, 2001:9; Blewitt, 2008:18; Munasinghe, 2009:11; Rees & Westra, 2003:103; Voisey & O’Riordan, 2001:26). Kellner (2002:302) also observes that

[g]lobalisation could bring about devastating destruction of local traditions (cultures), the continued subordination of poorer nations and regions by richer ones, environmental destruction, and homogenisation of culture and everyday life.

Notwithstanding its globalised character, SD also needs to be locally framed since each country would be in the best position to identify its own local problems and solutions. Local relevance of SD is subsequently important for its successful implementation. In this regard, *Agenda 21* (UNCED, 1992a) explicitly calls upon governments to elaborate national plans, strategies, policies and processes to achieve SD, arguing that national strategies should build upon and harmonise the various economic, social and environmental policies and plans that are operating in the country. The JPOI (UN, 2002: Section ix) is also specific when stating that:

Each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development, and the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be over-emphasised. All countries should promote sustainable development at the national level by, inter alia, enacting and enforcing clear effective laws that support sustainability.

Against this background, Munton (1997:148) asserts that although SD acquired its initial currency in the international arena, it is the local responses that will determine the success or failure thereof. To give effect to the local characteristic of SD, *Local Agenda 21* was adopted in 1992 with the aim that each country and government should develop its own SD plan.

The adoption of *Local Agenda 21* also played a role in informing the transformative agenda of the South African government. South Africa’s development path, which is oriented towards SD, was originally conceptualised in the aims and objectives of the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) of 1994, and the vision for the country as articulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2003:xvii; ANC, 1994; RSA, 1996). The significance of the RDP lies in its aims and objectives, which in broad

terms relate to the eradication of apartheid and the creation of a democratic, equal, non-racial and non-sexist country. Informed by the RDP, the *National Development Plan 2030* (NDP) (2012) is the latest policy conceptualisation for South Africa's development path. Within these documents the interrelatedness and interdependence of the different spheres of SD are implicit. For example, the Constitution does not only protect the basic rights of all South Africans, but it also makes provision for the protection of the environment (RSA, 1996: Section 24). Both the RDP (1994) and the NDP (2012) are concerned with the protection of the basic human rights of South Africans, economic development as well as the promotion of environmental sustainability.

Since these documents represent a break with South Africa's *unsustainable past*, they also provided the foundation for numerous legislation, policies and programmes that followed in respect of South Africa's vision for SD. Amongst these is the *National Environmental Management Act* (NEMA) (Act, 107 of 1998), which not only embraces the concept and principles of SD as articulated in the *Brundtland Report* (1987), but also explicitly states that all "development must be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable" (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), 1998: Section 2(3)). Following NEMA (1998), South Africa developed a national framework document, *Strengthening Sustainability in the Integrated Development Planning Process* (DEAT, 2002), which focused on the role of local governments in promoting SD. In 2008, a more comprehensive SD framework, *People-Planet-Prosperity: a National Framework for Sustainable Development in South Africa* (NFSD) (DEAT, 2008) was tabled and adopted by government. In this policy document, South Africa's vision for SD was articulated against the background of various principles aimed at

providing a basis for a long term process of integrating sustainability as a key component of development discourse and shows SA's commitment to the principles developed at international summits and conferences in the economic, social and environmental fields, including the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (DEAT, 2008: Executive Summary).

However, the NFSD (DEAT, 2008) largely articulated the vision for SD and identified the principles against which it should proceed. Whilst an action plan and strategy to proceed towards that vision was still lacking, this was later provided for by the

National Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Development (NSSD) (Department of Environmental Affairs (DoEA), 2010). In Section 1.1 of this document a distinction is made between sustainability as an overall goal, and SD as the process by which we move towards sustainability. Furthermore, it is also clearly indicated that sustainability, in the context of the NSSD (2010) and thus South Africa, implies *ecological sustainability*. The latter firstly recognises “that the maintenance of healthy ecosystems and natural resources are preconditions for human well-being”, and secondly, “that there are limits to the goods and services which they can provide”. (DoEA, 2010: Section 1.1). As such, SD implies the selection and implementation of a development option which allows for the achievement of appropriate and justifiable social and economic goals (based on meeting basic needs and equity) without compromising the natural system on which it is based. It could therefore be argued that South Africa adopted and embraces a ‘strong’ model of SD. It is against this background that South Africa’s vision for SD and a sustainable society is articulated. SA thus aspires to

...be a sustainable, economically prosperous and self-reliant nation state that safeguards its democracy by meeting the fundamental human needs of its people, by managing its limited ecological resources responsible for current and future generations, and by advancing efficient and effective integrated planning and governance through national, regional and global collaboration (DoEA, 2010:Section 1.3; DEAT, 2008:Section 4).

Conceptualised in this way, South Africa’s vision for SD underscores both the economic, environmental, as well as the social spheres of SD. Supported by a framework of governance and collaboration, this vision phrases the governments’ ideals of a sustainable society. Of particular importance for this study is the reference to “[a] nation state that safeguards its democracy by meeting the fundamental human needs of its people”, since it places SSD central in the protection of our democracy. Based on the above, one would like to assume that this vision of a (socially) sustainable South African society has been integrally incorporated into all governmental policies and plans.

2.3.6 A WORKING DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Aligned with the conceptualisation of ‘sustainable’ or the notion ‘to sustain’, it could be inferred that something is unsustainable if its survival or current condition cannot be prolonged or ensured to continue in future. Unsustainable development refers to development where long-term existence cannot be guaranteed, and subsequently threatens the environment, the economy, society and ultimately human existence in its broadest sense. Threatened by factors such as civil war; high economic inequality; gender inequality; social exclusion; HIV/AIDS; debt; conflict; terrorism; the World Bank; poverty; high unemployment; consumerist values and life-styles (Jehan & Umana, 2003:55-56; also Baker, 2006:182; Haque, 1999:201; Van den Bergh & Van der Straaten, 1994:31), SD is not exclusively concerned with economic sustainability (economic growth) and environmental protection. In addition, since human ways of life can be also be unsustainable for social reasons, SD concerns a social component. SD subsequently demands an integration of the economic-, environmental- and social spheres of human existence into one unified conceptualisation.

Framed against the notion of unsustainability, I propose SD as development which recognises the interconnectedness of the economic, environmental and social spheres of SD. In recognition of this interrelation, I further proceed from the assumption that SD will not be realised unless these spheres are treated and developed equally.

In this section of my literature review I attempted to explore the scope and extent of the concept *sustainable development*. Well aware that the concept ‘sustainable development’ is what I would call ‘a mine-field’ concept, both in terms of nature, extent, meaning, aims and objectives, I have delineated and limited the literature review only to those aspects of the concept which I regard as relevant to this thesis.

The following section of my literature review will focus on the concept *social sustainable development* as framed within the South African context.

2.4 SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In recognition of the interconnectedness of the different pillars of SD and given the centrality of SSD in my research, I will now conceptualise SSD as an independent pillar of SD. I agree with McKenzie (2004:26) that for as long as SSD remains to be conceptualised in terms of economic and environmental sustainable development, it will be impossible to form a truly equal and interdisciplinary partnership. Various authors note the dominance of discourses on environmental and economic sustainability, while the social dimension of sustainability is still being overlooked. Definitions of SSD generally also appear to be framed against interpretations of environmental and economic sustainability (Melén-Paaso, 2007:112; also Boschmann & Kwam, 2008:141; McKenzie, 2004:26). In general, SSD is poorly defined, resulting not only in a lack of consistency in its application and use (Colantonio, 2007:4), but also in confusion whether it means the social preconditions for SD or the need to sustain specific social structures and customs (Baker, 2006:26).

In this research I work with the premise that not only should 'society' or 'the social' be sustained in its own right, but that as one of the constituents of SD, SSD is concerned with those aspects of human life which are necessary for the survival of human beings and human society (Macarov, 1978:22; Thin 2002:20). This perception is underscored by Chan Lean Heng (2006:4) who links SSD with a concern for the different social, cultural and political aspects of life, as well as with issues that threaten the continuity of people's lives and affect the continued improvement of society. Also, SSD reflects the social norms, values and culture, social structures and social cohesion which are essential to ensure more choices for all segments of society in an equitable manner (Jehan & Umana, 2003:54). McKenzie (2004:18) concurs that

[s]ocial sustainability occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. Social sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected, and democratic and provide a good quality of life.

In line with the above, various themes and principles which could be linked to SSD are found in the literature. Amongst these are social justice; equality; solidarity; participation; security; equity; social mobility; quality of life; empowerment; cultural identity; minimised social exclusion; improved access to social services; gender equity; pluralistic democracy and political accountability; poverty; racism; peace; serious civic violence and state oppression of citizens; human and civil rights; the satisfaction of basic human needs; higher-level social and cultural necessities; a lack of human exploitation; emancipation; as well as freedom and human dignity (Blewitt, 2008:21; also Colantonio, 2007:6; Dudziak, 2007:44; Koning, 2001:9; Larsen, 2009:76; chan Lean heng, 2006:5; Magis & Shinn, 2009:31; McKenzie, 2004:18). In addition, Colantonio (2007:5) regards the maintenance and development of the stock of social capital as important constituents of SSD, especially in the context of the need to foster trust, harmonious and co-operative behaviour to underpin civil society.

Efforts to clearly define and delineate the boundaries of SSD are still in its formative phase (Magis & Shinn, 2009:16). Framed within the call for an expansion of SD to include a distinction between social, political and cultural sustainability (Haque, 1999:200; Pitt & Lubben, 2009:168), the emerging principles of SSD resonate the multi-faceted nature of SSD. The following exposition of the principles related to SSD is considered in relation to the popular belief that SSD includes the political and cultural dimensions of society (chan Lean heng, 2006; also Koning, 2001; Thin, 2002).

2.4.1 *EMERGING PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

It is generally accepted that human well-being; justice; democratic governance, government and civil society; equality and equity; peace and capital are basic constituents of SSD (cf. McKenzie, 2004:12; Magis & Shinn, 2009:30-33). Whilst these constituent elements resonate well with the definitions and themes of SSD identified earlier (cf. 2.4), they should not be considered as exhaustive. Rather, in order to generate debate, I propose, in addition to the mentioned elements, human rights as a distinguishable constituent of SSD. I argue that development discourse (and SD) is entrenched within issues of human rights, and that an improved quality

of life, as related to development, cannot be divorced from larger questions of human rights. This is supported by Pronk (1981:12) who argues that:

[a] guarantee of human rights is therefore an integral part of development, and is development of 'both growth and justice, but not only in economic terms, but also in social, political and cultural terms'.

A guarantee of human rights is therefore not *merely* related to SSD, but is embedded in the development process itself. As a prerequisite for SD, social justice (cf. 2.3) not only entails equity concerns, but also a concern for human rights. Countries who do not promote and protect the basic political, social and economic rights of its people can subsequently not claim to be sustainable or striving towards sustainable societies. Thus, in addition to human well-being, social and human capital, equity, democratic government and democratic governance, I include human rights as a basic principle of SSD.

In the next section the various principles of SSD will be framed within the South African context. This decision is underscored by the perception that SSD not only spans from intra-generation to inter-species, and within and between nations, but that as with SD, SSD is also locally produced and historically constructed (De Wit, 2007:29). Thus, grounded in a specific locality, the social issues at hand should be locally relevant and culturally appropriate (Chan Lean heng, 2006:2). Although principles of SSD are rendered differently from context to context and from community to community, it is incumbent for the South African society to identify those unique local needs and challenges which could either pose a danger to, or promote its sustainability.

2.4.1.1 HUMAN WELL-BEING

SD is primarily directed towards people whose well-being is the ultimate goal of all environmental and development policies (WCED, 1987:xiv). Whilst the concept 'well-being' is inclusive of the personal and the social, it is primarily conceptualised in terms of the fulfilment of *basic needs, human development and freedom*. In this regard Pavlova (2009:46; Bell & Morse, 2003:3; Clifton, 2009:4; Deb, 2009:291; Thin, 2002:14) maintains that humans are entitled to a healthy, improved, productive and quality life in harmony with nature. Since SD, and by implication SSD, is aimed

at promoting human well-being, now and in the future (Dujon, 2009:123), human well-being appears to be central to any conceptualisation of SSD.

From a *basic needs perspective*, human well-being not only concerns the basic goods, services or commodities (such as food, shelter, clothing, education, health care, clean water and sanitation, as well as clean air), but also fundamental human rights, democratic participation, self-reliance, social justice and equality, needed to meet a minimum standard of living or a good life (Elliott, 1999:186; Koning, 2001:19). Conceptualised as such, the fulfilment of basic needs is secured as a major development objective (WCED, 1987:43). A basic needs approach not only ensures a minimum standard of living, but it is also instrumental in poverty alleviation and sustainable growth (Atkinson *et al.*, 1999:138; Harkness, 2007:88; Magis & Shinn, 2009:20). Sustainable development subsequently only comes into play when the basic needs of people are met.

In terms of *human development*, human well-being concerns the creation of an environment where people can develop their capabilities and enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives framed within a concern for gender and race (Magis & Shinn, 2009:22; also Harkness, 2007:89; McCarthy, 2009:184; Rist, 2008:208). The implication here is the social or human aspect of well-being; thus a perception that goes beyond the narrow equation of development with economic growth and expansion. The reorientation of development to include political and cultural freedoms, better health and better access to knowledge, not only increases the material well-being of people, but also their social and cultural standard of living. According to Magis and Shinn (2009:19) human development broadens people's choices, promotes pro-poor growth strategies, and simultaneously reduces poverty. Because these conditions contribute towards an improved quality of life and an environment where people can live the lives they value, the perception is that human development ultimately creates an environment conducive to SSD. As such, human development cannot be reduced to a single and narrow view of development as economic growth. Rather, as a more inclusive concept, it holds the potential of truly contributing towards SSD.

In addition to the above approaches to human well-being as the fulfilment of *basic needs* and the creation of conditions to *value the lives people live*, Amartya Sen (1999) adds a third focus, namely *different freedoms*. The latter relates directly to people's ability to sustain themselves and to influence the world around them. Amongst these are freedoms related to political rights and political accountability; transparency which prevents corruption; access to land, finances, skills, education and health, dialogue and organisation; economic and income sufficiency; social interaction and security understood in terms of welfare; as well as food sufficiency and employment (Sen, 1999:20; also Blewitt, 2008:22; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:230; Magis & Shinn, 2009:24-25). Whilst Deb (2009:357) claims that a society cannot be sustained without affording freedom to its members, it is the expansion of the 'freedoms' and the elimination of 'unfreedoms' such as poverty that enable personal agency. The expansion of human well-being as freedom is subsequently linked with the potential to effect change.

Since South Africa is committed to SD and SSD, one could assume that an understanding of human well-being in terms of the provision of *basic needs*, *human development* and *freedoms* will hold certain implications for the way in which the country approaches SD and SSD. In line with this, South Africa expresses a dismay with the "predominant current view of human well-being which regards it [human well-being] as synonymous with the accumulation of physical goods and money (Department of Environmental Affairs (DoEA) (2010: Section 2.2.2). Rather than by simply reducing human well-being to physical goods and money, the multiplicity of human well-being is by implication embraced in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA, 1996: Preamble, cf. also Section 41h (b)) as the government's aspiration to "improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person". Given the constitutional guarantee of access to basic services (RSA, 1996), the protection of basic human rights and the development of South African citizens could contribute to the realisation of SA's vision of SS. The government's pledge to improve the quality of life of all South Africans is further expressed in and enforced through the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD) (2001); the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG) (2000); *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* (JPOI) (2002); and numerous other policy initiatives such as the *National Development Plan 2030* (2012). These commitments were reiterated in the

State of the Nation Address (RSA, 08 February 2012a) when the government once again pledged to improve the quality of life of all South Africans by eradicating poverty through the creation of jobs and investment in service delivery.

With regard to the provision of basic needs, the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996 Chapter 2, Sections 26; 27, 29 and 28) guarantees access to basic services such as housing, education, health care, food, water, social security and the protection of children. Moreover, the *Bill of Rights* (RSA, 1996: Chapter 2) also protects and guarantees numerous rights which contribute to human development and the protection from unfreedom. E.g. in Section 9(1) citizens are protected from (unfair) discrimination by stating that “[e]veryone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law”, whilst Section 10 protects human dignity by stating that “[e]veryone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”. The commitment to improve the well-being of South Africans is further strengthened by various government departments, white papers and acts. Whilst the *Batho Pele White Paper on the Transformation of Public Services* was enacted in 1997, the Department of Public Services and Administration (DoPSA) (1997: Section 1.1.1) committed itself to improve on the “effectiveness in delivering [basic] services which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens”. The vision of the Department of Social Development (DoSD) (2011: Section 1.4) of creating a system of social services that “facilitates human development and improves the quality of life”, also points to this effect. In addition, and to address unemployment and poverty, the *Expanded Public Works Programme* was launched in 2004, whilst the *South African Social Security Agency*, guided by the *South African Social Security Agency Act, Act 9 of 2004*, was established to manage the numerous social grants available to the poor and vulnerable (Department of Public Works (DoPW), 2004; DoSD, 2011).

Given the above, one could argue that the South African policy framework seems to be attuned to a vision in favour of human well-being. Furthermore, bearing in mind South Africa’s commitment to SSD, as well as the emphasis placed on the link between basic needs fulfilment, SD and SSD (DoEA, 2010: Section 3.3; cf. DEAT, 2008), one could assume that South Africans ought to be enjoying an improved quality of life. However, recent reports not only point to the opposite, but paint a grim

picture of the government's ability and commitment to deliver on its promise of ensuring a good quality of life (IDASA, 2010; DoEA, 2010: Section 2; Bond, 2011; Amnesty International, 2011). Rather, indications are that for the majority of South Africans, the vision of an improved human well-being is still in the distant future. For a country who is striving to be socially sustainable, this is not encouraging, and unless more concerted efforts are employed to promote the quality of life of South Africa citizens and their development, SSD will remain just a vision.

2.4.1.2 SOCIAL AND HUMAN CAPITAL

Various authors also regard the notion 'capital' as an emergent principle of SD and SSD (McKenzie, 2004:12; also Colantonio, 2007:12; Edwards & Onyx, 2007:20; Magis & Shinn, 2009:30-33). Although 'capital' comprises of cultural, natural, human, social, physical, intellectual, financial, spiritual and man-made capital (Jehan & Umana, 2003:54; also Blewitt, 2008:4; Koning, 2001:11; Wheeler & Bijur, 2000:4; Scott & Gough, 2003:69), I will only focus on social and human capital, and its implication for SSD, especially within the South African context.

a) Social capital

Regarded as "the missing link in SD" (Grootaert, 1998:1); a "*sine qua non* of stable liberal democracy" (Fukuyama, 1999:1); and the "glue that holds societies together" (Serageldin in Feldman & Assaf, 1999: Foreword), social capital is perceived as an attribute of communities and not of the individual. As such, it is external to the individual and shaped through interactions, norms and values that are socially held. Social capital is subsequently defined as

[t]hose relationships, by which groups and individuals communicate, network, build trust, enter into dialogue, resolve conflicts, identify and resolve problems, and realise collective and individual potential as agents of sustainable development (Blewitt, 2008:79).

Framed in this way, social capital embraces particular features of society, such as trust, norms and networks, information, commonly held values, mutual understanding, socially held knowledge, reciprocity, exchange, sanctions, social networks, interdependence, co-operation and connectedness (Adams, 2009:149; Asadi *et al.*, 2008:20; Kilpatrick, Field & Falk, 2001:4; Koning, 2001:10-12; Messer & Kecskes, 2009:249; Schuller, n.d.:2; Selman, 2001:14; Winter, 2000:5). All of these

features are supposed to contribute to the improvement of the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions and enabling people to work in groups and organisations to achieve a common goal. These features can indeed contribute towards SD and SSD through *inter alia* the lowering of crime rates, poverty alleviation, the improvement of health, longevity and educational achievement, improved child welfare, sustainable human and economic development, as well as the development of individual human capital, cohesion and social resilience (Asanti *et al.*, 2008:203; also Campbell, Hughes, Hewstone & Cairns, 2008:24; Productivity Commission, 2003:1). Viewed as such, social capital becomes a public good which enhances the delivery of other much needed critical public goods. However, Edwards and Onyx, (2007:20; Kilpatrick, Field & Falk, 2001:6) warn that social capital can form strong bonds between members of a society and could ultimately lead to the exclusion of others, resulting in for example, xenophobic attacks. Because of this very character of social capital, Bourdieu (in Edwards & Onyx, 2007:18) linked it to the reproduction of old power structures that control and maintain the status quo, isolating segments of the community or restricting connections with other groups, to inhibit change. So, although social capital holds the potential to promote SSD, it appears as if it could be equally detrimental to the aims and objectives of SSD.

In recognition of South Africa's history of segregation, the *South African Constitution* (RSA, 1996) articulates specific common values such as democracy, ubuntu, respect, reconciliation, accountability, equity and social justice, equality, transparency and non-discrimination to underpin the vision of a society characterised by strong social bonds and social cohesion, a society united in diversity, founded on democratic values and where citizens enjoy common citizenship. Whilst these values aim to unite all South Africans under a common identity and motivate them to work together towards equity, justice and freedom, they become what Asmal (DoE, 2001a:42) calls "the glue that will hold us together". Furthermore, common values should foster social cohesion amongst South Africans so that they are able to mobilise and collectively act to overcome social challenges that they are faced with on a daily basis, for mutual benefit. South Africa's aspirations for social capital, strong social ties and social cohesion are officially articulated in the motto "Unity in Diversity". Because SSD requires citizens to unite and embrace each other through

networks of trust and reciprocity, social capital could contribute towards stronger social ties in the family and ultimately the broader community, resulting in a more resilient South African society. Since social capital embraces the value of inclusion, the protection of cultural and language rights, as well as knowledge embedded in indigenous communities, it forms an important part of endeavours to enhance social ties between diverse communities, promote mutual cultural understanding and respect for diversity. As such, social capital can indeed promote SSD.

b) Human capital

Meadows (1998) considers human capital as the comprehensive means to an ultimate end in SD: the end of which is a state of human well-being. Well established within mainstream economics, human capital resides within the individual. It is thus primarily concerned with those capabilities, inherited or acquired through education and training, which will enhance an individual's productivity in labour and non-labour market activities (Goodwin, 2003:1; Sharpe, 2001:3). It generally results from an investment in for example education, health, on-the-job-training and migration. Due to its embeddedness in mainstream economy and neo-liberalism, human capital is mainly framed in terms of economic well-being and productivity, and is perceived to be economically beneficial to both the individual and society (Asadi *et al.*, 2008:203; Adams, 2005:146; OECD, 2001). Human capital can subsequently be regarded as a necessary condition for (sustainable) economic growth and economic development (Monimah, 2010:139; Nwankwo, Chaharbagdi, Boyd & Omar, n.d.:12). However, since it involves investments made in humans, human beings become valued for their contribution to the economy, whilst their improved skills are equated to a machine or instrument of trade. This leads to a rather narrow and reductionist conceptualisation in terms of which human capital is viewed as an economic principle which fosters growth rather than a social principle (Pieterse, 2010:134).

In a broader fashion, human capital could be conceptualised in terms of human development and human capability theory (Sen, 1993), thus including a wider range of human qualities. This includes, amongst others, the goods and services that people have access to and which enable them to not only function successfully, but to contribute to society and to ultimately live better lives (De Wit, 2007:32). Because

the investment in human capital development holds the potential to improve the quality of life, it could also contribute towards SSD. However, because of its ties with the economic paradigm, the danger exists that human capital could simply become another tool used to increase economic inequality. Thus, instead of reducing poverty, human capital development could assist in maintaining the status quo of unsustainable social development.

One could assume from the emphasis placed on education, training and skills development, including the aspiration to rid society from poverty, inequality and associated social evils, that South Africa also regards investment in human capital as important. In support of this, the right to basic education and training as well as adult education (RSA, 1996: Section 29) is guaranteed and protected. South Africa has also formally embraced the concept of 'life-long learning' (Aitchison, 2004; Walters, 1999:576). To enhance education, training and skills development, various supporting legislation such as the *Skills Development Act* of 1998, and the *Skills Development Levies Act of 1999*, as well as the subsequent *National Skills Development Strategy* (NSDS I, 2001-2005; NSDS II, 2005-2010 and NSDS III, 2010-2015), the *National Skills Authority* (1999) and the *Sector Education and Training Authorities* (SETA's) (2000) were introduced. Since these initiatives represent a response to the high unemployment rate in SA, they foreground the challenges of social development, the eradication of poverty and the need for social equity. Because they aim at contributing towards employment and a stable and sustainable society, it can be inferred that these policy initiatives could contribute to a social sustainable South African society.

2.4.1.3 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ¹

Sustainable development requires a political system that secures and promotes effective citizen participation in decision-making. This not only implies *democratic government*, but also *democratic governance*. Since both are perceived to promote human development, neither SD nor SSD can be pursued in the absence thereof

¹ Although Magis and Shinn (2009:36) use the notion 'good governance', because of the ideological baggage associated with it (cf. Camway & Gordon, 2004), I prefer to use the concept 'democratic or sound governance'.

(Bäckstrand, 2006:468-470; also Huh, 2011:67; Motsamai, 2006:11; Munasinghe, 2009:15; Rydén, 2007:30; Van Zeijl-Rozema, Cörvers, Kemp & Martens,2008:411). As such, the application of democratic principles in both government and governance are subsequently regarded as necessary conditions for SD and SSD. This not only calls for civil society involvement, democratic representation, transparency and social participation, but also for accountability, equity and equality, inclusion and representation, fundamental freedoms, non-discrimination, respect for human rights, futurity, the rule of law, responsive policies, poverty eradication and anti-corruption (Bäckstrand, 2006:470; also Baker, 2006:71; Blewitt 2008:107, Fernández, 2004:137; McLennan & Ngoma, 2004:282; Munasinghe, 2009:15; Rydén, 2007:30; Woollorton, 2003:71).

As an actor in *democratic governance*, civil society mobilised into various civil society organisations, such as non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations, which play an important role in advancing *democratic governance* (Delmas & Young, 2009:7; Mishra, 2005:4). This is done by way of volunteerism, collaboration in decision-making and politics, their agency in human rights, corruption, environmental conservation, checks and balances on government power and monitoring of social abuses (Magis & Shinn, 2009:37; Blewitt, 2008:109; Thin, 2002:51-53). As “agents of social change” (Deb, 2009:369) civil societies not only force its presence into *democratic governance*, but it also broadens and nurtures democratic space, empowers people to utilise that space for deepening democratic practices, strengthens democratic institutions, promotes social change and compels governments to work and act democratically and according to the will of the people (Magis & Shinn, 2009:36 and 47; Heller, 2009). In this way opportunities are created for the development of capacities to improve standards of living. Thus, by promoting democratic values, practices and principles, civil society creates the space for the promotion of democracy and the realisation of the aims and objectives of SSD. Because SSD requires commitment to democratic principles, one could assume that adherence to and protection of these principles would promote the transition to SSD.

As a democratic state, the South African government is founded on democratic values and principles. The latter is confirmed by the *South African Constitution*

(RSA, 1996: Preamble) which not only envisages the establishment of a society “based on *democratic values*, social justice and fundamental human rights”, but also lays the foundation “for a *democratic and open society* in which government is based on the will of the people”. In line with this, the *Bill of Rights* which is regarded as the cornerstone of SA’s democracy, enshrines and protects the right of all people and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (RSA, 1996: Section 7(1)). To protect and affirm South Africa’s democracy and the founding values of openness, accountability, the rule of law, respect for human rights and non-discrimination, provision is also made for the establishment of independent public institutions (RSA, 1996: Chapter 9). In addition, in September 2011 (Open Government Partnership, 2011) South Africa further demonstrated its commitment to democracy and democratic governance by co-founding the *Open Government Partnership* in collaboration with countries such as the UK and the USA. As a member, South Africa not only pledged to promote transparency, fight corruption and so improve democratic governance, but also pledged to increase participation of civic society.

Flowing from South Africa’s commitment to democracy is the system of co-operative governance. This not only ensures separation of powers, but also provides for active participation of civil society in governance and decision-making (Robinson & Friedman, 2007:649; also Habib, 2005:679; Van Driel & Van Haren, 2003:530). Subsequently, a vast number of civil society organisations emerged after 1994, which are not only registered with the Department of Social Development, but are also regulated by the *Non-profit Organisations Act*, Act 71 of 1997. By creating space for diverse interest groups to be consulted and involved in issues that directly affect them, co-operative governance would not only give effect to the principle of democracy but could also strengthen the ideals of SSD. For example, co-operative governance could enable civil society involvement in the identification, design and implementation of social projects aimed at promoting SSD. Furthermore, civil society could also hold government accountable for achieving SSD by delivering on its promise(s) of providing in the basic needs of the people, and by protecting basic human rights.

2.4.1.4 EQUITY

Regarded as basic to every concept of justice, equity implies fairness in the distribution of basic social goods, such as liberty and opportunity, income and wealth and social respect (Baker, 2006:39). Concerned with the elimination of institutionalised domination and oppression, and with the distribution of benefits and burdens throughout society (Foley, 2004:2; also Enslin, 2006:59; Miller, 1976:22), social justice embraces the notions of equity and equality. Similarly, Falk (in Beder, 2006:70) observes that:

[e]quity derives from a concept of social justice. It represents a belief that there are some things which people should have, that these are basic needs that should be fulfilled, that burdens and rewards should not be spread too divergently across the community, and that policy should be directed with impartiality, fairness and justice towards these ends.

Conceptualised as such, equity calls for more emphasis to be placed on the needs of the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged. A commitment to equity as *fairness* in the distribution of gains and losses, and the entitlement of everyone to an acceptable quality and standard of living, is a constant theme in all discourse on SD and SSD, (Dresner, 2008:2; also Beder, 2006:70; Deb, 2009:291; Dillard, Dujon & King, 2009:161; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224). Equity subsequently not only involves the creation of wealth and the conservation of resources, but also the way in which it is distributed.

However, equity cannot be achieved without equality. Conceptualised in terms of *sameness or equal treatment*, equality is not only an important requirement for social justice, but since inequity results in for example unfair treatment and discrimination, it is also perceived to be an integral part of the problem(s) of SD and the driving force behind unsustainability (Langhelle, 1999:143; also McLaren, 2003:21; Rao, 2000:255). Human inequality and inequity are perceived to be contributing factors to environmental degradation. Since SD also encapsulates environmental concerns, a link could therefore be established between environmental quality and human equality and equity. Inequality could therefore also negatively impact on the quality of the environment.

Within the SD context, equity entails *intra-generational equity*, as well as *inter-generational equity*.

Intra-generational equity concerns equity between people of the *same generation*. As such, it not only covers justice and the distribution of resources between nations, but it also relates to what is fair for people within any one nation (Beder, 2006:70). Given the reference to fairness towards people within a nation, one could assume that *intra-generational equity* also embraces *gender equity*.

Whilst gender inequalities result in discrimination against women and girls, including various forms of violence effecting their subjectivities and agency (chan Lean heng, 2006: 9-10), it also threatens the long term survival of society, thus rendering it unsustainable. Thus, the prevention of violence against women and promotion of gender equity will by implication contribute to the sustainability of society. Gender equity subsequently requires that women's rights to equality be respected and upheld, especially since "prompting SD without consideration of the female half of the world's population is an empty gesture" (Dobson in Adams, 2009:45).

As the second equity principle, *inter-generational equity* is regarded as fundamental to our understanding of SD and SSD (Hettne, 2008:xvii). This equity principle is based on the premise that current generations might compromise the ability of future generations to meet their essential needs in various ways. It subsequently calls upon current generations to hand on the earth to next generations in at least as good a condition as they have inherited it (Selman, 1996:11). Furthermore, for Beder (2006:80) it also calls for a just distribution of rewards and burdens between generations, and for fair and impartial treatment of future generations. As such, not only does it place current generations in a particular relationship with future generations, but it also places certain obligations and responsibilities on current generations.

Since equality, and therefore also equity, are crucial elements and principles of social justice (Schultz, 2007:29; also Heyneman, 2004:84; Pendlebury & Enslin, 2004:35) it could be argued that social justice is a defining characteristic of SD and more specifically SSD. To achieve social justice, and therefore SSD, people will

have to be treated equally and equitably. Greater equity and equality will thus contribute towards both SD and SSD by not only ensuring social justice, but also a more secure environment (Agyeman, Dullard & Evans, 2003:1; Foley, 2004:5). Because it holds the danger of critically undermining SD and SSD (Haughton, 1999:235), social justice, framed against issues of equity and equality, should be regarded as a focal point in all SSD efforts. Since social justice is an ideal of governments (Schultz, 2007:28), visions to achieve SSD aims and objectives should therefore specifically be underpinned by the people's social justice needs.

To reverse and redress the effects of overt inequity and inequality of the past, and so to transform society, South Africa has adopted a constitution with social justice as its focal point. Visualised as “a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights” (RSA, 1996: Preamble), and declared to be founded on the values of equality, non-discrimination and non-sexism, (RSA, 1996: Sections 1(a) and (b)), social justice is not only a goal within South Africa. Rather, the letter and spirit of the Constitution renders social justice fundamentally a basic human right. As such, social justice becomes a golden thread that runs throughout the *Constitution of South Africa*. The country's vision for social justice is specifically articulated in the equality clause (RSA, 1996: Section 9), which protects the right to equality before the law, full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms, as well as non-discrimination (RSA, 1996: Section 9). From this legislation followed *inter alia* the *Commission on Gender Equality Act* (Act 39 of 1996); the *Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act* (Act 4 of 2000), the *Employment Equity Act* (Act 55 of 1998), all aimed at enforcing equality of, and non-discrimination against the poor and disadvantaged, women, children and people with disabilities. The establishment of a ministry of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities also creates the environment in which equity, equality and non-discrimination, especially with regard to the aforementioned groups, could be achieved. The explicit emphasis placed upon social justice within the *Constitution of South Africa* (RSA, 1996) not only ensures that social justice becomes the overarching aim of the Constitution, but since a link exists between SSD and social justice, it also ensures that conditions are created in which SSD can be realised. Such conditions not only promote fairness and equity but could also contribute towards creating a peaceful and stable South African society. Because peace and stability is associated with

social sustainability (cf. 2.4), the promotion of social justice through equity and equality holds the potential of contributing towards SSD in South Africa.

The SA Government's commitment to SD and SSD is further demonstrated by its adoption of the principle of futurity, which finds expression in the statement: "everyone has the right to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations" (RSA, 1996: Section 24(b)). As such, this principle not only protects the rights of future generations to have their environmental rights protected, but also secures their future development. Because sustainable development is primarily premised on the assumption that current generations have a responsibility towards future generations, the adoption of this principle implies that both the environment and development possibilities of future generations are to be protected and secured. This could ultimately ensure the SSD of the South African society.

2.4.1.5 Human rights

Human rights are unalienable entitlements based on morality, justice and fairness which all people ought to have. Following the United Nations (in Beder, 2006:95):

Respect for human rights is broadly accepted as a precondition for SD, that environmental protection constitutes a precondition for the effective enjoyment of HR protection, and that human rights and the environment are interdependent and interrelated.

As a social issue, human rights occupy a specific place within SD and SSD. For Haughton (1999:233) SD has enlarged the consideration of rights through its explicit attention to the rights of present-day socially marginalised groups, of future generations, as well as the rights to continued existence of the non-human dimension(s) of the natural world. Landorf, Doscher and Rocco, (2008:224; Adebowale *et al.*, 2005:138; Agyeman, Bullard & Evans, 2003:2) also argue that SD cannot be confined to addressing environmental health and economic growth only, but that it should also encompass human rights issues of poverty, racism, democracy and peace, to life, equality, political participation and association. Since these rights are basic to human beings, it should be upheld and protected by all governments. Furthermore, recognition should also be given to the interrelatedness of these rights. For example, the right to life cannot be realised without the right to clean water, clean air, land, the right to equality and freedom, and other basic rights.

As much as these rights are applicable to current generations, the call of SD and SSD is for the rights to be transferred to future generations.

Since these rights ensure individual well-being, they have a direct bearing on human and environmental conditions (Adebowale *et al.*, 2005:138). When realised, these rights can ensure a political order supportive of SD and SSD. Subsequently, not only should a human rights approach to SSD allow for the quality of life of poor people to be integrated into environmental, social and economic decision-making, but it should also facilitate policies that have a direct impact on poverty and discrimination. It therefore follows that the absence of a human rights approach towards SD and SSD would not only impede upon the vision of SD, but could also hamper upon the realisation of the aims and objectives of a social sustainable society.

Human rights are given specific prominence in South Africa. The Preamble to the *Constitution of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996) visualises “a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights”. Section 1(a) of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) declares that South Africa is founded on the values of “human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms”. Articulated in the *Bill of Rights* (cf. RSA, 1996: Chapter 2), human rights form the guiding principle in realising the vision of a democratic South African society. In line with this principle various social, political, economic and cultural rights of women, children, minority groups, people with disabilities and other marginalised and vulnerable social groups are explicitly protected. The nature and extent of these human rights resulted in the *Constitution of South Africa* being heralded one of the most progressive constitutions in the world. South Africa’s commitment to the protection and advancement of human rights is furthermore demonstrated by Chapter 9 of the Constitution (RSA, 1996), which specifically provides for public institutions entrusted to enforce and protect the rights. One could therefore assume that given the above, the South African society is firmly anchored in human rights, and citizens enjoy protection under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Such protection and human rights guarantees will ensure the sustainable development of the South African society.

2.5 A WORKING DEFINITION OF SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Social sustainability is an integral part of SD (cf. 2.3). This means that SD will not be promoted unless attention is also given to the promotion and development of SS. Within its vaguest form, the term *social* is used as a reminder that development is ultimately about human beings, rather than about things and numbers (Thin, 2002:2). People are therefore central to development, and as such, it includes a human dimension. Based upon this, I prefer to define SSD as development that relates to the sustainability of social, cultural, and political practices, human relations within society, within and between nations, and between society and nature. I acknowledge that SSD is driven by concerns for human well-being, social and human capital, democratic government and –governance, equity and human rights. By conceptualising SSD in this way, I believe that a more comprehensive and inclusive approach towards human development can be followed.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Foley (2004:18) defines a sustainable society as one in which poverty and inequality have been reduced, within which citizens are active and engaged and where individual choice is balanced with the communal right to a high standard of living and a high quality of life. From this definition it appears that human rights, social justice and democracy are integral principles which are basic to the conceptualisation of SSD. To achieve such a society these principles ought to be acknowledged and realised. Therefore, despite being largely disregarded as an equal important sphere of sustainability, SSD is just as important as environmental and economic sustainability. Similarly, South Africa's vision for SD and SSD is unreachable if we do not regard these principles as basic requirements for SSD. Although it appears as if these principles are reflected within the Constitution and other policy documents, efforts should be made to conceptualise them within South Africa's vision for SSD.

Framed within the South African context, this chapter briefly explored the concepts SD and SSD. This was done to serve as a background for the conceptual analysis of the concept *Education for Sustainable Development*, which will follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT– A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been indicated (cf. 1.3) that the purpose of this study is to determine how responsive certain South African education policies are to the challenges of ESD. In the previous chapter I explored the concepts SD and SSD, and I also indicated that South Africa not only adopted SD as a future development path, but also aims at SSD through legislation, various policy documents and practices (cf. 2.3.5; also 2.4.1.1-2.4.1.5). It could therefore be assumed that South African education is also directed towards SD and the achievement of SSD, and that, by implication, SA embraces the concept of ESD. A literature review has revealed that SA has, as its educational response to SD, not only adopted the concept Environmental Education (EE), as opposed to ESD, but positioned EE as the vehicle for achieving SD, and thus for SSD (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4: Section 20).

Because the focus of this thesis is on the response of South African education to ESD, it is imperative to come to a comprehensive and informed understanding of the concept ESD, especially in the light of existing contestation, vagueness and ambiguity surrounding the concept (Down & Nurse, 2007; also Higgitt, Haigh & Chalkley, 2005; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224; Selby, 2006; Wooltorton; 2004:295). Ambiguities surrounding the concept have the potential to jeopardise the vision for SSD and a sustainable society. My decision to undertake a conceptual analysis (cf. 1.5.2.2) of the concept was informed by the contested and vague nature thereof. At this stage of my study it seems most appropriate to first analyse the concept before I consider the responsiveness of South African education to the goals and ideas of SSD. Also, in line with Critical Theory which aims to dig beneath the surface, an analysis of the concept should enable me to gain an in-depth understanding of ESD.

In this chapter I will first give a detailed description of the nature and significance of conceptual analysis as a research method, after which my specific approach to the conceptual analysis of ESD will be applied.

SSD is an integral component of SD (cf. 2.3; 2.3.4) and ESD is the educational response to SD and SSD. Since ESD is intertwined with SD and SSD, ESD cannot effectively be conceptualised without constant reference to SD and SSD. Not only will such reference result in a better understanding of ESD, but it will also situate ESD within the broader framework of SD and SSD. As such, the conceptualisation of ESD is directly linked to the insights on SD and SSD obtained from the literature study in Chapter 2.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS (CA)

Before engaging in a discussion on the nature and significance of *conceptual analysis (CA)*, a brief reflection on the meaning and value of concepts, as well as that of analysis, is needed.

3.2.1 THE MEANING OF CONCEPTS AND ANALYSIS

Concepts are communication tools used to impose some sort of meaning onto the world and to give sense, order and coherence to reality (Bless *et al.*, 2006:36-38; Cohen & Manion, 1989:18; Hirst & Peters, 1998:29). The implication here is that effective communication, coherence and order would be impossible without concepts. Moreover, in science (and thus also Education), *concepts* are viewed as building blocks of theory and key in formal processes of knowledge acquisition, formation and transfer (Babbie, 1998:52; Bless *et al.*, 2006:36-38; Du Toit, 2005:424; Neuman, 2000:42; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:72). As much as *concepts* enable us to sort and classify objects, and to bring about clarity, vague and ambiguous *concepts* lead to miscommunication. For research, the latter holds a specific risk, since it could lead to inadequate and un-interpretable research findings (Chadwick, Bahr & Albrecht, 1984:426; Mouton, 2001:177).

The word *concept* is generally equated to an 'idea'. According to Cohen and Manion (1989:17), words represent ideas, and a *concept* is the relationship between the

word (symbol) and an idea or conception. Similarly, Neuman (2000:42) indicates that a *concept* is an idea expressed as a symbol or in words. As such, 'ideas' are not physical images, but rather mental pictures. *Concepts* can therefore be regarded as abstract, mental images which cannot be observed directly (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:111; Bailey, 1987:40; Goode & Hatt, 1981:42). *Concepts*, unlike the object associated with it, cannot be physically touched. As specialised forms of language, concepts are the "terms we use in our thinking language to refer to the things around us" (Krathwohl in Adams, 2004:11). In order for people to speak the same language and attribute the same meaning to concepts, the latter needs to be defined in clear, precise, non-ambiguous and agreed-upon ways. Within the context of research, it is also important to clarify concepts as a clear understanding of concepts can lead to better analysis and meaningful conclusions of data.

Within conceptual analysis, *analysis* refers to the elucidation of the meaning of any concept, idea or unit of thought that we employ in seeking to understand ourselves and our world (Hirst & White in McLaughlin, 2000:445). *Analysis* also entails discovering what the concept denotes and the way in which its constitutive parts functions together (Charles, 1995:33). The concept is therefore reduced and broken down into more basic concepts that constitute it, and links to a network of other concepts is established. However, an *analysis* is not merely a breaking down of words in order to establish relationships. Rather, Hill and Bramley (1986:2) suggest that it is rigorous, questioning, systematic, and reliant on objective evidence. Understood in this way, *analysis* is therefore fundamentally a critical process.

3.2.2 THE NATURE OF CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

According to Du Toit (2005:424), conceptual analysis (CA) is not a unique and distinguishable form of research. On the contrary, since research as an attempt to understand or explain a phenomenon or process is primarily of a linguistic nature, a conceptual dimension is embedded in every research project. As such, CA enables us to become conversant with the basic tools of thinking and understanding, namely language, terms, ideas and concepts (Du Toit, 2005:425).

Following Adams (2004:11), CA not only assists us in defining the essential characteristics of a concept, but also to clarify the design of a concept. CA is therefore primarily concerned with the definition and clarification of concepts. For Tlali (2010:14) this entails a process to uncover the set of rules which underlies a 'given class of actions', to not only make them explicit but to relate them to other rules in society. Similarly, Adams (2004:12) views CA as the critical examination and clarification of the fundamental ideas underlying human experience. CA therefore entails the identification of constitutive meanings or ideas that underlie human experiences. According to Fay (1975:76), 'constitutive' meanings involves all the shared assumptions, definitions, and conceptions which structure the world in certain definite ways, and which constitute the logical possibility of existence of a certain social practice. These shared assumptions subsequently enable the existence of certain practices. A core aspect of conceptual analysis is the identification of constituent elements, i.e. those elements we regard as necessary and fundamental for a better understanding of a concept.

For Hirst and Peters (1998:30; Waghid, 2000:22), understanding a concept means covering both the experience of grasping a principle and the ability to discriminate and use words correctly. According to Waghid (2000:22), to 'grasp a principle' entails to have an understanding of what makes a concept what it is. This refers to the constitutive meaning, rule or 'general principle' of the concept. In other words, concepts could also be analysed by identifying logically necessary conditions that constitute its use (Waghid, 2000:23; Hirst & Peters, 1998). Furthermore, concepts are socially embedded and are therefore part of the social life of a group. Words can subsequently not be analysed adequately by just examining the use thereof in a self-contained way (Hirst & Peters, 1998:33). Rather, we also have to study their relation to other words and their use in different types of sentences. In analysing a concept, we have to uncover connections and links with other words, as well as the multiple uses of the concepts in diverse sentences. For this we need to reflect on the different general principles that inform our use of a concept.

Following Sandin (2006:28), conceptual analysis is an attempt to provide an illuminating set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the correct application of a concept. It is also a process which allows for the identification of key examples that

characterise the heart of the concept and finding negative and borderline examples that delineate the concept's boundaries (Krathwohl, 1998:263). Thus, as much as CA is a 'deconstructive' process, it is also a 'reconstructive' process when new insight and meanings are borne out of the analysis.

As a philosophical process, CA involves the articulation of the primary meanings of common terms that are of philosophical interest (Burbules & Warnick, n.d.:1; also Krathwohl, 1998:263; Peters & Hirst, 1998:34; Sytsma, 2005:4). Only concepts, such as Education for Sustainable Development, which are of philosophical significance and nature, should subsequently be subjected to CA. Since dictionary definitions appear to be limiting in their extent of clarification and does not allow for the identification of constituent elements we are advised to refrain from relying on dictionary definitions when defining concepts (Du Toit, 2005:428; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:71). CA is therefore much more than a process of simply using dictionary definitions in defining concepts. It is a philosophical process, employed to answer philosophical questions pertaining to concepts of philosophical nature such as ESD.

3.2.3 *THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS*

CA is of specific significance for education and educational research, and according to Feely (1972:2) it prevents the uncritical adoption and acceptance of educational terminology which could restrict valuable educational goals. Similarly, Adams (2004:15) maintains that in education policy research, CA aims to improve existing policies and practices by examining the concepts and conceptual schemes that underpin them. It is my contention that without critically engaging with 'fashionable' concepts such as ESD, we might simply accept its meaning at face value. Moreover, since South Africa embraces SD and because education is generally valued both as instrumental in achieving SD and as an agent of social transformation, we should explore the meaning of the concept ESD. Otherwise we might run the risk of educating for and about SD, expecting learners to uncritically embrace SD without knowing what it really entails.

Carr (1995:23) defends the use of CA, arguing that criticism against it stems from a

[p]ersistent failure to recognise that concepts we use in ordinary language have histories and sustain inherited common-sense ways of thinking and acting that are impregnated with the religious myths and ideological prejudices of the past.

However, despite CA in education and educational research being criticised “as just semantics and a playing with words” (Feely, 1972:2), it remains an important philosophical activity in the attempt to not only understand the use of terms, but also to clarify what they represent (Waghid, 2003:7).

This study is grounded in Critical Theory (cf. 1.5.1), and based upon this theoretical positioning, I perceive conceptual analysis most appropriate to grasp the real meaning(s) of ESD, but also to “abandon lines of thought which are not getting beneath surface appearances” (Harvey, 1990:30). As such, a conceptual analysis of ESD will enable me to dissect it as a taken-for-granted concept and to go deeper than its surface appearance. In addition, to enable me to come to a comprehensive understanding of the concept, it is essential that the reader of this thesis knows exactly how I perceive ESD. It is of the utmost importance that I gain a clear understanding of the meaning of ESD before attempting to establish the responsiveness of South African education policies to ESD and SSD. This is supported by Waghid (2003:8) who claims that CA enables one to first understand the meaning of a concept or practice before it can be used to transform education.

It is, however, essential to clarify that the aim of the conceptual analysis is not to rigidly define ESD, but rather to determine its constitutive elements or principles, which should enable me to arrive at a working definition of ESD (Du Toit, 2005:436). Such a definition will be functional for the sake and duration of this research only, since it will provide the backdrop against which the thesis will further unfold.

3.3 A STRUCTURE FOR CONCEPTUALISING ESD

Du Toit (2005:428-437) distinguishes six steps that could be followed when doing a conceptual analysis: a *model case scenario*, *contrary and borderline cases*, the *social context*, *consequences in language*, and arriving at a *working definition*. By employing these steps, I hope to arrive at an acceptable conceptualisation of ESD,

informed by its constituent elements or principles. Whilst these steps are not intended to follow a linear pattern, I have decided to rearrange them in a manner suitable to this study. Subsequently, I will firstly provide the historic context that led to the establishment of ESD, as well as the social context in which it is typically used. It is my contention that the socio-historic context will provide me with directives to construct a model case scenario from which the consequences in language and the border and contrary cases could be derived. These preceding steps should finally culminate in the last step, which is the formulation of a working definition of ESD.

3.4 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3.4.1 *THE SOCIO-HISTORIC CONTEXT OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

As the first step of my conceptual analysis, the socio-historic context briefly explores the history behind the concept ESD and the social context within which it is commonly used. According to Du Toit (2005:434), locating a concept in its socio-historic context could illuminate more features of its usage. By focusing on the social context of ESD, I aim to arrive at various connotations attached to this concept.

ESD does not appear to be such a recent phenomenon as it might appear, since its earliest origins can be linked to the Stockholm Conference on SD in the early 1970's and the subsequent birth of Environmental Education (EE) (cf. Calder & Clugston, 2005:8; also McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:19; Rohweder, 2007:24; Woollorton, 2003:86). Although the notions of equity and social coherence were integral components of EE (Skanavis & Sarri, 2004:272), it primarily displayed exclusive concern for the conservation of the environment. As such, and in line with the reigning view of SD as concerned with environmental sustainability, EE was regarded to be primarily eco-centric.

However, in the late 1980's the focus of SD changed and became more inclusive of the environment, economy and society (McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:18). This change also led to the re-conceptualisation of EE as the vehicle to promote SD. Although the *Education for All* conference (Jontiem, Thailand, 1990), as well as *Caring for the*

Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living (1991), contributed towards reconceptualising EE, it was specifically the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED, 1992a), also called the *Earth Summit*, that laid a firm foundation for ESD (Bourn, 2008:193; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224; Masahisa, 2006:172; Reid & Petocz, 2006:106; Venkataraman, 2009:8). At this Summit, *Agenda 21*, and specifically *Chapter 36*, which deals specifically with the role that education should play in promoting SD, was adopted. By declaring that “education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues” (UNCED, 1992a: Section. 36), previous notions of EE were broadened to include social justice and the fight against poverty as key principles of sustainable development (Gough, 2006:49; Pigozzi, 2007:27). ESD was thus linked to the social aspect of human life, and was now not only viewed as a catalyst for change, but also as a way of challenging attitudes and behaviour and fostering the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future (Bourn, 2008:193; also Huckle, 2006:11; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:224; Pitt, n.d.:39; Reid & Petocz, 2006:106; Venkataraman, 2009:8).

Following the *Earth Summit*, other major conferences and declarations such as the *World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg (SA) 2002)* and the *Bonn Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development (2009)* contributed towards further conceptualisations of ESD (Calder & Clugston, 2005:8; also Lindqvist, 2007:25; Lotz-Sisitka, 2009:205; Masahisa, 2006:6; Pigozzi, 2007:28).

Amidst the conceptualisation and re-conceptualisation of ESD, various concepts which describe the type of education that is aimed at SD, surfaced over the years and are commonly found in the literature. Amongst these are Education for Sustainability; Education for a Sustainable Future; Education for a Sustainable Life; Sustainable Education; Environmental Education for Sustainability; Environmental and Development Education; Education as Sustainability; Sustainable Development Education; Earth Education; and Education for the Development of Responsible Societies (Gough, 2006:48; also Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:225; Sauv , 1999:10; Selby, 2006:357; Wals, 2007:36; Yang, Lam & Wong, 2010:197). Nevertheless, and despite these variations, Yang, Lam and Wong (2010:197; Wade,

2008:32) maintain that ESD remains the concept used more often. However, all these concepts seem to have one common denominator: their commitment to SD and SSD.

To further locate the concept ESD within its socio-historic context and so expose its constitutive elements, I regard it essential to also focus on the social contexts within which the concept ESD is more frequently and generally used. It should however be stated that the concept ESD is an evolving one (Down & Nurse, 2007:181), and as such is it used in various contexts and under different conditions.

In view of its emancipatory and change-agent role (Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:226; also Pitt, n.d.:39; Pitt & Lubben; 2009:169; Springett, 2005:148; Sterling, 2006:18), ESD appears to be commonly used within the context of *empowerment* and *change* (Calder & Clugston, 2005:7; also Parker, 2005:169; Pavlova, 2009:186; Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:139; Schinkel, 2009:508; Schlottmann, 2008:216). As such, one could assume that ESD involves approaches to teaching and learning that will not only create spaces for empowerment, but will also promote change.

It is against this background that the following expositions of ESD as agent of empowerment and change will be undertaken.

3.4.1.1 EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS AGENT OF EMPOWERMENT

Defined as “an emerging but dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future” (UNESCO, 2002a:7; also Pigozzi, 2007:29), ESD is regarded as a force in empowering people to achieve SD. As such, it is assumed that ESD will not only empower the poor by paying due attention to the quality and relevance of their education, but will also equip teachers and learners with the readiness, desire and ability to work towards SD. It will also empower social institutions to play a leading role in the transition to a sustainable future (Gough, 2006:49; ICEE, 2007; Qablan, AL-Ruz, Khasawneh & Al-Omari, 2009:402; Shumba, Kasembe, Mukundu & Muzenda, 2008:82). In addition, ESD is also regarded a powerful source in social empowerment, and the empowerment of the youth,

vulnerable and marginalised groups (UNESCO, 2005a:15; De Andrade, 2011:142). Understood in this way, ESD holds the potential to create a space to empower people with the relevant virtues, skills and attitudes to bring about the changes required for SSD.

3.4.1.2 EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS AGENT OF CHANGE

As an agent of change, ESD aims at a change in the knowledge, values, attitudes, lifestyle, skills and actions needed for achieving SD and SSD (Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:139; Varga, Kószó, Mayer & Sleurs, 2007:242). However, questions are raised about the intentions and power of ESD to influence change (cf. Mulà & Tilbury, 2009:93). Despite the latter, as a change agent, ESD aims at effecting educational-, personal- as well as social change.

a) As agent of educational change

For ESD to be an effective agent of change, it needs to bring about a fundamental re-orientation of education towards the aim for SSD. In line with this, Sterling (in Venkataraman, 2009:8; also Fien, 2006:32) argues that:

Sustainability is not just another issue to be added to an overcrowded curriculum, but a gateway to a different view of curriculum, pedagogy, of organisational change, of policy and particularly of ethos.

Since formal education discourse on change towards ESD calls for a re-orientation of existing education, the *Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* encourages African countries, including South Africa, to adopt policies and practices to ensure the mainstreaming of ESD in education. ESD becomes an agent of educational change because it requires a *reform* of education (cf. UNCED, 1992a: Chapter 36; UNESCO, 2007a:118; UN, 2001: Section iv (23b)). It should, however, be noted, that ‘to reform’ does not necessarily imply ‘to transform’ or that fundamental change to the structure, aims and objectives of existing education is required. Rather, within ESD the reorientation of education implies the inclusion of more principles, skills, perspectives and values related to sustainable development into the existing education practice. Instead of adding new issues to the curricula, a re-orientation of the African curricula based on the paradigms and principles underpinning ESD, is required (Allemano, 2008:143).

To give effect to the reform of education, ESD requires a view of SD as an integrated and interconnected process, which consists of social-, economic-, and environmental sustainability, as well as the subsequent incorporation thereof into education practice (cf. UNESCO, 2005:10; Landorf, Drocher & Rocco, 2008:226; Springett, 2005:147). Education that is re-oriented to SD encompasses a vision for society that is not only ecologically sustainable, but also socially and economically. As such, by dealing with the key themes of SD and SSD, namely overcoming poverty, gender equality and equity, health protection (HIV/AIDS prevention) and promotion, environmental conservation and protection, ethics, rural transformation, human rights, sustainable production and consumption, responsibility in local and global contexts, democracy and governance, justice, citizenship, peace, cultural diversity natural resource management and biological diversity (UN, 2003: Section 45(a); Nevin, 2008; Sterling, 2001:64), ESD subsequently not only addresses environmental and economic sustainability, but also social sustainability. In addition, issues which also specifically relate to social sustainability and should be addressed by ESD includes (but are not limited to) human security, reinforcement of intercultural and international understanding and preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity (cf. Gough, 2006:54; also Shaeffer, 2007:10).

ESD therefore not only embraces social, environmental, and economic sustainability in a holistic and integral manner, but also promotes a trans-disciplinary understanding thereof. It therefore enables individuals to develop the knowledge, perspectives, values, and skills necessary to take part in decisions to improve the quality of life. ESD can therefore not be conceptualised as a subject to teach, but rather as a perspective or frame of mind that cuts across many subjects (ICEE, 2007; cf. also UNESCO, 2006a:17; Bonnett, 2003).

Furthermore, re-orientation towards ESD implies an approach towards education which fosters, amongst others the development of knowledge and skills for creative and critical thinking, decision-making, oral and written communication, collaboration and cooperation, conflict management, practical citizenship, reflection, decision-making, problem-solving and planning, insight, learning in the outdoors and learning through sustainable themes (ICEE, 2007; Schlottmann, 2008:215). In addition, ESD

also involves participatory learning, creating ways to incorporate participation and decision-making into teaching, developing the ability to live together, being able to change and adapt to change, acquiring literacy, numeracy and IT skills, as well as technological, economic, political, social and psychological skills and the ability to learn (Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:139; also Liu & Constable, 2010:195). Since the activity of self-reflection is key to what it means to be involved in ESD (Wade & Parker, 2008:6), it enables people to critically evaluate their ideas and actions pertaining to SD, and change it accordingly. Not only are these skills regarded as indispensable for economic or environmental education, but also for sound social sustainable development.

b) As agent of personal change

Sustainable development and concern about the unsustainability of current ways of life has an ethical (moral) basis (Bosselmann, 2001:167; also Huckle, 1999:40; Schütz, 1996:137; Van den Bergh & Van der Straaten, 1994:33). Values and ethical considerations are thus not only important in discussions on SD, but are also visible throughout all discourse of SSD. Ethical issues associated with SD are *inter alia*, concern for the alleviation of poverty; norms relating to the survival of living matter and to the rights of future generations; and issues of intergenerational and intra-generational equity (O’Riordan, 1990:30; Adams, 2009:11). It follows therefore that ESD calls for the infusion of appropriate reforms in education to cultivate values and behaviours that are supportive of SD and SSD (Allemano, 2008:143). In order to promote SSD, ESD should thus also reflect and be based upon certain morals and values.

It is envisaged that these values should contribute towards *change in personal values, actions, attitudes and behaviour*. Wade and Parker (2008:6; also Postma, 2002:42; Pitt & Lubben, 2009:169; Varga *et al.*, 2007:242) assert that ESD promotes and necessitates reflection upon behaviour, actions and commitments. In line with this view, Paden (2007:128; also Allemano, 2008:143; Gadotti, 2008; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:221; Pigozzi, 2007:30; Schinkel, 2009:509) also indicates that ESD should develop critical thinking that induces a change of attitude and behaviour in lifestyle among people. Since values determine behaviour, attitudes and lifestyle, it is assumed that a critical reflection on one’s values and the values of

the broader society will contribute towards change. ESD should therefore encourage change through the adoption of a sound value framework and the development of specific dispositions in behaviour that would promote a more sustainable future for present and future generations, specifically in relation to social sustainable development. Through ESD, education has a prominent role to play in changing values, since “most education daily reinforces unsustainable values and practices in society” (Sterling, 2001:21), and our dominant value systems are also responsible for unsustainable practices and living (Chapman, Flaws & Le Heron, 2006:282). Because ESD is primarily ‘values-driven’, an exposition of the values relevant to ESD and SSD will be given in subsequent sections (cf. 3.4.2.2).

c) As agent of social change

As much as ESD is used within the context of educational and personal change, is it also used in relation to societal change. For example, Fien (in Le Roux, 2000:233; Down & Nurse, 2007:181; ICEE, 2007) claims that ESD has an overt agenda of social change, and Pigozzy (2009:186) argues that education is essential to the *societal change* that is called for when learning to live sustainably. Similarly, Sterling (2006:197) observes that if the objective of a sustainable society is to move from rhetoric to reality, ESD has to become a central function of that society. Conceptualised as such, ESD can be regarded as instrumental in transforming society from being unsustainable to becoming sustainable. Through ESD people will therefore acquire the values, skills, behaviour, and lifestyles required for positive societal change. One can assume that since an unsustainable society is characterised by unsustainable practices, values, skills and attitudes, a transformed society will be a sustainable one. It is my contention that part of the societal changes needed to create such a society is a different perspective on development.

In the foregoing exposition of the socio-historical context of ESD, it was noted that ESD:

- is an evolving concept that is historically linked to EE;
- is associated with the empowerment of learners, teachers and the broader society in order to play a leading role in the transition to a sustainable society; and
- is regarded as an agent of educational-, social -, as well as personal change.

Having explored the socio-historic context of ESD, a model case of ESD will be constructed.

3.4.2 *MODEL CASE*

According to Du Toit (2005:428-429), a model case involves the creation of a hypothetical or imaginary situation, to which most people sharing one's language and historical background, will agree that the relevant concept applies in an unproblematic way. In constructing such a situation, one would therefore typically ask whether people in general will use the concept in this particular way or not? In analysing the concept ESD, one would therefore typically construct a model case which is representative of the elements that are essential when referring to ESD.

In constructing this model case, it is worth noting that ESD represents a new paradigm and vision for, as well as a different perspective of education (Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:226; ICEE, 2007). Envisioned as an integrated, holistic approach to education, ESD aims at achieving sustainable development by changing the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge of learners and people of all ages. Since it focuses on changing the educational paradigm by redressing the education system and institutions, ESD attempts to replace rather than extend current thinking on, and practice of education (Summers *et al.*, 2004:166-167). As such, ESD suggests more than simply an 'add-on' of sustainability concepts to some aspects of the curriculum (Sterling, 2008:65). Rather it implies systemic change in thinking and practice, which offers the possibility of education that is appropriate and responsive to the challenges, of for example SSD, that we are faced with daily. ESD is therefore more than a new feature of education, but rather a different perspective on education.

From the exposition of the socio-historic context it became apparent that by nature ESD focuses on empowerment and change (cf. 3.4.1). However, ESD is also interdisciplinary and holistic, values-driven, goal-oriented contextual, multi-methodical, problem-solving, lifelong and participatory. Therefore, in constructing a model case of ESD, I intend drawing on these characteristics of ESD. By discussing these characteristics I do not claim them to be the only ones constituting a model case of ESD, but rather as the characteristics most commonly referred to in the

literature. I argue that the re-orientation of education to become compatible with the vision of a sustainable society, should subsequently display these characteristics.

3.4.2.1 INTERDISCIPLINARY AND HOLISTIC

ESD involves a holistic, integrative, interdisciplinary, but also a trans-disciplinary approach towards teaching and learning (World Conference on ESD, 2009:3; Hargreaves, 2008:69; Kaivola & Åhlberg, 2007:5). In addition, ESD should be part of all subjects on all educational levels (Åhlberg, Aänismaa & Dillon, 2005:168). This subsequently implies that learning for SSD should be embedded in the entire curriculum, and not as a separate subject. As such, ESD calls for the integration within all disciplines and subjects at all levels of education. ESD assumes that no learning area or subject exists in isolation and that issues related to SSD cannot be confined to specific disciplines or compartments.

In a model case scenario, ESD should also be reflected in shared values, policies and guidelines, school management, behaviour of learners, teachers, parents, school staff, the school culture and ethos (UNESCO, 2006b). In this way, ESD should not only be reflected across the curriculum, but in all activities of the school. The implication is that ESD assumes a whole school approach. Following Shallcross and Robinson (2007:142), a whole school approach to ESD promotes action competence by enhancing self-efficiency. The whole school nature of ESD recognises that it will require more than curriculum content and information about SSD to make the behavioural shift(s) needed to achieve a more sustainable future and society. Rather, all education aspects are mutually affected and need to be seen as a consistent whole (McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:22). As such, ESD attempts to ground issues of SSD beyond subjects by making it part of the culture and ethos of a school.

An integrative, holistic and whole school approach towards ESD appears to be valuable for the aims and objectives of SSD. Sterling (1996:23) argues that it holds the potential to create new meanings, understandings and ways of working. Furthermore, it brings about a closer link between education processes and real life, building its activities around the sustainability problems that are faced by particular communities and focusing an analysis on these through a comprehensive approach,

which will permit a proper understanding of the particular problems (Wals, 2007:36). For example, in creating a social sustainable society, ESD would typically draw on the perspectives and experiences from education for nonviolence, conflict resolution as well as transformation (Toh, 2006:3).

In addition, a whole school approach also ensures that values are not only embedded across the curriculum but in every aspect of the school. ESD promotes the internalisation of the values of ESD, and more specifically those of SSD amongst all stakeholders in the school (Preston, 2010:190). It is anticipated that the internalisation of such values in every aspect of the school will contribute to a more sustainable future and society (McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:22). It subsequently becomes imperative for schools to demonstrate their commitment to issues of SSD such as diversity, social justice, human rights, eradication of poverty, equality and equity by not only reflecting it in the curriculum, but also in the ethos and culture of the school. Values of SSD are therefore not only taught, but also lived out in every aspect of the school.

The interdisciplinary nature of ESD calls for participatory learning and for all stakeholders to be actively engaged in working towards SSD with ESD as the driving force. In addition, it not only holds the opportunity to enhance the quality of education and building a more sustainable future by imparting the values learners will need to build and maintain sustainable societies, but it is also learner-centred and socially-oriented (Sterling, 1996:23; Hargreaves, 2008:73). ESD subsequently requires from teachers to engage in active and interactive learning processes, rather than in one way of knowledge transfer.

However, the implementation of an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to ESD poses its own challenges. Bosselmann (2001:180) asserts that it would be difficult to implement ESD in the existing education system, which is accustomed to mono-disciplinary and strictly rational forms of the distribution of knowledge. Education transformation should rather reflect the integrative and whole school nature of ESD.

3.4.2.2 VALUES-DRIVEN AND ETHICAL

Premised on the assumption that we need more than policy direction if we want to build sustainable societies (Preston, 2010:194), values are not only integral to ESD, but ESD is in itself a value-laden concept (UNESCO, 2005a:73; Nakayama, 2006:9; Yang *et al.*, 2010:198). Gadotti (2008:22) claims that ESD is more than knowledge about the environment, economy and society, since it encompasses amongst others, values that guide and impel people to live sustainably. In addition, Nevin (2008:50) asserts that ESD aims to integrate values inherent in SD into all aspects and levels of learning. ESD therefore plays a role in internalising those values which would contribute to and make the construction of a sustainable society possible.

Since the promotion and development of a value system, which is deemed relevant for SSD, is an integral part of ESD, the latter calls for the infusion of appropriate reforms in curricula, teaching and learning approaches to cultivate the relevant values and behaviour (Allemano, 2008:143). Because values underpin the learning of knowledge and skills, the internalisation of appropriate values is necessary to bring about the changes needed to construct social sustainable societies. A system of values and universally accepted codes of conduct are subsequently important to promote the values of SD, as articulated in the *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* (2004-2015), as well the *Earth Charter* (2000). Regarded as the normative statement of shared values (Weakland & Corcoran, 2009:155), and informed by the virtues of compassion, cooperativeness, intergenerational justice and stewardship (Preston, 2010:188) the *Earth Charter* (2000) articulates the principles and values which should inform, amongst others, SSD.

In a model case scenario it is generally accepted that amongst the values articulated and promoted are: inter- and intra-generational equality, equity, interdependence, social and economic justice, respect for others, the environment and the resources of the planet; commitment to the wellbeing of human beings and other living things; a sense of justice, peace, tolerance, rationality and open mindedness; working with others to bring about sustainability; sustainable use of resources; respect for diversity and plurality, human rights, gender, environment; a sense of spiritual wealth rather than material wealth; quality, democratic governance, non-discrimination,

justice and commitment to build a local and global culture of tolerance (Down & Nurse, 2007:181; also *Earth Charter*, 2000; Liu & Constable, 2010:195; Nakayama, 2006:13; Wade & Parker, 2008: Preamble; Yang *et al.*, 2010:198). In addition, UNESCO (2006b) asserts that ESD should promote the appreciation of diversity, acceptance, understanding, human dignity, harmony, social cohesion, compassion, care and concern for others, inclusion, sharing, collective well-being, truth, reconciliation, forgiveness, valuing cultural identity, language and heritage. As could be noted from the above, ESD in general embraces diverse values, which also bear testimony to the interrelated nature of SD.

By articulating these values, the *Earth Charter* (2000) also assists in guiding our responses to the critical social challenges of our time (Weakland & Corcoran, 2009:155). It is therefore my contention that the *Earth Charter* (2000) should inform our endeavours to change the current dominant value systems in our society. The value of the *Earth Charter* (2000) therefore lies in its ability to generate in us the kind of internal reflection that leads to a change in attitudes, values and behaviour (Preston, 2010:111). Furthermore, Gruenewald (in Clugston, 2010:165) asserts that:

[t]he power of the Earth Charter is in its potential to engender conversations, to interrupt our discourse, and to challenge our norms and routines with a comprehensive, socio-ecological vision for society and education.

However, the strong values and ethical orientation of ESD do not go unnoticed and uncriticised. Jickling and Spark (in Postma, 2002:42) argue that it holds the potential of manipulation, moralism and indoctrination. Schlottmann (2008:208) also warns against an uncritical acceptance of the values that ESD tries to promote. It therefore becomes critical that the assumed values – the shared values and principles underpinning SD and SSD (and promoted by ESD) – are made explicit so that they can be examined, debated and tested. This will enable the critical assessment thereof, as well as the development of students' critical faculties so that they can engage critically with SSD issues.

3.4.2.3 CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM SOLVING AND ACTION

ESD calls for a process of critical enquiry that encourages people to explore the complexity and implications of sustainability and the economic, political, social,

cultural, technological, and environmental forces that foster or impede it (Springett, 2005:147). Huckle (2006:25) agrees that ESD should enable learners to critically evaluate their ideas and actions. In recognising educational values as not politically neutral, Sterling (1996:23) prompts ESD to become a critical force in challenging the modern hegemony. What therefore appears to be central to ESD is the development of critical thinking skills which encourage problem solving attitudes and would encourage people to act. As such critical thinking appears to be valuable for ESD because it will lead to confidence in addressing the dilemmas and challenges of SSD.

Not only can critical thinking skills be used in exposing ideology, but it can also allow for a critical theorisation of ESD and the interrogation of existing knowledge claims (Springett, 2005:148). Such exposure and theorisation is necessary since ESD appears not to be devoid of ideological influences. ESD should therefore be ideologically aware as well as socially critical education (Sterling, 1996:23; Fien in Wade, 2008:36). As socially critical education, it is accepted that the teacher with agency towards ESD becomes a co-ordinator with emancipatory aims, involves learners in negotiation about common tasks and projects, emphasises commonality of concerns, and works through conflict of interest in terms of social justice and SD. ESD will therefore enable us to problematise related concepts such as *sustainability*, *sustainable development* and *development* and to examine the contested ways in which they are formed. Furthermore, it can also help us to critique and challenge the rationality of the capitalist paradigm of production and consumption. Added to the latter, ESD should critically focus upon the ethics and politics of SD and unsustainable development, and engage in reflection and action on forms of political economy that will enable us to live sustainably with one another and nature (Springett, 2005:148).

ESD subsequently involves reflection and self-critique (Qablan *et al.*, 2009:402). Because it also involves action as we engage with the discourse of SSD (Huckle, 2006:25), ESD should develop in learners, teachers and the broader community skills which would enable critical reflection on societal issues, as well as actions aimed to bring about change which would secure the sustainable development of society. As such, ESD requires and makes central the agency of human beings

(Wade, 2008:35). Agency is relevant to ESD because transformation happens most obviously amongst those oppressed and exploited by development, modernisation and liberation (Jackson, 2011:28). ESD should therefore not only challenge learners to critically reflect upon the human rights of marginalised and vulnerable people such as women, children, refugees and asylum seekers and indigenous peoples, but also to act to bring about change that would contribute to the realising of a social sustainable society.

3.4.2.4 MULTI-METHOD

As a new approach to teaching and learning, ESD needs to use a new pedagogy and methods to bring about SSD. More so, because of its complex nature and the diverse issues it addresses, ESD cannot be confined to one teaching and learning technique only. Rather, to be effective, ESD needs to involve and use different teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies which will develop the dispositions in learners required for SSD. In line with this, the UN (2005:7) suggests that ESD should use a range of participatory, process- and solution oriented education methods tailored to the needs of the learner. This is supported by Wade (2008:37) who asserts that ESD should use a variety of pedagogic techniques that promote participatory learning and critical reflective skills. ESD could use different methods such as literature, art, drama, word, debate and experience to convey its message of SSD (Nevin, 2008:51). The use of various methods ensures that teachers and learners work together to acquire knowledge and promote participatory learning, including higher order thinking and action research. Furthermore, a multi method approach also enables teachers to take initiative in organising and improving their educational activities. In this way ESD demands from educators to change from being sole transmitters of, and learners from being sole recipients of information.

3.4.2.5 PARTICIPATORY

Although regarded as an ambiguous concept, which could reinforce unfair and dishonest power structures, collective participation is an explicit characteristic of ESD in the attainment of the objectives that underpin SD and SSD (Taylor & Hunter, 2008:76). Sterling (2001:27) also subscribes to this view when regarding ESD as essentially engaging and participatory. As indicated earlier, ESD follows a holistic approach and covers a wide range of environmental, economic and social issues (cf.

2.3; 2.3.4). This extensive coverage subsequently requires ESD to be fundamentally participatory in nature in order to allow for different and alternative voices to be heard, especially those who are marginalised and those who challenge the current hegemony. As such, ESD opens up a space for the engagement of multiple stakeholders and sectors (Pigozzi, 2007:29). For example, as a key issue of ESD, good health requires diverse partnerships since the education sector alone cannot deal with the challenges of HIV and AIDS (Allemano, 2008:143).

Public participation not only allows for the establishment of sound ESD practices, but it also ensures community-based decision-making (UNESCO, 2005a:15). As fundamental to democracy and democratic governance, participation ensures that all relevant parties are consulted and involved in decision-making. Participation also guarantees that conceptualisations of ESD are relevant to the needs of the community and the larger society. Apart from building civil capacity, participation also builds social tolerance, environmental stewardship, and adaptable workforces and improves quality of life (Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:143). Through participation, education and learning is thus meaningful and engaging, rather than irrelevant and prescriptive.

It is the participatory nature of ESD that prompts Bassey (2002:14) to refer to ESD as democratic education. Because ESD upholds the fundamental value and right of equality for all, it engages learners in decisions on the way in which they are to learn. Through various NGOs, ESD also involves civil society in a variety of aspects of teaching and learning for SSD. Tilbury, Goldstein and Ryan (2003:59) warn not to underestimate the influence of NGO's, but to acknowledge their role in agenda-setting, influencing policy and global governance. More than this, ESD expects from educators to implement collective actions and decision-making (Masahisa, 2006:10). ESD subsequently not only creates the space for community participation on issues of SSD, but also requires from educators to implement such decisions.

As a participatory and democratic process, ESD could also foster and strengthen feelings of ownership of learning and develop in communities the capacity and the will to contribute to societal sustainability. The value of participation in ESD

subsequently lies in the potential that it holds for involvement in collective decision-making and collective action to address societal challenges to bring about SSD.

3.4.2.6 CONTEXTUAL AND LOCALLY RELEVANT

ESD is an approach to education that is locally relevant and culturally appropriate. As such, ESD is context specific, and each country will have its own unique conceptualisation of ESD. Goals, emphasis, priorities and processes of ESD will therefore be locally determined and defined to meet the local environmental, social and economic conditions in culturally appropriate ways (Higgitt, 2006:252). Countries also have to identify their own values and assess them in the broader context of SD and SSD (Nakayama, 2006:9). As a result, there can be no single universal model of, and one-size-fits-all approach to ESD (Gadotti, 2008:26). Rather whilst ESD considers the local environmental, economic and social conditions, it should be framed against and informed by local needs and demands. To achieve SSD through ESD, a country such as South Africa will have to identify its own unique social values, needs, priorities and challenges, and infuse them into the education system.

However, notwithstanding its local character, ESD also has to take cognisance of the broader global context. Shallcross and Robinson (2007:143-144; Rohweder, 2007:25) assert that ESD acknowledges that the fulfilling of local needs often has international effects and consequences. Regarded as a global initiative, the determination of local ESD imperatives should be done within the framework of global ESD imperatives (Tilbury, 2007:240). ESD not only takes cognisance of the broader global context, but it appears as if ESD is influenced by the impact of globalisation on ESD. According to Selby and Kagawa (2010:38) ESD has been critiqued as a policy-driven phenomenon that is both a subset of, and propelled forward by the globalisation imperative. From this perspective, ESD is not only contextually bound, but it is also a product and carrier of globalisation. ESD is subsequently both contextually locally and globally bound.

3.4.2.7 PURPOSIVE

It has been indicated that SD is a multiple and interconnected concept, embracing environmental-, economic as well as social sustainability. However, it has also been

indicated that SD is primarily interpreted as a concern for either environmental sustainability or economic sustainability, with social sustainability largely ignored (cf. 2.4). This resulted in different views of SD and also varied and often confusing views on its aims and objectives. This is echoed by Schlottmann (2008:208), who indicates that ESD aims at an elusive and conceptually unclear end.

Notwithstanding the above, ESD is primarily and fundamentally a purposive and goal-oriented process. For this reason a conception of education *for* rather than education *about* or education *towards* is commonly embraced. For example, Landorf Doscher and Rocco (2008:225) are of the opinion that ESD is about using education to achieve sustainability, as opposed to learning about or being aware of sustainable development. Similarly, for Wals (2007:35) the basic aim of ESD is

[t]o succeed in making individuals and communities understand the complex nature of the natural and built environments resulting from the interaction of their biological, physical, economic and cultural aspects, and acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes and practical skills to participate in a responsible and effective way in anticipating and solving sustainability problems, and in the management of the quality of the environment.

Varga, Kószó, Mayer and Sleurs (2007:241) also comment that ESD is a critical element in achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and lifestyle changes that are consistent with SD and are essential for effective public participation in decision-making. ESD is also regarded as instrumental in developing the skills and attributes needed by citizens and decision-makers to make the right choices for a sustainable future, as well as to promote education and learning as the basis for a more sustainable world (Mulà & Tilbury, 2009:90; Pigozzi, 2007:27). In principle, ESD is oriented towards achieving SSD.

Apart from being concerned with the promotion and adoption of a SSD lifestyle, ESD also aims at developing critical thinking faculties in learners. Wade and Parker (2008:6) assert that ESD aims at questioning development and the assumption that current dominant forms of development are necessarily inevitable and desirable. Fien (in Le Roux, 2000:233) also claims that ESD challenges those uncritical education practices which accept and reproduce the *Dominant Social Paradigm* as a taken-for-granted and 'natural way' of interpreting relationships. According to Huckle

(1999:40), ESD seeks to expose contradiction, ideology and politics and allows learners to glimpse genuine democratic and empowering meanings. ESD does not want to 'inculcate' predetermined choices, but rather seeks to inform critical reflection and action.

As a starting point, teaching and learning about SSD should create spaces to empower learners with the values, skills and knowledge to critically engage with conceptualisations of development and the taken-for-granted view that development (economic growth) is required for SSD. In this regard, Sauv  (1999:20) argues that a fundamental aim of ESD is exposure to alternatives and criticism of ESD and SD. This will entail an analysis of the foundations of ESD and SD, and the development of critical thinking to enable citizens to understand what is going on in society, to ask critical questions and to determine for themselves what needs to be done. ESD therefore aims at challenging the status quo.

ESD also seeks to bring about changes through poverty reduction and poverty prevention, thus to reverse present harmful trends towards social and environmental degradation (Wade & Parker, 2008:6). Since the reduction and prevention of poverty can be linked to human development, it can be inferred that ESD also aims at human development in an inclusive, equitable and secure manner (ICEE, 2007).

However, the aims and objectives of ESD have also been criticised. Sauv , Berryman and Brunelle (2007:37, also Schlottmann, 2008:214; Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:142) are concerned that ESD could be (mis)used as an instrument to pursue predetermined goals of SD. Postma (2002:42) also questions the implied normative and instrumental intervention in the private lives of citizens through education that is explicitly aimed at a predetermined goal. Furthermore, whilst Wals (2011:179) asserts that the perceived emphasis on (predetermined) goals contradicts the very foundation of education and borders on indoctrination, Sauv  (1999:20) rejects SD as an aim of education for it poses conceptual, ethical and cultural problems.

Notwithstanding the above criticism, ESD primarily aims to promote SD as an integrated and interconnected concept. ESD subsequently also aims to internalise the values and develop in people the dispositions needed to achieve SSD.

3.4.2.8 LIFELONG LEARNING

UNESCO (2002a:35) regards ESD as lifelong learning, which includes not only adult and community education, but also appropriate technical and vocational education, higher education, as well as teacher education. Similarly, Wade (2008:39; ICEE, 2007; Shallcross & Robinson, 2007:143) claims that ESD embraces and promotes the notion of lifelong learning. As lifelong learning, ESD could equip learners with the skills, values and attitudes that would enable them to continue learning after leaving school. Lifelong learning subsequently includes learning that occurs in any informal or non-formal setting such as at home, in the workplace, the school and within the community, including through various media and institutions. It further promotes an approach which suggests that ESD should take place outside the formal school environment, irrespective of age. Within ESD, the teaching and learning process is not completed after formal education, but extends it. ESD subsequently requires a blurring of lines between formal-, informal- and non-formal education, including the re-orientation of education to respond to the learning challenges of ESD.

Whilst the complex nature of ESD prompts a lifelong approach outside the formal school environment, it is necessary to free the formal school environment from the strong influence and control of government and the perceived demands of the economy and current neo-liberal perspectives. Wade (2008:39-40) maintains that the non-formal and informal sector holds the potential for lifelong learning which is critical and emancipatory. Whilst the implied links of managerialism to formal education holds little potential to promote SSD, it is assumed that expanding ESD beyond the formal education sector would promote the achievement of SSD.

To be effective in achieving SSD, certain conditions for ESD as a lifelong process are proposed. Holbrook (2009:48) argues that ESD should be grounded and based in life itself and on local needs and conditions, as well as on a passion for radical transformation and change in the moral character of society. Wade (2008) is of the

opinion that the lifelong learner should be part of a learning community as an active and creative explorer of the world and a reflexive self-actualising agent who is also an integrator of learning. Lifelong learning to SSD is proposed as an alternative approach with an agenda of poverty reduction, individual emancipation, participation and empowerment (Wade & Parker, 2008:28; Weymans, 2009:589). As such it is assumed that ESD could be instrumental in achieving SSD, since it holds the potential to reduce poverty, emancipate and improve the quality of life.

However, lifelong learning should not be seen as the only answer to a social sustainable society. Preston (1999:561-562) associates lifelong learning with the market, and warns against the “attractive vocabulary associated with personal development and empowerment [which] often masks other economic and social purposes”. According to Walters (1999:579; Adams, 2005:146) lifelong learning is primarily driven by the human capital school with its legacy of neo-liberal ideology. Although it can be argued in defence of lifelong learning as an imperative for SSD, that we should be cautious about the influence of neo-liberalism on conceptualisations of lifelong learning, especially since concerns are raised about predominantly market-oriented conceptualisations of SD, and subsequently of ESD.

Based upon the preceding model case scenario, ESD could be conceptualised as education, which:

- assumes that no learning area or subject exists in isolation and that issues related to SSD cannot be confined to specific disciplines or compartments;
- embraces a diversity of values pertaining to social, environmental and economic sustainable development;
- promotes critical thinking and action to bring about change, which would contribute in realising a social sustainable society;
- are not confined to one teaching and learning technique, but to different techniques and pedagogies, which will develop in learners the dispositions required for SSD;
- embraces collective participation in the attainment of the objectives that underpin SD and SSD, and that is essentially engaging;
- is not only contextually bound, but also locally as well as globally informed;

- aims at developing critical thinking faculties, human development, and the promotion and adoption of a SSD life-style, SD; and
- embraces lifelong learning, which includes not only adult and community education, but also appropriate technical and vocational education, higher education, as well as teacher education.

3.4.3 *CONSEQUENCES IN LANGUAGE*

According to Du Toit (2005:434), a linguistic system is a vast network of signs and the meaning of a particular sign (concept) is derived from its place within the network. As such, an individual sign has meaning based on its difference from a multitude of other signs. Since this network of signs is interrelated and interconnected, triggering one sign by writing or saying it, impacts on the whole network, resulting in “all other signs becom[ing] present in their absence, contributing to the specific meaning of the activated sign” (Du Toit, 2005:434). The implication is that the use of one concept inevitably has consequences for the whole language network, and impacts on other closely related concepts. It is this interconnectedness of concepts (signs) within the linguistic system which Du Toit (2005:434) regards as the consequences in language that flow from a particular use of a key concept. When using the concept Education for Sustainable Development, specific words such as quality education, learning, citizenship and knowledge frequently appear. Since these words appear to have a particular link to the concept ESD, I regard them as valuable in further clarifying the meaning of ESD. These concepts will subsequently be discussed.

3.4.3.1 *QUALITY EDUCATION*

Although a relative concept (Pigozzi, 2007:30; UNESCO, 2005a:71), quality education and learning are central pre-requisites for ESD. UNESCO (2007b:2) emphasises the importance of quality education when stating that “being in school or in an adult learning programme will not have a positive impact unless it is of a high quality and leads to usable knowledge and competencies”. The vision of ESD is that everyone has the opportunity to learn and benefit from quality education (ICEE, 2007). As one of the thrusts of ESD, the promotion and improvement of the quality of education aims at refocusing lifelong education on the acquisition of knowledge,

skills, and values needed by citizens to improve the quality of their lives (UNESCO, 2007a:119). The latter is particularly important in relation to the achievement of SSD.

The improvement of the quality of education is linked to both *Education for All* (EFA)(1990) and the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG)(2000) (Kalliomäki, 2007:16). Within the framework of EFA, MDG as well as ESD it is not sufficient to simply provide education. What is rather required is education of a high quality and not only a passing on of knowledge (ICEE, 2007). Nevin (2008:49; cf. also Mulà & Tilbury, 2009:90) also asserts that good quality education is essential for achieving a more sustainable world. In line with this, improving the quality of teaching and learning was also made one of the objectives of the *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* (2005-2015) (DESD) (UNESCO in Kaivola & Åhlberg, 2007:47).

Various views of what ESD as quality education entails can be found in the literature. Gadotti (2011:210) has certain reservations about improving the current model of education since it simply entails improving the quality of education that has been destroying and eroding the earth (and society). She (2011:210) rather calls for the construction of a new quality *in* education: a social-environmental quality, which differs from the current education that we are used to. Huckle (2008:342; Huckle, 2006:11) gives an encompassing exposition of quality education as education that

- entails a rights based approach;
- views the learner as an individual, a family member, community member, and a global citizen and educates to create individual competencies in all four roles;
- upholds and conveys the ideals of a sustainable world – a world that is just, equitable and peaceable;
- conserves indigenous and traditional knowledge;
- is based on the four pillars of Education for All – learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and with others, and learning to be;
- is informed by the past, is relevant to the present and prepares individuals for the future;
- builds knowledge, life skills, perspectives, attitudes and values;

- provides the tools to transform current societies to more sustainable societies; and
- is measurable.

Thus, in order to be reoriented towards ESD and the improvement of citizens' quality of life, education needs to be characterised by these requirements.

Pigozzi (2007:30) identifies the ability to enhance each individual's potential and to foster the full development of a learner's personality and lifestyle as the constant and essential elements of quality education. The latter subsequently involves the skills to continue learning throughout life, to think critically, to work cooperatively, and to seek and apply knowledge.

Quality education also focuses on the learner, his/her knowledge and experiences, makes content relevant to the learner, uses diverse teaching and learning strategies, and enhances the learning environment. Furthermore, quality education also creates a legislative framework, implements good policies, builds administrative support and leadership, provides sufficient resources, and measures learning outcomes (McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:22; Pigozzi, 2007:31-33).

As such quality education is regarded an effective means to not only fight poverty and to build democracy, but to improve health and secure and foster more peaceful and sustainable societies (Wade & Parker, 2008: Preamble). It furthermore creates the space to empower individuals, giving them a voice, unlocks their potential, opens pathways to self-actualisation and broadens perspectives to open minds to a pluralist world. In addition, whilst it calls for a life skills approach in education, which is not teacher-centred but rather learner-centred (UNESCO, 2005a:72), quality education also recognises that education and learning are not confined and limited to formal education (Wade & Parker, 2008:28). Drawing from the above, the role and relevance of the *Earth Charter* (2000) should not be disregarded. In this regard Gadotti (2010:209) is of the opinion that by incorporating ethics into all topics and content with the aim of educating for a more just, sustainable and peaceful world, the *Earth Charter* (2000) plays an important role in improving the quality of education.

Since ESD is grounded in quality basic education, it seeks to reduce barriers to learning through social inclusion. As such, ESD acknowledges that the learner has certain knowledge, experience and cultural values which he/she brings to the classroom; it ensures that teaching can be adapted to the learning needs of the learner; it provides adequate sanitation, hygienic facilities and nutritional services; it eliminates bullying, corporal punishment, gender discrimination and forced labour; and ensures that the basic right to education is protected. By ensuring that these requirements are met, ESD not only enhances the physical learning environment, but creates an environment in which the ideals of SSD can be realised.

3.4.3.2 INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

Huckle (n.d.:2) asserts that educating for sustainability requires a philosophy of knowledge that not only integrates the natural and social sciences and the humanities, but also accommodates local knowledge, supports critical pedagogy, and continues to regard education as a form of enlightenment. It is assumed that with such a philosophy, ESD would transform current education that still contributes towards unsustainable practices through the type of knowledge that it imparts to learners. Jucker (2011:41) agrees with this view when stating that a paradigm shift is required since we cannot use current dominant ideologies, world views and knowledge systems to solve the problem of unsustainability. ESD subsequently implies new thinking about knowledge that can break the cycle of unsustainable knowledge creation and transfer. Regarding the latter, Huckle (2006:26) is of the opinion that knowledge on SSD be taught in ways that will enable learners to gain an integrated or a holistic perspective thereof.

However, ESD not only requires a break from traditional ways of structuring and organising knowledge, but also from contemporary production of new knowledge. To initiate the search for and construction of new knowledge, critical thinking becomes paramount. This is echoed by Martin, Dawe and Jucker (2006:63), who argue that we need to think critically about the nature of knowledge and the ways in which it is constructed and validated. Also, new knowledge needs to be disseminated and shared once it had been constructed (Martin, Dawe & Jucker, 2006:63). This will not only ensure greater awareness of for example knowledge on

SSD, but it will also provide a basis for collaborative decision-making which is a hallmark of ESD.

Apart from the construction and dissemination of new knowledge, it is also important to ground knowledge in local realities (Wheeler, 2007:48). Without being embedded within the knowledge of the larger social and cultural context, knowledge will at best have a limited impact and at worst will distort development paths. Knowledge should therefore be locally relevant and for ESD to be effective, it should be grounded in local traditional and indigenous knowledge (Wade & Parker, 2008:26; Huckle, 2008:13).

Traditional knowledge forms part of a person's culture and as such represents everything in a person's life. This implies that ignorance of traditional knowledge amounts to ignorance of the person. Despite often being viewed as barbaric and primitive, indigenous knowledge in part reflects the dynamic way in which the residents of an area have come to understand themselves in relation to their natural environment and the way in which they organise folk knowledge of flora and fauna, cultural beliefs, and history to enhance their lives (Hesse & Wissink, 2004:49). In addition, Wade and Parker (2008:26) assert that ESD should investigate more fully the links with discussions of gender and the curriculum, including the role and importance of women's knowledge, both for social well-being and for ecosystem health. Apart from the value and significance of indigenous knowledge to SSD, women also seem to possess particular knowledge which could effectively be used to achieve SSD. ESD subsequently requires knowledge of SSD to be linked with informal and local knowledge, knowledge of indigenous people, as well as knowledge of women.

3.4.3.3 CITIZENSHIP

According to Wooltorton (2003), the calls for curricular reforms for ESD include the placement of a notion of citizenship as primary objective of ESD. This notion of citizenship entails a citizenry with specific qualities and dispositions. Mayo *et al.* (in Qablan *et al.*, 2009:402) claim that ESD intends to develop a citizenry empowered to participate actively in decision-making forums that determine its quality of life. Orr (in Fien, 2006:33) also observes that: "I see no prospect whatsoever for building a

sustainable society without an active, engaged, informed and competent citizenry". Similarly, Summers, Corney and Childs (2004:164) claim that the particular significance for citizenship is that ESD links knowledge and understanding with skills of enquiry and communication, and with participation and responsible action. ESD subsequently contributes in shaping a new kind of citizen by developing the skills and attributes needed to make appropriate choices for a sustainable future. As such, it is engaged in a process of developing an informed, active and concerned politically literate populace (Wooltorton, 2003:91). These sentiments are shared by Qablan *et al.* (2009:402) who claim that ESD seeks to change people into active political beings who actively participate in decision-making. Simultaneously, however, for citizens to become active and political beings that participate in decision-making, they also need to be reflexive beings. In line with this Wals (2007:38), argues that reflexion not only creates a reflexive society, but enables citizens to participate in, and contribute to the process of change.

Not only is ESD concerned with the development of citizenship within a particular political context, but it is also concerned with global citizenship. Bourn (2008:198) asserts that the language of global citizenship is evident in policy documents and in initiatives on ESD. Huckle (n.d.:4) also regards ESD as a form of global citizenship education, which requires both teachers and students to reflect and act upon rights and responsibilities that can foster sustainable development. Similarly, Varga *et al.* (2007:242) claim that the main aim of ESD is lifelong education for global citizenship. As such, ESD involves creating citizens who are not only sensitive to the basic SSD needs of fellow citizens, but to global social issues such as justice, human rights, peace, equity, equality and freedom.

3.4.3.4 LEARNING

ESD is primarily promoted and considered as learning, rather than a teaching process. UNESCO (2003:4) defines ESD as

[a] process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. This represents a new vision of education, a vision that helps people of all ages better understand the world in which they live, addressing the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation,

urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future

Bourn (2008:198; Manteaw, 2008:125) argues that learning has to be at the heart of what we understand ESD to be. So pronounced is the emphasis on learning in ESD, that Vare and Scott (2007:194) view SD and SSD not merely as dependent upon learning, but inherently as a learning process. This conception of ESD is underpinned by the drive to ground ESD as an integral component of all learning opportunities.

Current learning practices are, however, criticised for sustaining unsustainable development (Jucker, 2011:41). Jackson (2011:28; Van Dam-Mieras, 2006:17) claims that social transformation involves types of learning that are not at present recognised or practised in the formal or informal educational context. As a consequence, our perception of what learning is about needs to change in accordance with a view and vision of ESD. Sterling (in Martin, Dawe & Jucker, 2006:63; and Jackson, 2011:29) refers to a deeper, transformative learning approach which would enable learners to not only construct an entirely new world view, but to transform their entire outlook. Such learning requires that learners are assisted to see things holistically and to adequately deal with complex challenges.

As a learning process, ESD entails practical and contextualised learning (Shohel & Howes, 2011:132), which entails amongst others, learning how to live a better life and care for the present and future of the earth. Learning should therefore not only engender interdisciplinary learning, but also the interface between theory and practice (Wade, 2008:37). Learning takes place by doing, by reflecting and by acting on democratically chosen alternatives. It should therefore be open-ended, transformative and rooted in the life worlds of people and their encounters with each other (Wals, 2007:40). Such learning should be supported by a learning environment that is learner oriented, rather than teacher oriented. According to Pigozzi (2007:29), learning also entails the practicing of values such as respect for

- the dignity of the human rights of all people throughout the world and a commitment to social and economic justice;

- the human rights of future generations and a commitment to intergenerational responsibility; and
- cultural diversity and a commitment to locally and globally build a culture of tolerance, non-violence and peace.

As much as the above refers to the interdisciplinary nature of ESD, it also illustrates that a key learning goal of ESD is the understanding that SD focuses on a responsible relationship with nature, on questions of values, justice, equity, and on our relations with each other. Within the context of ESD, learning is not just any form of learning. Rather, it is learning that would lead to a new way of thinking, alternative values, co-operation and more reflexive citizens (Wals 2011:181). If effective, such learning should lead to individual behavioural changes, and to social change (Martin, Dawe & Jucker, 2006:61). Learning should therefore be based on a holistic experience, which includes

- discovery learning rather than reproductive learning;
- investigative learning rather than linear transport of material;
- exploring reality rather than reading books;
- active learning rather than passive reception of information;
- productive action rather than reproduction of facts; and
- gaining experience rather than acquiring knowledge (Bosselmann, 2001:176).

The preceding confirms earlier observations that in ESD learning cannot be confined to formal education; rather it extends the boundaries of formal education to also include informal and non-formal learning which takes place throughout life (cf. 3.4.2.8).

Various forms of learning have been linked to ESD of which social or participatory learning appears to be most relevant (Jackson, 2011; Gadotti, 2010:206; Wals, 2011:180). This makes ESD not only a learning process (Varga *et al.*, 2007:245; Hargreaves, 2008:69), but a social or participatory learning process. This validates ESD as fundamentally a participatory educational approach (cf. 3.4.2.5).

Social learning is a form of transformative learning which has been defined as “learning that takes place when divergent interests, norms, values and constructions

of reality meet in an environment that is conducive to meaningful interaction (Wals, 2007:39). Social learning resembles a form of learning by which one mirrors one's own beliefs, values, views, ideas and perspectives with those of others. It not only fosters greater understanding of one's 'own' and one's social and natural environment, but also the willingness and ability to act to transform them (Apple in Gadotti, 2010:206).

Social learning also emphasises the cultivation, utilisation and appreciation of pluralism. According to Wals (2011:181), pluralism allows for the emergence of transformative disruptions, whereby social learning opens up opportunities for active and critical participation in the search for and adoption of change and transformation. Social learning is therefore a form of deep transformative learning which creates space for amongst others; alternative paths of development, ways of thinking, participation minimally distorted by power relations, pluralism, diversity and minority perspectives, consensus but also disagreement and self-determination (Wals & Corcoran, 2006:107).

As deep transformative learning, social learning appears to correlate with the transformative and change agent role of ESD (cf. 3.4.1.2). ESD should therefore reflect the practices of social learning. Provided that ESD is informed by social learning practices, it holds the potential to develop and foster in learners the dispositions for sound SSD.

Consistent with ESD as a process of reflection and self-critique (3.4.2.3), learning is not only perceived as a social process, but also as reflective in nature (Vare & Scott, 2007:194). Learning subsequently takes place through reflection on experiences. In addition, for Wals (2007:43) both reflexivity and (social) learning imperatives are means to engage people meaningfully in their everyday struggle for a better world. Wals (2007:38) further contends that learning systems have to be reflexive in order to be willing to question, and break away from existing routines, norms, values and interests. This coincides with Brunold's (2005:297) characterisation of learning as a process of challenging knowledge that seems to be indisputable. As a reflective process, learning is therefore meant to bring about a critical reflection on society and a willingness to change issues, of *inter alia* social unsustainability, for the better. In

promoting reflective, deep social learning which could result in change, action research is proposed as a feature of ESD. Following Varga *et al.* (2007:245), action research can be used by teachers for systematic reflection on curriculum content and teaching and learning processes that relate to ESD.

Since learning is typically associated with the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values that make social renewal possible (Lavery, 2009:569), effective learning requires environments where learners can experiment with SSD issues; where they can be exposed to such values; and where they can practice SSD thinking, feeling and action. Without such learning environments, we cannot expect learners to develop the dispositions, values and skills needed to bring about SSD.

In exploring the influence of ESD on language, it has been illustrated that

- as quality education, ESD is measurable; conserves indigenous and traditional knowledge; is based upon human rights, justice, equity and peace; is informed by the past, is relevant to the present and future-oriented; builds knowledge, life skills, perspectives, attitudes and values; and provides the tools to transform current societies to more sustainable societies;
- the learner is viewed as an individual, a family member, community member, and a global citizen and ESD aims to educate for individual competencies in all four roles;
- ESD requires an integrated approach towards knowledge that integrates the natural and social sciences and the humanities, accommodates local knowledge, supports critical pedagogy and regards education as a form of enlightenment;
- ESD creates space for the development of a new type of citizen: one which is not only empowered, engaged, informed and competent to participate actively in decision-making forums that determine its quality of life at a local level, but also one that could take up the role of a global citizen in issues such as justice, human rights, peace, equity, equality and freedom; and
- ESD emphasises social participatory learning rooted in the life worlds of people and their encounters with each other, and is supported by a learning environment that is learner-oriented in which learning engenders critical reflection and transformative action.

If reoriented to ESD, education in South Africa should promote the integration of knowledge, foster citizenship and emphasise social learning.

3.4.4 *CONTRARY OR BORDERLINE CASES*

Despite being aimed at achieving sustainable development through the integration of environmental-, economic- and social sustainability (cf. 3.4.1), confusion still exists about what ESD really entails (Summers & Kruger, 2003:160). To further assist in gaining conceptual clarity, I will also indicate what ESD is *not* and what constitutes a borderline case of ESD.

When looking at a contrary case of ESD, one would typically construct a scenario where the characteristics of ESD, as identified in the model case, are not present (cf. 3.4.2). One could subsequently infer that education which does not display those characteristics is *not* re-oriented towards ESD. Borderline cases, on the other hand, exist when one is not sure whether the term applies to the description and would therefore be hesitant to apply the term (Du Toit, 2005:433). The advantage of borderline cases is that it could sensitise us about the concept, and assist in identifying metaphorical or literal uses of the concept, as well as with creative reinterpretations, ideological distortions of its core meaning, and borderline uses thereof. However, both contrary and borderline analyses are important because it enables us to determine the contours of a concept's actual use and assists us to formulate normative principles for the actual use of ESD. Based upon contrary and borderline analyses one can start to make suggestions on the way in which the concept ESD ought to be used.

In an attempt to present a case that can be considered as both contrary and borderline, it should be noted that whilst ESD and EE display certain similarities, there are clear distinctions which make them qualitatively different from each other. As such, ESD cannot merely be seen as an extension or another term of, or equated to EE (Pitt & Lubben, 2009:169; UNESCO, 2007a:125). Rather, these could be regarded as distinguishable approaches which are different both in aims and objectives, as well as in focus and nature. Thus, in order to understand why ESD is *not* EE, I need to conceptualise EE first as a contrary case.

According to UNESCO (2006a:17; Gough, 2006:49), EE is

[a] well-established discipline, which focuses on human-kind's relationship with the natural environment and on ways to conserve and preserve it and properly steward its resources.

Nevin (2008:56) also claims that EE developed out of a concern that human development was profoundly damaging the natural environment; and its primary aim is the protection and conservation of the environment. Summers, Corney and Childs (2004:166) further argue that EE is primarily concerned with the physical environment and with issues such as human impact, preservation and conservation. In addition, Gough (2006:49) posits that EE has traditionally been problem-focused since its goals and objectives usually referred to the environment, its associated problems and the resolving thereof. One can infer that EE primarily aims at the survival of, and the improvement of the natural environment and its quality, and that it subsequently concerns human relationships with, and their responsibility towards the environment. EE is therefore in essence education *about* the environment.

Although an understanding of, and concern for the natural environment through EE is necessary, it is not sufficient for ESD and the search for SD and SSD. Conceptualisation that equates ESD to EE and the natural environment, whilst excluding development issues of SD, is therefore not adequate. As such, EE is not sufficiently responsive to the needs and challenges of ESD. In line with this view, Sterling (2001:31) claims that EE has not made a critical difference in the quest for SD and SSD. Masahisa (2006:10; Schinkel, 2009:509; Surendra, 2006:53) argues that EE focuses on top-down approaches, knowledge transfer, formal education, cause-effect relationships and problem-solving. In addition, EE also uses a theory characterised by a managerial-hierarchical system, technocracy and positivistic epistemology, since it is uncritical and apolitical, as well as more individualistic and limited with regard to understandings of structures. Consequently EE is regarded as part of the problem rather than the solution (to SD and SSD), which as “practiced has too often suggested that it fails to confront the real causes of unsustainable development or address radical solutions” (Huckle, 1999:39-43). EE subsequently does not adequately deal with SSD and social sustainability.

Unlike ESD which is inter-disciplinary, holistic and trans-disciplinary (cf. 3.4.2.1), EE primarily uses science and geography in promoting its aims and objectives (Haury, 1998:4; also Kaivola & Åhlberg, 2007:47; Landorf, Doscher & Rocco, 2008:225). Huckle (1999:38) also observes that EE carries too much baggage and is too closely associated with nature study and the natural sciences. The integration of social and natural systems is subsequently neglected. Le Roux (2000:232) claims that science and geography focuses on ecological concepts and technical solutions to environmental problems at the expense of human causes and change in social systems necessary for solving the problems.

As much as EE can be framed as a contrary case of ESD, it can also be constructed as a border case. According to Summers *et al.* (2004:167), any proposed distinction between ESD and EE is far from clear-cut. As a borderline case, certain similarities between EE and ESD are discernible. These similarities stem from the strong historic links between ESD and EE (cf. 3.4.1), and the interconnected nature of issues of ESD and EE, which results in EE educators generally taking the lead in efforts to conceptualise ESD (McKeown & Hopkins, 2007:19). This is particularly true for South Africa and many countries in the Southern hemisphere and emerging countries where EE is strongly focused on the social, political, economic and biophysical (Sterling, 2010:216; Wade, 2008:33). These aspects are subsequently not regarded as separate. Gough (2006:49) also asserts that EE and ESD are concerned with the same ends: enabling learners to question unsustainable practices and participate in changing these practices.

Due to its multi-dimensional nature, scope and content, ESD is not confined to environmental issues and the responsibility of humans towards the improvement of environmental quality (Huckle, 2006:23). It should be stated once again that whilst EE is an integral and important component of the wider concept of ESD, the latter is holistic and interrelated in its approach and in the diversity of the issues that it covers (cf. 3.4.2.1). Although ESD thus encompasses EE, it includes the latter in the broader context of socio-cultural factors and the socio-political issues of equity, poverty, democracy and quality of life, as well as social change. EE subsequently also carries with it a vision for a better world; questions unsustainable practices and

participates in changing unsustainable practices by promoting critical thinking, values analysis, problem-solving, experiential learning, debate, participatory decision-making and active citizenship (Gough, 2006:49). As such, EE not only contributes to creating awareness about the natural environment and environmental sustainability, but also towards the development of specific dispositions for SD and SSD.

However, the close link between EE and ESD and the interplay between a contrary case and a borderline case have impacted rather ‘negatively’ on conceptualisations of ESD. Not only has ESD been associated with the conservation of the natural environment through geography and science, but it has also been seen as instrumental in the promotion of environmental awareness, values and attitudes (Bonnett, 2003:675; Postma, 2002:41; Selby, 2006:354). ESD subsequently became to be perceived as an extension of EE, whilst educators still largely focus on environment themes, instead of equally on social and economic issues. This is confirmed by Wade (2008:33) who asserts that although EE might be strongly focused on the social, political, economic and biophysical dimensions (as in South Africa), this viewpoint is not necessarily always translated into practice. For this reason Bourn (2008:201) observes that a key indicator of progress on and understanding of ESD would therefore be an explicit recognition of the need to move discourse and practice beyond EE. ESD subsequently needs to be freed from the constraints of EE.

Despite suggestions from the contrary case that ESD is qualitatively different than EE, the border case illustrates that ESD is conceptually and historically linked to EE, and aim towards the same ends. Based on the above I propose ESD to be:

- Qualitatively different than EE, which not only focuses on the protection and promotion of the environment, but also on social and economic issues;
- inclusive of EE, but it places EE within the broader context of socio-cultural factors and the socio-political issues; and
- conceptually and historically linked to EE and aims at the same end, namely to enable learners to question unsustainable practices and participate in the changing of these practices.

In the foregoing exposition it was illustrated that although particular links exist between ESD and EE, ESD is *not* EE. Because of these links it is difficult to separate ESD, at least in the case of South Africa, completely from EE or *vice versa*. However, the strong emphasis that EE places on the environment, as well as criticism levelled against EE's ability to realise SD and SSD, makes any conceptualisation of EE as ESD problematic. It is therefore my contention that conceptualisations of EE as ESD seriously jeopardise the aims and objectives of SD, and specifically that of SSD. For the purpose of this study, I therefore disregard EE as being ESD.

3.4.5 *A WORKING DEFINITION OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

The aim of this chapter was to come up with a workable definition of ESD which could serve as a backdrop against which this study will proceed. According to Du Toit (2005:436), every conceptual analysis must produce a clear outcome that consists of a summary of the key elements of a term, which then serves the purpose of a working definition (Du Toit, 2005:436). However, it should be stated that such a working definition is not finite; rather it is supposed to be only functional and applicable for the duration of a particular study. My proposed working definition of ESD is therefore only applicable to this study.

After having analysed the concept ESD in terms of its socio-economic context, model case scenario, consequences in language and a contrary and borderline case, I propose Education for Sustainable Development to be education that

- is qualitatively different from environmental education (EE); but demonstrate a sensitivity towards it;
- empowers learners, teachers and the broader community;
- is regarded as an agent of educational-, social- as well as personal change;
- assumes an integrated approach towards SD;
- embraces a diversity of social, environmental as well as economic values;
- uses various teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies;
- is not only locally but globally informed;
- is purposive and aims at promoting SD, a SSD life-style, human development, and critical engagement with ESD and SD;

- embraces lifelong learning;
- is quality education which promotes critical reflection, problem-solving and action;
- is a form of enlightenment that integrates different types of knowledge;
- is democratic education which creates space for the development of a democratic and global citizen; and
- emphasises learning that is supported by a learner-oriented learning environment.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the concept ESD was analysed by using Du Toit's (2005) approach to conceptual analysis. By reflecting on *the socio-historic context, a model case, the impact on language, and a contrary and border case*, the constitutive elements were identified. These elements were then used to construct a working definition of ESD. This working definition holds particular implications for the re-orientation of education towards SD, and particularly towards SSD. It is assumed that when education is re-oriented towards ESD, education will display the constitutive elements that make up the working definition. Whilst this working definition will form the backdrop against which the remainder of this study will unfold, it will in particular be used as a framework to explore the responsiveness of South African policy documents to ESD.

CHAPTER 4: CRITICAL POLICY ANALYSIS OF SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION POLICY DOCUMENTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3 the concept *Education for Social Development* was conceptually analysed and a working definition was formulated (cf. 3.4.5). Informed by this working definition and in order to explore its responsiveness to ESD and SSD, a critical analysis of various South African education policy documents will be undertaken. Although introductory remarks about critical policy analysis (CPA) were made in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.5.2.3), a thorough exposition of what CPA entails and the way in which it will inform this chapter is required. This exposition will be followed by a critical analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011(a)). However, since I will be analysing particular texts which are influential within a particular domain of human existence, namely education and more specifically education for sustainable development, I regard it also relevant to explore the meaning and aim of policies in general and educational policies in particular. This stance is underscored by Ball (2006:44) who observes that one of the conceptual problems currently lurking within policy research is that more often than not, analysts fail to define conceptually what they mean by policy. In this regard, I accept that the meanings attached to the concept *policy* will also affect the way in which I undertake my analysis of South African education policy documents, and how I will interpret my findings.

4.2 THE NATURE OF POLICY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION POLICY

Ozga (2000:2; cf. also Taylor *et al.*, 1997:23) asserts that there is no fixed or single definition of policy, and Ball (2006:45) argues that policy can be used to describe different things at different points in the same study. Although policy is generally

portrayed as actions by governments aimed at securing particular outcomes which should be beneficial to society at large (Hartshorne, 1999), Taylor *et al.* (1997:24) warn against definitions which give a too simplistic view of policy. Rather, a range of meanings and uses exist and the way in which the term is conceived, depends on the perspective of the researcher.

According to McLaughlin (2000:442; cf. also Anderson, 2006:6), policy is developed by those who exercise power and wants to change institutions or practices through a prescription of actions. Berkhout and Wielemans (1999:404; cf. also Cheek & Gibson, 1997:669) refer to power, authority and value allocation as enduring concepts in the policy processes. Policies are therefore not only fundamentally grounded in and vested with authority, but are also outcomes of a process in which power and control is used, either explicitly or implicitly. Policies should subsequently not be seen as innocent and neutral conveyers of procedures and undertakings to be implemented for the common good. Rather, policies are value-laden political ‘tools’ rife with compromises and struggles, and open to interpretations and reinterpretations. Ball (2006:44-50) describes policy as both text and discourse that legitimises certain influences and agendas at a particular point in time. Policies are consequently not merely documents of instruction or intention, but they represent the exclusive voices of particular groups; they serve as the vehicle that privileges, promotes and legitimises the values, interpretations and vested interests of those groups. Policies can therefore never be divorced from interests, conflict, domination or (in)justice.

Language is used tactically in the legitimisation of vested interests and values (Taylor, n.d.:3). Fairclough (in Cheek & Gibson, 1997:670) supports the perception that unequal power relations are sustained through certain ‘common sense assumptions’ that are embedded in the form of language. In this regard, Taylor *et al.* (1997:15) claim that the words chosen to be included in policy text are *carefully selected* and *much revised* against the background of the objections of various interests. It can consequently be agreed with Codd (1988:235) that policy is in essence also about the exercise of political power and the language used to legitimate that process. Since language can be used as a political instrument and an object of power, it should be reiterated that policy cannot be taken as evident of what

the author intends. The analysis of language used in policy text could therefore contribute to not only unveiling underlying values, assumptions and ideologies, but also to explore discontinuity, omissions and exceptions.

Adams (2004:21) further reminds us that policies have to be read in relation to the time and the particular site of its production. Policies subsequently emerge out of, and are informed by a specific context. In this regard Taylor *et al.* (1997:16) claim that there is always a prior history of significant events; a particular ideological and political climate and a social and economic context which influence the shape and timing of policies, as well as their evolution and outcomes. Taysum and Iqbal (2012:15) also assert that policies are hermeneutically situated within a particular social history that is political. As a product of its context, policies stand in a relationship with that context. In addition to the local context, a global context is also implied (Taysum & Iqbal, 2012:15; Tlali, 2010:88). Perceived as globally networked, all countries are linked with each other through international forums, institutions and agencies which provide assistance for policy guidelines and capacity building of person power. The global context of policy should therefore be read within the broader context of globalisation.

In addition to its context-relatedness, policies also sit in a dialogical relationship with previous and existing policy documents (Dudley-Marling, Stevens & Gurn, 2007). Porter (1986:35) asserts that every discourse is composed of traces or pieces of other texts that help to constitute its meaning. Because text makes its social meaning against the background of other texts and the discourse of other occasions (Lemke, 2004:3), policy texts are intertextually linked. Intertextuality reminds that the discourse within a particular text does not exist in a vacuum (Voithofer, 2006:204). Rather, intertextuality draws our attention to prior texts in the attempt to make meaning of current policy text.

From the preceding exposition it appears that policy is both contested and changing; it is always in a state of 'becoming', of 'was' and 'never was' and 'not quite' (Ball, 2006:4). However, policy also appears not to be a seamless process from development to implementation. It involves interactive, dynamic and multi-

dimensional processes (Webb & Gulson, 2012:88), which are all in one way or another politically informed and contributes to the contested nature of policies.

In terms of education policy, Berkhout and Wielemans (1999:403) warn that its conceptualisation in complex, dynamic and diverse socio-political systems is more problematic. It involves more than a mere description of policy as a set of executive, administrative, deliberative, and adjudicative institutions and/or official texts that direct education at the various hierarchical levels of government. Informed by the foregoing, I proceed from the assumption that education policies are not neutral. Rather, education policies are entangled in values, controversy and struggles which involve both personal and societal values. Since it is value-laden, education policy can become a political tool used to advance particular values and interests. To advance these particular values and interests, language is tactically used to convey particular messages and to create a particular discourse in which certain voices are excluded and certain values disregarded. Education policies are therefore rife with the values, intentions and interests of its authors. Furthermore, education policies cannot be divorced from its context and its relation with other policies. In order to be meaningful, education policies therefore need to be read against the background of its local and global context, as well as other policies by which they are informed.

It is my contention that South African education policies are value-laden *text*, developed to sustain a particular *discourse* on ESD and SSD. I therefore assume that education policy directives pertaining to ESD and SSD cannot be taken on face value as evident of what a government's intentions are. Rather, education policies should be critically analysed to explore hidden meanings, vested interests and covert values.

However, the particular perspective adopted when analysing a policy is crucial to the nature of its findings (Grimley, 1986:20). Wary of the limitations of traditional policy analysis (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:17; also Grimley, 1986:22; O'Connor, 2005:3), critical policy analysis appears to be most suitable to provide me with the appropriate 'tools' to explore hidden meanings and vested interests in policy text. It is with the foregoing perspectives on policy in general and education policy in particular in mind, that a critical policy analysis of South African education policies will be undertaken.

4.3 CRITICAL POLICY ANALYSIS

4.3.1 *BASIC ASSUMPTIONS*

It was indicated in Chapter 1 that the critical policy analysis framework advocated by Taylor *et al.* (1997; cf. 1.5.2.3) will be applied in this study. According to Taylor *et al.* (1997:19), critical policy analysis (CPA) conceptualises education as a moral ideal linked to concerns of social justice. This implies that CPA presents a vision of a moral order where justice, equality and individual freedom are uncompromised (Grimley, 1986:24). As a deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power, social justice requires the establishment of institutional and other structural conditions for promoting self-determination and self-development of all members of society (Pendlebury & Enslin, 2004:36). Linked to social justice, education concerns both individual and social aims and objectives. Education therefore seeks to develop those faculties and qualities in learners that will assist them to lead creative and fulfilling lives and to create the social conditions necessary for the development of a caring and equitable society. It could thus be assumed that since social justice requires an on-going struggle (Bogotch, 2000:2), education policies and practices must not only be aligned with the moral vision of a country, but also with achieving social justice. Meanings associated with social justice, such as equity, justice, equality, freedom and democracy should therefore be articulated in policy text and in practice. Subsequently, CPA also investigates the ways in which key terms are used (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:19). By exploring the use of terms associated with social justice, I am able to not only infer the responsiveness of South African education policies with the moral vision for education and social justice, but also with ESD and SSD.

4.3.2 *FOCUS ON THE USE OF POWER*

Notwithstanding education's concern with social justice, education policies are the outcome of political processes and struggles in which certain values are promoted, and particular voices silenced (cf. 4.2). CPA can therefore not be confined to the content of a policy only. Rather, CPA should also focus on the policy development process, as well as policy implementation, for it is in these processes that the influence of politics, economic and social forces, people and interests can be observed (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:20). The policy process is open to the immoral use of power, and the promotion of the interests of particular groups with disregard of

educations' moral vision and social justice. For this reason, CPA also examines the way in which policy content reflects certain understandings of reality (Cheek & Gibson, 1997:670). As such, CPA moves beyond overly simplistic and falsely apolitical questions of "what works". Rather, it poses essential questions of what works for whom, by whom, and for what purposes (Stevens, 2003:663). Since CPA is grounded in a particular vision of a moral order, it is overtly political and therefore sensitive to the social justice interests and needs of the oppressed and the marginalised.

Conscious of the possibility that policy might impede upon social justice, CPA also investigates the (mis)use of power and interests in policy texts. To ignore issues of power is to ensure powerlessness (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:20). Pendlebury and Enslin (2004:36) assert that powerlessness inhibits the development of people's capacities and scope of their decision-making power, and exposes them to disrespectful treatment because of their status. Similarly, Bourdieu (in Carr, 2006:4) also asks the question: *if inequitable power relations are not fully acknowledged how can there be anything but the maintenance of the system, the re-production of social relations and knowledge?* Therefore, issues of power and interest, especially in policy, need to be investigated. Anderson (in Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999:404) argues that CPA seeks a better understanding of the often invisible ways in which social interaction is structured, power wielded and privileged interests protected. Hence Troyna's (in Gale, 2007:153) claim that CPA is about the pulling apart of policy discourse to determine whose interests they serve. An examination of the manner in which power is exercised in the making of political choices is thus central to CPA. In this way CPA can assist in exposing and creating an awareness of unequal power relations and the resulting hegemony, privilege and oppression. In addition, CPA can also expose the (mis)use of power to maintain inequalities in society.

4.3.3 *CONCERNED WITH VALUES*

CPA subsequently rejects positivistic assumptions of value-neutrality and objectivity, and foregrounds normative questions. Since CPA is critical about policies, the intentions captured in it and the values it sets out to promote, it requires that the values of both the policy analyst and those embedded in and promoted by policy

text, be declared and argued upfront. Policy analysts thus need to declare their values, for “one’s own values are inextricably linked to the way we might approach policy analysis, especially in education, where the very notion of education is linked to moral purposes and is thus highly contested” (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:17). As a policy analyst, my own values are therefore not divorced from the policy analysis process, and an awareness of my own values as well as the values I want the policy to promote, becomes integral to CPA.

In addition to stating my own values as policy analyst, CPA requires an analysis of the values embedded in and promoted by the policy. Since policies impose and promote preferred values (cf. 4.2), CPA should also be committed to critically analyse the values in education policies as part of the process of clarifying the values that an analyst believes should inform policy (Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999:407). In addition, Bogotch (2000:3) not only calls for a challenge of structures built upon the so-called neutrality of objective reality, but also for the acknowledgement that the systems we have in place represent and subsequently reproduce the dominant culture and values in society. Thus, it becomes imperative to expose preferred values and social arrangements and the sources of power and control underpinning them, as well as hegemonic technologies which restrain human consciousness and emancipation (Starr in Cheek & Gibson, 1997:670). In order to achieve social justice, CPA should expose the ways in which agendas are set and framed in favour of dominant interests and values. In relation to ESD and SSD, CPA should enable me to make transparent the preferred values and raise questions relating to these values and the basis upon which they are validated as being appropriate and good.

4.3.4 *EMPHASIS ON REFORM AND CHANGE*

As a value explicit activity, CPA also explicitly and/or implicitly makes judgments on whether and in what ways policies assist to make things better (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:37). CPA therefore interrogates assumptions that policies are intrinsically good, moral and developed in the interest of social justice. CPA’s ability to create awareness of and insight into power relations and value assumptions in policies can assist in shaping the policy-making process in order to improve the quality of policy

decisions and empower community action (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:20). It is therefore particularly the potential of CPA to improve and to create space for empowerment that makes it fundamentally concerned with reform and change.

As a moral ideal concerned with social justice, education is essentially about the development of democratic communities in which everyone feels free and capable of participation (Taylor *et al.*, 1997:19). Participation and inclusion are therefore integral components of social justice. Pendlebury and Enslin (2004:37) argue that in young democracies such as South Africa, widened and deepened democratic practices provide the best means for promoting social justice. This requires participation in public deliberation that affects people's lives and the possibilities for their self-development. In order to give effect to this principle, CPA seeks to avoid the one-way communication inherent in top-down policy by including participants from all areas of policy involvement on an equal footing basis (Grimley, 1986:24). As such, CPA facilitates emancipation of the oppressed by allowing them input in policy procedures, and informing them about the manner of their oppression. In this way CPA seeks to subvert existing social arrangements by promoting consciousness of the situations of oppressed groups and the methods by which such oppression is maintained. This is consistent with the aim of creating praxis (Grimley, 1986:24), which entails the coalescing of thought and action from which social theorisation and the immediate concern with social action arises. I therefore assume that knowledge of the roles that education policies play in perpetuating structures of social injustice and inequality in society would prompt teachers to act in order to change their education practice, and to bring about emancipation from oppression.

In summary, CPA is fundamentally critical and it accepts nothing as sacred. Therefore, CPA aims to expose the sources of domination, repression and exploitation that are entrenched in and legitimated by policy (Prunty in Cheek & Gibson, 1997:670). In addition, CPA emphasis the spaces in which counter-hegemonic actions can be found, and mobilises countervailing support. By embracing participation, CPA gives a voice to the marginalised, oppressed and disenfranchised members of society. As such, CPA will enable me to interrogate existing education policies pertaining to ESD for traces of domination, repression and exploitation. However, since CPA has a social justice agenda, and is concerned

with change and transformation, it will also create the space for action in order to change conditions of social injustice created and perpetuated by socially unjust education policies.

4.4 THE USE OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

Although CPA entails the analysis of the policy context, the content, as well as the consequences for implementation (Taylor *et al.*, 1997), I will only focus on a context and content analysis in this study. Framed within the context of CPA, a content and context analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011a) will be undertaken. Since these policy-related documents serve as a communiqué on educational matters between the government and the education sector of South Africa, they are regarded as suitable for a content analysis. However, since policies are textually linked to one another (cf. 4.2), my content analysis will also involve reference to other policy documents that inform the two mentioned policies. It is my contention that a content analysis of these documents will enable me to expose the consistency and/or inconsistency of education policy with the moral vision of education as an issue of social justice. Since CPA concerns transformation and change, a content analysis will also enable me to explore spaces for empowerment against social injustices with the aim of bringing about change and transformation. In accordance with the basic assumptions of CPA, my analysis will be informed by the following assumptions:

- South African education policy and practice are plagued with certain contradictions and disillusioning creating a false consciousness of education being transformed towards ESD and aimed towards SS;
- contradictions and disillusioning regarding SD and SS must be exposed and relentlessly critiqued;
- South African education policy and practice perpetuate inequalities in various ways and lead to further social injustices and enslavement of South African citizens;
- a critical reflection on education policy and practice can expose its responsiveness to SS;

- a re-orientation of traditional education policy and practice to ESD will assist in the transformation of the South African society towards SS;
- education policy can only be improved by revealing and exposing what is hidden in it; and
- space must be created for teachers to empower themselves to change their own education practices to give effect to the aims and objectives of SD and SS.

Premised on the notion that South African education policy and practice create the false impression of being re-oriented towards ESD, a qualitative content analysis will be undertaken through which the interpretations and meanings of text will be explored (Zhang & Wildemuth, n.d.:2). The analysis will also include an examination of the assumptions, values, and ideologies underlying the documents, as well as the discourses around which they have been built (Codd, 1988:236; Taylor *et al.*, 1997:49). Since my analysis will be undertaken with an awareness of power relations and its impact on social (in)justice, it will be imperative to examine the way in which language is used to construct and maintain unequal power relations and social injustices. A content analysis of a policy will subsequently enable me to reveal those aspects of the text that are not explicitly stated, especially since that which is not obviously stated in a policy is equally significant to explicitly mentioned aspects (Neuman, 2000:292-294). My analysis will consequently focus on both the manifested and latent meanings embedded in the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011a).

Taylor *et al.* (1997:20) argue that content analysis can only be effective if the nature of the context within which policies are made and implemented, is clarified. White and Marsh (2006:28) also assert that policy texts are related to what precedes and follows it, as well as to other similar texts. To strategise a response to the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011a), an understanding of their context, as well as their relation with other policy documents is required (also Codd, 1988:243-244). As such, a content analysis should enable me to not only situate

these documents within a broader social, economic and political context, but also to read them in relation to other relevant policies (cf. 4.2).

In summary, a content analysis should enable me to make inferences about the assumptions and values that inform South African education policy on ESD and SSD. Furthermore, it should also enable me to identify unequal power relations and traces of oppression. Through an analysis of the language used in framing issues of ESD and SSD in South African education policies, a step could be taken towards answering my research question relating to the responsiveness of South Africa education policies to ESD and SSD.

In order to undertake a content analysis of the two policy-related documents, my working definition of ESD will be utilised as the framework for the analysis. Since the working definition holds certain consequences regarding ESD for education policy and practice in South Africa, the analysis will be framed against the background of the constitutive elements of ESD. As such, for the purpose of this study I regard education that is re-oriented towards ESD as education which:

- is qualitatively different than environmental education (EE); but demonstrate a sensitivity towards it
- empowers learners, teachers and the broader community;
- is regarded as an agent of educational-, social- as well as personal change;
- assumes an integrated approach towards SD;
- embraces a diversity of social, environmental as well as economic values;
- uses various teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies;
- is not only locally but globally informed;
- is purposive and aims at promoting SD, a SSD lifestyle, human development, and critical engagement with ESD and SD;
- embraces lifelong learning;
- is quality education which promotes critical reflection, problem-solving and action;
- is regarded as a form of enlightenment which integrates different types of knowledge;

- is democratic education which creates space for the development of a democratic and global citizen; and
- emphasises learning that is supported by a learner oriented learning environment.

4.5 CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING (1995) AND THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT, LIFE ORIENTATION FET (10-12) (2011A)

4.5.1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Against the background of my earlier observation that a context analysis is a prerequisite for CPA, and more specifically a thorough content analysis (cf. 4.2), I now embark on a context analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (WPET) (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011(a)) (CAPS LO FET). These documents are significant. The WPET represents the break with the apartheid educational past, since it constitutes a framework for the overhauling of the entire education system and articulates the principles for education and training in South Africa (cf. 4.5.1.1(c)). On the other hand, the CAPS LO FET translates the aims and objectives of the WPET and gives effect to the broader transformation of South African education and society (cf. 4.5.1.1(d)). I therefore assume that an analysis of these documents will not only provide the background of the local historic context and the factors that prompted education change, but also of the local policy context and the global context which might have influenced the conceptualisation and the re-orientation of South African education and policies towards ESD and SSD.

4.5.1.1 THE HISTORIC CONTEXT

In order to frame these documents within the broader historic context, it should once again be stated that prior to 1994 education in South Africa was organised along racial lines, with education policy used to reinforce notions of inequality and oppression (cf. 1.3). Gross inequalities in education provisioning not only epitomised institutionalised racism, but the South African society was in general characterised by social injustices. This state of affairs resulted in a pattern of contrasts and

paradoxes in education: on the one hand, South Africa had the best and most developed and well-resourced education and training system on the African continent, while on the other hand, there were millions of functionally illiterate adults and children and youth learning in schools that resembled conditions similar to those in the most impoverished countries (DoE, 1995: Section 7). However, the first democratic elections of 1994 and the adoption of the *South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996* (hereafter the Constitution), put South Africa on a trajectory of social sustainability characterised by democracy, freedom, respect for human rights and equality. To realise social sustainability various education policy documents were enacted. These documents will subsequently be briefly explored.

a) The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

Premised on the assumption that South Africa's past is rife with injustices (RSA, 1996: Preamble), the Constitution envisions the redress of societal inequalities and the freeing of South Africa from institutional racism and oppression. As such, the Constitution embodies the moral vision of the people of South Africa and articulates the vision as constituted by the values of "human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms; non-racialism and non-sexism; and the supremacy of the constitution and the rule of law" (RSA, 1996: Section 1(a-c)). The moral vision for South Africa is also articulated in the *Bill of Rights*, which "enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom" (RSA, 1996: Section 7(1)). Amongst the various rights and freedoms enshrined and protected by the *Bill of Rights*, is the right to basic education and training (RSA, 1996: Section 29).

As such, the Constitution as the supreme law of the country also provides the basis for the transformation of the South African education system. As such, it proposes that education should be transformed and democratised in accordance with the democratic values of human dignity and social justice. It is therefore assumed that the Constitution, which is regarded "a living instrument of justice in our society" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 6, Section 4), would not only contain directives for the reorientation of education towards ESD, but also directives about the role of education in bringing about changes that could promote social sustainability in South Africa. South African education laws and policies should therefore be grounded in

the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996*. This is of particular importance because the hopes of all South Africans for a better quality of life, is grounded in education. Against this background, the Department of Education (DoE) promises that “all new education and training policies to address the legacies of under-development and inequitable development and provide learning opportunities for all will be based on the constitutional guarantees of equal education rights for all and non-discrimination” (1995: Chapter 3, Section 16). The DoE therefore acknowledges the value and importance of the Constitution in re-orienting education towards ESD and the realisation of SSD.

b) The reconstruction and development of South Africa

The new legislative and political climate in South Africa brought about by the new Constitution mandated the development of new policies that would not only realise the vision of the Constitution, but also reconstruct and develop the country. These developments inevitably also impacted on the conceptualisation of education policies in South Africa. Therefore, although not a policy, the Constitution forms the backdrop against which all education policies are formed. In line with this, other equally relevant and related policies such as the *Reconstruction and Development Plan* (1994) also influence the outcomes of education policies. For example, the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 1, Section 1) locates education and training within the national *Reconstruction and Development Program* (RPD) of 1994. The DoE (1995: Chapter 5, Section 2) also declares that “the entire work of the national and provincial Ministries of Education supports the objectives of the RDP”. The RDP and its latest conceptualisation, the *National Development Plan 2030* (NDP) of 2012 embrace SD and SSD by aiming to *inter alia* reduce poverty and inequality in South Africa (RSA, 2012b:14; cf. 2.3.5). Both the RDP, as well as the NDP form the basis of the government’s attempt to address poverty and deprivation, and to build a united, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa (RSA, 2012b:1). It could therefore be assumed that the priorities, values and principles of education and training are derived from and should be in line with these policy documents. Inter-textuality is further implied in the close cooperation between the Ministries of Education and Labour, which resulted in joint policy work to develop common interests in an integrated approach towards teaching and learning, and a *National Qualifications*

Framework. South African education policy documents are subsequently also linked to the broader project of social development and transformation.

c) The White Paper on Education and Training (1995)

The promulgation of the *White Paper on Education and Training* in 1995 could be regarded as the first decisive step in breaking with the previous education system and transforming education in alignment with local and global imperatives. In line with the view of Pendlebury and Enslin (2004:41), the WPET also casts the *Bill of Rights* as its moral framework and affirms basic education (including adult education) as a universal right. Since the WPET takes its bearing from the vision of the *Constitution of South Africa*, it could be regarded as the educational articulation of the Constitution, which not only defines the values and principles of all future education policies, but also aims at paving the way for the transformation of education and the broader society into a social sustainable society. The WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 16) indicates that

[n]ew education and training policies to address the legacies of under-development and inequitable development and provide learning opportunities for all will be based principally on the constitutional guarantees of equal educational rights for all persons and non-discrimination, and their formulation and implementation must also scrupulously observe all other constitutional guarantees and protections which apply to education.

The significance of the WPET in transforming both education and society is further demonstrated in the declaration that

“[i]t is time to declare that a new era has dawned. In publishing this document, the Ministry of Education opens not just a new chapter but an entire new volume in the country’s educational development” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 22).

The value of the WPET for SSD lies in its aim to “ensure democratisation, a clear framework for redress, equity, and the transformation of our educational bureaucracy” (DoE, 1995: Part 6, Section 4), as well as the South African society into a sustainable society. It is this intention of the WPET which makes it a suitable document for analysis in terms of its responsiveness towards ESD.

d) The National Curriculum Statements

Various policy documents aimed at realising the visions of both the Constitution and the WPET were enacted since 1995. Amongst these are the *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12* of 2003 which served as a policy statement to guide teaching and learning in the FET band. However, the *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12 of 2003*, was replaced with the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12* (NCS) of 2011, after certain implementation challenges were revealed. Like the former, the NCS of 2011 also focuses on teaching and learning, including curriculum and assessment in South African schools. As a unified document, the NCS (2011a) comprises of a single comprehensive *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS) for each approved subject; the *National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*; and the *National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12*.

The NCS (2011(a)) is not only informed by and grounded in the principles and stipulations of the WPET, but also the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996)*. According to the NCS (2003:1), the “adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) provided a basis for curriculum transformation and development in South Africa”. It is subsequently assumed that the NCS Grades R–12 (2011a) in general and the NCS for Life Orientation in Further Education and Training (FET) (Grades 10-12) (2011a) in particular, not only articulate the vision and values of the Constitution and the WPET, but also the vision for a sustainable South African society. In addition, I assume that since South Africa embraces sustainable development (cf. 2.3.5), a transformed curriculum will not only provide a basis for development *per se*, but for sustainable development and the establishment of a social sustainable society. The latter in particular is underscored by the statement of the Minister of Basic Education² (DBE, 2011a: Foreword by the Minister) that education and the curriculum have an important role to play in realising the aims and objectives of the Constitution.

² The Department of Education was dissolved in 2009 and divided into the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training. Educational matters pertaining to schools are now the responsibility of the Department of Basic Education.

Life Orientation (LO) is one of the four fundamental and compulsory subjects required for the National Senior Certificate for all learners in Grades 10-12. LO focuses on the development of the self in relation to others and the society (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). It further encourages the development of “balanced and confident learners who can contribute to a just and democratic society, a productive economy and an improved quality of life for all” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). As such, LO not only demonstrates a particular alignment with the Constitution, but also with SD and SSD (cf. also 1.1). LO can therefore be regarded significant in achieving the vision of both the Constitution and of social sustainable development. It is against this background that I regard the NCS (2011), and particularly the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) Life Orientation, FET (10-12)* (2011a) as a suitable document for analysis.

4.5.1.2 THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

In addition to the local environment, the global context also impacts on the development of policies (cf. 4.2). This applies particularly to South Africa, and is echoed by N'zimande and Mathieson (2000:110) who state that globalisation is not only an external factor to the political economy of South Africa, but an integral component. It could therefore be assumed that globalisation also has a profound impact on the articulation of education policies in South Africa. This view is supported by Nekhwevha (1999:498) who frames the transformation of South African education within the lure and attraction of the international economic and technological order. Adams (2004:73) also blames globalisation for the rather narrow and instrumentalist notion of teaching and learning discernible in the discourse on teacher education in South Africa. The impact of globalisation on South African education policy is further demonstrated in the statement that “integrated approaches towards education and training are now a major international trend in curriculum development and the reform of qualification structures” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 6).

The above exposition demonstrates that in South Africa, education transformation in particular, and the transformation of society through education in general, is both a Constitutional, as well as a global imperative. To realise this transformation, the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995), as well the *National Curriculum*

Statement (2011(a)), (and in particular the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011(a))) were enacted. These two documents can therefore be regarded as pivotal in the transformation of education and the creation of a social sustainable South African society.

4.5.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

In order to explore the responsiveness of South African policy documents to ESD, I will use my working definition (cf. 3.4.5) as a framework to undertake a content analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011(a)).

4.5.2.1 ESD IS QUALITATIVELY DIFFERENT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Although the WPET does not in any way refer to ESD, it declared EE as one of the principles upon which future education and training in South Africa will be built. It is stated that

[e]nvironmental education involving an inter-disciplinary, integrated and active approach to learning, must be a vital element of all levels and programmes of the education and training system, in order to create environmentally literate and active citizens and ensure that all South Africans, present and future enjoy a decent quality of life through the sustainable use of resources (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 21).

As such, the DoE regards EE not only as an important aspect of education and training, but also as an active approach to learning. Since EE is promoted as integral to education, all subjects are to be oriented towards EE. No explicit link is drawn between the environment and social issues *per se*, and environmental sustainability is prominently advocated by the call for environmental resources to be used sustainably for current and future generations. EE is subsequently conceptualised in terms of the conservation and preservation of the natural environment and its resources, and to become environmentally literate, learners are to be endowed with knowledge, skills and values. EE subsequently aims at developing citizens that have agency to act in response to the environment. This conceptualisation of EE corresponds particularly with the Ministry of Environmental Affairs' conceptualisation of SD (cf. 2.3.5). The integration of EE across the curriculum focuses on environmental concerns and not necessarily on issues of

SSD. The claim that EE will enable South Africans to enjoy a decent quality of life should therefore be read in connection with the focus on the environment, and not in terms of social justice and the enjoyment of basic human rights. It seems as if a narrow view of EE is promoted as opposed to ESD, which explicitly encapsulates social issues. As such, EE as conceptualised in the WPET, runs the risk of not being realised in terms of the vision for ESD and the promotion of SSD.

Environmental concerns feature strongly in both the NCS (2003b:4) and the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)), which both ground LO on the principle of environmental justice and social justice. Social and environmental responsibility also forms one of the six themes of LO in the CAPS LO FET. Issues of environmental sustainability such as environmental causes of ill health and climate change; environments and services that promote safe and healthy living; and responsibilities of various levels of government are subsequently dealt with across the FET phase (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.1). Although Grade 10 seems to focus on social issues that impact negatively on local and global communities, these issues are not framed within notions of justice, equality and equity. For example, although reference is made to poverty, no critical engagement with the notion of ‘poverty’ and its causes is envisaged. By not framing environmental challenges within a broader social context, EE not only signals a mismatch with ESD, but is also in danger of not promoting and developing a social sustainable society.

A similar conceptualisation of EE is found in subjects such as Life Sciences and Geography. In the former, EE topics are organised under the knowledge strand ‘Environmental Studies’, which aims to encourage learners “to look for and suggest solutions to local environmental problems” (DBE, 2011b: Section 3.2). Environmental Studies also intend that “learners will become more informed and more sensitive to environmental issues and will modify their behaviour to lessen their impact on the environment” (DBE, 2011b: Section 3.2). In addition, Life Sciences aim to develop in learners “an understanding of the ways in which humans have impacted negatively on the environment and organisms living in it”, as well as “an awareness of what it means to be a responsible citizen in terms of the environment” (DBE, 2011b: Section 2.1). Environmental Studies envisage no critical examination of issues of power relations and privilege, which inevitably determine the relationship

of humans with the environment. By focusing exclusively on the environment, this learning strand holds the potential to jeopardise SSD and efforts to re-orientate education towards ESD.

CAPS Geography FET aims to “investigate the activities and impact of people on the Earth” (DBE, 2011c: Section 2.1), and to promote the skills, values and knowledge for “making and justifying informed decisions and judgements about social and environmental issues” (DBE, 2011c: Section 2.2). Although social issues are dealt with, the social is linked to the environmental in a way that suggests that the former should only be explained in relation to its impact on the environment, and not as issues of concern in their own right, or of social justice. Thus, although Geography aims at “developing a commitment to sustainable development”, “creating awareness and sensitivity to inequality in the world” and “fostering empathy, tolerance and fairness” (DBE, 2011c: Section 2.2), this should be read in relation to environmental sustainability. This environmental focus is demonstrated by the content which, amongst others, concentrates on the effect of development on the environment, resources and sustainability (DBE, 2011c: Section 3.2). Since sustainability within this context refers to environmental sustainability exclusively, and not sustainable development as an integrated concept (cf. 2.3.4), it is inferred that social sustainability is once again viewed and framed within environmental sustainability. This demonstrates an ignorance of SSD, while Geography also does not appear to respond to ESD.

Although the concept ‘development’ is also used in Geography, it is not conceptualised; rather it is primarily used to distinguish between various forms of development and in relation to (albeit questionable) concepts such as ‘developed’; ‘developing’, ‘more economically developed countries’, and ‘less economically developed countries’ (DBE, 2011c: Section 3.2). No critical interrogation of these concepts or related concepts such as growth or SD, which would expose issues of domination or unequal power relations, is encouraged. Rather, emphasis is placed on concepts which are traditionally associated with economic development (growth), such as ‘gross national product’, ‘gross domestic product’, ‘human development index’ and ‘Gini-coefficient’ (DBE, 2011c). The impression is subsequently created that ‘economic development’, interpreted as economic growth, should be sustained

(DBE, 2011c). It was noted earlier that although necessary, sustained economic growth is not a sufficient requirement for sound development (cf. 2.3.1) or SD. Thus, although social issues are implied in both Life Sciences and Geography, environmental and economic growth concerns still appear to dominate SD discourse in South African education, at the expense of social sustainability.

In addition, apart from a single reference, the construct 'sustainable development' does not appear in the CAPS Geography FET. The one time that it is used, it is not as an integrated and interrelated concept (cf. 2.3.4), but as a distinctive form of development alongside 'economic development' and 'social development' (DBE, 2011c: Section 3.2). As such, the DBE regards 'sustainable development' as a distinctive form of development, which exclusively concerns environmental sustainability. Social sustainable development appears therefore not to be regarded as an integral component of SD.

Contrary to the integrated nature of ESD and SD (cf. 3.4.2.1 and 2.3.4), according to the foregoing analysis it appears that an explicit focus is placed on EE and issues related to environmental protection. Thus, although the assumption is that social issues are integrated into EE, this is not necessarily the case and no clear distinction is drawn between EE and ESD. In addition, it is evident that social issues are largely framed in relation to the environment (cf. 2.3.2), and 'development' is linked to notions of 'economic growth' (cf. 2.3.1). The spheres of SD therefore appear to be treated unequally. The particular location of issues related to SD within the Natural and Life Sciences and the exclusive emphasis on the environment are contributing factors to the particular conceptualisation of EE. From the focus on and conceptualisation of EE, it appears that environmental sustainability concerns take centre stage and is valued above social issues. EE therefore seems to neglect the social aspect of SD, and therefore appears to show no correspondence with ESD in this regard.

4.5.2.2 ESD EMPOWERS LEARNERS, TEACHERS AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY

According to the DoE (1995: Chapter 3, Section 2; Chapter 5, Section 1):

Appropriate education and training can empower people to participate effectively in all the processes of democratic society, social activity, cultural expression, and

community life, and can help citizens to build a nation free of race, gender and every other form of discrimination.

By using the verb 'empower', the DoE acknowledges that the South African people were disempowered and were not at that time, able to participate in building a democratic and free South Africa and so realise the vision of a sustainable South African society, as well as a transformed education system as envisioned for a new South Africa. The DoE envisages that once empowered, South Africans will enjoy all the rights and privileges of a democratic society and a truly free nation. It is assumed that South Africans will become active democratic citizens who respect the rights of other people, and effectively take part in decision-making, voting, and the economy and in the protection and promotion of their cultures. The WPET (1995) therefore advocates the empowerment of the South African people in the hope that this will contribute towards a social sustainable society, and subsequently demonstrate responsiveness towards ESD.

Similarly, by using the word 'build', the DoE envisaged a new kind of society. One could assume that given the Constitutional directives, that a social sustainable society is envisaged. The WPET therefore anticipates that education would empower the South African people to become effectively involved in building such a sustainable society. Against the background of South Africa's history of social injustices and subsequent social unsustainability, education that empowers people socially, economically and politically to bring about SSD, is indeed relevant and necessary.

However, the ability to empower South Africans and to realise a social sustainable society is dependent upon the provision of "appropriate education and training" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 2; Chapter 5, Section 1). Although the concept 'appropriate' is not clarified, I assume that it refers to education and training, which "is able to meet the personal and social needs and economic challenges" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 22) of the South African people. In addition, the "entire work of the national and provincial Ministries of Education supports the objectives of the RDP, since education and training is by definition developmental" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 1, cf. also 4.5.2.8). Therefore, not only is the empowerment of

South Africans linked to the broader project of the reconstruction and development of the country, but it also relates to the realisation of the vision of a social sustainable South African society. The WPET subsequently not only demonstrates a commitment to SSD, but also an orientation of education towards ESD.

Empowerment is also linked to the establishment of democratic governance structures. In this regard, the DoE (1995: Chapter 4, Section 10) suggests that the rehabilitation of the schools “must go hand in hand with the establishment and empowerment of legitimate representative governance bodies”. The governance of schools can therefore not be placed in the hands of disempowered communities, especially not if South Africans are to realise the vision of a social sustainable society. The establishment and empowered of legitimate governance bodies will not only promote SSD, but will, in principle, underscore ESD.

Taking its cue from the WPET, the NCS of 2003 explicitly committed South African education to empowerment and social justice (DoE, 2003a:8; cf. also 2003b:3). However, contrary to these two documents, the CAPS LO FET document is vague on its role of empowerment, and makes no reference to either empowerment or social justice. The absence of any explicit reference to the possible role of education in the continued empowerment of South Africans could have a negative impact on the realisation of the vision of SSD in South Africa, and the orientation of education towards ESD.

However, it could only be assumed from its aims, that the CAPS LO FET anticipates the empowerment of learners, teachers and the community to effectively participate in realising a social sustainable society (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(d); also 2011a: Section 2.2). In line with this, the DBE (2011a: Section 1.3(b)) aims at “equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or mental ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country”. In addition, the DBE also aims at enabling learners to “respond appropriately to life’s responsibilities and opportunities” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.2). Empowerment is further implied in the broad topics and content prescribed for CAPS LO FET. These topics not only cover issues related to social and environmental responsibility,

democracy and human rights, but also focuses on the role of the self in society, careers and career choices, study skills and physical well-being (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.1 and 3.2). From these assumptions it appears as if the CAPS LO FET could possibly feed into SSD and underscores the orientation of education towards ESD.

4.5.2.3 ESD IS REGARDED AN AGENT OF EDUCATIONAL-, SOCIAL- AS WELL AS PERSONAL CHANGE

By outlining South Africa's educational legacies in the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 7-12; cf. 1995: Chapter 5, Section 2; also 4.5.1(c)), the problems previously experienced in South African education is reiterated and the need for *change in education* is simultaneously advocated. Hence the DoE called for the transformation of education when stating that

[i]t is now the joint responsibility of all South Africans...to build a just, equitable and high quality system for all citizens, with a common culture of disciplined commitment to learning and teaching" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 13).

That change is inevitable is clearly demonstrated in the above citation. However, it is clearly not the sole responsibility of government to transform apartheid education into a just, equitable and high quality education system, which would provide in the needs of all but the responsibility of every South African. Transforming education implies an equitable distribution of funds, resources and infrastructure, but also an improvement in the quality of education. The DoE assumes that common values of discipline, commitment, justice, equity, quality, non-discrimination and non-sexism would be integral elements of the moral fabric and ethos of a transformed education. Although the articulation of these values indicates a particular value preference, it also refers to an education system that will embrace the values of SSD and therefore be distinctly different from the previous system. By articulating a vision to transform education, the WPET embraces ESD in principle.

The vision of a changed education system is reiterated in the statement that "the efforts of all South Africans will be needed to reconstruct and develop the national education and training system" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 22). 'Reconstruct' implies a total overhaul and not just a superficial reform. It therefore suggests a

decisive break with the previous education system and the values that informed the latter. As such new priorities, values and principles for education and training were outlined and the DoE envisioned a “transition to a single, national non-racial system” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 13). The WPET subsequently anticipates the transformation of education in order to realise a social sustainable society, but also to re-orientate education in line with ESD.

The reconstruction of education assumes fundamental changes in education policy, curricula, teaching and learning and assessment. Regarding *education policy*, the DoE (1995: Chapter 4, Section 13; cf. also DoE, 1996a: Introduction) states that

[i]t should be the goal of education and training policy to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take root and prosper in our land, on the basis that all South Africans, without exception share the same inalienable rights, equal citizenship, and a common national destiny and that all forms of biases (especially racial, ethnic, and gender) are dehumanising.

This not only positions education and training as national assets, which would contribute to uniting all South Africans and creating a democratic and prosperous country, but it also promises that education and training would improve the quality of life of all South Africans. This commitment represents an educational attempt to re-orient South African education towards ESD, and to put education in the position of creating a social sustainable society, by striving towards and promoting the values and principles of SSD.

The *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) of 2011 gives effect to *curriculum and assessment* transformation (cf. 4.5.1(d)). By giving “expression to the knowledge, skills and values worth learning in South African schools” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(a)), the NCS (2011) proposes a curriculum that is relevant to the South African people. In this way, the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Sections 3.2 and 3.3) addresses issues of diversity, HIV/AIDS, discrimination, human rights, violence, prejudice, democratic participation, ideology, environmental issues, well-being and nation-building. These issues are linked to both the moral vision of the people of South Africa, as well as to SD (cf. 2.3) and SSD (cf. 2.4). The NCS therefore suggests the transformation of the curriculum in line with the vision of a social sustainable society, including the re-orientation of education to ESD.

The role of education in transforming the South African *society* into a social sustainable society is informed by the *Constitution of South Africa*, other relevant policies focused on the reconstruction and development of the country, and articulated in the WPET. As a consequence, it is suggested that education can assist citizens to build a nation free of race, gender and every other form of discrimination (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3: Section 2). This is also re-affirmed in the *South African Schools Act* of 1996 (SASA) with the statement that “the country needs a new national system of schools which will advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance and contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society” (DoE, 1996c: Preamble). In addition, the DoE (2003a:7; cf. also 2003b:2) also maintains that “if social transformation is to be acquired, South Africans have to be educationally affirmed through the recognition of their potential and the removal of artificial barriers to the attainment of qualifications”. These stipulations subsequently establish education as instrumental in changing the South African society into a social sustainable society and, in principle, envisage the re-orientation of education towards ESD.

Social transformation is a guiding principle of the CAPS LO FET since it “ensures that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). However, social transformation is valued only in as far as it enables redress in education. What is missing is an explicit reference to the value that social transformation holds for achieving the vision of the Constitution and social sustainability. Social transformation appears not to be explicitly linked to achieving the foregoing. This is in contrast with the view that “the imperative to transform South African society ... stems from a need to address the legacies of apartheid in all areas of human activity” (DoE, 2003b:2). The silence of the CAPS LO FET on issues of social transformation is not conducive to SSD, and therefore might not promote the ideals of ESD.

As an agent of change, education also supposes the transformation of the individual. Values are integral in bringing about behavioural changes in the individual and in

realising SD and SSD (cf. 3.4.1.2). Not only is the WPET informed by the values of the Constitution, but it also aims at promoting “the values underlying the democratic process and the charter of fundamental rights” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 16). To realise these values, the *Manifesto on Democracy, Values and Education* (2001) (cf. 4.5.2.5) was promulgated. In addition, the CAPS LO FET expresses the concern of South African education with the development of values worth learning in a democratic South Africa (cf. 4.5.2.5). As such, these documents promote the development of a sound and relevant value system, which would bring about behavioural changes in all South Africans and enable them not only to value, uphold and protect the values of the Constitution, but also to realise a social sustainable society. Because these policy documents anticipate the transformation of the individual into a citizen imbued with the values of SSD, in principle, it also appears to hold the potential to re-orientate education towards ESD.

4.5.2.4 ESD ASSUMES AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TOWARDS DIVERSE LEARNING AREAS

The WPET (1995) proposes an integrated approach towards education and training, as well as various subjects, because it states that

[n]ew, flexible and appropriate curricula are needed that cut across traditional divisions of skills and knowledge (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 9).

Similarly, the *National Education Policy Act* also maintains that national education policy will be directed by the principle of “achieving an integrated approach” (DoE, 1996b: Section 4(f)). Integration is valued since “modern economies and societies require the elimination of artificial hierarchies” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 5), and also because “divisions in the past resulted in social class distinctions” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 4). Education should therefore be more socially relevant and not characterised by a rigid division between ‘academic’ and ‘applied’; ‘theory’ and ‘practice’; ‘knowledge’ and ‘skills’; ‘head’ and ‘hand’. Rather, subject boundaries should be blurred so that learners can experience diverse subjects as linked and related, whilst flexible curricula should support and expand opportunities to effectively attain knowledge and skills and to develop attitudes across the curriculum. I therefore assume that the WPET envisions issues of SSD to be covered across the

entire curriculum, reflected in the culture and ethos of education, and lived out in every aspect of the school. As such, the WPET seemingly feeds into ESD.

The WPET links integration to the reconstruction and development of the South African society. It maintains that integration is “a prerequisite for successful human resource development ... capable of making a significant contribution to the reconstruction and development of our society and economy” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 6). The document also assumes that integration will not only encourage creative work and the recognition of learning attainments, but will open doors of opportunity for people whose academic or career paths have been blocked (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 7). Since SSD is conceptualised within the framework of the reconstruction and development of the country (cf. 2.3.5), it can be assumed that integration will promote the effective acquisition of knowledge, skills and values for SSD. The proposal of the WPET to replace artificial subject divisions with an integrated approach can therefore be linked to a commitment to re-orientate South African education towards ESD.

The NCS (2003b) is also grounded in the principle of integration because it states that “integration is achieved within and across subjects and fields of learning” (DoE, (2003a:8; also 2003b:3). Since integration promotes an integrated learning of theory, practice and reflection, “all newly developed learning areas are infused with the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa” (DoE, 2003a:4). By explicitly embracing the integration of knowledge, skills and values, the NCS (2003) also embraces the integration of knowledge, skills and values related to SSD, and so demonstrates an alignment with ESD.

However, as a guiding principle, integration is omitted from the CAPS LO FET and no other direct reference to the integration of knowledge, skills and values is made. The CAPS LO FET is thus visibly silent on the extent of integration. This poses a threat to SSD, because knowledge, skills and values related to SSD might not necessarily be integrated and embedded across the entire curriculum as assumed by the WPET and anticipated by ESD. The vision of a social sustainable society may thus be endangered since educators may not see the need to link their efforts of

re-orienting society, the learner or teaching and learning to SSD. Although the DoE is committed to produce learners that are able to “demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(d)), the question remains how this will be achieved if integration *across* the curriculum is not explicitly promoted. It has been noted that the WPET initially argued strongly in favour of a single Department of Education, which supports an integrated approach to education and training. As also reflected in the name of the Department of Basic Education, ‘training’ is no longer its responsibility, but the responsibility of the Department of Higher Education and Training.

However, describing LO as a subject that applies a ‘holistic approach’ and by stating that “owing to the interrelatedness and holistic nature of the subject, the six topics of Life Orientation function interdependently and are of equal importance”, provision is made for integration *within* LO (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). It is assumed that integration will encourage “the development of a balanced and confident learner who can contribute to a just and democratic society, a productive economy and an improved quality of life for all” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). Considering the magnitude of SD and SSD and because no integration *across* the curriculum is actively promoted, questions can be asked about the potential of LO to effectively contribute to SD and SSD, and its ability to realise ESD.

4.5.2.5 ESD EMBRACES A DIVERSITY OF SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC VALUES

The WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 3) maintains that

[t]he education system taken as a whole, embodies and promotes the collective moral perspective of its citizens, that is the code of values by which the society wishes to live and consents to be judged.

According to this statement, South African education embraces, and also fosters and promotes the common social, environmental and economic values of South Africans. As envisaged by the WPET, South African education should be infused with the values of the broader South African society. As articulated in the Constitution, it is also anticipated that these values will be actively developed in learners. The values

and the principles of the Constitution “express[es] South Africa’s shared aspirations and the moral and ethical direction they have set for the future” (DoE, 2001a:iv). It is therefore the responsibility of the education system to

[c]ounter the legacy of violence by promoting the values underlying the democratic process and the charter of fundamental rights, the importance of due process of law and the exercise of civic responsibility, and by teaching values and skills for conflict management and conflict resolution, the importance of mediation and the benefits of toleration and cooperation (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 16).

The DoE assumes that the promotion of Constitutional values will result in peace and stability, and that citizens will be empowered to participate confidently and constructively in social and civic life. Not only does South Africa’s history make the development of values that would promote peace and stability a prerequisite for SSD, but the latter also requires a social context within which the values of peace, stability, respect for diversity and human rights, amongst others, are developed and valued (cf. 2.4.1). The WPET subsequently not only provides for the promotion and development of the values of SSD, but also suggests a re-orientation towards ESD.

To promote the values of the Constitution, the DoE adopted the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (Manifesto) in 2001. This Manifesto regards the promotion of values as important, “not only for the sake of personal development, but also to ensure that a national South African identity is built on values different from those that underpinned apartheid education” (DoE, 2001a:8). The development of common social values is therefore linked to nation-building and to enrich the individual (cf. 4.5.2.3). Nation-building is associated with social capital and social cohesion (cf. 2.4.1.2), and both require commonly held values. Education re-oriented towards SSD will therefore have to develop and reflect the values that will enhance social capital, promote cohesion and contribute towards nation-building. The Manifesto subsequently commits the education sector to the promotion of democracy, social justice, equity, non-racism and non-sexism, ubuntu/botho (human dignity), an open society, accountability (responsibility), respect, the Rule of Law and reconciliation. Since these values show a strong affinity with the values of SSD (cf. 2.4; 3.4.2.2) and holds the potential to enhance social capital and promote social

cohesion, the *Manifesto* signals a commitment to SSD, as well as a re-orientation of education towards ESD.

Taking a cue from the WPET and the Manifesto, the DoE (2003a:1; cf. also 2003(b):8) articulated a vision for learners: “imbued with the values and acting in the interest of a society based on respect for democracy, human dignity and social justice as promoted in the Constitution”. The CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(b); Section 2.2(5)) reiterates the intention to equip learners with the “values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country”. As such, the above policy addresses values about the self, the environment, responsible citizenship, and social engagement (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). However, despite being regarded instrumental in developing the values for SD and SSD, no reference to the *Earth Charter* (2000) is made in the document. As indicated earlier (cf. 3.4.2.2) the *Earth Charter* is significant because it articulates and promotes those values which should drive any re-orientation towards SD and thus SSD. The silence of the CAPS LO FET on the value, place and relevance of the *Earth Charter* is problematic because it implies that the CAPS LO FET does not subscribe to the particular values promoted by the *Earth Charter*, and consequently does not yet fully respond to the conditions of ESD. However, a comparison of the values of the Manifesto and SSD (cf. 2.4; 3.4.2.2), as well as those articulated in the CAPS LO FET, illustrates that the latter document could possibly validate the values of SSD and the requirements of ESD.

4.5.2.6 ESD USES VARIOUS TEACHING AND LEARNING TECHNIQUES AND PEDAGOGIES

According to the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5; Section 25), South Africa would “gain from world-wide experience in the development of innovative methods of education, including the use of guided self-study and the appropriate use of a variety of media”. As such, the DoE envisages that teaching and learning will take place through new and diverse ways and techniques, which would presumably replace the old ones. The WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 15) further maintains that

[e]ducation in the arts and the opportunity to learn, participate and excel in dance, music, theatre, art and crafts, must become increasingly available to all

communities on an equitable basis drawing on and sharing the rich traditions of our varied cultural heritage and contemporary practice.

Accordingly, the WPET anticipates the creation of new learning opportunities outside the traditional school curriculum and subjects. This inevitably implies that these methods will promote teaching and learning for SSD, especially since provision is made for the diversification of the curriculum in the FET phase of education (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 18).

In addition, it is expected that teachers select “methodologies appropriate to learners and contexts” (DoE, 2000: Section 3(7)). Teachers should therefore be guided by the needs of the learner and his/her context. The WPET therefore suggests that the selection of teaching and learning methods and pedagogies are to be informed by ESD and the vision of SSD. In addition, the focus of South African education on an integrated approach to education and training (cf. 4.5.2.4) also warrants the development of innovative and relevant teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies, which would promote teaching and learning for SSD and affirm ESD. The development of new and diverse teaching and learning techniques are furthermore mandated by the declaration that:

Education and training are basic human rights. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights, so that all citizens irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age, have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential, and make their full contribution to the society (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 2).

The right to education and training implies the right to *appropriate* education and training. The state is therefore obliged to provide education and training that caters for diverse learning and teaching needs. Since education is committed to contribute to the realisation of a social sustainable society, methods and pedagogies that caused social unsustainability are no longer relevant. Rather, the call for methods and pedagogies that represent a shift to, and an orientation towards education that would develop in learners the abilities to contribute towards building a social sustainable South African society, conforms to the requirements of ESD.

The need for innovative and diverse teaching and learning methods is also expressed in a requirement that “the way in which the official curriculum is delivered, needs to be overhauled”, since “many teachers rely on teaching methods that do not engage learners in active learning” (DoE, 2003a:2). The DoE therefore calls for new methods and pedagogies that not only engage learners in active learning, but that are learner-centred. The commitment to inclusive education also suggests the use of innovative, alternative and diverse methods of instruction (DoE, 2003b:10). Varied teaching and learning methods are also deemed relevant to promote and advance inclusive education. It should be noted that inclusion is a requirement of SSD (cf. 2.4). The promotion of the use of diverse teaching and learning methods in the NCS (2003) consequently feeds into the achievement of SSD and the orientation of education towards this aspect of ESD.

Although mention is made in the CAPS LO FET of the use of diverse teaching and learning methods and pedagogies, it is a vague suggestion framed only within the context of inclusive education. It is stated that teachers should “have a sound understanding of how to recognise and address barriers to learning, and how to plan for diversity” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(e)). Diversity in teaching and learning methods and pedagogies are thus conceptualised in terms of its value for inclusive education, whilst the value thereof as a means of promoting SD and SSD and orientating education towards ESD appears to be neglected. The lack of a broader application could result in teachers’ continued exposure of learners to teaching and learning strategies that are not conducive to ESD, thus negatively impacting on the realisation of the aims and objectives of both LO, as well as SSD.

4.5.2.7 ESD IS LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY INFORMED

According to the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 20)

[p]rovincial Departments of Education have significant scope for defining learning programmes which express distinct provincial interests and priorities, should they wish to do so...School based “micro” adaptations can be an important means of professional development and INSET, as well as expressing particular interests of the school and its community.

The WPET subsequently acknowledges and respects the existence of the particular and unique local and provincial contexts within which schools function. This is

important because schools do not exist in vacuums, but are informed and shaped by their contexts. By giving 'significant scope', provincial education departments are not limited in structuring and defining their learning programmes. Moreover, the WPET suggests that programmes be defined in ways that reflect particular provincial and community needs and priorities. Knowledge, skills and values, also those related to the realisation of SSD, should therefore be locally relevant and responsive, so that people can identify and associate with the education they receive. In addition, the WPET also anticipates that teaching and learning remain connected to the local community it serves by reflecting local indigenous knowledge. As such, the WPET demonstrates a concern for the SSD of the community, the broader society and the orientation of education towards ESD within both local and global contexts.

However, provinces and schools are not given a blank slate in defining their programmes, since any adaptations have to comply with basic education requirements and guidelines, within the parameters laid down by the national Department of Education (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 20). Provinces have to confine themselves to the expected values, skills and knowledge that learners need to acquire to be able to live successfully in, and contribute towards the social sustainability of their respective societies and the broader South Africa. Furthermore, the DoE proposes that the provincial and local school context be utilised to develop teachers as part of in-service education. This not only assumes the relevance of education, but also the continuous improvement of the quality of education. By acknowledging the provincial and local school contexts, the WPET gives effect to the democratic requirement of involving all in the decision-making process, and by implication to democratic participation as a principle of SSD. As such, the WPET appears to correspond, in principle, with ESD.

However, it should be noted that 'local relevance' is not a requirement, since the above citation contains the stipulation "...should they wish to do so..." (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 20). The WPET does therefore not place any obligation on provinces and local communities to reflect the local context of the school in their learning programmes. As such, provinces and local communities are not forced to respond to the needs of the local community or to develop contextually relevant learning programmes. The possibility subsequently exists that learning programmes

might not be attuned to the developments in the community or province, or to embrace the local culture(s) and its values. The latter may have a negative effect on the promotion of social cohesion and social sustainability of the community or the province.

The NCS (DoE, 2003a:23) acknowledges local contextuality when it states that subjects are “flexible and make allowances for the inclusion of local inputs”. It further promises that “NCS Grades 10-12 will ensure that learners acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their lives” (DoE, 2003a:viii). These sentiments are reiterated in the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(a)): “...curriculum promotes and grounds knowledge in local contexts”. The latter (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(a)) also “gives expression to the knowledge, skills and values worth learning in South Africa”. LO subsequently deals with various topics and themes that are relevant, meaningful and grounded within their local contexts, and which could develop in learners the knowledge, skills and values to not only live effectively in their communities, province and country, but also to contribute to the social sustainable development thereof. Relevance is further also important because it will contribute towards SSD by promoting trust in education as capable of transforming local communities, the broader society and ultimately improving the lives of the South African people. By validating and promoting locally relevant education, the CAPS LO FET demonstrates responsiveness to social sustainable development and a conformation to ESD.

Apart from being locally informed, links exist between South African education and the global world (cf. 4.5.1.2; also Botha, 2002:362). For example, the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 95) envisages global involvement in South African education since it looks forward to a “pro-active, professionally-based and reciprocal relationship with external partners”. Although no reference is made to Africa in particular, it is assumed that the global context also includes the African context. As such, the WPET anticipates reflecting global (African included) social issues. Cognisance of the global and particularly the African context is important because it inevitably impacts on South Africa’s conceptualisation of education issues pertaining to SSD, and it affirms the orientation of South African education towards ESD.

The CAPS LO FET also demonstrates sensitivity to the global context. For example, it not only envisages that education should be “sensitive to global imperatives”, but it also aims at sensitising learners about discrimination and violence on a global level, as well as about contemporary social issues that impact negatively on global communities (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(a) and 3.2). In addition, the CAPS LO FET also assumes that South African education can achieve credibility only if it “is comparable in quality, breadth and depth to those of other countries” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). In this way the CAPS LO FET seeks to benchmark South African education against education in other countries. Since little reference is made to the African context in particular, the inclusion of the latter is only assumed. Because it shows cognisance of the global environment, the CAPS LO FET not only demonstrates the potential to promote SSD, but it also appears to be aligned with ESD.

4.5.2.8 ESD IS PURPOSIVE AND AIMS AT PROMOTING SD, A SSD LIFESTYLE, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, AND CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SD

It was noted earlier that South African education is informed by the *Constitution of South Africa* (cf. 4.5.1.1(a)). Reference has also been made to the role education plays in promoting the collective moral perspective of the South African people (cf. 4.5.1.1(a)), and in assisting citizens to build a nation free of racial, gender and every other form of discrimination. As such, South African education stands in service of the Constitution and purposively aims to realise its aims and objectives. It can subsequently be argued that in principle South African education aims at promoting SSD and improving the quality of life of the South African people (cf. 2.3.5). This means that the WPET purposively positions South African education to promote the values and to realise the vision of the Constitution (cf. 4.5.1.1(a)).

The vision of the Constitution is operationalised in the RDP, the NDP of 2012 and various other programmes devoted to the reconstruction and development of South Africa. According to the WPET, the “entire work of the national and provincial Ministries of Education supports the objectives of the RDP” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 2). South African education is therefore also oriented towards the reconstruction and development of the country and the improvement of the quality of life of South Africans. The WPET therefore constantly reminds us that South African

education and training is aligned to the reconstruction and development of the country (cf. for example DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 3). Since the project of reconstruction and development, as articulated in the RDP and NDP, correlates with the broader aim of SD and thus SSD, it can be assumed that education aims at realising SSD, and as such is oriented towards ESD.

However, it is evident that SSD requires the conceptualisation of development not only in terms of economic growth, but also in relation to social issues such as equity, equality, social justice, the enjoyment, protection and promotion of basic human rights and freedoms, as well as provision in the basic needs of all people (cf. 2.3.3; 2.4). Otherwise, 'development' will continue to focus on the economic aspect of SD, and as such will remain unsustainable in nature. The WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5 Section 22) regards unsustainable development not as development but as "a kind of fraud practiced against the people". The WPET thus seems to be wary of unsustainable development and the possible effect thereof on SSD, and purposively orientates education towards the improvement of the quality of life of all South African citizens, including the achievement of SSD.

To realise the vision of the Constitution and to positively contribute towards the reconstruction and development of South Africa, the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3: Section 2) further positions South African education as an agent of social change (cf. also 4.5.2.3). The DoE thus assumes that education would automatically contribute towards change in South Africa. The values articulated in the WPET are therefore not only linked to the project of development, but also to bringing about social change in South Africa. By aiming to develop in learners the values, knowledge and skills required to bring about social change, the WPET holds the potential to realise SSD and to respond to the requirements of ESD. As much as these values aim at social change, they also promote change within the individual (cf. 4.5.2.3). South African education subsequently demonstrates a concern with the development of a particular morality or lifestyle. Since the values which education anticipates to develop, correlate with the values of SD and SSD (cf. 2.3; 2.4), it could be assumed that South African education aims at developing and promoting a SSD lifestyle.

The CAPS LO FET also intends developing learners as critical and creative thinkers who are able to solve problems and engage with a diversity of life issues (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c); cf. also 4.5.2.10). As such, rather than indoctrinating learners to become uncritical receivers of information, the CAPS LO FET policy anticipates the critical engagement of learners with the principles and objectives of SD or SSD, and with the values which ESD aims to inculcate. The commitment of the WPET and the CAPS LO FET (2011) to develop the critical thinking faculties and dispositions of learners therefore also illustrates the commitment of South African education to SSD and re-orientation towards ESD.

4.5.2.9 ESD EMBRACE LIFELONG LEARNING

For the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4; Section 5)

[t]he over-arching goal of policy must be to enable all individuals to value, have access to and succeed in lifelong education and training.

Lifelong learning is subsequently regarded as an education and national priority worth striving for. Hence the *National Education Policy Act* (DoE, 1996b: Section 4(e)) states that “national education policy in South Africa is directed towards providing opportunities for and encouraging lifelong learning”, whilst the Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2011a:8) also envisions “a South Africa in which all our people have access to lifelong learning”. Lifelong learning is furthermore implied in calls for a comprehensive and interlocking FET sector which provides purposeful educative experience to learners at the post-compulsory phase, irrespective of age, place and time of delivery (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 60). The DoE therefore is committed to develop policies, which not only will promote lifelong learning, but will also provide access to it. Promoting and realising lifelong learning is therefore not only an important aim of the WPET, but it also appears to underscore ESD.

Lifelong learning requires “open access to education and training ... to all children, youth and adults, and means for learners to move easily from one learning context to another” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 6). In addition, it also requires “an increasing range of learning possibilities, offering learners greater flexibility in choosing what, where, when, how and at what pace they learn” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 6). Lifelong learning not only gives expression to the Constitutional right

to education (RSA, 1996: Section 29), but it also extends that right beyond the formal school, to the workplace and any other context where learning can take place. This requires a more flexible conceptualisation of learning, the creation of more learning opportunities and the recognition and appreciation of prior learning and learning that takes place outside the formal school sector. In this way the WPET not only suggests a commitment to realise SSD, but also to ESD.

Furthermore, lifelong learning is integral to South Africa's broader project of reconstruction and development. According to the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 9)

[t]he concept of lifelong learning ... is incorporated in the human resource development strategy of the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme.

The WPET further claims that "national reconstruction and development demands that the knowledge and skills base of the working and unemployed population are massively upgraded, and that young people still at school have better opportunities to continue their education and training" (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 8). However, this creates the impression that the reconstruction and development of the country can only be achieved through lifelong learning. The latter is therefore regarded as a cure to many of the economic challenges, such as unemployment, that South Africans face. Such conceptualisations lead to the misinterpretation of lifelong learning as an instrument to promote economic growth at the expense of sound development. Lifelong learning will subsequently not be freed from its embeddedness in economic and neo-liberal demands (cf. 3.4.2.8), nor will it become critical and emancipatory or develop true democratic citizens, imbued with the knowledge, skills and values needed to contribute towards a social sustainable society. Thus, although the WPET embraces lifelong learning, and holds the potential to contribute towards SSD and to bring about ESD, the conceptualisation thereof runs the risk of jeopardising the vision of ESD and the realisation of SSD.

However, lifelong learning also appears to be integral to social transformation in South African. Hence, the view that the "realisation of democracy, liberty, equality, justice and peace are necessary conditions for the full pursuit and enjoyment of life-

long learning” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 13). It is therefore anticipated that lifelong learning also becomes instrumental in correcting the social imbalances and inequalities of the past. By promoting lifelong learning as a means of correcting the social imbalances of the past, and thus orienting education towards ESD, the WPET anticipates that lifelong learning will contribute to the establishment of a social sustainable South African society.

Building on the WPET, the NCS (2003a:viii) requires the FET curriculum to “lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning”. However, the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a) appears to be visibly silent on the issue of lifelong learning since there is no reference to it, or to the role of the FET phase in this regard. The role that LO could play in realising lifelong learning and in creating a social sustainable society therefore seems to be ignored. Omissions such as this not only implies a mismatch between policies within the DBE, but more so, between education policies and the Constitution, which envisions a social sustainable South African society. So, despite the importance of lifelong learning for the reconstruction and development of the country and the realisation of SSD, CAPS LO FET does not seem to embrace lifelong learning as a means of achieving SSD in South Africa. As such, the CAPS LO FET does not correspond with ESD in this regard.

4.5.2.10 ESD IS QUALITY EDUCATION WHICH PROMOTES CRITICAL REFLECTION, PROBLEM-SOLVING AND ACTION

In 1995, establishing a good quality education and training system was regarded as a major responsibility of the DoE. The DoE subsequently declared that a

[p]aramount task [is] to build a just and equitable system which provides good quality education and training to learners young and old throughout the country (DoE, 1995: Chapter 3, Section 1, cf. also 1995: Chapter 3, Section 13).

The intention to give access to good quality education to all is reiterated in the statement: “increasingly open access to education and training opportunity of high quality must be provided” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4; Section 6). The DoE is also aware that, “access without quality is a recipe for disappointment education” (1995: Chapter 13, Section 15). The DoE’s commitment to education of good quality in South Africa

not only resonates with ESD as quality education, but also validates quality education as a requisite for the realisation of a social sustainable society.

Quality education is linked to teaching and learning, the capacity and commitment of the teacher; ownership of the school by the community that it serves; the appropriateness of the curriculum and the way in which standards are set and assessed, as well as the efficiency and productivity of the system (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 9; Chapter 13, Section 19; Chapter 4, Sections 5 and 23). It is also concerned with the availability of sufficient text books and instruction material, a decent environment for learning provided by the physical facilities of schools, and assistance to teachers in developing their expertise and skills to stimulate learning (DoE, 1995: Chapter 13, Section 14). The DoE further proceeds from the assumption that the improvement of efficiency and productivity and the integration of teaching and learning will not only raise the quality of performance across the system, but will also increase the life chances of learners. Furthermore, the DoE realises that providing good quality education requires that every aspect of the education system is transformed. Thus, by implication, regarding education of good quality as an indispensable feature of South African education, feeds into the possible realisation of ESD and the achievement of SSD.

In South Africa, education and training are basic human rights (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 2; cf. RSA, 1996: Section 29; cf. 4.5.2.6). The state is therefore obliged to also provide education opportunities of a good quality. As such, the WPET suggested a national qualifications framework which would provide the “scaffolding for new levels of quality” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 9). The subsequent promulgation of the *South African Qualifications Authority Act* (SAQA) in 1995, the *South African Qualification Authority Act* in 1995; the *Education and Training Quality Assurance Regulations* in 1998 and the *General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act* of 2001, further demonstrates that concerted efforts are being made to ensure that the quality of education and training in South African is indeed improved. As a consequence, the commitment of South Africa to quality education implies responsiveness to ESD and bringing about a social sustainable society.

Since quality education is also rights based (cf. 3.4.3.1), the CAPS LO FET is guided by “human rights, inclusivity, social and environmental justice” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). The latter policy therefore endeavours to infuse education with “the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). To facilitate this, the LO curriculum addresses issues of human rights, diversity, discrimination and violations of human rights (DBE: 2011a: Section 3.1–3.2). Therefore, by exposing “learners to their constitutional rights and responsibilities, to the rights of others and to issues of diversity” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.2), LO demonstrates a sensitivity towards SSD and thus by implication an alignment with ESD. In addition, improving the quality of South Africa’s education is also an outcome of the Departments’ *Strategic Plan 2011-2014* policy (DBE, 2011e).

According to the WPET, the “curriculum, teaching methods, and textbooks at all levels and in all programmes of education and training education [should] encourage independent and critical thought, the capacity to question, enquire, reason, weigh evidence, and form judgments, achieve understanding, recognise the provisional and incomplete nature of most human knowledge, and communicate clearly” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 17). Teachers should therefore also “practise and promote critical, committed and ethical attitudes in learners” (DoE, 2000: Section 3(7)). The DoE not only demands the creation of what would be regarded as an ESD learning environment, which fosters attitudes and dispositions of critique, but it also encourages the embracement of critical thinking and questioning the taken-for-granted. It can be assumed that being critical not only implies being ideologically, socially as well as politically critical, but also being critical about SD. In line with ESD, and the realisation of SSD, the WPET suggests that teaching and learning be organised in such a fashion that learners’ critical thinking and reflective skills are developed.

The focus on critical and reflective thinking is reiterated in the CAPS LO FET, which embraces “a critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths” (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). The above policy also aims at developing learners that are able to, amongst others, identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking; collect, analyse, organise and critically

evaluate information; communicate effectively; critically showing responsibility towards the environment (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(d)). Furthermore, the expectation of learners to “identify and critically analyse various moral and spiritual dilemmas: the right-to-life; cultural practices and traditions; economic issues and environmental issues”, and to evaluate and reflect on their own position when dealing with discrimination and human rights violations also remind of ESD (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.2 and Section 3.3). As such, SSD is promoted by implication through the encouragement of learners to be critical about themselves, their lives and their social environment.

However, critical thinking also involves the ability to make skills and knowledge applicable and relevant to various contexts and to solve problems. Hence the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1) not only focuses on knowledge, but also emphasises the importance of applying skills and values in real-life situations. Therefore, CAPS LO FET not only encourages learners to realise the vision of SSD by applying their skills and knowledge to solve social problems and challenges, but it also demonstrates an alignment with ESD.

Apart from its potential to promote critical thinking, the CAPS LO FET also demonstrates a commitment to develop agency in learners, since it views the knowledge and skills to take appropriate action as relevant to the social responsibilities of learners (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.2). In particular, the CAPS LO FET requires learners to “take appropriate actions to enable them to live meaningfully and successfully in a rapidly-changing society” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). It is not clear precisely what appropriate action entails, and under what circumstances such action should be taken. However, it can be assumed in the light of its responsiveness towards ESD and the vision of a social sustainable society, that the CAPS LO FET policy wants to equip learners with the skills and knowledge to act in the interest of society and to improve their lives, and so realise a social sustainable society.

4.5.2.11 ESD REGARDS EDUCATION AS A FORM OF ENLIGHTENMENT WHICH INTEGRATES DIFFERENT TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

The WPET suggests that “educational and management processes must recognise and build on the knowledge and experience learners bring to the school” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 5). As such, it not only confirms the existence of various forms of knowledge, but asserts that on arrival at school, learners are already in possession of particular valuable knowledge and experience, which should be explored in teaching and learning. In addition, various forms and sources of knowledge is also implied in the principle of respect,

[f]or our people’s diverse religious, cultural and language traditions, their right to enjoy and practice these in peace and without hindrance, and the recognition that these are a source of strength for their own communities and the unity of the nation” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 14).

As such, the WPET respects diverse forms of knowledge as embedded in the unique experience(s) of individual learners and in their diverse religious, cultural and language traditions. In addition, the WPET also suggests that knowledge has meaning and value to the people who use it, and that diverse knowledge should be regarded as a source of enrichment and enlightenment, both to the community and the broader South African society. By calling for the development of “new knowledge, skills and technologies” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 5), the WPET further suggests that knowledge is flexible, negotiable, changeable, and co-constructed. This policy therefore proposes that diverse knowledge systems should not be disregarded or viewed as unscientific, but that education should build upon, value and validate it. By validating and respecting the knowledge of various communities, and encouraging teachers to explore this knowledge, the WPET not only promotes the integration of various types of knowledge, but also positions education in line with ESD and the vision of SSD.

The NCS (2003a) explicitly articulates concern for various knowledge systems and particularly IKS, since it states that subjects “are viewed as dynamic and as responding to new and diverse knowledge, including knowledge that traditionally has been excluded from the formal curriculum” (DoE, 2003a:23). As such, this curriculum document (DoE, 2003b:10) not only states that there is “a wide diversity

of knowledge systems through which people make meaning of the world in which they live”, but it also proceeds from the viewpoint that knowledge systems are not static, but grows and changes when in contact with other knowledge systems. According to the NCS (2003), IKS “has [been] infused into all the Subject Statements” (DoE, 2003a:9), and was also implied in the development outcomes (DoE, 2003a:8), which required learners to be culturally sensitive across various social contexts. By promoting respect and sensitivity for the knowledge and cultural capital of other cultures, the WPET also promotes cohesion and SSD, and underscores the orientation of education towards ESD.

Valuing indigenous knowledge systems is also a guiding principle of the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)). However, where IKS is generally framed within the broader context of various views of knowledge (DoE, 2003a:4), in the CAPS LO FET a watered-down explanation that IKS “acknowledges the rich history and heritage of this country as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the Constitution”, is given (DBE, 2011a). In addition, where the NCS of 2003 (DoE, 2003a:4) explicitly defines IKS and places it within the South African context, the CAPS LO FET neither does that, nor does it established any link between IKS and the aims and objectives of education. Furthermore, the CAPS LO FET does not indicate to what extent (if any) IKS is integrated within LO and across the curriculum, or to what extent the curriculum responds to indigenous knowledge, which was excluded from the formal curriculum in the previous dispensation. It also does not draw any link between IKS and problem solving, as was done in the NCS of 2003 (DoE, 2003a:4). Although IKS appears to be important, given the emphasis placed on it in the WPET, and being used as a grounding principle of the CAPS LO FET (2011) policy, is it not clear precisely what IKS entails, how and to what extent it is infused or should be infused throughout the curriculum. IKS is only implied in the notion of ‘indigenous belief systems’ and the exposure to ‘indigenous games’ (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.2). In addition, it can also only be assumed from its purpose to “equip learners ... with the knowledge...and values necessary for ... meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country”, that IKS is integral to the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(b)).

The way in which IKS is framed within the CAPS LO FET is problematic since it holds the potential that IKS, and therefore also other forms of knowledge can be treated as insignificant or even disregarded for SSD and ESD, whilst the dominant view of knowledge as scientific and Western is still promoted. As such, the potential exists that when locally informed and relevant knowledge is not included in teaching and learning, the realisation of ESD can be hampered.

4.5.2.12 ESD IS DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION WHICH CREATES SPACE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEMOCRATIC AND GLOBAL CITIZEN

In its transformative mission, the DoE (1995: Chapter 3, Section 13) states that

[i]t is the priority of the national and provincial Ministries of Education to create a transformative, democratic mission and ethos in the new departments of education which could completely supersede the separate identities of the former departments.

By calling for South African education to be driven by and grounded in democratic principles and values, the WPET envisages the establishment of an education system that would foster democracy. Moreover, South African education should also employ democratic means and processes to achieve both the vision for education, and for SSD. Since ESD involves democratic education with the aim of developing democratic citizens, the WPET signals not only a commitment to the realisation of SSD, but also envisages, by implication, the orientation of education towards ESD.

Democracy assumes the involvement of all in decision-making. South African education provides for collective decision-making through democratic governance: “democratic governance should increasingly be reflected in every level of the system by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making of elected representatives of the main stakeholders, interest groups and role players” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4 Section 11; cf. also Section 10). Concerns for issues of governance are also articulated in the *White Paper on the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools* (DoE, 1996a: Section 3) and the *SASA* (DoE, 1996c), because both provide for the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGB). According to the WPET, democratic governance is the:

[o]nly guaranteed way to infuse new social energy into institutions and structures of the education and training system, dispel the chronic alienation of large sectors of society from the educational process and reduce power of government administration to intervene where it should not (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 11).

Democratic governance is subsequently valued and embraced for its potential to transform education and bring about a social sustainable society. Thus, by promoting democratic governance, the WPET underscores ESD.

Democratic governance also assumes the inclusion of previously excluded, alternative and marginalised voices. Hence, the call for “special emphasis on redress of educational inequalities amongst those sections of our people who have suffered particular disadvantages, or who are especially vulnerable, including street children, out-of-school youth, rural communities, squatter communities, and communities damaged by violence”, and for “a drastic increase of women in leadership positions” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Sections 7 and 8). Collective decision-making not only ensures sustainability of education, but also ensures that objectives that underpin SSD are collectively embraced and promoted. The WPET therefore not only seems to align with the principle of democracy, but also with equality. Since both democracy and equality are principles of SSD, it could be inferred that the WPET proposes democratic governance as a means of promoting SSD and the orientation of education towards ESD.

Since South African education has the responsibility to promote and develop constitutional values, it can be argued that education needs to foster and promote civic responsibility. The DoE acknowledges that it is the responsibility of education and training to promote the “exercise of civic responsibility” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 16). In line with this, the DoE undertakes to “strive in good faith to create policies which interpret the provisions of the Constitution in a balanced manner, and promote its broad intentions and values”. Since civic responsibility, within the South African context implies democratic citizenship, it can be inferred that because the WPET promotes the development of responsible citizens, in principle, is also promotes and advances SSD and ESD.

The idea of responsible citizenship is also conceptualised in the NCS (DoE, 2003a:18) as the aim to develop learners into “productive and responsible citizens”. The CAPS LO FET equally embraces responsible citizenship because it aims to develop a “balanced and confident learner, who can contribute to a just and democratic society, a productive economy and an improved quality of life” (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.1). In addition, education not only aims at developing “learners that are able to use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of other”, but also guiding them to make responsible decisions about their own health and well-being, and the health and well-being of others (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(d); Section 2.2(3)). To facilitate these aims, emphasis is placed upon learners’ responsibilities to participate in community organisations, community service or life, good decision-making, affirmation of others, the job market, the environment, and their positions when dealing with discrimination and human rights violations (DBE, 2011a: Section 3.2). The CAPS LO FET subsequently holds the potential to not only develop caring and compassionate citizens that are sensitive to social issues such as HIV/AIDS, democracy and social injustices, but also to realise SSD and ESD.

However, South Africa is not an island. It has been indicated that South Africa in general and its education policies in particular are influenced by globalisation (cf. 4.2 and 4.5.1.2). As such, South African education should remain globally relevant and focused upon developing the values and dispositions of global citizenship in learners so that they can take their place in the global village. The DoE appears to be aware of this role because it argues that successful modern economies require “citizens with a strong foundation of general education, the desire and ability to continue to learn, to adapt to and develop new knowledge, skills and technologies, to move flexibly between occupations, to take responsibility for personal performance, to set and achieve high standards, and to work cooperatively” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 2, Section 5). Hence the proposal to provide education that is comparable in quality and in breadth and depth to those of other countries (cf. 4.5.2.7). Implied in the skills, knowledge and values worth learning in South Africa are therefore also those worth learning and knowing in a global context. Furthermore, by indicating that “global changes in the industrial and service sector of the economy requires an increase in the general education component of vocational training and a

concomitant increase in the ability of those in full-time education to develop applied and problem-solving skills” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 5, Section 59), the WPET envisages education that would be responsive to ESD and the realisation of SSD.

4.5.2.13 ESD EMPHASISES LEARNING WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY A LEARNER-ORIENTED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

ESD regards the way in which learning is currently constructed as part of the problem rather than the solution to unsustainable development (cf. 3.4.3.4). Therefore, SSD and ESD require a transformed approach towards learning.

According to the WPET (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 5), “education and management processes must put the learner first, recognising and building on their knowledge and experience, and responding to their needs”. Learning experiences should therefore be grounded in the learner, be meaningful and add value to his/her life. This is in line with the focus on learning which gives learners the opportunity to “develop their capabilities and potential” and to prepare them more effectively for life’s opportunities (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 2; Chapter 5, Section 9). As such, the WPET supports ESD by suggesting a learner-oriented approach which focuses on learners’ needs, capabilities and interests as well as the knowledge and experiences that they bring to school. Teachers are therefore no longer central to the learning process: rather the learners are. The WPET subsequently embraces transformed and meaningful learning which holds the potential to contribute towards a social sustainable society. The adoption of lifelong learning (cf. 4.5.2.9) and the integrated approach to education and training (cf. 4.5.2.4) can therefore also be seen as efforts to embrace learner-centeredness.

The CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(a)) embraces learner-centeredness by ensuring that “children acquire knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives”. To facilitate this, the CAPS, LO FET aims to ‘guide and prepare’, ‘equip’ and ‘expose’ learners to various knowledge, skills and values (DBE, 2011a: Section 2.2). Since achieving SSD is inherently a learning process, by advocating learner-centeredness, this policy document holds the potential to advance and promote a social sustainable society and an orientation towards ESD.

It has been indicated that the CAPS, LO FET seems to aim at developing a critical engagement with content in learners (cf. 4.5.2.10). However, it is not explicitly stated in its general aims that LO contemplates promoting learning that is based on discovery, investigation, exploration and gaining experience (DoE, 2011a:Section 1.3(a); cf. 3.4.3.4). Therefore, although it can be assumed that LO fosters critical learning skills (DoE, 2011a: Section 1.3(d)), silence in the policy on this issue might impact on realising SSD and a re-orientation of education towards ESD.

The creation of a learner-centred learning environment supposes that social and cooperative learning takes place (cf. 3.4.3.4). Social learning requires an environment where learners from diverse backgrounds can feel safe to interact with each another. Against the background of the vision that education “must counter the legacy of violence” (DoE, 1995: Chapter 4, Section 16), and that “it should be a goal of education and training to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take root and prosper in our land”, it is anticipated that South African schools would become social learning environments. As a consequence, it can be argued that the WPET anticipates the realisation of ESD and SSD, by envisaging safe learning environments for learners, to not only challenge and reflect on their own values and beliefs, but also on those of other learners.

Social and cooperative learning, as well as learner-centeredness is implied in the CAPS LO FET (DBE, 2011a: Section 1.3(c)), which “encourages active learning”. In order to ensure that education remains relevant and meaningful and that the learners’ needs and priorities are catered for, they are required to be actively involved in and be part of their own learning. It can thus be argued that because CAPS LO FET promotes an active and critical approach to learning, which focuses on the needs of the learners, the promotion of ESD and the realisation of SSD in South Africa can become a possibility.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter entailed the critical analysis of two South African education policy documents, notably the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011),

in order to explore their responsiveness to ESD. This analysis was informed by the constitutive elements of ESD, which were identified in Chapter 3, and which simultaneously forms the implications for education policy in South Africa. Since these documents articulate the intentions of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (Act 84 of 1996)*, both with regard to SD and SSD, they are regarded as influential in the re-orientation of education towards ESD. It has been noted from this analysis that the *White Paper on Education and Training* illustrates a considerable responsiveness towards ESD, and that the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation FET (10-12) (2011)* also responds to ESD, but exhibits a number of omissions, silences, contradictions and value preferences.

Based upon this analysis it is further important to explore the views and perceptions of Free State teachers in order to establish the responsiveness of South African education practices towards ESD. The next chapter will therefore focus on the empirical part of this research. This chapter will report on the survey conducted amongst teachers in the FET phase of Free State school. Although the focus of the survey was on LO teachers, teachers offering other FET subjects also participated in the survey.

CHAPTER 5: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH - A SURVEY STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4 a critical analysis of South African education policies was undertaken. The aim of the critical policy analysis was to explore the responsiveness of South African education policies with ESD, against the backdrop of a conceptual analysis, which yielded constitutive elements of ESD and resulted in the development of a working definition (cf. Chapter 3). Informed by the constitutive elements of ESD, it appears from the analysis that South African education is oriented towards ESD. However, the critical policy analysis also revealed certain omissions, silences, contradictions and value preferences between different education policy documents. Informed by the underlying paradigm, Critical Theory, I proceed from the assumptions that theory and practice are not opposites but rather form a unity, and that South African education practice is plagued by contradictions and disillusionments that create the false consciousness of education being transformed towards ESD and aimed towards SSD (cf. 1.5.1.2). As such, an empirical investigation into education practice is also warranted. The aim of this chapter is therefore to investigate the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community (cf. 1.3.4). To achieve this, a survey study, using questionnaires will be conducted. Although introductory remarks about survey research were made in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.5.2.4), a thorough exposition of what this method entails and how it can be linked to my study is required. This exposition will subsequently be followed by a report on the research findings of the survey study.

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN: SURVEY RESEARCH

5.1.1 *METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS*

As a research method, surveys are paradigmatically associated with positivism (Curtis & Curtis, 2011:123; Neuman, 2000:247). This point of departure assumes that the social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world, that there

is a method for studying the social world that is value free and that explanations of a causal nature can be provided (Mertens, 2010:11). Positivism subsequently proceeds from a methodological stance which “seek[s] rigorous, exact measures and ‘objective’ research, and ... test[s] hypothesis by carefully analyzing numbers from the measures” (Neuman, 2000:66). As such, positivism mainly embraces quantitative research methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:110; Tuli, 2010:102), which quantifies or reflects on numbers, observations about human behaviour, and attempts to describe relationships amongst variables mathematically.

However, this study is informed by Critical Theory (cf. 1.5.1.1), which primarily utilises qualitative methodological approaches and methods that do not merely give account of issues, but rather aims at emancipation, empowerment and transformation of the *status quo* (cf. 1.5.1.1).

Positivism and Critical Theory represent two diverse paradigms, which, together with their particular research methods, are perceived to be mutually exclusive, incommensurable or incompatible (Bryman, 1988:105). The incompatibility thesis holds that qualitative and quantitative approaches, including their associated methods, cannot and should not be mixed (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). Qualitative and quantitative ‘purists’ further believe that a combination of these two approaches could result in “ontological oscillation” (Lee, n.d.:93), or “lead to vastly diverse, disparate, and totally antithetical ends” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). There is no doubt that differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches do exist. However, Bryman (in Kura, 2012:13) indicates that a somewhat exaggerated picture is painted of these differences and their theoretical irreconcilability.

Emphasis on the irreconcilability of research approaches resulted in a polarisation or a dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative research. However, for many this dichotomy is false and flawed (Kruger, 2003:3; also Kura, 2012:13; Walsh, 2012:10). For example, Ercikan and Roth (2008:14) distance themselves from this polarisation and regard it as confusing and tending to limit research inquiry, which could result in incomplete answers to research questions and potentially inappropriate inferences based on findings. Hammersley (in Niglas, 2007:2) also asserts that ‘paradigm wars’

may have serious implications for the nature and functioning of education research in particular. Similarly, Reynolds and Cavanagh (2005:2) are of the opinion that "the binary divide" bedevils research endeavours within the broader field of educational research. For Wood and Welch (2010:57) distinctions between qualitative-quantitative tends to constrain opportunities for innovation, while Rolfe (in Morgan & Drury, 2003:5) indicates that the "rigidity of thinking by researchers to avoid stepping outside of the rules, is unlikely to produce the necessary leap into creative discovery".

Subsequently, informed by the aforementioned, I intend to transcend this perceived dichotomy by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods in this study. My choice is justified by my conviction that "while some methods lend themselves more readily to certain epistemological perspectives, no method of data collection is inherently positivist, phenomenological or critical" (Harvey, 1990:1). Howe (in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15) also argues that although research methods have been typically linked to certain paradigms, this linkage is neither sacrosanct, nor necessary. In addition, Guba and Lincoln (1994:105) claim that both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm, while Creswell (in Kura, 2012:14; also Creswell, 2008:552) asserts that:

[t]he problems addressed by social and health science researchers are complex, and the use of either quantitative or qualitative approaches by themselves is inadequate to address this complexity ... Finally, there is more insight to be gained from the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research than either from itself. Their combined use provides an expanded understanding of research problems.

Building on the above, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:15) contends that "the world is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, complex, and dynamic, therefore many researchers need to complement one research method with another...". Of particular interest for education research is the observation of Niglas (2007:3) that a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches could be beneficial to educational research and that these approaches should be treated as complementary ways of studying educational phenomena and not as mutually exclusive paradigms. From the aforementioned it appears that a certain degree of permeability and 'method borrowing' between qualitative and quantitative research

approaches *is* possible. Methods, and not epistemological or ontological elements (Morgan, 2007:62), *could* therefore be mixed.

However, concerns could still be raised about the relevance of quantitative research methods or a combination thereof with qualitative research methods within a critical research paradigm, especially since positivism and critical theory could be placed on the far most ends of a paradigm continuum.

In this regard Jackson (1995:12; cf. also Stage 2007:7) claims that quantitative and qualitative research can be used together in the critical approach. Waghid (2002:50) also asserts that critical inquiry transcends the quantitative-qualitative dichotomy. Furthermore, as previously indicated (cf. 1.5.2) Critical Theory is, at its centre, an effort to join empirical investigation, the task of interpretation and a critique of reality. While Jupp and Norris (1993:45) indicate that the critical paradigm is not against empirical investigation *per se*, Jayaratne (1993:107), in referring to the value of the latter for feminist research, which is inherently critical, asserts that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods can assist in achieving feminist goals more effectively than the use of either qualitative or quantitative methods alone. Finally, I tend to align myself with Harvey (1990:7) who indicate that:

Critical social research requires that empirical material is collected. It does not matter whether it is statistical material, anecdotes, directly observed behaviour, media content, interview responses, art works, or anything else. Whatever provides insight is suitable. But whatever it is, it must not be taken at face value.

Despite the criticism by critical theorists of positivism and its associated methodological approaches and methods, it is indeed possible to effectively use positivistic methods within a critical research approach. The choice whether to use quantitative methods or not, should primarily be determined by the research question and not the philosophical position of the researcher (Niglas, 2007:4; cf. also Morgan, 2007:64; Krathwohl, 1998:27).

The implication here is that methods do not have much value in themselves but will rather be more or less useful for particular research questions. Researchers should therefore select and apply methods that are appropriate to the research question

being addressed (cf. also 1.5.2.4). It follows then that 'fitness of purpose' should be the guiding principle in the selection of research methods.

Based on the above exposition and informed by my research question, I find it appropriate to utilise survey research in this study. I am convinced that the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods will deepen my understanding of the practice of education as related to ESD. I am also of the opinion that the use of a survey will contribute to my endeavour to "attempt to confront the injustices of society" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994:140). It is therefore my intention *not* to use quantitative methods to verify conventional wisdoms, to seek consensus, or to confirm and maintain the *status quo*. Rather, I seek to forge challenges, illuminate conflicts and develop critique in an effort to move theory, knowledge and policy to a higher plane (Stage, 2007:8), by illuminating oppression and inequality. I will therefore use numerical data from structured questionnaires to identify social or institutional perpetuation of systematic inequities in education processes and outcomes (Stage, 2007:10).

5.1.2 *THE NATURE OF SURVEY RESEARCH*

As a research approach, surveys are primarily quantitative in nature (Aldridge & Levine, 2001:29; also Bryman, 1988:1; Mertens, 2003:146; Neuman, 2000:247). As such, it involves collecting quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires or interviews, and statistically analysing the data to describe trends in responses to questions (Creswell, 2008:388; also Dooley, 1990:129; Reynolds & Cavanagh, 2005:8). While many authors point out the possibility to use surveys to infer findings to the whole population (Curtis & Curtis, 2011:122, cf. also Krathwohl, 1998:351; Kraemer in Glasow, 2005:1; Neuman, 2000:247) it is not my intention to either extrapolate or generalise any research findings to the broader population. Through the survey I merely seek a deeper understanding about the research topic.

Because of its association with positivism, surveys are criticised as not only being intrinsically manipulative, scientific and technistic, but also as an ideological reflection, whose acceptance by the public furthers particular interests (De Vaus, 1986:9). In addition, Sapsford (1999:161 and 162) also refers to power relations that

are implicit in survey research – researchers who extract the data they want from respondents selected by them, through means they want to employ, while respondents are simply required to comply with honesty. However, I approach this survey research with a sensitivity towards the above power relations, and a consciousness that the people I am about to involve in this research are experts in their own right, and co-producers of knowledge. Hence participants to this research are not viewed as objects of study, but co-researchers, participants and informants.

Surveys can be used for various reasons (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:232; also Creswell, 2008:388; Glasow, 2005:1; Neuman, 2000:247). Aldridge and Levine (2001:29) assert that the material that surveys elicit can open up important insights into the motivation and perceptions of the participants. It is especially this potential of surveys to explore that is of particular significance to this study, since the data that will be yielded will be used to unpack the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community (cf. 1.4). Questionnaires are essential to and most directly associated with survey research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:239), and the quantitative data for this thesis was subsequently collected through questionnaires.

5.1.3 *THE QUESTIONNAIRE*

A questionnaire is made up of a series of set questions and either provides a space for an answer or offers a number of fixed alternatives from which the participants make a choice (Jackson, 1995:105). According to McNeil (1990:23) the questionnaire should be prepared in such a way that the questions are asked in exactly the same way for every participant. Black (1999:204) asserts that if the questionnaire is to be reliable, then it is necessary for all the respondents to interpret the questions in the same way.

The questionnaire for this thesis consisted of closed-ended questions, which allow for an overview of traits, actions, abilities, views and attitudes (Black, 1999:203). Since the use of only closed-ended questions might yield concerns about the validity of the data (McNeill, 1990:26), other measures were put into place to ensure that the data collected would be as reliable as possible (cf. 5.1.3.1; 5.1.3.2; 5.1.3.3).

The questionnaire furthermore consisted of various sections. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of the participants, whilst Section B included questions pertaining to SD, SSD and ESD (cf. 2.3, 2.4 and 3.4). These sections were completed by all the respondents. Section C focused on LO and was completed by LO teachers only. The various types of questions were rated on a 4-point scale.

5.1.3.1 RESEARCH ETHICS

Researchers have an ethical responsibility towards the participants (Alreck & Settle 1995:8). In this research, various ethical aspects were considered and applied. As already indicated (cf. 1.5.2.4b) I firstly applied for clearance from the Free State Department of Education to conduct the research at selected schools in the Free State (cf. Addendum B); and for ethical clearance from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State. The granting of permission (cf. Addendum B) underscored my responsibility towards the participants to ensure that no participant was harmed or threatened in any way during the research. Aldridge and Levine (2001:22) maintain that the core of research ethics is due respect for the integrity of the people participating in the research. Whilst the dignity of the participants were ensured by treating them in a respectful, professional and dignified manner, their privacy and confidentiality were protected by using numbers (cf. 1.5.2.4b). Since social research invades a persons' privacy, direct and informed consent from the participants were sought (cf. Addendum A). To ensure informed consent, participants were not only informed about the aim and objectives of the research, but they were also briefed on the possible effect(s) that taking part might have on them. Participation was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time during the research.

Transparency and honesty are important ethical principles that needed to be observed and respected (cf. 1.5.2.4b). To give effect to these principles, written reports of my research will be communicated in an honest and trustworthy manner to the participating schools as well as the Free State Department of Education. In so doing, the participants' access to the results of their contribution as a basic right will be honoured (cf. 1.5.2.4b). Through transparency, I will thus ensure that the

participants gain something from the research, and by assisting them to feel empowered by their participation (Krathwohl, 1998:56). In this way informed consent comes to fruition in an informed outcome (Aldridge & Levine, 2001:22).

My contact details and that of the University of the Free State were provided should participants raise any queries or concerns, or to verify my identity or the nature of my research (Aldridge & Levine, 2001:22). This promoted trust and enhanced my relationship with the participants and my responsibility not to compromise the field of research (cf. 1.5.2.4b).

In addition to ethical considerations pertaining to the participants, I also ensured that the research was conducted with the highest level of professional and scientific integrity, and no information was falsified or plagiarised in any way. As such, I had to ensure the validity and reliability of my research enterprise.

5.1.3.2 VALIDITY

For Bernard (2013:193) nothing in research is more important than validity. Suskie (1996:56) also regards validity as important since it ensures that inferences made from a valid instrument will be accurate. Validity is defined by Mertens (2010:383) as the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. Similarly, Morison (1986:35) asserts that the validity of any research method is determined by whether it actually measures what it is supposed to measure. Bernard (2013:45) is also of the opinion that validity refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of research instruments, data and findings. One could infer that validity deals with the extent to which conclusions drawn from the data logically follow from it (Sapsford, 1999:9). It also asks to what extent answers are produced that are a true reflection of the participants' beliefs, experience or situations? (Morison, 1986:36). Therefore, to ask whether a study is valid, or the extent to which it is valid, is to ask about the status of evidence. Although various types of validity are found in the literature, Crombach (in Black, 1999:192) suggests that the above is not really separated from other forms of validity. To ensure the validity of this study, I focused on, and adhered to the following:

- Content validity is when an instrument contains appropriate content for measuring a complex concept or construct. Following De Vaus (1986:48; cf. also Aldridge & Levine, 2001:40; Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996:78), content validity emphasises the extent to which indicators measure the different aspects of the concept. I addressed the content validity of the questionnaire by grounding it in an extensive literature study (cf. Chapter 2), a conceptual analysis (cf. Chapter 3) and a critical policy analysis (cf. Chapter 4).
- Construct validity deals with the consistency between concept, construct and operational definition (Black, 1999:192). According to Aldridge and Levine (2001:40) construct validity reflects on the performance of a measure over time, to see if it had produced fruitful findings. An instrument has high construct validity if there is a close fit between the construct it supposedly measures and actual observations made with the instrument (cf. also De Vaus, 1986:48). In this study I measured the constructs SD, SSD and ESD (cf. 2.3, 2.4 and 3.4), and the measurable indicators constituting these constructs, were obtained as described in the foregoing paragraph.
- Face value validity involves looking at the operational indicators of a concept and deciding whether the indicators make sense at face value. Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen (1996:78) assert that face value validity is about the degree to which a questionnaire seems to measure the appropriate concept at face value. To enhance the face value validity of this study, I asked two critical readers to read through the questionnaire and their recommendations were included in the final questionnaire. Attention was also paid to the structure of the questions, ensuring that they were developed to ask for the required information.

5.1.3.3 RELIABILITY

Reliability is not only related to validity, but it is also essential for validity (Black, 1999:198). According to Krathwohl (1998:435) in providing evidence of validity, we will also have shown that the measure is consistent or reliable. Reliability refers to the consistency of an instrument in measuring whatever it measures (Krathwohl, 1998:435). According to Morison (1986:36; cf. also Aldridge & Levine, 2001:39; Alreck & Settle, 1995:59; Black, 1999:193; Sapsford, 1999:15) the reliability of a research method is assessed in terms of the consistency and repeatability of the response, as well as the stability of the measuring tool. In other words, reliability

answers the question: will the same question asked of the same person in similar circumstances, produce the same answer? It also deals with the ability to get the same data values from several measurements made in the same way. An instrument is therefore reliable if it produces the same result on repeated occasions.

In order to enhance the reliability of my study and to ensure that a lack of objectivity of questions and other imperfections in the questionnaire do not result in biasness in the final results of this study (Denzin, 1989:148, cf. also Black, 1999:198), particular measures were attended to. First, attention was given to the quality of wording. The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with my supervisor and given to experts to evaluate its consistency. Questions were structured in an unambiguous fashion and to ease reading, questions were also as colloquial (McNeill, 1990:27; cf. also Sapsford, 1999:119) and as objective as possible by avoiding inappropriate vocabulary, clichés, jargon and emotive words (Black, 1999:205; cf. also Suskie, 1996:44-50). Sufficient time to complete the questionnaires was also given. Since group homogeneity can reduce reliability (Black, 1999:198), special attention was given to ensure that the participants are as representative as possible of the various teachers in a school.

In addition, I piloted the questionnaire with a small group of the research population. Piloting the questionnaire enabled me to identify poorly formulated, ambiguous or complex questions, and values that are not mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive (Curtis & Curtis, 2011:127).

In order to enhance reliability of the results I also cleaned the data (Black, 1999:199; Aldridge & Levine, 2001:133; Alreck & Settle, 1995:251), by carefully scrutinising all the questionnaires and rejecting all those which were completed incorrectly³, before the data was captured. I also double-checked the recorded data for errors and corrected those made during the recording process. Once the data of the survey was correctly captured, I measured the internal consistency of the responses by calculating the Cronbach alpha coefficient (Black, 1999:279). The Cronbach alpha

³ These refer *inter alia* to respondents providing more than one response per item, and respondents completing only the first few items.

coefficient ranges between 0 and 1, and the higher the coefficient value the higher the internal consistency of the questionnaire. According to Durrheim (1999: 72) an alpha value of greater than 0,75 is considered reliable. In this study the scale reliability coefficient was measured as 0,9796, which suggests a relatively high internal reliability.

5.1.4 *PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY*

5.1.4.1 SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND PARTICIPANTS

In survey research, participants are usually carefully selected and a careful rationale for their selection is provided (Krathwohl, 1998:26). Participant selection is the process of choosing, in a systematic fashion a sub-set of cases from which data will be collected from a pool of all those potentially relevant to the research being conducted (Aldridge & Levine, 2001:61).

The selection of participants was preceded by a decision on the population of the study (cf. Neuman, 2000:201). Babbie (2010:199) defines a population as the theoretically specified aggregation of the elements in a study. According to Curtis and Curtis (2011:127) a population consists of all the possible cases that could be covered in the survey. In this study the population consisted of teachers in the Further Education and Training band (FET, Grades 10–12) in all five educational districts of the Free State Province. Although all the teachers in this band were targeted, the focus was on Life Orientation (LO) educators. The rationale for focusing on LO teachers is based on the assumption that the aims and objectives of LO show significant similarities with that of SSD (cf. 1.1). In addition, both SD and ESD assume an interdisciplinary and interrelated character (cf. 2.3.4 and 3.4.2.1) and as such it requires that related themes be covered in all subjects across the FET band. Both Life Science and Geography also explicitly focus on SD. I therefore assumed that all teachers teaching in the FET band would be equipped to answer questions related to SD and SSD, and also assist in investigating the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community (cf. 1.4). Due to the practical, financial and time constraints of using the entire Grade 10-12 teacher population in the Free State, a smaller number of participants or a unit of analysis, was drawn (Neuman, 2000:201).

A unit of analysis to answer the research question could be drawn using any techniques (Kemper, Stringfield & Teddlie, 2003:277). Subsequently, a unit of analysis was drawn following the logic of non-probability or purposive participant selection. According to Creswell (2008:155; cf. also Aldridge & Levine, 2001:81; DeVaus, 1986:68; Krathwohl, 1998:172) purposive selection enables the researcher to select cases intentionally because they are available, convenient and represent some characteristic that the investigator seeks to study. Following Babbie (2010:193), purposive sampling enables the selection of participants on the basis of knowledge of a population and its elements. Kemper, Stringfield and Teddlie (2003:279) also assert that in purposive selection specific cases are intentionally selected since it will provide the most information for the question under study. However, it is particularly the potential of purposive selection to find information-rich cases that will not only allow an in-depth study, but will also clarify and deepen understanding (Neuman, 2000:197), which is what I regarded as of significance to this research. I therefore assumed that the unit of analysis selected would allow for an in-depth understanding of education practice, especially since it relates to ESD. Since purposive participant selection does not allow for findings to be generalised to the broader population, results yielded by this selection technique will solely be used to describe views of the unit of analysis. The burden of generalisability therefore lies with the readers. There is seldom a definite answer about how large a unit of analysis should be for any given study (Fowler, 1993:35), but I was guided by Johnson and Christensen (2004:218) who suggest a final sample of 384 to be sufficient to any large population. To allow for non-return of questionnaires, I distributed more than this suggested number and the unit of analysis consisted of 480 teacher-participants.

Ten secondary schools from each of the five education districts of the Free State were selected using the EMIS of the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) to take part in this study. However, a total of only forty-eight schools were willing to take part in the study. Where I initially planned to send out 500 questionnaires (cf. 1.5.2.4) in the final instance only 480 questionnaires were distributed. Careful attention was paid to ensure that the participating schools represent the broad demographics, as well as the socio-economic conditions of the Free State Province.

Details on the schools are provided in Table 1:

TABLE 1: DETAILS ON THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Quintile allocation	Number of schools	Geographical Location								
		Inner city	Suburban	Township	Informal settlement	Rural	City	Large town	Small town	Other
1	10	1		14	1	17		1	35	
2	10			18	3	15			15	
3	8			20	3	7	1		31	
4	10			51		7	1	1	3	2
5	10	2	22	9		2	31	25	1	
Total	48	3	22	112	7	48	33	27	85	2

5.1.4.2 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Bless *et al.* (2006: 121) point out the difficulties of collecting data using questionnaires, specifically in developing countries. Denzin (1989:148 & 153) similarly reports on a growing refusal rate amongst participants to participate in research, and also indicates that non-response of participants might distort the final results and lead to bias. Therefore, to get as much schools and teachers to participate, and to enhance the response rate, schools were first recruited telephonically, after which most questionnaires were personally delivered and collected. A few questionnaires (to 5 (five) schools) were sent by mail, and questionnaires to one school were sent electronically. By doing this I prevented late questionnaires from impacting on the validity of the results to a large extent. In cases where problems were experienced with respondents, follow-up phone calls were made to encourage participating schools, to clear any uncertainties and to make final arrangements for collecting the questionnaires. In addition, to enhance the return rate, a not too long questionnaire was developed, questions were carefully worded and particular attention was paid to the typology of the questionnaire to ensure that it appears professional and inviting.

The questionnaire (cf. Addendum A) included a cover letter explaining the worthwhileness of participating, as well as the aim of the research, the way in which the participants were selected, why they could assist, and assurance regarding confidentiality and anonymity as well as contact information should participants want to verify issues or raise concerns (cf. Aldridge & Levine, 2001:87).

5.1.4.3 RESPONDENTS

The schools were requested to ask at least two LO teachers from Grades 10-12 to complete the questionnaire. In addition, at least eight teachers in other subjects offered at the school for the corresponding grades were asked to complete the questionnaire as well.

Of the 480 questionnaires sent out, 332 were returned. However, 7 questionnaires were rejected during the data cleansing process since they were not completed according to prescriptions, resulting in 325 questionnaires being fit to serve as representing the views of the participants in the study. Since this is a non-probability sample (cf. 5.1.4), findings cannot be generalised to the broader population.

Below are the demographic details of the participants ($n=325$).

TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF PARTICIPANTS

		n	%
Gender	Male	154	
	Female	169	
	Not indicated	2	
		325	
Teaching experience	Up to a year	10	
	2-3	32	
	4-5	34	
	6-10	70	
	11-20	94	
	More than 20	82	
	Not indicated	3	
		325	

Subjects taught	Life Orientation	81	
	Languages	74	
	History/Geography	25	
	Biology/Physical Science	31	
	Maths/Maths Literacy	55	
	Accounting/Business Studies/Computer Literacy	44	
	Technical Drawings	4	
	Tourism/Consumer Studies	2	
	Not indicated	9	
		325	
Qualifications	Diploma	77	
	B-degree	153	
	Honours	69	
	Masters	13	
	PhD	1	
	Grade 12	1	
	Not indicated	11	
		325	
Quintile ⁴	1	63	
	2	45	
	3	60	
	4	69	
	5	88	
		325	

I captured the data in MS Excel and afterwards carefully scrutinised it for possible mistakes. The initial aggregation was done in MS Excel, after which the data was imported into STATA IC11 and analysed with the assistance of an experienced data analyst.

⁴ While the classification of schools in terms of quintiles is a contentious issue, and has been discontinued, I merely used this classification as an indicator whether the schools can be classified as disadvantaged or not.

5.2 STATISTICAL MEASURES

The following statistics were used to analyse the data.

5.2.1 *MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY: THE MEAN SCORE (\bar{x})*

In statistics, data can be summarised using a single number, value or score. As such, central tendency suggests that some value can give a general description of the bulk of the data (Bless & Kathuria, 2004:35). In this study I used the mean score (\bar{x}) as measure of central tendency. The mean, also called the arithmetic average is the sum of all the values or scores divided by the total number of cases (Bless & Kathuria, 2004:35; Neuman, 2000:319). The use of the mean score as measure of central tendency permits non-statisticians to easily understand the average as a score that represents the general trend on a construct.

5.2.2 *MEASURES OF DISTRIBUTION: THE STANDARD DEVIATION*

All data sets contain variability between the scores on different items, and measured constructs. Measures of variability determine the degree to which the observations for a variable are unrelated to one another (Durheim, 1999:106; Walsh & Ollenburger, 2001:40). It therefore explores the spread or dispersion or variation of data around a central value. The most comprehensive and widely used method to determine variability is the standard deviation (s) (Neuman, 2000:320; Tanner, 2012:32). The standard deviation is an index of the level of variability in a set of data (Babbie, 2010:432). As such, it explores the dispersion, deviation or spread of data around the mean. It is calculated so that approximately 68 per cent of cases will lie within plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean (Babbie, 2010:431). A high standard deviation subsequently means that the data are more scattered, and a low standard deviation suggests that the data is more clustered.

5.2.3 *THE STUDENTS' T-TEST*

My use of the students' t -test statistics permits me to determine the *significance* of differences between responses from various groups (Alreck & Settle, 1995:323). Because of its practical application value, the t -test is commonly used to determine the statistical significance of differences in the means (Barbie, 2010:485; Hoy, 2010:53; Walsch & Ollenburger, 2001:104-105). To establish significance, the t -

value is calculated and compared to a critical value. If the *t*-value is more than the critical value, the nil-hypothesis can be rejected with a 95 per cent confidence level (Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996:230-233; cf. also Jacobs, 2012:185). Differences in the mean of two groups of data are therefore not coincidental or by change, but rather statistically significant. While the *t*-test is typically used to infer findings to a population, this is not my intention in this study. In this study the *t*-test is done not to make any judgements, but rather to establish whether there *are* significant statistical differences in the responses of two specific groups taking part in the study.

In my analysis of the data I attempt to give details on the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community. The analysis of the data expands my understanding of the practice of education as related to ESD. By comparing specific groups, in addition to the above, analysis of the data assists me to identify injustices in society. I seek to expose challenges, shed light on conflict, and develop critique in an effort to move theory, knowledge and policy to a higher level.

5.3 RESULTS

The purpose of the survey was to examine the views of Free State teachers on the ways in which education practices respond to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society in South Africa.

5.3.1 *SUMMATIVE OVERVIEW ON CONSTRUCTS*

In the questionnaire a number of issues were explored. Table 3 provides a description of these, as well as the summative statistics of the aggregated responses to items relating to each of the issues, put in ranked order based on the mean score.

TABLE 3: SUMMATIVE STATISTICS OF EACH CONSTRUCT

	Description	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s
General Issues			
Value of SD	Whether respondents regard SD as of value to SA	3,4166	0,4929
Knowledge of SD/SSD	Whether respondents are familiar with the concepts SD/SSD	3,1267	0,4436
LO in SA	Whether Life Orientation is aligned with ESD and able to realise social sustainable development	2,9782	0,3684
SD in SA Context	Alignment of SA policies with SD	2,6057	0,5109
Elements of a social sustainable society			
Human well-being	Whether SA policies promote well-being	2,5303	0,3917
Democracy	Whether SA embraces democratic government and governance practices	2,5223	0,5309
Human rights	Whether SA respects human rights	2,5114	0,5214
Equity	Whether South Africans are treated equitably and fairly	2,5095	0,5491
Human capital	Whether South Africans have access to skills development/learning opportunities/personal development	2,4296	0,6226
Social capital	Whether strong social ties exist between South Africans (social cohesion)	2,3543	0,4649
Elements of Education for Sustainable Development			
Multi-methods	Whether various teaching and learning strategies and methods are advocated in education	2,9688	0,5835
Lifelong learning	If SA education is oriented towards lifelong learning	2,9021	0,5947
Values driven	Whether education embraces and promotes social sustainable values/values of SD	2,8965	0,5979
Holistic	Whether a holistic approach towards social issues is followed - social aims and objectives are reflected in every aspect of education, not just T+L.	2,8581	0,4252
ESD as change	Whether education promotes individual, systems or social change	2,8553	0,4416

	Description	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s
Environmental Education	If SA education is oriented towards EE	2,8371	0,3682
Integrated knowledge	Whether SA education allows the integration of different types of knowledge	2,8307	0,4224
Critical thinking, self-reflection and problem solving	Whether education promotes critical thinking/ problem solving and reflection	2,7777	0,5160
ESD as purposive	Whether education aims towards a sustainable society or SD	2,7750	0,4446
Learning	Whether education is oriented towards a learner-centred learning environment	2,7496	0,4502
Empowerment	Whether SA education creates space for the empowerment of learners, teachers and the broader community	2,7485	0,5904
Citizenship	Whether education promotes a new kind of citizenship – democratic and global	2,7440	0,5637
Participatory	Whether SA education encourages the participation of all stakeholders in education	2,7112	0,5197
Contextual	Whether education is locally as well as globally relevant	2,6743	0,4793
Quality education	Whether DBE provides quality education	2,4519	0,4426

When interpreting the summative statistics it is important to note that the responses were given on a 4-point scale, and thus 2,5 is the point of neutrality. Any value above 2,5 thus indicated a positive trend with regard to the ways in which education practices respond to the challenges of ESD and of the realisation of a social sustainable society in South Africa, while any score below 2,5 indicates a negative.

The summative values in the table above revealed some positives. The concept that was on average scored the highest by the respondents was the *value of SD* ($\bar{x}=3,4166$; $s=0,4929$), which means that respondents regard SD as of value to SA.

The concept that measured the second highest was the *knowledge of sustainable development and social sustainability* ($\bar{x}=3.1267$; $s=0.4436$), which suggest that the respondents have a relatively good understanding of the concepts sustainable development and social sustainability as it is used in this study. The third highest measurement on average was *Life Orientation in the South African context* ($\bar{x}=2.9782$; $s=0.3684$), which is an indication that Life Orientation is regarded to show a strong alignment with ESD and is seen to have the potential to contribute to realising a social sustainable society.

However, specific challenges emerged. The concept that was scored the lowest measured *social capital* ($\bar{x}=2.3543$; $s=0.4649$). This indicates that the respondents perceive that weak social ties exist between South Africans. *Human capital* measured the second lowest score ($\bar{x}=2.4296$; $s=0.6226$), indicating that the respondents do not think that South Africans have access to skills development, learning opportunities or personal development opportunities. Respondents scored *quality education* the third lowest ($\bar{x}=2,4519$; $s=0,4426$), suggesting that they have doubts about the quality of South Africa education.

5.3.2 ASPECTS OF THE CONSTRUCTS

The statistics on the constructs provided in the summary above was aggregated through details that were included in the questionnaire, based on the literature review, conceptual analysis and policy analysis. I subsequently provide the reader with the scores on each of the aspects that form part of the constructs. The purpose of including such detail is in line with the purpose of this chapter, namely to portray the views of Free State teachers, on the ways in which education practices respond to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society in South Africa. While this study uses numbers as data, and statistics to do the analyses, it is not used in a positivist fashion to derive general laws and theories but rather to expose the challenges and shortcomings in education policy and practice with regard to SD, SS and ESD. As such, detail is required.

In the table below, apart from the mean score (as measure of central tendency) and the standard deviation (as indication of the distribution of the scores), I also include

the percentage of respondents who scored positively on this aspect (i.e. 3 or 4). This provides the readers with a measure that is instinctively understood by non-statisticians.

Although such a lengthy table with much detail is difficult to read and absorb, I want to encourage the reader to focus on positive aspects, as well as the challenges that can be identified through this data. I provide some thoughts on these in my discussion after the table.

TABLE 4: SUMMATIVE STATISTICS ON MEASUREABLE INDICATORS THAT FORM THE CONSTRUCTS

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
General issues			
Knowledge of SD/SSD			
Are you familiar with the concept SD?	3,2574	0,5832	94,97%
Are you familiar with the concept SSD?	3,1324	0,5723	90,59%
Are you familiar with the concept ESD?	2,9910	0,5553	86,57%
The value of SD			
Sustainable development could provide a good quality life for all South Africans	3,4382	0,5942	95,88%
I regard sustainable development as important for poverty alleviation	3,4006	0,5949	94,96%
SD in the SA context			
South Africa aims towards sustainable development	2,9086	0,6665	80,53%
I frequently hear the concept 'sustainable development' in discussions on education	2,6637	0,7250	63,13%
The South African government does a lot to ensure the sustainable development of the country	2,4647	0,7458	48,24%
Current South African society is socially sustainable	2,3818	0,7015	46,67%
Life Orientation in SA schools			
I am committed to teaching LO	3,3908	0,7047	91,95%
I use subject content to sensitise learners to social issues and challenges	3,3243	0,4995	98,65%
I understand the value and place of LO in achieving a social sustainable society	3,2414	0,5699	93,10%
LO gives me hope for the future of South African society and its people	3,1860	0,6776	87,21%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
I think the role of LO in creating a social sustainable society is underestimated	3,1494	0,7553	85,06%
We discuss issues of social sustainable development in class	3,1216	0,4953	93,24%
Themes of social sustainable development are explicitly stated in LO	3,0345	0,6550	82,76%
I am sufficiently trained to deal with complex critical social issues, such as racism, prejudice, HIV/AIDS and inclusion	2,8966	0,8495	67,82%
LO is oriented towards achieving a social sustainable society	2,7241	0,8448	60,92%
Learners are interested in the social issues of race, inclusivity or exclusivity and (in)justice	2,4368	0,7104	42,53%
Colleagues and the SMT's treat Life Orientation as equally relevant and important to other subjects	2,2989	1,0013	41,38%
Elements of a social sustainable society			
Human well-being			
Social sustainable development concerns the improvement of society	3,2522	0,5105	97,03%
For the majority of South Africans the vision of an improved quality of life and human well-being are still in the distant future	3,0880	0,7423	83,58%
South Africa regards human development as vital for social sustainable development	2,8441	0,5664	78,53%
South Africa's commitment to human well-being is the focus point of various government departments, white papers and acts	2,7455	0,6301	75,15%
South African children enjoy improved child welfare	2,6302	0,7364	61,24%
South Africans enjoy a minimum standard of living, poverty alleviation and sustainable growth	2,6053	0,7915	59,05%
South Africans have access to a wide range of goods and services, which enable them to contribute towards society and to live a better life	2,5147	0,6890	53,82%
South Africans enjoy real and unrestricted freedom	2,4513	0,7919	48,67%
In South Africa, an environment is created where all people can develop their capabilities and enjoy long, healthy and creative lives	2,4223	0,7956	48,09%
Good quality education and healthcare facilities are available to all South Africans	2,1563	0,8509	32,15%
The basic needs of all South Africans are provided for	2,1173	0,8390	31,67%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
The majority of South Africans have access to land	2,0801	0,8033	29,38%
The majority of South Africans have access to finance	2,0029	0,8123	25,37%
Democracy			
Non-governmental organisations and community based organisations play an important role in advancing democratic governance in South Africa	2,8724	0,6304	80,71%
South Africa is committed to a democratic government and democratic governance	2,7033	0,7644	68,84%
South Africans embrace the inclusion of diverse people	2,6506	0,7155	62,35%
Effective platforms for dialogue exist in South Africa	2,5375	0,6916	53,15%
South Africa is committed to transparency	2,2929	0,8043	38,17%
The South African government is committed to fighting corruption	2,0973	0,8934	35,10%
Social capital			
The values in the <i>South African Constitution</i> promote social cohesion	2,8284	0,7470	75,15%
South Africans have strong social ties in families	2,6538	0,7029	62,72%
South Africans experience strong bonds of social cohesion within their broader communities	2,5940	0,6538	58,51%
South Africans associate themselves with a common South African identity	2,5799	0,7787	58,28%
South Africans trust one another	1,8269	0,6473	10,15%
South Africans enjoy low crime rates	1,6280	0,7987	12,80%
Equity			
In South Africa we are serious about gender equity and equality	2,7794	0,7651	70,29%
South Africans are motivated to work together towards equity, justice and freedom	2,5546	0,7373	56,05%
South Africans are committed to social justice through equity and equality	2,4792	0,7408	53,27%
South African women are treated equally and without any unfair discrimination	2,4384	0,7722	51,05%
We are realising social justice in South Africa	2,2943	0,6703	40,24%
Human rights			
Societies characterised by human rights abuses are unsustainable	3,0601	0,7777	80,48%
In South Africa, basic human rights of all people are upheld and protected	2,4491	0,7684	51,80%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
The political rights of all South Africans are guaranteed and protected	2,2765	0,8690	41,18%
In South Africa accountability is highly regarded	2,2663	0,8440	38,17%
Human Capital			
Skills development is a priority in South Africa	2,6921	0,7449	65,10%
South Africans have access to employment opportunities	2,1701	0,7408	34,33%
Elements of Education for Sustainable Development			
Quality education			
South African education promotes democracy and secures peaceful societies	2.7560	0.6578	69.88%
South African education is sufficiently transformed to realise social sustainable development	2.5559	0.6780	56.50%
Education in South Africa is just and equitable	2.5244	0.7078	52.74%
Learners in South Africa receive education of a good quality	2.5060	0.7463	50.30%
South African education reduces social inequality, social injustice and discrimination	2.3951	0.7624	38.91%
South Africans experience no barriers to learning	2.0150	0.8008	26.73%
Participation in education			
LO succeeds in equipping learners with skills, values and knowledge for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society	3,1628	0,6109	88,37%
Non-governmental organisations, as well as community based organisations are actively involved in South African education	2,7690	0,6906	70,52%
We discuss issues of social sustainable development in the LO class	2,7568	0,7730	71,62%
South African education involves and embraces the participation of different and alternative voices	2,7190	0,6717	69,18%
South African education provides for participation of the marginalised and oppressed in decision-making and consultation	2,5843	0,6835	58,73%
Education as purposeful			
LO is focused on achieving a social sustainable society	3,2558	0,5978	94,19%
The principles of LO are focused on social sustainable development	3,1860	0,5204	94,19%
LO succeeds in developing in learners understanding and respect for cultural diversity	2,9770	0,6643	83,91%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
In South Africa, teaching and learning promote reflection upon experiences and existing knowledge, routines, norms, values and interests	2,9245	0,5906	81,57%
South African education contributes towards a socially, sustainable society	2,7619	0,6623	69,94%
South African education is oriented towards sustainable development	2,7568	0,5994	72,37%
South African education is primarily concerned with social sustainable development	2,7544	0,6320	69,53%
I am convinced that South African education is oriented towards social sustainable development	2,7365	0,6862	68,86%
South African education, in particular, is oriented towards sustainable development	2,6657	0,6917	64,50%
Education focuses on poverty alleviation and poverty prevention	2,6396	0,6915	61,26%
Education as agent of change			
LO brings about personal change in the life of the individual	3,2442	0,6675	91,86%
LO develops balanced and confident learners who can contribute to an improved quality of life for themselves and others	3,1860	0,6233	88,37%
LO contributes to the transformation of South African society into an equal, just and free society	3,1609	0,6625	87,36%
I challenge learners to act on and confront social injustices in order to bring about change	3,1067	0,5829	90,67%
The aims and objectives of my subject are linked to social transformation and social sustainable development	3,0901	0,5738	89,49%
LO transforms the South African society into a fair, just and equitable society	3,0471	0,6344	84,71%
I am convinced that I am teaching towards social sustainable development	2,9426	0,5927	80,66%
South African education promotes the transformation of society	2,8610	0,6457	77,34%
Teaching and learning in South African schools result in individual behavioural changes	2,8299	0,6222	76,12%
South African education aims at challenging the <i>status quo</i> of inequality in society.	2,8204	0,6419	77,25%
South African education brings about positive action to change society and make it more socially sustainable	2,7493	0,6496	69,85%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
Teaching and learning in South African schools promote social changes	2,7477	0,6784	72,07%
South African education is sufficiently transformed to develop in learners the values associated with social sustainable development	2,6707	0,6525	65,27%
Learners understand the value of LO in social and personal transformation.	2,6437	0,8066	59,77%
Education promotes citizenship			
Learners are empowered through LO to become active citizens	3,1512	0,6042	88,37%
South African education focuses on developing active global citizens	2,7224	0,6638	68,06%
South African education develops active, engaged, informed, concerned and competent citizens	2,6900	0,6860	64,74%
Education focuses on learning			
Learning taking place in LO transforms learners	3,1047	0,6691	84,88%
South African education embraces types of learning which can promote social transformation	2,8563	0,6322	77,25%
South African education creates learning environments which cultivate and appreciate diversity	2,8423	0,6148	75,60%
Meaningful learning environments that accommodate diverse interests, values, ways of thinking and doing, norms, views and perspectives are created	2,8253	0,6018	75,90%
South African education policies are effective in providing learning opportunities for all, based on constitutional guarantees of equal educational rights and non-discrimination	2,7417	0,6489	69,37%
South Africans promote cultural understanding and respect cultural diversity	2,7345	0,7300	66,67%
South African education embraces learning rather than teaching	2,7237	0,6955	64,86%
Learning environments in South African schools are learner-oriented and not teacher-oriented	2,6914	0,6899	64,99%
Deep transformative learning takes place in South African schools	2,5271	0,7012	52,11%
Local and global relevance of education			
I am sensitive to the cultural and contextual relevance of my teaching and learning approaches in class	3,4189	0,5236	98,65%
LO aims at global citizenship	3,1176	0,5651	91,76%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
South African education is relevant to the broader South African community	2,8090	0,6606	72,84%
South African education is relevant to the needs of the community and the wider South African society	2,7343	0,6732	68,96%
South African education is shaped by globalisation	2,7095	0,6539	67,89%
South African education embraces local needs and demands	2,6595	0,6638	61,35%
South African education is culturally relevant to the diverse local communities	2,5843	0,6656	59,94%
In South African education, knowledge is grounded in local communities	2,5754	0,6559	57,54%
Local communities and stakeholders accept ownership of schools	2,3958	0,7297	45,83%
Holistic and inter-disciplinary approach to education			
The vision statement of my school promotes social sustainable development	3,0452	0,5877	89,16%
Social themes of environmental education are integrated in other subjects	2,8985	0,5149	82,99%
I work collaboratively with teachers in other subjects	2,8983	0,7587	79,66%
Education policies articulate the vision of a social sustainable society	2,8359	0,6371	76,29%
South African education follows a whole school approach towards social sustainable development	2,6617	0,6061	63,20%
Education is value driven and ethical			
The aims and objectives of LO are explicitly linked to issues of social sustainable development such as equality, equity, inclusion, human rights and justice	3,2674	0,6024	94,19%
I engage learners in discussions on South Africa's common values	3,2667	0,5534	94,67%
Through LO, learners become more tolerant and respectful towards people different from themselves	3,1279	0,6650	83,72%
Our school promotes the values of social sustainable development, such as compassion, respect, equity, equality, cooperativeness, HR, non-discrimination, tolerance and justice	2,9048	0,7430	76,79%
Social values such as equity, justice, commitment, discipline, peace and trust are integral to the moral fabric and ethos of South African education	2,8060	0,7184	72,84%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
Education promotes multi-methods			
I use diverse teaching and learning strategies in my class	3,2133	0,5764	94,67%
Education in South Africa promotes the use of various teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies	2,9464	0,6206	83,33%
Education promotes critical thinking, self-reflection and problem-solving, and agency			
In my teaching and learning I encourage learners to reflect on their attitudes and values	3,3067	0,4925	98,67%
I link critical social issues to my subjects	3,2800	0,5342	96,00%
I create situations where learners are challenged to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to solve real-life social challenges	3,2267	0,5087	96,00%
Learners initiate discussions on critical social issues.	3,0676	0,6043	85,14%
South African education develops in learners, teachers and the broader community, skills which enable critical reflection on social issues	2,8144	0,6355	74,25%
South African education enables learners to develop critical thinking skills in order to ask critical questions and to determine for themselves what needs to be done to change the situation.	2,7946	0,6964	71,90%
South African education develops critical thinking and problem-solving attitudes	2,7898	0,7098	72,37%
South African education enhances reflection and self-critique	2,6939	0,6618	66,67%
South African education is sufficiently critical to expose ideology, contradiction and politics	2,6042	0,6207	61,63%
Environmental Education in SA education			
Social sustainable development could be achieved through environmental education	2,9940	0,5148	88,29%
Social issues of environmental education are integrated into my learning area	2,9940	0,5756	86,19%
I regard the themes (issues) of environmental education as exclusively concerned with environmental sustainability	2,9302	0,6649	76,74%
I regard environmental education as a synonym for education for sustainable development	2,8862	0,5791	81,14%
In South African education, sustainable development and environmental education are closely related	2,8468	0,5682	78,68%

	Mean \bar{x}	Standard deviation s	% positive
Environmental education amongst other things focuses on social issues such as equality, equity, democracy and poverty eradication	2,8415	0,5846	79,27%
Environmental education assists in creating a social sustainable South African society	2,8061	0,5978	78,48%
Issues of sustainable development are primarily dealt with in Natural Science and Geography	2,7709	0,6618	71,52%
Environmental education is responsive to the needs and challenges of education for sustainable development	2,7638	0,5786	72,39%
In South African education the focus, aims and nature of education for sustainable development and environmental education are the same	2,6163	0,6235	58,91%
Education and lifelong learning			
Through LO, the values of lifelong learning are developed in learners	3,1882	0,6636	88,24%
In South Africa, lifelong learning holds the potential to reduce poverty and emancipate and improve the quality of life of its citizens	2,9699	0,6211	82,83%
South African education promotes lifelong learning	2,8198	0,7549	69,97%
Promotion of integrated knowledge			
I draw on other knowledge systems, such as indigenous or local knowledge, in my teaching and learning	3,2000	0,5695	94,67%
South African education promotes the integration of various and diverse knowledge and knowledge systems	2,8892	0,5338	82,63%
South African education promotes the production and dissemination of new knowledge	2,8875	0,5489	82,37%
Women's knowledge in particular, forms an integral component of knowledge in South African education	2,7788	0,6635	71,21%
Traditional knowledge forms an integral component of knowledge in South African education	2,7199	0,6095	68,98%
Education as empowerment			
LO empowers learners to become agents of social change	3,2069	0,6495	87,36%
LO develops in learners the values and dispositions required for a social sustainable society	3,1954	0,6069	91,95%
South African education empowers all learners, teachers and the broader community socially, economically and politically	2,6925	0,6776	63,58%
Governance structures in schools are sufficiently empowered to take ownership of schools	2,6837	0,7329	63,25%

Looking at the detailed aspects that were explored through this survey, a number of promising issues emerged. The aspect that on average scored the highest relates to the respondents' perception that sustainable development could provide a good quality life for all South Africans ($\bar{x}=3,4382$; $s=0,5942$). Likewise I found it encouraging that the participants seem to be sensitive to the cultural and contextual relevance of their teaching and learning approaches in class ($\bar{x}=3,4189$; $s=0,5236$). The third highest measurement indicates the views of the participants on the importance of sustainable development for poverty alleviation ($\bar{x}=3.4006$; $s=0.5949$). This suggests that the respondents regard sustainable development as a prerequisite for poverty alleviation.

Other positive aspects that emerged from the data are:

- Respondents feeling that LO teachers are committed ($\bar{x}=3,3908$; $s=0.7047$).
- Respondents indicating that they use subject content to sensitize learners about social issues and challenges ($\bar{x}=3,3243$; $s=0,4995$).
- Respondents noting that they encourage learners to reflect on their attitudes and values ($\bar{x}=3,3067$; $s=0,4925$).
- Respondents suggesting that the aims and objectives of LO are explicitly linked to issues of social sustainable development such as equality, equity, inclusion, human rights and justice ($\bar{x}=3,2674$; $s=0,6024$).
- Respondents linking critical social issues to their subjects ($\bar{x}=3,2800$; $s=0,5342$).
- Respondents engaging learners in discussions on South Africa's common values ($\bar{x}=3,2667$; $s=0,5534$).

Contrary to the positive aspects that emerged, low scores expose issues in South African education that need improvement. The aspect that was scored the lowest measured the level of trust amongst South Africans ($\bar{x}=1,8269$; $s=0.6473$), which suggests that respondents experience distrust amongst South Africans. Crime rates in South Africa scored the second lowest ($\bar{x}=1,6280$; $s=7,7987$), while the accessibility of financial support for South Africans measured the third lowest ($\bar{x}=2,0029$; $s=0,8123$).

Other aspects that measured low, and thus indicate reason for concern are the following:

- Respondents denying that South Africans experience no barriers to learning ($\bar{x}=2.0150$; $s= 0.8008$).
- Respondents disagreeing that the majority of South Africans have access to land ($\bar{x}=2,0801$; $s=0,8033$).
- Respondents not experiencing the South African government as committed to fighting corruption ($\bar{x}=2,0973$; $s=0,8934$).
- Respondents rejecting that the basic needs of all South Africans are provided for ($\bar{x}=2,1173$; $s=0,8390$).
- Respondents suggesting that good quality education and healthcare facilities are not available to all South Africans ($\bar{x}=2,1563$ $0,8509$).
- Respondents refuting that South Africans have access to employment opportunities ($\bar{x}=2,1701$; $s=0,7408$).

5.3.3 COMPARING GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

Following my analysis of the detail under each construct, in order to expose problematic areas in SD, SS and ESD, I furthermore explored whether there were different views amongst diverse groups of respondents. I used specific statistics, typically used for *inferential* statistics, to *differentiate* between the views of groups of respondents. The purpose of this is to expose specific challenges without claiming generalisations beyond this sample.

Comparisons are thus made between the views of the following sets of respondents:

- Respondents from economically deprived schools (formerly classified as quintile 1 and quintile 2 schools) vs. respondents from the more affluent schools (formerly classified as between quintile 3 and quintile 5).
- Female respondents vs. male respondents.
- Respondents with less years' experience (5 years or less) vs. experienced teacher-respondents (6 or more years' experience).
- Respondents with just a basic education qualification (Diploma or Degree) vs. respondents with a postgraduate qualification.
- Respondents teaching Life Orientation vs. respondents teaching other subjects.

The analysis of each of the comparisons will be discussed in the sections that follow.

5.3.3.1 COMPARING THE VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS PER ECONOMIC POSITION OF SCHOOL

The views of respondents from disadvantaged schools, per construct, were compared to the views of respondents from more affluent schools. The detail is provided in the table that follows.

TABLE 5: ECONOMIC POSITION OF SCHOOLS

Economic position	Knowledge of SD and SSD				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	3,1294#	0,4765	0,0833	0,9336
More affluent	217	3,1252	0,4247		
Combined	342	3,1267	0,4437		
Economic position	Value of SD in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	3,4560#	0,5120	1,1203	0,2634
More affluent	217	3,3940	0,4814		
Combined	342	3,4167	0,4930		
Economic position	SD in the SA context				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	2,7187#	0,5370	3,1419	0,0018*
More affluent	217	2,5407	0,4847		
Combined	342	2,6058	0,5109		
Economic position	LO in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	32	3,0299#	0,3420	0,9938	0,3231
More affluent	56	2,9488	0,3826		
Combined	88	2,9783	0,3685		
Economic position	Human well-being in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	2,6211#	0,3969	3,2988	0,0011*
More affluent	217	2,4781	0,3799		
Combined	342	2,5304	0,3918		

Economic position	Democracy in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,67096#	0,5704	3,9925	0,0001*
More affluent	217	2,43739	0,4884		
Combined	341	2,5223	0,53096		
Economic position	Social capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,4422#	0,4944	2,6609	0,0082*
More affluent	217	2,3042	0,4406		
Combined	341	2,3544	0,4649		
Economic position	Equity in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	123	2,6220#	0,5688	2,8725	0,0043*
More affluent	217	2,4458	0,5285		
Combined	340	2,5095	0,5492		
Economic position	Human rights in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	2,7093#	0,5160	5,5546	0,0000*
More affluent	217	2,3975	0,4906		
Combined	342	2,5115	0,5215		
Economic position	Human capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,5726#	0,7062	3,2499	0,0013*
More affluent	217	2,3479	0,5548		
Combined	341	2,4296	0,6226		
Economic position	SA education as quality education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	123	2,5446#	0,5400	1,2479	0,2129
More affluent	217	2,4720	0,5012		
Combined	340	2,4982	0,5160		
Economic position	SA education as participatory				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	123	2,7564#	0,5732	1,2164	0,2247
More affluent	217	2,6853	0,4859		
Combined	340	2,7112	0,5197		

Economic position	SA education as purposive				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	125	2,8602#	0,4718	2,7165	0,0069*
More affluent	217	2,7259	0,4214		
Combined	342	2,7750	0,4446		
Economic position	SA education as agent of change				
	n	\bar{x}	S	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,9130#	0,4637	1,8271	0,0686
More affluent	217	2,8224	0,4261		
Combined	341	2,8553	0,4416		
Economic position	SA education promoting citizenship				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	123	2,8238#	0,5578	1,9757	0,0490*
More affluent	215	2,6984	0,5633		
Combined	338	2,7441	0,5637		
Economic position	Learning in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	T	p
Disadvantaged	125	2,7764#	0,4698	0,8350	0,4043
More affluent	217	2,7341	0,4389		
Combined	342	2,7496	0,4502		
Economic position	SA education as context relevant				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,7256#	0,5219	1,4962	0,1355
More affluent	217	2,6450	0,4517		
Combined	341	2,6743	0,4793		
Economic position	SA education embracing a holistic and inter-disciplinary approach				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,8802#	0,4506	0,7243	0,4694
More affluent	217	2,8455	0,4105		
Combined	341	2,8581	0,4252		
Economic position	SA education as values driven				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	122	2,2281	0,5946	0,6071	0,5442
More affluent	215	2,8816#	0,6006		
Combined	337	2,8965	0,5979		

Economic position	SA education promoting multi-methods				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	122	3,0081#	0,5749	0,9324	0,3518
More affluent	215	2,9465	0,5885		
Combined	337	2,9688	0,5835		
Economic position	SA education promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving and agency				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,8054#	0,5368	0,7470	0,4556
More affluent	217	2,7619	0,5043		
Combined	341	2,7777	0,5160		
Economic position	Environmental Education in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,8981#	0,3637	2,3243	0,0207*
More affluent	217	2,8023	0,3671		
Combined	341	2,8371	0,3682		
Economic position	SA education promoting lifelong learning				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	123	2,9891#	0,6485	2,0419	0,0419*
More affluent	216	2,8526	0,5573		
Combined	339	2,9021	0,5947		
Economic position	SA education promoting integrated knowledge				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,8252	0,4604	0,1821	0,8557
More affluent	217	2,8339#	0,4002		
Combined	341	2,8307	0,4224		
Economic position	SA education empowering learners, teachers and the community				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Disadvantaged	124	2,8266#	0,6133	1,8595	0,0638
More affluent	213	2,7030	0,5732		
Combined	337	2,7485	0,5904		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

From the above table it appears that respondents from disadvantaged schools consider the *value of SD for SA*, *familiarity with concepts of SD and SSD (Knowledge of SD/SSD)* and the *alignment of Life Orientation to ESD* and its ability to realise social sustainable development (*LO in SA context*) as the least problematic areas (mean scores above 3,000), while they seem to be less positive about whether

education embraces and promotes social sustainable values (*values driven*). Respondents from more affluent schools regard the lack of strong social ties between South Africans (*social capital*) as well as the lack of access to skills development, learning or personal development opportunities (*human capital*) as aspects of concern. The differences of opinion between these two sets of respondents are statistically significant for the following sets of data as displayed in the table:

- Respondents from disadvantaged schools ($\bar{x} = 2,7187$) are statistically significantly more positive about the alignment of SA policies with SD (*SD in the South African context*) than their colleagues at more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,5407$; $p=0,0018$).
- Respondents from disadvantaged schools ($\bar{x} = 2,6211$) experience that SA policies promote well-being (*human well-being*) statistically significantly more than those from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,4781$; $p=0,0011$), and also South Africa's ability to embrace democratic government and governance practices (*democracy*) statistically significantly higher ($\bar{x} = 2,67096$) than respondents from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,43793$; $p=0,0001$).
- Respondents from more affluent schools regard the existence of strong social ties between South Africans (*social capital*) statistically significantly lower ($\bar{x} = 2,3042$) than disadvantaged schools ($\bar{x} = 2,4422$; $p=0,0082$).
- These respondents also experience that South Africans are treated equitably and fairly (*equity*) statistically significantly less ($\bar{x} = 2,4458$) than respondents from disadvantaged schools ($\bar{x} = 2,622$; $p=0,0043$), and similarly consider respect for human rights in South Africa (*human rights*) statistically significantly less ($\bar{x} = 2,3975$) than respondents from disadvantaged schools ($\bar{x} = 2,7093$; $p=0,0013$).
- Respondents from disadvantaged schools experience that South African education aims towards a sustainable society or SD (*purposive*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8602$) than respondents from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,7259$; $p=0,0069$).
- Respondents from disadvantaged schools experience the ability of South African education to promote democratic and global citizenship as statistically

significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8238$) than respondents from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,6984$; $p=0,0490$).

- Respondents from disadvantaged schools experience SA education as oriented towards EE (*environmental education*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8981$) than those from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,8023$; $p=0,0207$).
- Respondents from disadvantaged schools perceive education as oriented towards lifelong learning (*lifelong learning*), statistically significantly higher ($\bar{x} = 2,9891$) than those from more affluent schools ($\bar{x} = 2,8526$; $p=0,0419$).

In general, respondents from economically challenged schools were more positive about aspects related to SD, SSD and ESD than their peers from more affluent schools. The perceptions of males will be compared to those of females in the following section.

5.3.3.2 COMPARING THE VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS PER GENDER

In the table below the views of male respondents are compared to that of female respondents. These detailed responses depict the views of the respondents about the various constructs.

TABLE 6: VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS PER GENDER

Gender	Knowledge of SD and SSD				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	3,1690#	0,4706	1,6647	0,0969
Female	175	3,0885	0,4167		
Combined	340	3,1274	0,4448		
Gender	Value of SD in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	3,3939	0,5054	0,9135	0,3617
Female	175	3,4428#	0,4820		
Combined	340	3,4191	0,4933		
Gender	SD in the SA context				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,6469#	0,4651	1,4737	0,1415
Female	175	2,5652	0,5508		
Combined	340	2,6049	0,5119		

Gender	LO in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	34	2,9407	0,3170	0,8923	0,3748
Female	42	3,0136#	0,4015		
Combined	86	2,9848	0,3701		
Gender	Human well-being in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,5606#	0,3542	1,3959	0,1637
Female	175	2,5012	0,4246		
Combined	340	2,5300	0,3926		
Gender	Democracy in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,5884#	0,5038	2,300	0,0221*
Female	174	2,4563	0,5508		
Combined	339	2.5207	0,5318		
Gender	Social capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,4202#	0,4138	2,5679	0,0107*
Female	174	2,2911	0,5041		
Combined	339	2,3540	0,4662		
Gender	Equity in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,5833#	0,5236	2,4625	0,0143*
Female	173	2,4368	0,5673		
Combined	338	2,5083	0,5505		
Gender	Human rights in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,6222#	0,4755	3,8952	0,0001*
Female	175	2,4057	0,5445		
Combined	340	2,5107	0,5228		
Gender	Human capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,4909#	0,6009	1,7774	0,0764
Female	174	2,3706	0,6421		
Combined	339	2,4292	0,6244		

SA education as quality education					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,2457	0,4466	0,2886	0,7730
Female	174	2,4433#	0,4412		
Combined	338	2,4501	0,4432		
SA education as participatory					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	163	2,7216#	0,5051	0,3890	0,6976
Female	175	2,6996	0,5365		
Combined	338	2,7102	0,5210		
SA education as purposive					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,7668	0,4336	0,2741	0,7842
Female	175	2,7801#	0,4577		
Combined	340	2,7737	0,4455		
SA education as agent of change					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,8443	0,4276	0,4183	0,6760
Female	175	2,8644#	0,4576		
Combined	339	2,8547	0,4428		
SA education promoting citizenship					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	163	2,7576#	0,5565	0,4436	0,6576
Female	173	2,7302	0,5746		
Combined	336	2,7435	0,5652		
Learning in SA education					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	165	2,7251	0,4290	0,9492	0,3432
Female	175	2,7716#	0,4719		
Combined	340	2,7491	0,4515		
SA education as context relevant					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,6440	0,4367	1,0671	0,2867
Female	175	2,6997#	0,5175		
Combined	339	2,6728	0,4802		

SA education embracing a holistic and inter-disciplinary approach					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,8318	0,4314	1,0977	0,2731
Female	175	2,8826#	0,4212		
Combined	339	2,8580	0,4263		
SA education as values driven					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	163	2,9082#	0,5809	0,3668	0,7140
Female	172	2,8842	0,6184		
Combined	335	2,8959	0,5996		
SA education promoting multi-methods					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	163	2,9723#	0,6015	0,1136	0,9097
Female	172	2,9651	0,5711		
Combined	335	2,9686	0,5853		
SA education promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving and agency					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,7528	0,5175	0,8507	0,3955
Female	175	2,8007#	0,5176		
Combined	339	2,7775	0,5173		
Environmental Education in SA education					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,8351	0,3829	0,0785	0,9375
Female	175	2,8383#	0,3570		
Combined	339	2,8368	0,3692		
SA education promoting lifelong learning					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,9044#	0,5526	0,0861	0,9314
Female	173	2,8988	0,6368		
Combined	337	2,9015	0,5964		
SA education promoting integrated knowledge					
Gender	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	164	2,7875	0,3997	1,7815	0,0757
Female	175	2,8693#	0,4421		
Combined	339	2,8297	0,4235		

Gender	SA education empowering learners, teachers and the community				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Male	161	2,7034	0,5729	1,2983	0,1951
Female	174	2,7873#	0,6076		
Combined	335	2,7470	0,5918		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table reveals that the female respondents in this study regard the value of SD and LO in South Africa as the least problematic areas of those included, whilst males regard knowledge of SD and SSD as the least problematic areas. The table also shows that males consider the quality of education as the most problematic construct, whilst females regard the lack of strong social ties between South Africans (*social capital*) as well as the lack of skill opportunities of personal development through access to skills development and learning opportunities (*human capital*) as aspects of concern. The differences of opinion amongst the respondents from the two groups are statistically significant for the following constructs:

- Male respondents regard the tendency in South Africa to embrace democratic government and governance practices (*democracy*) in South Africa statistically significantly higher ($\bar{x} = 2,5884$) than female respondents ($\bar{x} = 2,4563$; $p=0,0221$).
- Male respondents ($\bar{x} = 2,4202$;) regard social cohesiveness between South Africans (*social capital*) as statistically significantly stronger than female respondents ($\bar{x} = 2,2911$; $p=0,0107$).
- Male respondents are statistically significantly more positive ($\bar{x} = 2,5833$) about whether South Africans are treated equitably and fair (*equity*) than female respondents ($\bar{x} = 2,4368$; $p=0,0143$).
- Male respondents experience respect for human rights (*human rights*) in South Africa statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,6222$) than female respondents ($\bar{x} = 2,4057$; $p=0,0001$).

5.3.3.3 COMPARING THE VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

In this section comparisons are drawn between the views of respondents with relatively little teaching experience (0-5 years) and those teaching for a substantial

number of years (6 years and more). This data exposes the views of respondents on every construct, and is displayed in the table that follows.

TABLE 7: PERCEPTIONS PER TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF RESPONDENTS

Teaching experience	Knowledge of SD and SSD				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	3,0638	0,4365	2,0350	0,0426*
6+ years	207	3,1634#	0,4428		
Combined	340	3,1245	0,4423		
Teaching experience	Value of SD in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	3,4135	0,4707	0,1229	0,9023
6+ years	207	3,4202#	0,5093		
Combined	340	4,4176	0,4938		
Teaching experience	SD in the SA Context.				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,5469	0,5411	1,8447	0,0660
6+ years	207	2,6505#	0,4809		
Combined	340	2,6100	0,5070		
Teaching experience	LO in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	41	2,2982	0,3691	0,2371	0,8131
6+ years	47	2,9870#	0,3716		
Combined	88	2,9782	0,3684		
Teaching experience	Human well-being in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,5259	0,3901	0,1235	0,9018
6+ years	207	2,5313#	0,3951		
Combined	340	2,5292	0,3926		
Teaching experience	Democracy in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	132	2,4527	0,5460	1,8782	0,0612
6+ years	207	2,5636#	0,5195		
Combined	339	2,5204	0,5319		
Teaching experience	Social capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	132	2,3245	0,4688	0,8839	0,3774
6+ years	207	2,3703#	0,4636		
Combined	339	2,3545	0,4655		

Teaching experience	Equity in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	131	2,4465	0,6116	1,6310	1,1038
6+ years	207	2,5465#	0,5054		
Combined	338	2,5077	0,5503		
Teaching experience	Human rights in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,4202	0,5208	2,6703	0,0079*
6+ years	207	2,5724#	0,5068		
Combined	340	2,5129	0,5169		
Teaching experience	Human capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	132	2,3977	0,6292	0,7420	0,4586
6+ years	207	2,4492#	0,6201		
Combined	339	2,4292	0,6232		
Teaching experience	SA education as quality education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,4424	0,4499	0,1746	0,8615
6+ years	205	2,4510#	0,4339		
Combined	338	2,4476	0,4396		
Teaching experience	SA education as participatory				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	132	2,6594	0,5560	1,3907	0,1652
6+ years	206	2,7399#	0,4941		
Combined	338	2,7085	0,5199		
Teaching experience	SA education as purposive				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,7852#	0,4616	0,3539	0,7236
6+ years	207	2,7676	0,4364		
Combined	340	2,7745	0,4458		
Teaching experience	SA education as agent of change				
	n	\bar{x}	S	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,8390	0,4720	0,4939	0,6217
6+ years	206	2,8632#	0,4215		
Combined	339	2,8537	0,4415		

Teaching experience	SA education promoting citizenship				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	131	2,6997	0,6182	1,1497	0,2511
6+ years	205	2,7723#	0,5280		
Combined	336	2,7440	0,5651		
Teaching experience	Learning in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,7291	0,4948	0,6102	0,5421
6+ years	207	2,7597#	0,4211		
Combined	340	2,7477	0,4509		
Teaching experience	SA education as context relevant				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,6299	0,4813	1,3251	0,8160
6+ years	206	2,7006#	0,4783		
Combined	339	2,6728	0,4800		
Teaching experience	SA education embracing a holistic and inter-disciplinary approach				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,8387	0,4494	0,6213	0,5348
6+ years	206	2,8681#	0,4091		
Combined	339	2,8565	0,4250		
Teaching experience	SA education as values driven				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	131	2,8754	0,6109	0,5752	0,5656
6+ years	204	2,9139#	0,5900		
Combined	335	2,8989	0,5977		
Teaching experience	SA education promoting multi-methods				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	131	2,9465	0,6362	0,4805	0,6312
6+ years	204	2,9779#	0,5466		
Combined	335	2,9656	0,5825		
Teaching experience	SA education promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving and agency				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,7263	0,5771	1,4375	0,1515
6+ years	206	2,8088#	0,4728		
Combined	339	2,7764	0,5170		

Teaching experience	Environmental Education in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,8049	0,3871	1,2563	0,2099
6+ years	206	2,8563#	0,3550		
Combined	339	2,8362	0,3682		
Teaching experience	SA education promoting lifelong learning				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	132	2,8421	0,6351	1,5141	0,1309
6+ years	205	2,9422#	0,5633		
Combined	337	2,9030	0,5935		
Teaching experience	SA education promoting integrated knowledge				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	133	2,7956	0,4469	1.1726	0,2418
6+ years	206	2,8506#	0,4048		
Combined	339	2,8290	0,4221		
Teaching experience	SA education empowering learners, teachers and the community				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
0-5 years	131	2,7175	0,5695	0,6940	0,4882
6+ years	204	2,7634#	0,6043		
Combined	335	2,7455	0,5905		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table shows that while respondents from both categories (0-5 years and 6+ years teaching experience) regard the value of SD in South Africa as least problematic areas, knowledge of SD and SSD is statistically significantly higher amongst teachers with 6+ years teaching experience ($\bar{x} = 3,0638$; $\bar{x} = 3,1634$; $p=0,0426$). Respondents with 6+ years teaching experience also feel statistically significantly more positive about South Africans' human rights being respected in SA ($\bar{x} = 2,5724$) than respondents with 0-5 years' experience ($\bar{x} = 2,4202$; $p=0,0079$). In addition, it also appears that those respondents with 0-5 years teaching experience regard the alignment of Life Orientation with ESD and its ability to realise social sustainable development, lack of strong social ties between South Africans (*social capital*) as well as the lack of opportunities of personal development through access to skills development and learning opportunities (*human capital*) as aspects of concern. However, it appears that differences between these two categories of respondents are not statistically significant for most of the aspects.

5.3.3.4 COMPARING THE VIEWS OF RESPONDENTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF QUALIFICATIONS

In the subsequent table the views of respondents with basic education qualifications (B-degree and or Education diploma) is compared to those respondents with post-graduate education qualifications (Hons.-; Masters- or Doctoral degrees).

TABLE 8: VIEWS OF PARTICIPANTS WITH BASIC EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS VS. THOSE WITH POST-GRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification of participants	Knowledge of SD and SSD				
	n	\bar{x}	S	t	p
Basic	242	3,1150	0,4413	0,4648	0,6424
Post-graduate	89	3,1404#	0,4430		
Combined	331	3,1218	0,4412		
Qualification of participants	Value of SD in SA				
	N	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	242	3,4214#	0,4906	0,0023	0,9982
Post-graduate	89	3,4213	0,5050		
Combined	331	3,4214	0,4937		
Qualification of participants	SD in SA context				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	242	2,6353#	0,4803	1,9977	0,0466*
Post-graduate	89	2,5084	0,5914		
Combined	331	2,6012	0,5147		
Qualification of participants	LO in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	53	2,9577	0,3371	0,4392	0,6617
Post-graduate	30	2,9954#	0,4341		
Combined	83	2,9713	0,3729		
Qualification of participants	Human well-being in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	T	p
Basic	242	2,5366#	0,3939	0,7721	0,4406
Post-graduate	89	2,4989	0,3951		
Combined	331	2,5265	0,3939		

Qualification of participants	Democracy in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Basic	241	2,5426#	0,5069	1,2693	0,2052
Post-graduate	89	2,4587	0,5980		
Combined	330	2,5200	0,5334		
Qualification of participants	Social capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Basic	241	2,3810#	0,4687	2,0395	0,0422*
Post-graduate	89	2,2636	0,4211		
Combined	330	2,3494	0,4662		
Qualification of participants	Equity in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	240	2,5057#	0,5603	0,1247	0,9008
Post-graduate	89	2,4971	0,5351		
Combined	329		0,5528		
Qualification of participants	Human rights in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	242	2,4927	0,5374	0,9592	0,3382
Post-graduate	89	2,5552#	0,4907		
Combined	331	2,5095	0,5252		
Qualification of participants	Human capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	241	2,4647#	0,6306	1,8030	0,0723
Post-graduate	89	2,3258	0,5940		
Combined	330	2,4272	0,6231		
Qualification of participants	SA education as quality education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	240	2,4608#	0,4443	0,7242	0,4694
Post-graduate	89	2,4209	0,4428		
Combined	329	2,4500	0,4436		
Qualification of participants	SA education as participatory				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	240	2,7049#	0,5347	0,0176	0,9860
Post-graduate	89	2,7037	0,4911		
Combined	329	2,7046	0,5225		

Qualification of participants	SA education as purposive				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	242	2,8008#	0,4388	1,9965	0,0467*
Post-graduate	89	2,6905	0,4631		
Combined	331	2,7712	0,4475		
Qualification of participants	SA education as agent of change				
	n	\bar{x}	S	t	p
Basic	241	2,8718#	0,4372	1,4846	0,1386
Post-graduate	89	2,7899	0,4648		
Combined	330	2,8497	0,4456		
Qualification of participants	SA education promoting citizenship				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	238	2,7499#	0,5608	0,6512	0,5154
Post-graduate	89	2,7041	0,5837		
Combined	327	2,7374	0,5666		
Qualification of participants	Learning in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	242	2,7678#	0,4394	1,6121	0,1079
Post-graduate	89	2,6774	0,4863		
Combined	331	2,7435	0,4535		
Qualification of participants	SA education as context specific				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Basic	241	2,6902#	0,4804	1,1711	0,2424
Post-graduate	89	2,6204	0,4812		
Combined	330	2,6714	0,4809		
Qualification of participants	SA education embracing a holistic and inter-disciplinary approach				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	241	2,8848#	0,4081	2,1507	0,0322*
Post-graduate	89	2,7705	0,4788		
Combined	330	2,8540	0,4306		
Qualification of participants	SA education as values driven				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Basic	237	2,8904	0,6048	0,0377	0,9699
Post-graduate	89	2,8932#	0,5952		
Combined	326	2,8912	0,6013		

Qualification of participants	SA education promoting multi-methods				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	237	3,0126#	0,5765	2,1758	0,0303*
Post-graduate	89	2,8539	0,6133		
Combined	326	2,9693	0,5901		
Qualification of participants	SA education fostering critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving and agency				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Basic	241	2,7988#	0,5046	1,4625	0,1446
Post-graduate	89	2,7049	0,5508		
Combined	330	2,7734	0,5183		
Qualification of participants	Environmental Education in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	241	2,8516#	0,3702	1,5510	0,1219
Post-graduate	89	2,7801	0,3740		
Combined	330	2,8323	0,3720		
Qualification of participants	SA education promoting lifelong learning				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	239	2,8988	0,5924	0,2287	0,8192
Post-graduate	89	2,9156#	0,5909		
Combined	328	2,9034	0,5911		
Qualification of participants	SA education promoting integrated knowledge				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	241	2,8418#	0,4124	0,9711	0,3322
Post-graduate	89	2,7906	0,4580		
Combined	330	2,8280	0,4251		
Qualification of participants	SA education empowering learners, teachers and the community				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Basic	239	2,7562#	0,5980	0,698	0,4857
Post-graduate	87	2,7040	0,5973		
Combined	326	2,7423	0,5973		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The above table shows that for both categories of respondents (respondents with a Teachers' Diploma or a B-degree and those with Honours, Masters and PhD degrees) the participants are positive about the value of SD in South Africa. In addition, respondents with post-graduate qualifications are knowledgeable about SD and SSD, whilst respondents with a basic education qualification experience that

various teaching and learning strategies are advocated in education (*multi-methods*). However, respondents with a post-graduate qualification regard the lack of strong social ties between South Africans (*social capital*), the lack of access to skills development, learning or personal development opportunities (*human capital*), as well as the quality of South African education as problematic areas. The differences of opinion amongst the respondents with different qualifications are statistically significant for the following sets of data as displayed in the table above:

- Respondents with a basic education qualification perceives that strong social ties exist between South Africans (*social capital*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,6353$) than respondents with post-graduate qualifications ($\bar{x} = 2,5084$; $p=0,0466$).
- Respondents with a basic qualification are furthermore statistically significantly more positive about the way in which they perceive the alignment of SA policies with SD (*SD in the SA context*) ($\bar{x} = 2,3810$) than respondents with post-graduate qualifications ($\bar{x} = 2,2636$; $p=0,0422$).
- Respondents with a basic qualification believes that education aims towards a sustainable society or SD (*purposive*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8008$) than respondents with post-graduate qualifications ($\bar{x} = 2,6905$; $p=0,0467$).
- Respondents with a basic qualification experience that social aims and objectives are reflected in every aspect of education and not just in teaching and learning (*holistic approach*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8848$) than respondents with post-graduate qualifications ($\bar{x} = 2,7705$; $p=0,0322$).
- Respondents with a basic qualification regard the promotion of various teaching and learning strategies and education methods (*multi-methods*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 3,0126$) than respondents with post-graduate qualifications ($\bar{x} = 2,8539$; $p=0,0303$).

In general, participants with only a basic education qualification are more positive about aspects related to responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community. However, they are more negative (even if the difference is small) than their better-qualified peers about South African education promoting lifelong learning, whether education embraces and promotes social sustainable values, whether South Africa respects human rights and about their own knowledge of SD and SSD.

5.3.3.5 COMPARING THE VIEWS OF LO TEACHERS WITH THOSE OF OTHER TEACHERS

I lastly compared the views of LO teachers with the views of teachers teaching other subjects in school. The details are in the table that follows.

TABLE 9: LO TEACHERS VS. OTHER SUBJECT TEACHERS

Teaching subject of participants	Knowledge of SD and SSD				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	3,1468#	0,3707	0,6307	0,5286
Other	248	3,1115	0,4640		
Combined	332	3,1204	0,4420		
Teaching subject of participants	Value of SD in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	P
Life orientation	84	3,4523#	0,5007	0,8541	0,3936
Other	248	3.3991	0,4907		
Combined	332	3,4126	0,4930		
Teaching subject of participants	SD in the SA context				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,6369#	0,4743	0,6183	0,5368
Other	248	2,5974	0,5159		
Combined	332	2,6074	0,5053		
Teaching subject of participants	LO in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	82	2,9903#	0,3625	1,7091	0,0911
Other	5	2,7036	0,3956		
Combined	87	2,9738	0,3682		
Teaching subject of participants	Human well-being in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2.5169	0,3880	0,4389	0,6610
Other	248	2,5386#	0,3919		
Combined	332	2,5331	0,3904		
Teaching subject of participants	Democracy in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,4801	0,5639	0,8818	0,3785
Other	247	2,5395#	0,5225		
Combined	331	2,5245	0,5331		

Teaching subject of participants	Social capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,3527	0,4627	0,0343	0,9727
Other	247	2,3548#	0,4654		
Combined	331	2,3542	0,4640		
Teaching subject of participants	Equity in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	2,5277#	0,5090	0,3077	0,7585
Other	247	2,5062	0,5641		
Combined	330	2,5116	0,5501		
Teaching subject of participants	Human rights in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,5049	0,4943	0,2195	0,8264
Other	248	2,5194#	0,5342		
Combined	332	2,5158	0,5237		
Teaching subject of participants	Human capital in SA				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,3452	0,6110	1,4288	0,1540
Other	247	2,4574#	0,6256		
Combined	331	2,4290	0,6229		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education as quality education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,4366	0,4240	0,5309	0,5958
Other	247	2,4663#	0,4487		
Combined	331	2,4588	0,4421		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education as participatory				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,8208#	0,4955	2,0035	0,0460*
Other	246	2,6921	0,5152		
Combined	330	2,7249	0,5106		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education as purposive				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,8888#	0,3995	2,5204	0,0122*
Other	248	2,7495	0,4500		
Combined	332	2,7848	0,4413		

Teaching subject of participants	SA education as agent of change				
	n	\bar{x}	S	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,9563#	0,4187	2,2730	0,0237*
Other	247	2,8312	0,4416		
Combined	331	2,8629	0,4387		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education promoting citizenship				
	N	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	2,8433#	0,4982	1,7048	0,0892
Other	245	2,7238	0,5689		
Combined	328	2,7540	0,5536		
Teaching subject of participants	Learning in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,7843#	0,4505	0,6485	0,5171
Other	248	2,7474	0,4514		
Combined	332	2,7568	0,4508		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education as context relevant				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,7644#	0,4609	1,8455	0,0659
Other	247	2,6531	0,4829		
Combined	331	2,6814	0,4792		
Economic position	SA education embracing a holistic and inter-disciplinary approach				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,9000#	0,4299	0,8427	0,4000
Other	247	2,8549	0,4204		
Combined	331	2,8664	0,4226		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education as values driven				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	3,055#	0,4659	3,4897	0,0006*
Other	244	2,8331	0,6284		
Combined	327	2,8997	0,6017		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education promoting multi-methods				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	3,0662#	0,5106	1,6419	0,1016
Other	244	2,9446	0,6052		
Combined	327	2,9755	0,5843		

Teaching subject of participants	SA education promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, problem-solving and agency				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,9238#	0,4480	2,7754	0,0058*
Other	247	2,7473	0,5211		
Combined	331	2,7921	0,5088		
Teaching subject of participants	Environmental Education in SA education				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2.8803#	0,3897	1,0890	0,2770
Other	247	2,8296	0,3609		
Combined	331	2,8425	0,3685		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education promoting lifelong learning				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	3,0561#	0,5621	2,7151	0,0070*
Other	246	2,8516	0,6036		
Combined	329	2,9032	0,5992		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education promoting integrated knowledge				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	84	2,9077	0,4302	1,6739	0,0951
Other	247	2,8212	0,4016		
Combined	331	2,8432	0,4101		
Teaching subject of participants	SA education empowering learners, teachers and the community				
	n	\bar{x}	s	t	p
Life orientation	83	2,9397#	0,5246	3,4429	0,0007*
Other	244	2,6875	0,5931		
Combined	327	2,7515	0,5861		

Group with the highest mean score

* Statistically significant with a 95% confidence level

The analysis of the data shows that both categories of respondents (respondents teaching LO and those teaching other subjects) regard SD as of value to South Africa. Respondents teaching LO are furthermore positive about their knowledge of SD and SSD. Although both categories of respondents appear to regard the lack of access to skills development, learning or personal development opportunities (*human capital*) as problematic areas, respondents teaching LO also identified the quality of South African education as a concern. The differences of opinion amongst the respondents teaching LO and those teaching other subjects are statistically significant with regard to the following constructs:

- Respondents teaching LO are significantly more positive ($\bar{x} = 2,8208$) about whether SA education encourages the participation of stakeholders in education (*participatory*) than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,6921$; $p=0,0460$).
- Respondents teaching LO consider education as purposefully aiming towards a sustainable society or SD (*purposive*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,8888$) than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,7495$; $p=0,0122$).
- Respondents teaching LO experience that education promotes individual, systems or social change (*agent of change*) statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 2,9563$) than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,8312$; $p=0,0237$).
- Respondents teaching LO regard education to be embracing and promoting social sustainable values and values of SD (*values driven*) as statistically significantly more ($\bar{x} = 3,055$) than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,8331$; $p=0,0006$).
- Respondents teaching LO view education as promoting critical thinking, reflection and problem-solving (*critical*) as statistically significantly more than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,9238$; $\bar{x} = 2,7473$; $p=0,0058$).
- Respondents teaching LO experience education as oriented towards and promoting lifelong learning statistically significantly more than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 3,0561$; $\bar{x} = 2,8516$; $p=0,0070$).
- Respondents teaching LO regard SA education's ability to create space for the empowerment of learners, teachers and the broader community (*empowerment*) statistically significantly higher ($\bar{x} = 2,9397$) than respondents teaching other subjects ($\bar{x} = 2,6875$; $p=0,0007$).

In general, participants teaching LO are more positive about aspects related to responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community, and in many cases the difference is statistically significant.

Based on the results obtained through the analysis of the data, I now consider the insights that I gained in the process.

5.4 DISCUSSION

In this Chapter I explored the responsiveness of education practices to the challenges of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community (cf. 1.3.4). Such an investigation was warranted since I proceeded not only from the assumption that theory and practice are not opposites but rather form a unity, but also that South African education practice is plagued with certain contradictions and disillusion, which create a false consciousness of education being transformed towards ESD and aimed towards SSD (cf. 1.5.1.2). Empirical material should be collected but it should not be viewed naively (Harvey, 1990:7). In my discussion I thus transcend the face value of the results discussed above and focus on possible inequities, possible social or institutional perpetuation of systematic inequities and hostilities in education practices with regard to ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable community. I thus only focus on the challenges, represented by scores lower than 2,5 since this is the point of neutrality on the scale that I used.

In general, respondents across the spectrum appear not to be very optimistic about the social sustainability of the South African society. Respondents replied neutrally on the ability of South African policies to promote human well-being; the SA ability to embrace democratic governance and democracy; display respect for human rights, equity and fairness; and they appear to hold strong views about the SA inability to have access to skills development; learning and personal development opportunities, as well as social cohesion (cf. 5.3.1).

Particular issues which respondents feel very negative about and which might appear to endanger the realisation of a social sustainable South African society, include lack of provision in the basic needs of South Africans, including access to employment opportunities, good quality education and health care facilities as well as to land and financial assistance (cf. 5.3.2). In addition, respondents also appear to be negative about transparency in the country and the will of government to fight corruption, to achieve social justice through equality and equitable treatment of women (cf. 5.3.2). Furthermore, respondents are also negative about the SA record with regard to the protection and advancement of human rights, including political rights and accountability (cf. 5.3.2).

Certain contradictions are also discerned amongst constructs within a particular cluster. For example, although respondents appear to feel very positive about the value of SD for SA, they appear to be less optimistic about the alignment of SA policies towards SD (cf. 5.3.1). Responses relating to the promotion of human well-being (perceived to be quite high) (cf. 5.3.1) are also in stark contrast to perceived deficits with regard to South Africans' accessibility to skills development, learning opportunities and personal development as well as strong social ties that exist between South African citizens (cf. 5.3.1).

Although the respondents on average indicated that SA policies were aligned to SD (cf. 5.3.1), interesting trends emerged further. Firstly, respondents indicated that the South African government is not contributing sufficiently to ensure sustainable development of the country (cf. 5.3.2). Secondly, respondents indicated that the SA society is not social sustainable (cf. 5.3.2).

Responses from the various groups of participants also indicated particular areas of concern within particular groups. For example, respondents from more affluent schools, female participants, respondents with relatively little teaching experience and respondents with post graduate qualifications responded in a neutral fashion when asked about the alignment of SA policies towards SD (cf. 5.3.3.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.3.3 and 5.3.3.4). In addition, respondents from more affluent schools appear to be negative about issues relating to human well-being, democracy and democratic governance, social cohesion, equitable and fair treatment, respect for human rights, access to skills and personal development and the provision of quality education in South Africa (cf. 5.3.3.1).

When comparing male and female responses (cf. 5.3.3.2), it appears that female respondents in particular are more concerned about issues of human well-being, democracy and democratic governance, social cohesion, equity and fairness, respect for human rights, and access to skills and personal development than their male counterparts. Although both groups of respondents display negative feelings about the quality of South African education, male participants appear to be more concerned about the quality of South African education (cf. 5.3.3.2).

A significant difference was also noticed in the responses of teachers with little teaching experience as opposed to those with 6 years' and more experience, with regard to the alignment of LO policies towards ESD and social sustainable development. The first group displayed serious reservations about the alignment of LO policies towards ESD and social sustainable development (cf. 5.3.3.3). Similarly, teachers with 0-5 years' teaching experience as well as those with post-graduate qualifications also appear to be more concerned with issues of democracy and democratic governance, equity and fairness, respect for human rights, access to skills and personal development and the quality of South African education, than respondents with 6 years' and more experience as well as those with basic education qualifications (cf. 5.3.3.3 and 5.3.3.4).

Respondents who teach Life Orientation, feel quite positive about the alignment of LO policies towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable South African society. However, they appear to be particularly despondent about social ties amongst South Africans, access to skills development, learning opportunities and personal growth, as well as the quality of South African education (cf. 5.3.3.5).

On the whole, the respondents who took part in this study do not appear to be unusually optimistic about South African education. In fact, they have serious reservations about the quality of education in South Africa. Constructs which appear to pose particular challenges to quality education, and which respondents are negative about, includes the transformation of South African education to realise social sustainable development; equity and equality in education; the ability of education to reduce social inequality; social injustices and discrimination; and accessibility to education (cf. 5.3.2). Assuming that the various constructs of ESD collectively inform quality education, the respondents' positive attitudes towards these constructs as opposed to quality education, can be seen as a contradiction in their perspectives.

Other areas of concern which might have a direct impact on the provision of quality education, includes the lack of deep transformative learning in South African schools, the relevance of knowledge to local communities and communities not taking ownership for schools (cf. 5.3.2).

Although it thus appears that there is a perception amongst the respondents that South African education is responsive towards ESD, certain challenges and contradictions which negate the responsiveness of the participating educators towards ESD, exist.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter I reported on the survey conducted amongst secondary school teachers of the Free State Province. Respondents were selected following the logic of purposive respondent selection. As such, the findings discussed in this Chapter cannot be generalised to the broader population. However, from the results of this survey certain deductions could be made about SD, the realisation of a social sustainable society and the responsiveness of the education practice to ESD.

It appears at face value that South African education is aligned towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable South African society. However, from the responses in this chapter, certain tensions, contradictions and disillusionments were elucidated. In particular, respondents appeared to be particularly concerned about the ability to realise a social sustainable South African society. In addition, the responses also indicated that the educators were highly concerned about the quality of South African education. Since quality education is a prerequisite for ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society, the lack of quality education not only hampers the orientation of South African education towards ESD, but also the hope that a social sustainable society could be achieved through education.

In the final chapter of this study I draw on insights from the literature study, the critical policy analysis and the survey, to make recommendations in order to change current education policy and practice in an endeavour to contribute to a social sustainable South African society.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In line with the vision to transform the South African society into a social sustainable society, sustainable development (SD) was adopted as a future development path. However, the transformation of our society towards SD presupposes the transformation of the education system. It is therefore assumed that South African education ought to not only be transformed and oriented towards Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), but that it should also contribute to the realisation of social sustainable development (SSD). With the foregoing in mind, this study was undertaken to determine the extent to which South African education policy and practice are responsive towards the challenges of ESD. Guided by specific objectives, the study unfolded as follows:

In Chapter 2, in order to gain an understanding of the nature and status of SD and SSD in general and within the South African context in particular, a literature review was undertaken. Based on the insights gained from this chapter, it appeared that SD is a multi-faceted but interrelated concept which consists of economic-, environmental- and social spheres. This interrelated nature assumes that SD can only be achieved if all three spheres are equally developed and embraced. In addition, it was also observed that SD is not only globally relevant, but also contextually bound. Furthermore, it was also found that SSD is driven by concerns for human well-being, social and human capital, democratic government and governance, equity and human rights. Subsequently it became clear from the conceptualisation of SD and SSD that they require a more comprehensive and inclusive approach towards human development.

In order to conceptualise ESD as a framework for understanding the implications of ESD and SSD for education policy and practice in South Africa, a conceptual analysis was undertaken in Chapter 3. Whilst the conceptual analysis enabled me to

explore the constitutive elements of the concept ESD, it also informed my reflection on possible implications of ESD and SSD for education policy and practice. In addition, the identified constitutive elements were used to develop a working definition of ESD. In subsequent chapters, this working definition formed the backdrop against which education policies were analysed and education practice explored.

Informed by the working definition, I set out to achieve the third objective of this study, namely to expose the extent to which South African education policies are consistent with ESD and SSD. In order to realise this objective, a critical policy analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), Life Orientation FET (10-12)* (2011(a)) (CAPS) was undertaken in Chapter 4. However, my analysis was not confined exclusively to these two policies. Intertextuality, i.e. the way in which policies often relate to each other, was considered and as a consequence, other related policies were also considered in my analysis. By means of a critical policy analysis, a space was created for the exposure of contradictions, silences, omissions, value preferences and disillusion with regard to ESD and SSD in current South African education policies.

In order to explore the views of some Free State teachers regarding the responsiveness of education practice to the challenges of ESD and of the realisation of a social sustainable society, I undertook a survey, and this was reported in Chapter 5. The decision to explore such views and to subsequently investigate the South African education practice, was not only informed by my research aim, but also by my understanding of the way in which Critical Theory embraces praxis as coalesce of policy and practice. Based upon insights gained in the preceding chapters, a questionnaire was designed. By means of an analysis of the data, deductions were made about the responsiveness of South African education practice towards ESD, and the realisation of a social sustainable society.

6.2 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In my attempt to reflect on the extent to which education policy and practice in South Africa are responsive towards the challenges of ESD, I will draw from the different chapters in my thesis, as set out above. My discussions and conclusions will particularly relate to the constitutive elements of ESD, since it is my understanding that responsive policy and practice will be directly related to these elements. As a consequence, what follows will be informed by the conceptual analysis (cf. 3.4) which revealed ESD as:

- fundamentally different from EE, but displays a sensitivity towards it;
- an agent of empowerment;
- an agent of change;
- integrated, holistic and trans-disciplinary;
- values driven;
- using various teaching and learning techniques;
- locally and globally relevant;
- purposive and aimed at promoting SD, a SSD life style, human development and critical engagement with SD;
- lifelong learning;
- quality education which promotes critical thinking, problem solving and action;
- a form of enlightenment which integrates knowledge;
- democratic education which creates space for the development of a democratic and global citizen; and
- learner-oriented.

6.2.1 *ESD IS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM EE BUT DISPLAYS SENSITIVITY TOWARDS IT*

It was established that ESD is fundamentally different from EE (cf. 3.4.4). The literature clearly distinguishes between EE, which is principally about the environment, whilst ESD appears to be inclusive of the environment and the economic and social spheres of SD (cf. 3.4.4). However, it was also noted that the literature refers to a sensitivity of EE towards issues of socio-political and economical nature. Thus, despite the supposed difference between ESD and EE, the latter is often perceived to be concerned with the same ends as ESD. Proceeding from the

assumption that ESD is fundamentally different from EE, but might display sensitivity towards ESD-related issues, the expectation is that such difference and sensitivity ought to be reflected in education policy and practice.

In my analysis of South African education policy documents no explicit reference to ESD could be found (cf. 4.5.2.1). As a consequence, the silence regarding ESD could imply a lack of responsiveness to the difference between ESD and EE. Rather, the WPET makes a strong reference to EE when the latter is articulated in terms of environmental issues and as a principle of future education (cf. 4.5.2.1). Whilst the aim of EE is stated only in terms of realising environmental sustainability, no clear and unambiguous link appears to be established with social issues (cf. 4.5.2.1). Such an articulation not only resonates with the perception that in South Africa EE is fundamentally concerned with environmental sustainability, but it also does not strengthen EE's sensitivity towards issues of socio-political and economical nature. Ignorance of the differences between ESD and EE (cf. 4.5.2.1) might result in educational efforts aimed at SD focusing exclusively on environmental issues, while simultaneously strengthening misconceptions about ESD. This state of affairs is particularly disconcerting when considering that the WPET (DoE, 1995: Message) is regarded as the policy document that "describes the process of transformation in education and training which will bring into being a system serving all our people, our new democracy, and our Reconstruction and Development Programme". Whilst the WPET gives direction to the transformation of education, the possibility subsequently exists that misconceptions regarding ESD may feed into further policy development, impeding upon the orientation of education towards it. Also, it could be anticipated that if education is not orientation towards ESD, the realisation of a social sustainable society comes under threat. Furthermore, the neglect of such a re-orientation of education may lead to the latter not being able to take up its role as an agent of social change (cf. 3.4.1.2), thus entrenching the possibility of sustaining unsustainable development and unsustainable societies. It subsequently appears from my critical policy analysis that the WPET does not make a clear distinction between ESD and EE, nor does it respond to the sensitivity of EE towards socio-political and economic issues. Rather, in the WPET there seems to be an overemphasis on EE at the expense of ESD (cf. 4.5.2.1).

However, the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to draw a closer link between EE and ESD when environmental issues are linked to issues of social justice (cf. 4.5.2.1). For example, not only is environmental justice and social justice mentioned as one of the grounding principles in the CAPS LO FET policy document, but social and environmental responsibility is listed as one of the six themes of LO. In support of the former, the survey revealed that the respondents are conscious of a strong link between EE and ESD in the aims and objectives, as well as the SD issues they address in their classroom practice (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). It subsequently appears that the translation of the guidelines set by the WPET for the transformation of education regarding EE did not result in a complete silence on the sensitivity of EE to ESD. Rather, it appears as if the CAPS LO FET policy document not only reflects sensitivity towards the potential link between ESD and EE, but it also seems as if this sensitivity has filtered through to the respondents' experience of education practice.

Despite the perceived sensitivity of EE towards the integration of ESD issues, on closer scrutiny, it seems as if the CAPS LO FET document focuses more prominently on environmental issues. For example, although reference is made to social issues such as poverty and development within the broader context of the environment, no critical engagement with these concepts is encouraged (cf. 4.5.2.1). Similarly, in the CAPS Life Sciences FET and the CAPS Geography FET policy documents (cf. 3.4.4), environmental issues also appear not to be framed within the broader discourse of SSD and social justice. Although the respondents in the survey articulated their confidence in the possibility of education practice to realise a social sustainable society through EE, they did express distrust in the ability of South African education to reduce social inequality, social injustices and discrimination (cf. 5.3.2). In line with this, the teachers also indicated that South Africans are not committed to social justice. It has been shown that a social sustainable society requires an appreciation and a validation of the social aspect of human life within the broader framework of social justice. Social sustainable development therefore requires an orientation towards issues of human well-being, the development of social and human capital, equity, democratic government and governance, and respect for human rights (cf. 2.4.1). Thus, indifference to these principles not only suggests a non-alignment to ESD, but has the potential of imposing restrictions on

the potential of both EE and ESD to contribute to the realisation of a social sustainable society.

Although the literature exposed EE and ESD as two visibly distinct educational approaches, it also suggested that these two approaches aspire towards the same aims and objectives. In South African education policy documents as well as education practice, no explicit distinction is made between these two concepts and they appear to be regarded as synonyms aspiring to the same aims and objectives. It can therefore be concluded that although the South African education policies that were analysed, and education practice as experienced by the teachers, seem to respond to issues of social justice within the broader context of EE, they do not appear to be responsive towards ESD, particularly in terms of differentiating between the two concepts.

6.2.2 *ESD AS AGENT OF EMPOWERMENT*

In my conceptual analysis of ESD, the latter was explored as potentially instrumental in empowering people of all ages, teachers, learners, the vulnerable and the marginalised to assume responsibility for realising SD (cf. 3.4.1.1). To affect empowerment, attention needs to be given to the quality and relevance of education (cf. 3.4.1.1). In addition, the conceptual analysis suggests that empowered citizens would be actively involved in constructing sustainable societies (cf. 3.4.1.1). Based on the assumption that ESD is an agent of empowerment, education oriented towards ESD needs to demonstrate a propensity to create the space for the empowerment of all South African citizens.

In my critical policy analysis, I found that the WPET strongly focuses on the promotion and advocacy of the empowerment of the South African people (cf. 4.5.2.2). In this document, empowerment is regarded as a national imperative linked to the reconstruction and development of society, which would enable all South Africans to become active participants in building a democratic and free society; in exercising their democratic rights; and in establishing democratic governance structures (cf. 4.5.2.2). By implication, and drawing on the focus of my study, the empowerment of South Africans can be regarded as a prerequisite for counteracting

the legacies of apartheid on the one hand, whilst, on the other hand, simultaneously contributing to the realisation of the values of a social sustainable society (cf. 2.4.1). Therefore, by promoting the empowerment of South African citizens, the WPET is not only sensitive to the role that education policy should play in bringing about a social sustainable society, but also to the orientation of education towards ESD.

Empowerment is a national imperative linked by the WPET to the transformation of apartheid legacies and the realisation of a sustainable society. As a consequence, the expectation is that the CAPS LO FET policy, as the latest policy document of the DBE on Life Orientation, should not only articulate the need and relevance of empowerment, but also present practical suggestions on how spaces for empowerment should be created through Life orientation. However, contrary to the clear focus of the WPET on empowerment, the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to be silent on this, since it does not articulate the role of education as instrumental in the empowerment of South Africans (cf. 4.5.2.2). The perceived silence of the policy on the issue of empowerment appears, in principle, as a non-demonstration of its responsiveness towards empowerment. Since empowerment is regarded as one of the elements of ESD, this silence reflects, by implication, non-responsiveness to ESD. This is disconcerting when considering that creating a social sustainable society accepts empowerment as important for the realisation of human capital (cf. 2.4.1.2), and for democratic government and governance (2.4.1.3). Although there is no clear articulation of empowerment in the latter policy, the respondents' experience of the role of education regarding the empowerment of learners appear to be positive (cf. 5.3.1). These positive views are possibly shaped by policy documents such as the NCS of 2003, which explicitly commits South African education to empowerment and social justice, and the WPET, which links empowerment to the establishment of democratic governance structures (cf. 4.5.2.2). However, despite their positive views, the teachers suggested that the South African society is not socially sustainable and that South African education does not yet succeed in eradicating discrimination and the exclusion of the marginalised (cf. 5.3.2). They responded fairly neutral with regard to South Africa embracing democratic governance and democratic practices (cf. 5.3.1). Thus, whilst both the WPET and education practice appear to be responsive to the issue of empowerment, the analysis of education practice reveals a possible tension between

practice and the expectation created by the WPET on the role of education in empowerment.

Drawing on the literature which frames ESD as empowering, and against the background of the WPET and education practice that seem to embrace empowerment, the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to be in dissonance with the concern of ESD for the empowerment of learners and society at large. It is also evident that there are contradictions relating to the respondents' perceived experience of the empowerment role of education and the empowerment and inclusion of the vulnerable and marginalised in the South African society.

6.2.3 *ESD AS AGENT OF CHANGE*

According to the conceptual analysis undertaken in this research, ESD assumes the transformation of the individual, of the education system and of the broader society (cf. 3.4.1.2). On closer scrutiny, the conceptualisation of ESD suggests that the mainstreaming thereof presupposes the adoption of policies and education practices that are infused with the values of society in order to affect change (cf. 4.4.1.2(a) and (b)). Conceptualised as an agent of social change responsible for transforming society into a sustainable one (cf. 3.4.1.2(c)), ESD assumes the re-routing of the South African society from its path of unsustainability towards SSD (cf. 2.3; 2.3.5). Thus, in order to be aligned with ESD and to realise a social sustainable South African society, the intention of education policy and practice to effect change of the individual, of education and of society has to be visible.

The critical policy analysis further revealed that the intention to position South African education as an agent of change (cf. 4.5.2.3) is articulated in the WPET as well as the CAPS LO FET policy document. Whilst change in the individual and society is implied in the ideal of the WPET to realise the values underpinned by the *Constitution of South Africa*, the CAPS LO FET policy document anticipates change through its expression of the values, skills and knowledge worth learning in South African schools. In addition, whilst the WPET articulates the principles which should transform the education system (cf. 4.5.2.3), the CAPS LO FET policy gives effect to the principles by expressing a commitment to curriculum and assessment

transformation (cf. 4.5.2.3). As such, it appears on the surface as if the analysed policies might be responsive to ESD as far as their roles as agents of change are concerned.

However, a closer look at the CAPS LO FET policy document reveals that *social* transformation in this document is framed against the backdrop of its emphasis on *educational* transformation (cf. 4.5.2.3). As such, the impression might be created that the document promotes the values of SSD solely to correct educational imbalances and not for the sake of a broader societal transformation. The perceived omission to properly articulate the transformation agenda in the policy document could impact negatively on perceptions about its responsiveness towards ESD and SSD, especially when considering that ESD aims at more than only *educational* transformation (cf. 3.4.1.2). The results of the survey show that the teachers do not perceive South African education as contributing to the reduction of social inequality, social injustice and discrimination; to the protection and upholding of basic human rights; and South Africans do not appear to value accountability (cf. 5.3.2). The survey also perceived weak social cohesion characterised by very low levels of trust and very high levels of crime, between South Africans (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Furthermore, the teachers are of the opinion that the education system has not been sufficiently transformed to reduce challenges such as barriers to learning and delivering education of quality to the South African people (cf. 5.3.2). However, although the respondents feel that the education system has not been sufficiently transformed, they do experience education practice as conducive to the transformation of the individual and the society by, amongst others, challenging the *status quo* of inequality in society (5.3.2). Thus, whilst the analysed policies appear to underscore education as an agent of change, certain noticeable contradictions and tensions within policies and practice were discerned. Partial responsiveness to ESD was also reflected in the experience of the respondents, and as a consequence, the extent to which education has been orientated towards ESD becomes questionable. One could therefore assume that these contradictions and tensions might not only negate the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD, since it assumes education as change, but also the vision of a social sustainable society.

6.2.4 *ESD IS INTEGRATED, HOLISTIC, INTER-DISCIPLINARY AND TRANS-DISCIPLINARY*

The conceptual analysis revealed ESD as an integrated, holistic, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach towards teaching and learning (cf. 3.4.2.1). This supposes a whole school approach within which ESD becomes part of the entire culture and the ethos of a school (cf. 3.4.2.1). Integration within ESD is relevant for not only does SD display an interrelated and interconnected nature (cf. 2 3.4), but SSD in particular will only be achieved with due cognisance of this interconnectedness. As such, if oriented towards ESD, education needs to reflect interconnectedness and integration of and within all subjects, policies and knowledge, but also in the culture of the school. It is thus expected that both education policy and practice should promote the integrated, holistic, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of ESD. Therefore, education will be responsive to ESD if every aspect thereof bears testimony of ESD as integrated, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary.

In resonance with the literature and my conceptualisation of ESD, the analysis of policy documents showed that the WPET advocates an integrated, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach towards teaching and learning in South African education (cf. 4.5.2.4). This document strongly promotes the blurring of lines between subjects and forms of knowledge because such divisions contributed towards social inequalities in the past (cf. 4.5.2.4). In the WPET, integration is embraced to advance the project of social equality, as well as equity and transformation by linking it to the broader project of the reconstruction and development of the country (cf. 4.5.2.4). The responsibility is therefore placed on subsequent education policies to advance education as integrated, holistic, inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary, which aims at transforming society, the individual and the education system. In line with the WPET, education practice also appears to value integration and trans-disciplinary teaching and learning since the teachers who took part in the survey indicated that they do not only work collaboratively with their colleagues across subjects, but that the vision statements of their respective schools and school policies are aligned to SSD (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2).

However, unlike the WPET, no reference is made in the CAPS LO FET policy document to the integration of knowledge, skills and values across subjects as a directive for teaching and learning of LO in South African schools (cf. 4.5.2.4). The WPET guides the development of South African education policies and as such the directives in the latter policy should be reflected in subsequent policies. It appears however that the CAPS LO FET policy does not reflect the guidelines of the WPET relating to the inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of education. Since the integrated nature of teaching and learning was also framed against the backdrop of the broader project of the reconstruction and development of the country, the apparent failure to reflect the directives of the WPET could impact on the challenging of social inequalities and correction of social imbalances created by the subject divisions of the past. Rather, the former policy document refers to the holistic nature and interrelatedness of LO (cf. 4.5.2.4); thus the integration of content, but only *within* LO. Since the document endorses integration and holism only within LO, an inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach towards LO is not promoted. It can thus be concluded that the CAPS LO FET policy document seems to be partially responsive to the trans-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary notions of ESD, and therefore does not appear to value the potential of an integrated and trans-disciplinary approach to bring about societal change in general.

From the above, it appears that the WPET is responsive towards ESD in terms of envisaging a policy process informed by an integrated and holistic perception of the nature of South African education. In line with this, the respondents' experience of their education practice also reflects responsiveness in terms of the integration of subjects. However, although the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to demarcate integration within the content of LO, it does not respond to the general perception of the proposed inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of South African education. Since the CAPS LO FET policy impacts on practice, it can be assumed that the contribution of LO to SSD will be framed within the potential contribution of LO as a subject, and not in terms of a more holistic approach to a social sustainable society.

6.2.5 ESD AS VALUE DRIVEN

In Chapter 3, I observed ESD as a value-driven educational approach (cf. 3.4.2.2). Informed by the integrated and interrelated nature of SD and ESD (cf. 2.3.4; 3.4.2.1), ESD ought to embrace various economic, environmental and social values (cf. 3.4.2.2; 2.4). Since in this thesis I focus on social sustainable development in South Africa and the responsiveness of education towards ESD, education oriented towards ESD should reflect particular social values which would bring about a social sustainable South African society. In the context of South Africa and to ensure local relevance (cf. 2.3.5; 3.4.2.6), education needs to draw from the values of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996). These constitutional values should define the nature and character of the South African education culture and ethos (cf. 2.3.5; 2.4.1). In addition, the literature proposes that the values promoted by ESD should corroborate also with that of the *Earth Charter* (2000) (cf. 3.4.2.2). I therefore assume that South African education will, through responsive policies and implementation in practice, be driven by ESD, constituted by the values of SSD.

In line with the conceptual analysis, I found that not only do both the WPET and CAPS LO FET policy documents ground South African education in particular values, but they simultaneously position South African education as instrumental in developing values for social sustainable development in learners (cf. 4.5.2.5; 2.4; 2.4.1). In articulating its value orientation, the WPET not only draws on the values of the *South African Constitution* (cf. 4.5.2.5), but defends these values against the need to counter the legacy of violence and to promote social cohesion and nation-building (cf. 4.5.2.5). The significance of values is derived from its potential to effect change in the individual, in society and education, and to bring about social sustainability (cf. 4.5.2.3; also 6.2.3). It therefore appears as if both these policies underscore the value-driven nature of ESD. In line with this, the survey suggested a positive link between the policy environment and education practice (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2), since the respondents not only indicated that the aims and objectives of LO are aligned to constitutional values, but also that values are integral to the moral fabric and ethos of South African education (cf. 5.3.2). As such, it seems as if both the analysed education policies and the experienced education practice respond

positively towards the need to ground education in particular values. Responsiveness towards ESD is therefore noticeable.

However, despite the perceived value-driven nature of the mentioned policies and experienced practice, particular values that are characteristic of a social sustainable society appear to be absent. Respondents were not only troubled about the prospects of realising a social sustainable South African society, but indicated their concern about South Africans' (lack of) devotion to the values of transparency, trust, social justice, equity and equality, non-discrimination, honesty, and accountability (cf. 5.3.2). Whilst the WPET advances values in education to counter violence and enhance social cohesion, the respondents do not experience the infusion of education practice with these values. Rather, their experience suggests the existence of weak social cohesion between South Africans (cf. 5.3.1) and high crime rates (cf. 5.3.2) as matters of concern. It therefore appears as if the values-driven nature of ESD and the values espoused by the WPET have not filtered through to practice and the bringing about of a social sustainable South African society. There seems to be a gap between the intentions of the WPET, the role of policy in translating the WPET into practice, and the respondents' experience of the South African education society.

Furthermore, in my critical policy analysis I also perceived silence in the CAPS LO FET policy document on the *Earth Charter* (2000) and the importance it attaches to the values espoused by South African education, especially in the wake of our commitment to SD and SSD. Since it is assumed that South African education is oriented towards ESD, and because of its embeddedness in EE, it was expected that the values which inform education in South Africa should be explicitly articulated within the broader values framework of the *Earth Charter* (2000) (cf. 3.4.2.2). However, this silence suggests a non-responsiveness of the policy document towards the values proposed by the *Earth Charter*. Although ESD assumes local relevance (cf. 3.4.2.6), the articulation of social values within the broader framework of the *Earth Charter* remains important since it not only demonstrates an alignment with ESD, but also confirms commitment to SD and SSD. Such pronouncement of values is especially relevant since the respondents perceive the South African

government as not doing much to ensure the sustainable development of the country (cf. 5.3.2).

Informed by the literature study on the values-driven nature of ESD, and supported by the analysed policies and the respondents' experience of education practice, I conclude that there appears to be responsiveness towards ESD as far as its value-driven nature is concerned. Since these values articulate the moral vision of the country, the promotion thereof through education ought to contribute to the realisation of SSD. However, apparent silences about the *Earth Charter* in the conceptualisation of values for South African education, and the perceived incapability of education to realise the values of a social sustainable society, could impede negatively on a normative orientation towards ESD and could hamper the realisation of SSD.

6.2.6 *ESD USES VARIOUS TEACHING AND LEARNING TECHNIQUES*

Since the literature presents SD as a multi-dimensional concept concerned with diverse issues (cf. 2.3.4), the orientation towards ESD presupposes a multi-methodological approach towards education. According to the literature, SSD assumes the creation of conditions which would not only consider the human development needs of all people (cf. 2.4.1.1), but would also develop their human capital (cf. 2.4.1.2). This requires participatory, process and solution-oriented methods which are not only cognisant with the needs of the learners (cf. 3.4.2.4), but also transforms educators from being sole transmitters and learners from passively receiving information (cf. 3.4.2.4) into active participants in the teaching and learning process. If oriented towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society, education policy and practice will have to embrace and promote the use of various teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies (cf. 3.4.2.4) so that learners are fully developed and able to live the lives they value.

In line with the above, the critical policy analysis revealed that the WPET not only supports and promotes the use and development of new teaching methods throughout every level of education, but that it also opens up the possibility for various new media to be utilised in teaching and learning (cf. 4.5.2.6). The WPET

calls for new and diverse methods and techniques to replace the old ones, which did not consider the needs of the learner, or engaged learners in active learning (cf. 4.5.2.6). As such, the WPET places the responsibility on subsequent policy documents to advance the use of various teaching and learning strategies which would actively engage learners in their own learning. It is therefore also assumed that these guidelines of the WPET will be reflected in practice. Education practice, as experienced by the participants of this study, appears to endorse the call of the WPET for the use of diverse methods and techniques since the respondents indicated that they use various teaching and learning strategies in their daily practice (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Indications are therefore that both the WPET and the experienced education practice respond to ESD as far as the use of various teaching and learning techniques are concerned.

However, despite the advocacy of the WPET towards a multi-methodological approach in teaching and learning, this directive seems to be narrowly articulated in the CAPS LO FET policy document, and only within the context of inclusive education (cf. 4.5.2.6). Such a narrow articulation might not only create the impression that methodological diversity is promoted only in relation to its value for inclusive education, but could also impede upon the role of LO education to fully develop every aspect of the learner. Since ESD supposes the use of various teaching and learning methods as an approach to education in general (cf. 3.4.2.4), the narrowing-down of methodological diversity to inclusive education only might not yield the expected outcomes of education oriented towards ESD, and thus has the potential of jeopardising the ideals of a social sustainable society. In this regard, the teachers who participated in the survey suggested that South Africans are not yet enjoying real and unrestricted freedom and that environments within which all people could develop their capabilities and enjoy creative lives have not yet materialised in society (cf. 5.3.2). Since real freedom and the development of all the capabilities of people assume that the varied teaching and learning needs of people be accommodated, a lack of methodological diversity in practice might limit their opportunities to fully develop their potential and contribute towards their well-being, as is called for by a social sustainable society. Therefore, despite indications that both the WPET and the teachers' education practice positively embrace various teaching and learning methods, and as such appears to be responsive towards ESD,

a disparity between the WPET, the perceived education practice and the CAPS LO FET policy document is observed. It seems therefore that the CAPS LO FET policy document is only partially responsive to ESD particularly since it relates to the promotion of various teaching and learning techniques only within the context of inclusive education.

The analysed policies and education practice appear not to be aligned with regard to the promotion of various teaching and learning techniques. Whilst the WPET reflects responsiveness to ESD by advancing the use of various teaching and learning strategies, and the teachers indicate that they indeed engage learners in their own learning, the CAPS LO FET policy document seems to be only partially responsive in this regard.

6.2.7 *ESD AS LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY RELEVANT*

Whilst the literature review brought to the fore the local and global character of SD and SSD (cf. 2.3.5), the conceptualisation of ESD highlighted its local and global relevance (cf. 3.4.2.6). Local relevance implies that ESD in one country will have a unique character, which not only makes it distinctively different from ESD in another country, but also grounds ESD in the local community or society (cf. 3.4.2.6). As such, local refers to South African communities and cultures in particular, as well as to the broader South African society. Global relevance assumes that ESD reflects the global context (cf. 3.4.2.6). I thus assume that for South African education to be oriented towards ESD, its needs to respond to both local and global needs. Thus, to be locally relevant and to realise social sustainability, education needs to respond to the human well-being needs of all South Africans, including the framing and conceptualisation of social and human capital, democracy and democratic governance, as well as equity and human rights in the local idiom (cf. 2.4.1.1). Developing the critical faculties of learners (cf. 3.4.2.7) also presupposes a critical orientation towards globalisation (cf. 2.3.5). The expectation therefore is that education policy and practice oriented towards ESD should be locally relevant and globally sensitive. Education should subsequently be infused with local and global knowledge, values and skills, whilst simultaneously reflecting a critical stance towards the global.

My critical policy analysis revealed that both the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document provide for the local and global relevance of education (cf. 4.5.2.7). On one hand, the WPET encourages local relevance by giving scope for learning programmes to be structured and defined to not only emulate the local community interests and needs, but also that of the provinces and the country. Themes must therefore be articulated to be relevant, meaningful and grounded within the local context of the learner. Local relevance is also promoted by providing for education to be infused with indigenous and traditional knowledge (cf. 4.5.2.7), and by grounding education in the values of the *Constitution of South Africa*. On the other hand, global relevance is advanced by not ruling out the possibility to work closely with external partners on educational matters (cf. 4.5.2.7). Although the WPET does not explicitly refer to the rest of the African continent, it is assumed that Africa is regarded amongst the external partners. The WPET subsequently appears to resonate with the local and global relevance elements of ESD since it requires the policy process to be responsive to the local and the global context. In support of the latter, the respondents in the survey also indicated that they experience education practice as aimed at global citizenship (cf. 5.3.2). It subsequently seems as if the guidelines of the WPET regarding notions of local and global relevance have filtered through to education practice.

Although it appears at face value as if the WPET espouses local relevance and aspires to promote the needs of local communities through education, the grounding of education in the local context and the reflection of local communal imperatives is not mandatory (cf. 4.5.2.7). Reflecting on local needs in subsequent education policies is therefore optional and various education authorities are thereby at liberty to choose whether they want to respond to local needs. It could therefore not be unequivocally stated that the WPET particularly promotes local relevance. However, notwithstanding the discretionary tone of the WPET, the CAPS LO FET policy reflects a commitment to the local context by declaring the latter not only as a grounding principle of education, but also by grounding knowledge, skills and values in the local (cf. 4.5.2.7). In line with the latter policy, the survey also presented the respondents' experience of South African education as relevant to the needs of the community, and embracing local demands (cf. 5.3.2). The responsiveness of South

African education practice and the CAPS LO FET policy document towards ESD with regard to local relevance of education is therefore noted.

Furthermore, the CAPS FET LO policy document regards local relevance of education as significant for societal change (cf. 4.5.2.7). However, considering that local relevance of education is necessary to affect societal change and to transform the South African society into a sustainable one, it appears as if in practice this has not yet materialised because the respondents do not perceive the current South African society as sustainable (cf. 5.3.2). As such, it appears that whilst the analysed policies exhibit a strong responsiveness to the notion of local relevance, the local relevance of education has not yet contributed to societal change.

The CAPS LO FET policy document promotes global relevance of education by assuming that South African education will only be credible if it is compatible with that of other countries (cf. 4.5.2.7). As such, not only is the impression created that South African education is dependent on the global context, but the CAPS LO FET also suggests that education needs to embrace global values, knowledge and skills in order for it to be reliable. However, a tension is discerned between the local and the global relevance of education. This tension is visible in requests that South African education should be infused with local communal values required for local societal transformation, whilst it simultaneously needs to respond to global educational imperatives to ensure that education remains trustworthy. In this regard, the neutral responses of the respondents, relating to the cultural relevance of South African education needs to be noted (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Also, the respondents appeared to be negative when asked whether local communities and stakeholders accept ownership of schools (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). It is suspected that the apparent reluctance of communities to identify with and take ownership of education (cf. 5.3.1) can be linked to an assumed lack of local relevance of education. Since the relevance of education ensures that local needs are catered for, decontextualised education is rather distant and does not necessarily respond to the needs of the community. Since ESD assumes relevance, education that does not respond to the needs of local communities cannot contribute to the realisation of a social sustainable society in a meaningful manner.

From the foregoing exposition it appears as if the analysed policies acknowledge, and are sensitive to both the local and the global contexts, and that these contexts are, to a certain extent, reflected in education practice. However, a contradiction between the local relevance of education and its ability to affect societal change is observed. In addition, a tension is also noted between the advancement of global relevance at the expense of providing in global needs. These tensions and contradictions might negatively impact on the orientation of South African education towards ESD and its vision to realise a social sustainable society.

6.2.8 *ESD IS PURPOSIVE AND AIMS AT PROMOTING SD, A SSD LIFE STYLE, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SD*

The conceptual analysis of ESD highlighted it as a purpose-driven process; hence ESD is regarded as education *for* sustainable development (cf. 3.4.2.7). As such, ESD is propelled by its intention to develop awareness, attitudes, values and skills required for SD and social sustainability in particular. In addition, the conceptual analysis also suggested that ESD promotes the integrated and interconnected nature of SD and the values by which it is underpinned (cf. 3.4.2.7). By focusing on the values and principles of SSD (cf. 2.4.1) and through poverty reduction and prevention (cf. 3.4.2.7), ESD is portrayed as a purpose-driven process which envisages citizens who would effectively contribute towards social sustainable societies. ESD was also foregrounded as education aimed at the development of a critical orientation towards SD and towards ideology and politics (cf. 3.4.2.7). As such, education oriented towards ESD ought not to inculcate or indoctrinate, but should inform critical reflection and challenge the *status quo* and the dominant social paradigm (cf. 3.4.2.7). In the context of the social focus of my study, I assume that ESD would therefore also purposively aim at challenging those social issues which might promote or sustain social unsustainability. It is therefore expected that education aligned with ESD would problematise social issues that might endanger the ideal of a social sustainable South African society.

Reflecting on the literature study and the conceptualisation of ESD, I observed that the advancement of the vision and the values of the Constitution is central to the aims and objectives of South African education, as articulated in the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document (cf. 4.5.2.8). Since the vision of South Africa

articulates the values for a sustainable South African society, it could be argued that in principle, South African education is aimed towards *inter alia*, a social sustainable society. In addition, aligning the aims and objectives of South African education with the aims and objectives of reconstruction and development as espoused in the *National Development Plan (2012)* (cf. 4.5.2.8), suggests that SA education is purposively orientated towards social sustainability. South African education also aims at developing critical thinking skills and problem-solving attitudes in learners (cf. 4.5.2.8). It is therefore assumed that these skills would not only enable learners to challenge issues of social unsustainability, for e.g. poverty, discrimination and injustice, but would also enable them to critically engage with and respect the values of a social sustainable South African society as advanced by the Constitution. Given the perception that the current South African society is socially unsustainable, but that SD could provide a good quality of life for all through poverty alleviation (cf. 5.3.2), South African education ought to play an important role in contributing towards a social sustainable society. Following the survey, it appears as if the respondents do indeed experience South African education practice as purposefully oriented towards realising SSD and a social sustainable lifestyle. In this regard, the respondents suggested that education practice aims at alleviating and preventing poverty, that education emphasises critical thinking and problem-solving attitudes, and that it embraces and promotes social sustainable values (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). It therefore appears as if the analysed policies and the respondents' experience of education practice might be responsive towards the purposive nature of ESD. It is further also assumed that such responsiveness might also contribute towards the realisation of a social sustainable society.

6.2.9 *ESD AS LIFELONG LEARNING*

In my attempt to conceptualise lifelong learning within the context of ESD, I observed that it requires skills, values and attitudes which would enable learners to continue learning well after they leave school (cf. 3.4.2.8). Lifelong learning assumes that the school is not the only site of learning, but that learning can take place in any formal, non-formal or informal environment, such as the home, workplace and through various media, whilst age is not a barrier (cf. 3.4.2.8). The conceptual analysis also conceptualises lifelong learning as locally relevant and informed by a willingness to

transform society (cf. 3.4.2.8). In addition, lifelong learning is framed as a reflexive self-actualising agent that should improve life through poverty reduction, emancipation, participation and empowerment (cf. 3.4.2.8). It could subsequently be inferred that lifelong learning feeds into the aims of SD since the latter focuses on improving the quality of lives. Because improving the quality of people's lives finds expression in the realisation of SSD, lifelong learning or the lack thereof could impact on human well-being (cf. 2.4.1.1); on human capital (cf. 2.4.1.2(b)); on equity (cf. 2.4.1.4); and on human rights (cf. 2.4.1.5). However, despite the perceived potential of lifelong learning, the literature warns against an exorbitant view of lifelong learning as the only answer to rid society from poverty, injustices and disempowerment. Rather, the conceptual analysis alerts us against a predominantly market-oriented conceptualisation of SD and a subsequent over-emphasis on economic growth and economic sustainability at the expense of social sustainability (cf. 3.4.2.8). As such, hidden within calls for lifelong learning and disguised by an apparent 'social vocabulary', might be the infusion of education with economic values at the expense of equity and equality, democracy, human rights and human well-being and other elements of a social sustainable society. Thus, although education oriented towards ESD should reflect an orientation towards lifelong learning, it needs to demonstrate sensitivity towards the possible threats of lifelong learning focused only on the labour market.

In line with the perception of lifelong learning illuminated in the literature, the critical policy analysis revealed that the vision for education in South Africa is also centred on providing lifelong learning to all of its citizens (cf. 4.5.2.9). The critical policy analysis further highlighted that this vision finds expression in the obligation placed on education authorities to orientate all education policies towards lifelong learning (cf. 4.5.2.9). By linking lifelong learning to the reconstruction and development of the country, the impression is created that lifelong learning could assist in ridding the South African society from social, economic and environmental unsustainability. The WPET subsequently directly links lifelong learning with SD and SSD. It appears that the vision for lifelong learning expressed in the WPET has also, to a certain extent, filtered through to education practice since the respondents perceive South African education as promoting lifelong learning (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). The respondents also appeared to be positive about the potential of lifelong learning to reduce poverty, to

emancipate and to improve the quality of life for all (cf. 5.3.2). It therefore seems that within the context of South African education both the WPET and perceived education practice reflect the lifelong learning focus of ESD.

Although the WPET articulates the potential role that lifelong learning could play in the broader project of social transformation, it appears to emphasise the economic value of lifelong learning (cf. 4.5.2.9). Whilst it is assumed that an over-emphasis on economic sustainability can be to the detriment of social sustainability, the respondents' perception of the South African society and the extent of its sustainability revealed that South Africans are not enjoying real freedom (cf. 5.3.2). They indicated that a social environment is not created within which all people could develop their capabilities; that the basic needs of people are not catered for; social justice and equality and equity are lacking; that basic human rights are not respected and that South Africans experience various barriers to learning. These perceived realities not only pose a serious danger for social sustainability, but reflect negatively on the responsiveness of education to the role of lifelong learning in social transformation.

Although the WPET seemingly embraces lifelong learning, the CAPS LO FET policy appears to be visibly silent on this issue. Such a silence is a concern. The expectation is that since the WPET gives direction on the transformation of South African education, and whilst it emphasises the importance of lifelong learning, the latter should also be reflected in the CAPS LO FET policy document. However, this document appears to be unresponsive to lifelong learning as an element of ESD. Since the CAPS LO FET policy impacts directly on education practice, the possibility exists that practice might not only become more divorced from the WPET and the vision for lifelong learning it expresses, but also from ESD and the transformation of South Africa into a social sustainable society.

Based on the preceding exposition, I conclude that although the WPET seems to be responsive to lifelong learning as a principle of South African education, it is not critical of the concerns that often surround lifelong learning. Whilst the CAPS LO FET policy document is visibly silent in this regard, the respondents do not

experience the proposed effect of lifelong learning in terms of the realisation of a social sustainable society within the bigger context of the South African society.

6.2.10 *ESD IS QUALITY EDUCATION WHICH PROMOTES CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM SOLVING AND ACTION*

The conceptual analysis revealed quality education not only as the central precondition for ESD, but also as its driving force (cf. 3.4.3.1). ESD conceptualises quality education as education that promotes peace; integrates various types of knowledge; embraces indigenous knowledge; is grounded on a sound legislative framework; transforms society; and celebrates and develops the individual as a member of a family, of a community and as a global citizen (cf. 3.4.3.1). Quality education aims towards a sustainable world, whilst developing critical thinking skills, problem-solving and agency at the same time. Linked to these faculties, the intention of quality education is to advance reflection and self-critique in learners, teachers and the broader community on issues closely related to SSD. As such, low quality education is not associated with ESD. Considering that in ESD quality education is conceptualised in terms of various related aspects, responsiveness to ESD assumes that these aspects should be in collaboration. It is therefore expected that education policy and practice oriented towards ESD should reflect, respond to and promote these qualities, whilst simultaneously contributing towards the realisation of a social sustainable society.

In line with the foregoing, the critical policy analysis revealed numerous references in the WPET indicating a sincere commitment to provide quality education to the people of South Africa (cf. 4.5.2.10). In this White Paper, the former Department of Education was clear in its conceptualisation of quality education, not only in the South African context, but also in terms of what such quality education would require. The WPET thus links quality education to a conducive teaching and learning environment; to the commitment of teachers; ownership of schools by the community; relevance of the curriculum and assessment; effectiveness of the system; the availability of material; teacher development; and to the transformation of the entire education system (cf. 4.5.2.10). In addition, by framing South African education as a basic human right and grounding it on constitutional values and principles, the WPET suggests not only local relevance, but also an intention to

provide quality education. Therefore, the WPET in particular, appears to demonstrate responsiveness towards ESD to the extent that it is concerned with quality education.

However, in contrast to the expectation that the notion of quality education, as highlighted in the WPET, ought to filter through to the policy process aimed at the transformation of South African education, the survey revealed a perceived gap between policy and practice. The notion of quality education, especially in the light of the re-orientation of education towards ESD, becomes questionable when all the respondents appeared to be concerned about and quite disillusioned with the quality of education offered in South Africa (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Particular issues related to quality education which concerned the respondents include social justice, equity, non-discrimination and access to education (cf. 5.3.3). It subsequently appears that whilst the WPET envisages the transformation of South African education towards *inter alia* quality education, education practice, as per experience of the respondents, does not reflect the orientation of education towards certain aspects of quality education. Simultaneously, however, the respondents also suggested that the South African education practice responds fairly well to other aspects of quality education such as promoting democracy and peace, participation, the values that informs education, lifelong learning, and empowerment (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Considering the encompassing nature of quality education, one could conclude that education practice seems to be aligned towards ESD, only as far as certain aspects of quality education are concerned.

The intention to provide critical thinking, reflection and action are clearly expressed in both the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document. The WPET not only suggests that study material, teaching methods and the curriculum should promote critical thinking, but it also places a particular responsibility on teachers to practice and promote critical attitudes (cf. 4.5.2.10). Coupled with this, the CAPS LO FET policy encourages problem-solving attitudes; critical engagement with, and the analyses of information, moral dilemmas and cultural practices; and reflection on one's own attitudes towards social challenges such as discrimination (cf. 4.5.2.10). This document further demonstrates an alignment with quality education since it promotes the development of agency in learners so that they can take action to

improve their own lives (cf. 4.5.2.10). In addition, the survey also pointed out that education practice was experienced positively by the respondents in terms of the promotion and development of critical thinking, reflection and problem-solving attitudes, as well as the development of active citizenship (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). Based on the perceived prevalence of these aspects in education policy and practice, it appears as if the latter responds to the requirements of ESD. However, it was also observed that South African education practice does not respond to some elements of quality education. Although the analysed policies demonstrate responsiveness to quality education as a prerequisite for ESD, the respondents articulated particular concerns about education's quest for quality education.

Informed by the literature on quality education as conceptualised in ESD, and drawing on the policy environment and education practice, it appears that South African education policies aspire towards quality education, but that education practice does not yet fully underscore these intentions. Education practice in particular displayed certain contradictions with regard to the responsiveness of education. As such, South African education appears to be responsive to a limited extent, to quality education as framed within ESD.

6.2.11 *ESD AS A FORM OF ENLIGHTENMENT WHICH INTEGRATES DIFFERENT TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE*

According to the conceptual analysis undertaken, the integrated nature of knowledge embedded in ESD, requires a paradigm shift in the way in which knowledge is viewed, constructed and validated (cf. 3.4.3.2). It is further stated that critical thinking should be central in the construction of new knowledge, and that lines between different forms of knowledge should be blurred to not only integrate diverse sciences, but to also accommodate local traditional and indigenous knowledge, and women's knowledge. Since current forms of knowledge and the ways in which it is constructed are blamed for unsustainability, changes in the way knowledge is viewed, constructed and validated, is significant. Responsiveness towards ESD subsequently assumes that in South African education, a paradigm shift in the conceptualisation of knowledge should be reflected in both education policies and practice.

ESD is premised on the integration of various forms of knowledge, especially since its interrelated nature (cf. 3.4.2.1) assumes the incorporation of knowledge from various sources. In addition, not only does its local character (cf. 3.4.2.6) suppose the recognition of local traditional and indigenous knowledge, but the promotion of human and social capital (cf. 2.4.1.2(b)) suggests that within ESD, knowledge should be regarded as flexible. Since it informs equity and equality (cf. 2.4.1.4), recognising various forms of knowledge would further feed into the realisation of SSD and the promotion of respect for the human rights of all people (cf. 2.4.1.5). Therefore, if South African education is oriented towards ESD, education policy and practice need to promote the integration of various forms of knowledge.

In terms of embracing various forms of knowledge, the critical policy analysis indicated that the WPET not only suggests respect for the diversity of knowledge and the sources of its origins, but it also acknowledges that such knowledge should inform teaching and learning in schools (cf. 4.5.2.11). In addition, the WPET conceptualises knowledge as flexible, changeable, and constructed through interaction (cf. 4.5.2.11). Thus, all forms of knowledge are to be regarded as valuable. Building on this, the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to validate indigenous knowledge (IK) as a central guiding principle. Similar to the perceptions on various forms of knowledge promoted in the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document, the survey revealed that the respondents experience that South African education practice not only promotes the integration of different types of knowledge, but also the production of new knowledge (cf. 5.3.1; 5.3.2). They subsequently indicated that they draw on other knowledge systems and that indigenous or local knowledge is indeed integrated in their teaching and learning. By recognising traditional and IK education, the status of cultural capital embedded in the knowledge of South Africans is not only elevated, but the link between the integration of diverse knowledge and the local relevance of education is strengthened. An apparent responsiveness to ESD in terms of the integration of various knowledge forms is subsequently exposed in the WPET, the CAPS LO FET policy document and in education practice.

However, on closer analysis certain gaps which could hamper the responsiveness of the CAPS LO FET policy document to the integration of various forms of knowledge

came to the fore. As such, the policy document does not give much information on the nature and relevance of IK within the broader knowledge context in South African education (cf. 4.5.2.11). In addition, this policy does not provide any definition of IK, nor does it suggest how IK should be integrated across the curriculum. The danger subsequently exists that the implementation of IK could be limited to mere indigenous belief systems and indigenous games. Silences in policy on the nature and significance of IK might impact negatively on education practice when educators do not realise the value of IK, or how to incorporate it in practice.

Concerning the integration and validation of various forms of knowledge in response to ESD, and despite perceived gaps in the conceptualisation of IK, it appears as if, in principle, the analysed policies and education practice as experienced by the respondents embrace and promote the integration of various and diverse forms of knowledge.

6.2.12 *ESD AS DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION WHICH CREATES SPACE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEMOCRATIC AND GLOBAL CITIZEN*

Informed by the conceptual analysis of ESD, I established that the latter is in principle a participatory and engaging educational approach (cf. 3.4.2.5). As such, it not only assumes involvement of all that are affected by educational matters, but it essentially also creates the space for the involvement of multiple stakeholders on an equal basis (cf. 3.4.2.5). Considering the multi-dimensional nature of SD (cf. 2.3) and the complex character of SSD (cf. 2.4.1), multiple stakeholder participation in education matters is significant. Therefore, education policy and practice should reflect a democratic character and demonstrate the propensity to create space for the development of democratic and global citizens. In addition, ESD needs to embrace democracy since democratic government and democratic governance are principles of a social sustainable society. Education oriented towards ESD subsequently needs to create an environment in which democratic principles such as participation, representation, transparency, accountability, equity and equality, inclusion, freedom, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and poverty eradication flourish (cf. 2.4.1.3), and within which the involvement and contribution of NGO's and CBO's as civil society organisations are promoted and valued (cf. 3.4.2.5).

Since developing democratic citizenship is regarded as its primary aim, ESD also ought to develop an empowered, competent and informed citizenry (cf. 3.4.3.3) who display reflective skills and can act responsibly as global citizens (cf. 3.4.3.3). It is therefore anticipated that education policy and practice oriented towards ESD should typically be democratic in character and endow citizens with values and dispositions for democratic and global citizenship. As such, it is expected that South African education will embrace democracy and promote the values basic to democratic and global citizenship.

Considering the participatory nature of ESD, the critical policy analysis revealed that the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document express commitment to advance democracy through education. In the WPET, democracy is articulated in the transformative mission and the creation of a democratic ethos for education (cf. 4.5.2.12). This document subsequently anticipates that democratic values and principles will inform South African education. Furthermore, the WPET also gives effect to the principle of participation by advocating the establishment of democratic governance structures in accordance with democratic principles (cf. 4.5.2.12). This envisaged democratic ethos seems to find expression in the CAPS LO FET policy when the inculcation of a sense of civic responsibility in learners and participation in decision-making structures for community life and various community organisations (cf. 4.5.2.12), are emphasised. Similar to the responsiveness observed in these documents, the respondents also suggested that education practice promotes democratic participation and the associated values (cf. 5.3.2). They not only accentuated their experiences about the democratic nature of South African education, but also the alignment of education practice with policy. Hence, considering the guidelines of the WPET and the apparent reflection thereof in the CAPS LO FET policy document and practice, a particular responsiveness towards the democratic nature, including democratic and global citizenship of ESD can be observed.

In addition, to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders and the realisation of the democratic principles of equity and equality, the WPET particularly calls for the inclusion of those sectors of the community which in the past were left out of decision-making structures (cf. 4.5.2.12). However, from the survey it seems that

the respondents do not experience education practice as inclusive of those marginalised sectors. It was particularly respondents in more affluent schools (cf. 5.3.3.1) who appeared concerned about the exclusion of the marginalised in decision-making and consultation (cf. 5.3.2). Since democratic government and governance suppose equity, participation, inclusion and non-discrimination, the perceived exclusion of certain sectors of society is not only contradictory to, but could also hamper the ideals of a social sustainable society. Although the WPET calls for social inclusion, the respondents apparently experience education reality as rather hostile in this regard. Such a tension between policy and practice indicates that the WPET's guidelines on inclusion have not filtered through to education practice.

In response to the conceptual analysis which assumes that ESD also promotes global citizenship (cf. 3.4.3.3), the analysed policy documents articulate a concern for the development of the values, skills and knowledge in learners that would enable them to effectively participate in the global village (cf. 4.5.2.12). As such, by promoting dispositions regarded as essential for global citizenship, South African education not only attempts to remain globally relevant, but also to respond to global needs. Aligned with this, the survey also suggested that in practice, LO aims at global citizenship (cf. 5.3.2). Therefore, concerning the development of global citizenship, South African educational policy and practice seems to respond to this particular element of ESD.

According to the above exposition, the South African education policy environment and practice appear to be responsive towards ESD as far as the latter promotes democracy and global citizenship. However, concerning the inclusion of the oppressed and marginalised in decision-making, a dissonance between the literature, policy intentions and the practice was noted. Thus, although South African education policy appears to be responsive towards ESD, the practice as experienced by the respondents appears to be partially responsive to this particular element of ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society.

6.2.13 *ESD EMPHASISES EDUCATION SUPPORTED BY A LEARNER-ORIENTED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT*

In the conceptual analysis ESD was conceptualised as inherently a learning process (cf. 3.4.3.4). Since current learning practices are often blamed for unsustainable development, ESD requires a change in perceptions of what learning entails. As such, the re-orientation of education towards ESD presupposes deep, transformative social learning informed by contextual and local relevance, by integration and interdisciplinary learning, and by learner-centeredness, human rights and cooperation (cf. 3.4.3.4). In addition, such learning should also be characterised by the values of respect and participation; it should foster behavioural and social transformation; be lifelong; propel learners into action; lead to discovery, exploration and gaining experience; and be quality learning (cf. 3.4.3.4). Therefore, for South African educational policy and practice to be responsive to ESD, it has to be in agreement with these qualities.

In addition, the literature indicates that the framing of learning within the broader project of SSD requires that learners learn the values of a social sustainable society. Thus, to enhance social capital, learners need to learn to trust one another and to learn to work co-operatively for the benefit of society (cf. 2.4.1.2(a)). Learners also need to learn the dispositions of democratic citizenship (cf. 2.4.1.3) and how to, in a responsible fashion, enjoy democracy and live out their democratic rights, cognisant of the rights of other people. Education oriented towards ESD should therefore also reflect a propensity to realise a social sustainable society (cf. 2.4).

With regard to the foregoing, the critical policy analysis revealed that in South Africa the learner is not only central to the teaching and learning process, but that teaching and learning should also be structured around the needs of the learner (cf. 4.5.2.13). As such, the WPET suggests that learners' existing knowledge is considered when constructing a meaningful teaching and learning environment which adds value to the learners' lives (cf. 4.5.2.13), and that education be framed within a lifelong learning paradigm (cf. 4.5.2.9; 6.2.9). In support of the learner-centeredness of education put forward by the WPET, the CAPS LO FET policy document proposes that an environment be created that is conducive to the meaningful acquisition of

skills and knowledge (cf. 4.5.2.13). However, although this policy document does not explicitly suggest that learning should be based on discovery, investigation, exploration and the fostering of critical learning skills, the principles expressed in the CAPS LO FET policy document suggests these as the intention. The document also proposes social and cooperative learning by promoting active involvement of learners in their own learning, and sensitivity to the needs and priorities of the learner (cf. 4.5.2.13). Sentiments regarding the learner-centeredness of education articulated in South African policy documents appear to have manifested in practice as experienced by the respondents who indicated that education is indeed oriented towards a learner-centred learning environment (cf. 5.3.1). However, despite the learner-centeredness of education, the respondents who took part in the survey appear to be particularly concerned about deep transformative learning that ought to take place in South African schools (cf. 5.3.2). If deep transformative learning supposes changes in behaviour and society, the lack thereof could impact negatively on realising ESD as an agent of change (cf. 3.4.1.2); on the empowerment of learners (cf. 3.4.1.1), the relevance of education (cf. 3.4.2.6); as well as on the integrated nature of education (cf. 3.4.2.1). Failure to realise deep transformative learning in practice could subsequently not only impede upon the responsiveness of South African education practice towards ESD, but also on the realisation of a social sustainable society. It is therefore assumed that deep transformative learning could counter the experience of a socially unsustainable society as indicated by the respondents in the survey (cf. 5.3.2).

Although it appears as if the analysed education policies display an intention to re-orientate education towards ESD through learner-centeredness, and although educational practice appears to feed into this intention, reservations about the nature of deep transformative learning seems to exist. As such, when considering the above, it could be noted that the South African education policy environment appears to respond to ESD as far as the learner-centeredness of education is concerned. Education practice, however, does not seem to respond to the transformative nature of learning.

6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE OVERALL RESPONSIVENESS OF POLICY AND PRACTICE

Based on the foregoing discussion on the responsiveness of education policy and practice to the various elements of ESD, I conclude that South African education is only *partially* responsive to ESD and as such, might find it difficult to realise a social sustainable society. My conclusion is informed by suggestions that South African education policy and practice reflect and demonstrate responsiveness towards particular constitutive elements of ESD, whilst silences, contradictions and tensions between policies and practice were also exposed.

Concerning its responsiveness towards particular constitutive elements of ESD, I found South African education policies and practice to be responsive to ESD in various ways, which includes the reflection of issues of social justice within EE; the embracing of empowerment; the underscoring of education as agent of change, being purposefully aimed at SD and SSD; the promotion of local and global relevance; a focus on democratic and global citizenship; and a responsiveness to the integrated and holistic nature of ESD. In addition education policy and practice also seem to demonstrate a value-driven nature; it embraces the integration of various forms of knowledge and underscores learner-centeredness. It is assumed that such responsiveness could strengthen the orientation of South African education towards the realisation of a social sustainable South African society.

However, and in addition to the aforementioned responsiveness, there are indications that South African education policy and practice are either silent on other constitutive elements of ESD, or that contradictions or tensions concerning these constitutive elements are present. Silences pertaining to a distinction between EE and ESD, the *Earth Charter* and its role in education and sensitivity towards possible concerns surrounding lifelong learning were depicted. Also, not only was the CAPS LO FET policy document visibly silent on the inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of South African education, but also on the empowerment of learners and the broader society, as well as on the orientation of education towards lifelong learning and the way in which IK should be conceptualised. It is anticipated that these exposed silences will, by implication but also in practice, impede on the orientation of

education towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable South African society in a number of ways. A lack of distinction between EE and ESD could result in ESD continuously being regarded as similar to EE. As a consequence, EE might remain the instrument with which the South African government hopes to realise both environmental and social sustainability, whilst simultaneously framing social issues within the logic of environmental sustainability. The apparent failure to acknowledge the *Earth Charter* as fundamental in value clarification could result in the perception that the values of the *Earth Charter* are not relevant to South Africa's aspirations for SD and a social sustainable society. In addition, apparent silences regarding lifelong learning and its concerns could on the one hand result in South African education not responding to ESD in terms of the creation of lifelong learning opportunities. On the other hand, not considering the dangers associated with lifelong learning, could lead to an uncritical implementation thereof with possible negative effects on equity, equality and the establishment of a social sustainable society. The failure of the CAPS LO FET policy document to promote inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary teaching and learning could result in various disciplines and bodies of knowledge remaining captive in their respective silos without collectively addressing social sustainable issues. Since achieving SSD assumes integration and interconnectedness, not promoting these would jeopardise SSD. Similarly, by not clearly indicating what IK within the context of South African education ought to be, would not advance the integration of various types of knowledge and as such, might not promote SSD. In summary, silence with regard to the above-mentioned constitutive elements of ESD could affect the orientation of education towards ESD and might have a restrictive effect on the realisation of the vision for a social sustainable society.

In addition to these silences, particular contradictions and tensions between education policies and practice were also exposed. Contradictions and tensions were noted between the respondents' experience of the focus of South African education on empowerment, democracy and democratic citizenship, including the issue of the exclusion of the vulnerable, oppressed and the marginalised. Also, the WPET calls for a general integrated and holistic orientation in education, whilst the CAPS LO FET appears to limit this to the content of LO only. Whilst the WPET promotes the use of various teaching and learning strategies, the CAPS LO FET

policy document does not seem to advance this. In addition, the WPET promotes lifelong learning as instrumental in societal change, but the respondents do not seem to experience lifelong learning as contributing towards societal change. In contrast to South African education policies which envisage quality education, in practice respondents experienced South African education as of a low quality. Furthermore, although South African education appears to be learner-centered, deep transformative learning, which is characteristic of learner-centeredness is apparently lacking. A tension was also exposed where South African policies do indeed promote local relevance, but simultaneously over-emphasise, at the expense of the local, compliance to those global educational imperatives that are regarded as essential to ensure global credibility of South African education.

Not only do the above-mentioned contradictions and tensions limit and at times negate the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD, but in principle, they create a false consciousness of education being oriented towards ESD, but also about education's contribution towards the realisation of a social sustainable society. Creating the impression that South African education is oriented towards ESD and a social sustainable society, whilst it is rife with tensions and contradictions could cause confusion and disillusion in South Africans who hope for a better quality of life through education. In addition, not only do these tensions and contradictions suggest that the social aims and objectives of education might be obstructed in their achievement, but realising SD through education also becomes doubtful and questionable. Contradictions and tensions in policies could also impact negatively on education practice since educators might not know what education really wants to achieve, how it envisages achievement of aims and objectives, and what is expected of them. In addition, not only do these tensions and contradictions suggest the existence of weaknesses within the education policy development process, but also that education authorities might not realise what is required of education in order to be oriented towards ESD.

As indicated above, South African education policy and practice is only partially responsive towards ESD. However, although partial responsiveness gives hope of the possibility of education contributing to the realisation of a social sustainable society, it also has a restrictive effect on such realisation. Bearing this in mind,

recommendations are made in the next section to enhance the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD, while simultaneously strengthening the possibility of education contributing towards the realisation of a social sustainable society.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to my conclusion regarding the partial responsiveness of education policy and practice towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society (cf. 6.2), this section will focus on recommendations that could assist in enhancing ESD as an educational endeavour aimed at the realisation of a social sustainable South African society. In this section, recommendations will firstly be made with regard to those aspects of ESD that appear to be reflected in policy and practice. Secondly, recommendations will be made with respect to those aspects of ESD on which South African education appears to be silent, and in the last instance, recommendations on perceived tensions and contradictions within South African education policy and practice will be offered.

6.4.1 *VALIDATE AND ACKNOWLEDGE EXISTING ELEMENTS*

Informed by the foregoing discussion and conclusions regarding the partial responsiveness of South African education and practice to ESD, I firstly recommend that those constitutive elements to which South African education policy and practice show responsiveness, be acknowledged and validated by the DBE as elements of ESD. Not only is social justice integral to the vision of the *Constitution of South Africa*, but it is also a prerequisite for a social sustainable society (cf. 2.4.1). Validating and acknowledging issues of social justice within EE would therefore not only strengthen the government's commitment to, and focus on the eradication of social injustices and the realisation of the morale of South African people, but also to SD and SSD *per se*. It is therefore recommended that issues related to social justice such as equity and equality be the focal point of education policy and practice.

In addition, I pointed out that education oriented towards ESD not only creates space for all people to be empowered, but that it also effects change. Both the empowerment of citizens, as well as change is central to any conceptualisation of a

social sustainable society (cf. 3.4.1.1; 3.4.1.2). For example, it is assumed that once empowered, citizens would take up the responsibility of creating a sustainable society (cf. 3.4.1.1). Similarly, change in behaviour, values, knowledge, attitudes and life styles are needed to bring about a sustainable society (cf. 3.4.1.2). Whilst I recommend that these aspects are validated and acknowledged, it is my contention that such validation and acknowledgment will ease the transition to a sustainable society, whilst simultaneously enhancing the orientation of South African education towards ESD.

When considering the purposive nature of ESD, it was argued that education should aim at achieving SD and SSD (cf. 3.4.2.7). However, aiming towards SD and SSD assumes an intentional focus on values and skills, critical thinking and poverty eradication and prevention. As such, I recommend that such a focus should be strengthened by an intentional validation and acknowledgment of the purposive nature of education in the broader policy context, but also on a micro level, i.e. in schools. In this regard, I assume that such action could indeed direct education towards the realisation of the mentioned attributes. In addition, it was also indicated that education needs to promote local and global relevance (cf. 3.4.2.6). Responding to both local and global imperatives is important because not only do SD and SSD reflect both a local and a global character, but it also requires and aims towards democratic participation and global citizens. Local social needs and priorities should therefore be determined within the broader global context, just as much as democratic citizens who are also able to take up their roles as global citizens are to be developed. . Therefore, in order for South African education to validate local needs and priorities and to develop democratic citizens, I recommend that the DBE ensures that local communities remain actively involved in the education of their children. The latter could be done by means of community forums where closer cooperation is established between schools and the local communities. It is further recommended that the curriculum be made more flexible in order to provide the space for the infusion thereof with those skills and values that learners would require to enjoy quality lives within their local communities. In addition, global relevance and citizenship should be ensured through school curriculums by enhancing sensitivity to global issues.

Considering the integrated and holistic nature of ESD, it is assumed that in education oriented towards ESD, the lines between various types and sources of knowledge would be blurred so that knowledge traditionally regarded as unscientific be included in efforts to realise a social sustainable society (cf. 3.4.3.2). It is anticipated that moving beyond traditional forms of knowledge towards the integration of for example traditional knowledge, would not only contribute to breaking the cycle of unsustainable knowledge creation, but would also ground knowledge in local realities. As such, it is recommended that by drawing on the existing pool of knowledge located in local communities, and by infusing the curriculum with such knowledge, South African education would not only validate the knowledge learners are exposed to at school, but would also advance South Africa's vision of a social sustainable society.

It was also pointed out that ESD is value-driven (cf. 3.4.2.2) and as such, education needs to be infused with and aspire to develop in learners values of a social sustainable society. Since South African education demonstrates an orientation towards social values, it could be assumed that the internalisation of these values would bring about changes necessary to construct a social sustainable society. As such, validating and acknowledging existing social values in education could contribute towards realising the vision of a social sustainable South African society as articulated in the *Constitution of South Africa*. It is on the basis of this that I recommend that values of SSD be advanced by reflecting common South African values in national, provincial but also school policies; in the vision and mission statements of schools; and in the content taught to learners. By so doing, Constitutional values and subsequently values for a social sustainable South African society could become embedded in the culture and ethos of education.

ESD also endorses learner-centeredness (cf. 3.4.3.4), which promotes learning that is practical, contextualised, lifelong and social (cf. 3.4.3.4). As such, learner-centred education could advance ESD and a social sustainable South African society by developing common SA values in learners and by being locally relevant; by creating opportunities in which learners can improve their skills and knowledge throughout their lives; by advancing pluralism and by changing values and attitudes. I therefore recommend that it is imperative that learner-centeredness of South African education

be acknowledged and strengthened by ensuring, on a continuous basis and through regular assessments, that education remains relevant, that lifelong learning opportunities of good quality are created and sustained on an on-going basis, and that education promotes critical dispositions.

I assume that since South African policy and practice already exhibit responsiveness to the foregoing elements of ESD, they could be advanced by validating and acknowledging them, but also building upon them. In addition, raising awareness about them and their possible value for and towards social sustainability would enable education policy makers and practitioners to contribute towards ESD, whilst simultaneously promoting the realisation of a social sustainable South African society.

6.4.2 ADDRESSING OF SILENCES

Although South Africa education seems to be responsive to some elements of ESD, the redirection of education towards ESD seems to be hampered by silences regarding some aspects of ESD. In this instance, it is recommended that these silences should not only be highlighted and noted, but that they need to be given specific attention to enhance the redirection of education towards ESD.

Whilst there exists a clear distinction between EE and ESD (cf. 3.4.4), the silence in policy documents in this regard is disconcerting. In order to address the problem of social issues being framed within an environmental paradigm, I recommend that the differentiation between EE and ESD is clearly conceptualised within the broader policy context. Since national policy serves to guide provincial and school policies, it is assumed that if such a differentiation is clearly articulated and included on a national level, it will ultimately be reflected in all levels of school governance and ultimately in practice. It is assumed that such an alignment of policy and practice could positively contribute towards social issues enjoying a co-equal position to environmental issues in curriculum content, instead of assuming secondary place to environmental sustainability.

Another silence depicted in South African policy and practice relates to the lack of acknowledging the relevance and significance of the *Earth Charter* in the orientation of education towards ESD and the realisation of SD and SSD (cf. 4.2.2.5). Since the *Earth Charter* is regarded as the moral compass for SD and SSD (cf. 3.4.2.2), values of the latter should be linked to the broader value framework provided by the *Earth Charter*. It is therefore recommended that although the Constitutional values give guidance on the direction of South African education, a critical assessment of educational values against the values of the *Earth Charter* might be necessary. It is assumed that such an assessment could, on the one hand, expose contradictions and tensions between educational values, societal values and that of the *Earth Charter*. On the other hand, it could create the space for framing educational values within the broader value framework of the *Earth Charter* in order to strengthen the orientation of education towards ESD, but also to contribute positively towards a social sustainable society.

Lifelong learning is integral to ESD (cf. 3.4.2.8). Not only does it require the creation of learning opportunities which extend beyond the formal classroom, but lifelong learning also extends beyond age. Since lifelong learning is associated with poverty reduction, empowerment, emancipation and participation, it could be potentially beneficial for ESD and social sustainable development. Silences on lifelong learning, as was discovered in the CAPS LO FET policy document (cf. 4.5.2.9), are not only confined to policy, but because policy impacts on practice, such silences are ultimately reflected in practice. Since notions of lifelong learning in education policy and practice could strengthen endeavours of a social sustainable society, I recommend the deliberate and notable inclusion thereof in all national policy documents, with the expectation that it could filter through to practice. In addition, it is imperative that the inclusion of the mentioned notions must be carefully considered by policy-makers, considering possible dangers often associated with lifelong learning. Within the broader policy context, references to lifelong learning must reflect sensitivity for the concerns associated with lifelong learning to ensure that education does not hamper prospects to realise a social sustainable society.

The silence on the inter- and trans-disciplinary nature of ESD in the CAPS LO FET policy document (cf. 4.5.2.4) is problematic in the sense that it is assumed that

education promotes ESD throughout all subjects and on all educational levels (cf. 3.4.2.1). Since such a silence not only impedes on the orientation of South African education towards ESD, but also on the realisation of a social sustainable society, it is recommended that the intentions of the WPET pertaining to the inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary nature of education be extended to the CAPS LO FET policy, and any other subsequent policy documents. It is assumed that an infusion of all policy documents across the South African education policy environment aimed at inter- and trans-disciplinary education, will not only strengthen the orientation of South African education towards ESD, but will feed into every aspect of education aimed at the realisation of the vision for a social sustainable society.

Despite the value for both ESD and the vision of a social sustainable South African society, the CAPS LO FET policy document appears to be visibly silent on the issue of empowerment. This silence is also problematic in the sense that education oriented towards ESD is in fact aimed at empowering all learners, including the broader society (cf. 3.4.1.1). Because empowerment is particularly significant within the context of a society that is still suffering from a legacy of oppression and marginalisation, I propose that education policy documents be developed in line with the pronouncement of the WPET on the empowerment role of education. By demonstrating the intention to empower learners and the broader society, education will not only give effect to the prerequisites of ESD, but also to that of SSD. As such, South Africans will be empowered with skills, values, attitudes and knowledge to realise a social sustainable South African society.

As a form of knowledge which should be embraced by education oriented towards ESD, indigenous knowledge reflects the knowledge of particular communities with which they make meaning of their lives (cf. 3.4.3.2). Silences pertaining to IK as noted in the CAPS LO FET policy document not only obstruct the orientation of South African education towards ESD, but it also restricts the realisation of a social sustainable society. I therefore recommend that the concept IK be clearly conceptualised in South African education policy documents. I believe that a clear conceptualisation of what IK entails would not only raise sensitivity towards, and an appreciation of IK, but would also enable educators to identify and to effectively use

such knowledge in their teaching practice. In addition, the incorporation of IK in teaching and learning will also advance the local relevance of education.

6.4.3 CONSIDERATION OF CONTRADICTIONS AND TENSIONS

Particular inconsistencies were identified between the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document. The WPET articulates the vision of education in South Africa and it serves as a guide to education policy development and practice in the country (cf. 4.5.1.1(c)). The development of policies should therefore be informed by sound policy development processes which take cognisance of the vision for education as articulated in the WPET. However, inconsistencies between the WPET and the CAPS LO FET policy document on the elements of ESD suggest that the WPET was either not consulted when the CAPS LO FET policy was developed or that those responsible for the CAPS LO FET policy document did not share the vision of the WPET. Also, since the CAPS LO FET policy document directly impacts on education practice, one could only speculate about the impact thereof on the latter. It is therefore suggested that a conscious decision be taken to not only consult, but also reflect the spirit of significant documents such as the WPET in education policies. It is my contention that when policies are grounded in the WPET, their implementation will contribute towards the realisation of the vision for South African education as articulated in this document and informed by the *South African Constitution*. Simultaneously, it is assumed that if the vision of a social sustainable South African society is pursued through education policies, education practice should respond more effectively to the requirements of ESD.

A contradiction between the intentions of the policies to deliver quality education and the experiences of the respondents concerning quality education in South Africa was also noted. Since quality education in ESD is conceptualised in terms of various aspects (cf. 3.4.3.1), failure to address any one of those aspects might not only jeopardise the quality of education, but also restrict the orientation of South African education towards ESD, and the realisation of a social sustainable society. I therefore recommend that the improvement of the quality of South African education should involve an engagement in the evaluation of the type of teaching, learning and assessment taking place in schools on an on-going basis. The DBE needs to ensure

that they provide in the basic needs of schools, while the conditions under which teaching and learning takes place should be evaluated on an on-going basis to not only improve conditions, but to enhance the ability and potential of every learner by promoting various teaching and learning strategies. I also suggest that consideration be given to the way in which existing knowledge of learners can be utilised; and how issues of poverty; hunger and child-headed households at schools can be addressed. Within the policy context, the DBE needs to continuously ensure, through policy evaluation, that South African education is directed by a sound legislative framework with sound policies, supported by strong administration and sufficient resources; that policies are effectively implemented on a school level; that school governing bodies are empowered to govern schools, whilst management capacities of school managing teams are continuously enhanced. I am in no way suggesting that the challenge of quality in South African education should be reduced to and probably solved by addressing the foregoing issues. However, these are merely suggestions as a starting point to improve the quality of South African education.

Since analysis of the CAPS LO FET policy document exposed contradictions with the vision of the WPET and the experiences of the educators, I recommend a critical re-consideration of the way in which South African education can be re-orientated towards the vision of the Constitution, and that of a social sustainable society. However, whilst the language of the Constitution, including the constitutional values are used to legitimise policy changes under the guise of educational transformation, careful consideration should be given to the way in which education can contribute to challenge the societal status quo. The need for education to challenge the status quo also relates to the importance of the inclusion of the oppressed, the vulnerable and the marginalised. Although the WPET expresses a commitment to empower all South Africans (cf. 4.5.2.2), the experiences of respondents suggest that women, the marginalised and oppressed are excluded in various ways (cf. 5.3.2). In order to address this contradiction, I suggest that conscious efforts be made to identify and reduce those barriers that prevent these groups from having their democratic rights protected and validated. Although education policies are framed within the context of equity, equality, democracy and human rights as suggested by the Constitution, policy evaluation should carefully review the extent to which existing policies are

merely forms of political symbolism, which not hamper implementation, but also inhibits the realisation of the vision to empower and promote democratic citizenship in practice.

A contradiction was exposed between the WPET that calls for a general integrated and holistic orientation in education, and the CAPS LO FET policy document which appears to limit integration only to the content of LO (cf. 4.5.2.4). Similarly, these two documents also seem to contradict each other in as far as the promotion of various teaching and learning strategies are concerned (cf. 4.5.2.6). To address these contradictions it is recommended that the CAPS LO FET policy document be adapted to be in line with the directives of the WPET. I assume that the advancement of integration and trans-disciplinary teaching and learning, as well as the promotion of various teaching and learning strategies by the CAPS LO FET policy document would advance the orientation of South African policy documents towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society. In addition, responsiveness of the CAPS LO FET policy document would also positively impact on education practice.

In order to demonstrate responsiveness towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society, South African education has to be locally as well as globally relevant (cf. 3.4.2.6). However, despite the perceived value that the local and global holds for South African education, it is essential that contradictions between local and global relevance, as well as possible dangers embedded within a global orientation of education be highlighted. In this regard I recommend the raising of awareness within the broader policy context and on a curriculum level of the dangers embedded within an over-emphasis on global relevance of education. It is assumed that the increase of such awareness could assist policy officials to critically consider whether the credibility of South African education is dependent on the degree that it responds to global imperatives. It is important to ensure that local and communal needs and aspirations are also respected, and that global needs are never promoted at the expense of what is locally valued.

The WPET not only explicitly calls for education to be oriented towards lifelong learning, but also for education to be focused on the needs and aspirations of the

learner (cf. 4.5.2.9; 4.5.2.13). Whilst the WPET links lifelong learning with the reconstruction and development of the country, the CAPS LO FET policy document envisages learning to be instrumental in the transformation of the learner and society (cf. 4.5.2.13). However, the respondents' experience reveals that lifelong learning does not contribute to change in society, and that learner-centeredness does not lead to deep transformative learning. It is because of these apparent contradictions between the vision of education policy and the experiences in practice that I recommend an assessment of the impact of lifelong learning on societal change. In addition, deep transformative learning should contribute towards the transformation of the individual as well as society. To enhance deep transformative learning, I propose that learning environments be created which validates diversity, participation, equality, pluralism, consensus and disagreement, human rights, reflection and critique, discovery, investigation, exploration and agency.

I am well aware that the orientation of South African education towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable South African society is a complex and often contested issue that will involve far more than the few recommendations made in this section. However, I present these recommendations as a mere entry point for conversation and debate around issues pertaining to the orientation of South African education towards ESD, and in so doing contribute towards realising the social sustainable society to which education is expected to contribute. In addition to the deliberation of what is required to re-orientate South African education towards ESD, it is my contention that a commitment to the vision of the Constitution should be the starting point. It is with these recommendations in mind, that the next section focuses on the limitations of this study and simultaneously presents possible areas for further study.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was conducted with the aim of exploring the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD in order to realise a social sustainable society. In realising this research aim, I was confronted by various obstacles which impacted in a challenging way on this study. In this section I reflect upon some of these obstacles which served, in one way or another, as limitations to the study. However,

since a limitation in a study also opens up new opportunities for future research, I subsequently make suggestions of how these limitations could be addressed in future areas of research.

6.5.1 *CONCEPTUAL CONFUSION*

As indicated, the aim of this study was to explore the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD and the realisation of a social sustainable society. However, the concept *sustainable development* is a rather fluid concept with literally many and sometimes diverse meanings (cf. 2.3). The variety of words, concepts, issues and meanings attached to SD not only made it difficult to grasp the actual meaning, intention, focus, aims and objectives of SD, but it also impeded upon the scope of my investigation. As such, I had to limit this study to a basic conceptualisation of SD, whilst conceptual issues such as the development of the concept itself could have been explored more critically. Confusion was further caused by authors using the concept sustainable development in a narrow way as referring to environmental sustainability only.

Due to the various conceptualisations of the orientation of education towards sustainable development and the many and diverse aims and objectives that such education is supposed to realise, the concept ESD is also not spared conceptual confusion. Although I limited myself in this research to the construction of a working definition of ESD, such a definition could by implication be regarded as a limitation to the scope and extent of the study. Whilst various authors are of the opinion that the value of ESD and SD lies within the variety of meanings that can be attributed to it, I am not convinced that something as important as ESD should be so vague that any meaning can be attached to it. There should rather be clarity on the aims and objectives of education, and the means with which these goals are to be achieved, or it could lead to non-achievement thereof. I thus argue that the conceptual haziness of ESD is detrimental towards achieving clarity on the aims and objectives of ESD. The vagueness of the concept ESD caused confusion and the multiple views hampered me from properly understanding and conceptualising the concept. This is visible in the constitutive elements of ESD which I have identified in this study. However, because of constraints of time as well as scope, I had to limit this study to

particular elements of ESD only. I am consequently convinced that research focusing on conceptual clarity of both the concepts SD and ESD, undertaken against the background of South Africa's needs and aspirations, could further strengthen the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD.

6.5.2 *LIMITED BODY OF KNOWLEDGE*

I am aware that social sustainable development *per se* is a new research field. However, despite the anthropocentric focus of SSD and the vision of South Africa to realise a social sustainable South African society, I could trace only a very limited number of articles on social sustainable development within the South African context. In addition, apart from a few sources which explicitly address social sustainability, no additional material could be found. This lack of literature could be regarded as both an advantage and a disadvantage to this study. Whilst the lack of literature enabled me to explore new research fields and construct new meanings, it also limited my study in the sense that I had to rely on limited sources in my conceptualisation and meaning-making of SSD. I do believe, however, that this study could contribute towards the discourse on ESD. As such, without limiting the scope of social research in South Africa, I suggest that research focused on social issues should be framed within the unifying theme of social sustainable development. I believe that social research focused upon a common theme could serve as impetus for more research on SSD.

In addition, and despite the rather long history of ESD and its focus on achieving SD in an integrated fashion, in South Africa very little extensive research appears to be published on ESD. Rather, EE not only seems to dominate research on SD and more specifically on ESD, but it also seems as if EE enjoys more interest in society. It is therefore important that more research be undertaken with a clear focus on ESD.

6.5.3 *METHODOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS*

In this thesis I declared my methodology and I strongly defended the methods which I employed in the research (cf. 1.5.2). Contrary to (mis)conceptions about the value and relevance of survey research within a critical research paradigm, I opted to use

a survey as one of my data gathering techniques. However, I was not able to extend my research to also include qualitative empirical research. I am convinced that interviews with particular role players such as Learning Facilitators and educators would not only have yielded information not captured by the survey, but would also have contributed to a deeper investigation and a better understanding of the educational reality(ies) experienced by the educators pertaining to the responsiveness of South African education to ESD. However, I intend to follow this up in subsequent studies, and I also recommend other future studies to embark on this important theme.

6.5.4 *LIMITATIONS CONCERNING THE PARTICIPANTS*

In my survey I used the non-probability participant selection method to draw the educators as participants. Non-probability participant selection enabled me to intentionally draw participants which I knew would provide me the most information to answer my research question on the responsiveness of South African education towards ESD. Subsequently, findings of this study cannot be generalised to the whole population. Nonetheless, I am convinced that the survey provided comprehensive results which could be used by policy-developers, stakeholders or other scholars. However, I do not claim these findings to be universal truths, because the participants cannot be regarded representative of the whole educator population of the Free State; rather, they merely embody the perceptions of particular educators and as such, provide us with a partial view of ESD and SSD. Nevertheless, the study could inform other relevant research on ESD and SSD by extending the research participants and making it more representative of the broader Free State educator population. Future studies on ESD could also include other provinces of South Africa. Although I initially planned to involve Life Orientation Learning Facilitators (LO LF's) in the study, I soon discovered that only two LF's who serve all the FET schools of the Motheo and the Xhariep educational districts were available. I subsequently experienced difficulty contacting the LF's for the FET LO phase, so I decided not to involve them.

6.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This study was undertaken to explore whether, in the wake of continued social difficulties and challenges in South Africa, which render society unsustainable, South African education is orientated towards ESD and subsequently focused on the realisation of SSD.

To enable me to answer the question on the responsiveness of South African policy and practice I first had to study the literature to explore the nature and status of sustainable development and social sustainable development (Chapter 2). Having established that, I set out to gain conceptual clarity about the concept ESD. This was important not only to limit conceptual confusion regarding ESD, but to also identify particular constitutive elements with which I constructed a working definition of ESD. Against the backdrop of this working definition, I critically analysed two South African education policy documents: the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation Grades 10-12* (2011) in order to expose their responsiveness to the constitutive elements of ESD. However, I also found it necessary to explore the perceptions of Free State educators on their experiences of the responsiveness of education practice to ESD.

In my final analysis, I found South African education to be partially responsive towards ESD. This conclusion is informed by the South African education policy environment and practice which demonstrated responsiveness to only certain constitutive elements of ESD, whilst visible silences, contradictions and tensions between policies and practice were also exposed. However, and despite this partial responsiveness, I argue that ESD holds the potential to contribute towards realising the vision for a social sustainable South African society as expressed in the Constitution of the country. The value of ESD for South Africa not only lies in the potential it holds for an effective contribution towards societal change and transformation, but also the possibility to improve the quality of life of all South Africans and to enable them to live the lives that they long for and value.

ABSTRACT

Although South Africa embraces sustainable development (SD), sound SD cannot be realised amidst unsustainable social conditions. Whilst I acknowledge the interconnectedness of the various spheres of SD, in this study I only focused on social sustainable development (SSD). SSD calls for the transformation of society in accordance with common social values. Since the construction of a social sustainable South African society is imperative, it is accepted that the values which should guide societal transformation are articulated in the vision of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996). As such, education ought to be transformed towards realising this vision for a social sustainable South African society. However, persistent social injustices suggest that South African education might not yet be transformed to fully realise the vision of a social sustainable society, but it rather sustains unsustainable social conditions.

In order to realise a social sustainable society, education policy and practice have to be transformed towards education for social development (ESD). As an educational approach, ESD purposively pursues the aims and objectives of SD. The lack of research on ESD and the vision of a social sustainable South African society prompted me to explore the responsiveness of South African education policy and practice towards ESD.

Based on this research aim, I conducted a critical policy analysis of the *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) and the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Life Orientation Grades 10–12* (2011). This analysis was undertaken against the backdrop of a conceptual analysis of the concept ESD and the identification of various constitutive elements thereof. I used the identified constitutive elements to construct a working definition of ESD and to explore the implications of ESD for South African education policy and practice. Due to my belief in *praxis* as the intersection of practice and theory, I conducted a survey to explore the views of educators on the extent to which elements of ESD have filtered,

via policy, to education practice. Finally I made recommendations to enhance ESD in order to contribute to a social sustainable South African society.

Concerning the value and relevance of ESD for South Africa, I found the former to be potentially valuable in enhancing the orientation of education towards SD and SSD. The critical policy analysis revealed positive aspects about South African education policy documents which suggest their responsiveness to ESD. Also, the findings of the empirical research revealed the extent to which education practice is responsive to ESD. Whilst South African education appears to be infused with elements of ESD, the findings indicated that education policy and practice exhibit only partial responsiveness to some elements of ESD. I subsequently exposed particular contradictions and tensions which relate to the focus of South African education on empowerment, democracy and democratic citizenship; the exclusion of the oppressed and the marginalised; integration and holism; diverse teaching and learning strategies; lifelong learning as instrumental in societal change; quality education; deep transformative learning; and the global- and local relevance of education. Although it appears at face value that South African education is responsive towards ESD, these contradictions and tensions suggest that the education of the country is only partially responsive to ESD and as such, might not effectively contribute to the realisation of a social sustainable South African society.

Informed by this conclusion, I made certain recommendations which could, on the one hand advance the orientation of South African education towards ESD, and on the other hand, redirect education to contribute to the realisation of a social sustainable South African society.

Key words: Education for Sustainable Development; sustainable development; social sustainable development; education policy; critical theory; critical policy analysis; South African education; conceptual analysis.

OPSOMMING

Hoewel Suid-Afrika volhoubare ontwikkeling (VO) onderskryf, sal VO nie realiseer midde onvolhoubare sosiale omstandighede nie. Hoewel ek erkenning gee aan die interafhanklikheid van die verskillende aspekte van VO, fokus ek in hierdie studie slegs op sosiaal volhoubare ontwikkeling (SVO). SVO veronderstel die transformasie van die samelewing aan die hand van gemeenskaplike sosiale waardes. Gegewe dat die daarstelling van 'n sosiaal volhoubare Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing belangrik is, word dit aanvaar dat die waardes wat sodanige samelewing daar moet stel in die visie van die *Grondwet van Suid-Afrika (Wet no. 108 van 1996)* verklaar word. Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys hoort dus getransformeer te wees om die visie van 'n sosiaal volhoubare samelewing te realiseer. Volgehoue sosiale ongeregthede dui egter daarop dat Suid Afrikaanse onderwys moontlik nie ten volle getransformeer is om daardie visie te realiseer nie.

Die verwesenliking van 'n sosiaal volhoubare samelewing veronderstel dat onderwysbeleid en –praktyk heroriënteer word na onderwys vir volhoubare ontwikkeling (OVO). As 'n onderwysbenadering is OVO doelgerig in die bereiking van SD. Gebrek aan navorsing binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks oor OVO sowel as die visie van 'n sosiaal volhoubare Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing, het gedien as dryfveer om die beantwoordbaarheid van Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys ten opsigte van OVO en die daarstelling van 'n sosiaal volhoubare samelewing bloot te lê.

Gerig deur hierdie doelwit het ek 'n kritiese beleidsanalise van die *Witskrif oor Onderwys en Opleiding (1995)* en die *Kurrikulum- en assesseringsbeleidsverklaring, Lewensoriëntering Verdere Onderwys- en Opleidingsfase Graad 10-12 (2011)* onderneem. Hierdie analise is gedoen teen die agtergrond van 'n konseptuele analise en die identifisering van konstitutiewe elemente. Hierdie konstitutiewe elemente is gebruik om 'n werkbare definisie van OVO saam te stel asook om die implikasies van OVO vir beide die onderwysbeleid en –praktyk te ondersoek. My oortuiging in *praxis* as die eenwording van teorie en praktyk het my genoop om 'n ondersoek te doen na die sienings van opvoeders oor die mate waartoe elemente van OVO deurgesyfer het, via beleid, na die onderwyspraktyk. Ten einde laas het ek

aanbevelings gemaak om OVO te verbeter in 'n poging om by te dra tot 'n sosiaal volhoubare Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing.

Betreffende die waarde en relevansie van OVO vir Suid-Afrika het ek gevind dat eersgenoemde 'n potensiële bydrae kan lewer tot die heroriëntering van Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys tot VO en SVO. Die kritiese beleidsanalise het positiewe aspekte rondom die beantwoordbaarheid van Suid-Afrikaanse beleidsdokumente ontbloot. Bevindings van die empiriese navorsing het ook die mate waartoe die onderwyspraktyk gehoor gee aan sommige elemente van OVO uitgebeeld. Hoewel dit egter blyk asof Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys deurdring is met sekere elemente van OVO, het die bevindings ook aangetoon hoe onderwysbeleid en –praktyk tot 'n beperkte mate gehoor gee aan die elemente van OVO. In hierdie verband het ek bepaalde kontradiksies en spanninge blootgelê wat verband hou met die fokus van Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys op bemagtiging; demokrasie en demokratiese burgerskap; die uitsluiting van die verdruktes en gemarginaliseerdes; integrasie en interafhanklikheid; diverse onderrig- en leermetodes, lewenslange leer en die globale- en plaaslike relevansie van onderwys. Hoewel dit op die oog af lyk asof Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys gehoor gee aan OVO, en as sodanig in staat is om 'n sosiaal volhoubare samelewing daar te stel, dui hierdie kontradiksies en spanninge aan dat Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys slegs gedeeltelik gehoor gee aan OVO, en as sulks moontlik nie effektief sal kan bydra tot die realisering van 'n sosiaal volhoubare Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing nie.

Gerig deur hierdie gevolgtrekking het ek sekere aanbevelings gemaak wat enersyds die oriëntasie van Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys tot OVO kan bevorder, en andersyds onderwys kan reoriënteer om 'n bydrae te lewer tot die realisering van 'n sosiaal volhoubare Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing.

Sleutel konsepte: Onderwys vir volhoubare ontwikkeling; sosiaal volhoubare ontwikkeling; onderwysbeleid; kritiese teorie; kritiese beleidsanalise; Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys; konseptuele analise

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ADDENDUM A: QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN SYSTEM

Dear Educator

I am a researcher at the University of the Free State, who is currently engaged in research as part of the requirements for my PhD degree in Policy Studies in Education. **I am attempting to establish the extent to which South African education policy and practice is responsive to the challenges in education towards a social sustainable community.** To inform my research, ***your expertise and experiences*** are essential. I thus request that you take part in the following survey, by completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire should not take longer than 20 minutes to complete. It must please be completed at your convenience, and not during school hours. I want to assure you that ALL information obtained from this questionnaire will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and be used only for research purposes. Please note that the questionnaires are not numbered, and that you should please not write your name or the name of your school on the form. All the scores will be aggregated during the analyses. This means that no individual or school will be identifiable from the research report.

Respond to the statements/questions as honestly as you can. If you are uncomfortable with a specific question, please feel free to leave it out. If you want to verify anything concerning this questionnaire, or simply want to raise concerns, please feel free to contact me at the University of the Free State, at the Faculty of Education. On completion of the questionnaire, please fold it in two and staple it so that no one else can view your responses, then give it to the principal from whom I will collect it.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



Kevin Teise

Tel: 051 401 3576

Email: TeiseKL@ufs.ac.za

GENERAL INFORMATION

- This questionnaire consists of FOUR Sections. Sections A and B must please be completed by **ALL participants**. Section C focuses specifically on Life Orientation, and as such, must be completed by Life Orientation educators and Life Orientation learning facilitators AS WELL. In addition, Section D must be completed by **Life Orientation Learning Facilitators**.
- Do not write your name or the name of the school or any form of identification on the questionnaire.
- Please read the statements below. Choose a corresponding answer you think best suits the question or statement and mark it in the corresponding block. For example:

What type of school are you teaching at?	Primary school	1
	Secondary school	2

SECTION A

For the purpose of the study, we need a few details about you and your school. We want to remind you that all our analyses are aggregated so that your responses are kept confidential. Please do not write your name or the name of the school on this form. Respond to the question regarding yourself by marking it with an X in the solid block provided or by filling the response in where required.

1. What is your gender?	Male	1
	Female	2

2. Number of years as a teacher?	Up to a year	1
	2-3	2
	4-5	3
	6-10	4
	11-20	5
	More than 20	6

3. What subject(s) do you teach?	
----------------------------------	--

4. Number of years teaching this subject?	Up to a year	1
	2-3	2
	4-5	3
	6-10	4
	11-20	5

	More than 20	6	
5.	What is your highest qualification? (Please fill in.)		
6.	How would you classify your school? (Mark all that are applicable and add any relevant detail under other)	An inner city school.	1
		A suburban school.	2
		A township school.	3
		A school in an informal settlement.	4
		A school in a rural area.	5
		A school in a city.	6
		A school in a large town.	7
		A school in a small town.	8
Other:			

SECTION B

In the context of the study, **sustainable development** refers to development which strives towards economic development, environmental development and social development. **Sustainable development** includes the economy, environment and society as interrelated and interconnected aspects that are of equal importance.

Please read the following statements about sustainable development and indicate your views on the scale as indicated.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
7. I am familiar with the concept sustainable development as defined in this study.	1	2	3	4
8. South Africa aims towards sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
9. Sustainable development could provide a good quality life for all South Africans.	1	2	3	4
10. The South African government does a lot to ensure the sustainable development of the country.	1	2	3	4
11. I frequently hear the concept 'sustainable development' in discussions on education.	1	2	3	4
12. South African education, in particular, is oriented towards sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
13. I regard sustainable development as important for poverty alleviation.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
14. As a teacher, I am concerned about sustainable development in South Africa.	1	2	3	4
15. I primarily associate sustainable development with? (Mark only one of the applicable and add any other relevant detail under other)	Economic development only			1
	Environmental development only			2
	Social development only			3
	Environmental and economic development			4
	Economic, environmental, as well as social development			5
	Other:			

In the context of the study, **SOCIAL sustainable development** is development which focuses on the sustainability of society. This includes all social, cultural and political practices; human relations within society, within and between nations; and between society and nature. For this study, **social sustainable development focuses on human well-being, social and human capital, democratic government and governance and human rights.**

Please read the following statements about social sustainable development and specify your views on the scale as indicated.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
16. I am familiar with the concept social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
17. South African education is primarily concerned with social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
18. Social sustainable development concerns the improvement of society.	1	2	3	4
19. Societies characterised by human rights abuses are unsustainable.	1	2	3	4
20. The basic needs of all South Africans are provided for.	1	2	3	4
21. South Africa regards human development as vital for social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
22. South Africans enjoy a minimum standard of living, poverty alleviation and sustainable growth.	1	2	3	4
23. In South Africa, an environment is created where all people can develop their capabilities and enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.	1	2	3	4
24. The majority of South Africans have access to finance.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
25. For the majority of South Africans, the vision of an improved quality of life and human well-being are still in the distant future.	1	2	3	4
26. South Africa's commitment to human well-being is the focus point of various government departments, white papers and acts.	1	2	3	4
27. South Africa is committed to transparency.	1	2	3	4
28. South Africans enjoy low crime rates.	1	2	3	4
29. The political rights of all South Africans are guaranteed and protected.	1	2	3	4
30. South Africans associate themselves with a common South African identity.	1	2	3	4
31. The values in the <i>South African Constitution</i> promote social cohesion.	1	2	3	4
32. Skills development is a priority in South Africa.	1	2	3	4
33. South Africans have strong social ties in families.	1	2	3	4
34. South African children enjoy improved child welfare.	1	2	3	4
35. The majority of South Africans have access to land.	1	2	3	4
36. South Africans embrace the inclusion of diverse people.	1	2	3	4
37. South Africans promote cultural understanding and respect cultural diversity.	1	2	3	4
38. South Africans have access to a wide range of goods and services which enable them to contribute towards society and to live a better life.	1	2	3	4
39. Good quality education and healthcare facilities are available to all South Africans.	1	2	3	4
40. South Africa is committed to a democratic government and democratic governance.	1	2	3	4
41. South Africans enjoy real and unrestricted freedom.	1	2	3	4
42. Non-governmental organisations and community based organisations play an important role in advancing democratic governance in South Africa.	1	2	3	4
43. South Africans experience strong bonds of social cohesion within their broader communities.	1	2	3	4
44. Effective platforms for dialogue exist in South Africa.	1	2	3	4
45. The South African government is committed to fighting corruption.	1	2	3	4
46. South Africans are committed to social justice through equity and equality.	1	2	3	4
47. South Africans are motivated to work together towards equity, justice and freedom.	1	2	3	4
48. In South Africa accountability is highly regarded.	1	2	3	4
49. In South Africa we are serious about gender equity and equality.	1	2	3	4
50. South Africans trust one another.	1	2	3	4
51. We are realising social justice in South Africa.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
52. In South Africa, basic human rights of all people are upheld and protected.	1	2	3	4
53. South Africans have access to employment opportunities.	1	2	3	4
54. South African women are treated equally and without any unfair discrimination.	1	2	3	4
55. Current South African society is socially sustainable.	1	2	3	4

In the context of the study, **education for sustainable development** is education that is oriented towards achieving **sustainable development and social sustainable development**.

Please read the following statements about **education for sustainable development**, as well as the realities that exist in your school, and indicate your views on the scale provided.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
56. The concept 'education for sustainable development' is known to me.	1	2	3	4
57. South African education is oriented towards sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
58. South African education is sufficiently transformed to realise social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
59. I am convinced that I am teaching towards social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
60. Learners in South Africa receive education of a good quality.	1	2	3	4
61. Education in South Africa is just and equitable.	1	2	3	4
62. South African education involves and embraces the participation of different and alternative voices.	1	2	3	4
63. Education focuses on poverty alleviation and poverty prevention.	1	2	3	4
64. South African education promotes democracy and secures peaceful societies.	1	2	3	4
65. South Africans experience no barriers to learning.	1	2	3	4
66. South African education is culturally relevant to the diverse local communities.	1	2	3	4
67. Teaching and learning in South African schools promote social changes.	1	2	3	4
68. South African education focuses on developing active global citizens.	1	2	3	4
69. Learning environments in South African schools are learner-oriented and not teacher-oriented.	1	2	3	4
70. Local communities and stakeholders accept ownership of schools.	1	2	3	4
71. South African education follows a whole school approach towards social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
72. In South African education the focus, aims and nature of education for sustainable development and environmental education are the same.	1	2	3	4
73. South African education promotes lifelong learning.	1	2	3	4
74. South African education provides for participation of the marginalised and oppressed in decision-making and consultation.	1	2	3	4
75. South African education is shaped by globalisation.	1	2	3	4
76. South African education brings about positive action to change society and make it more socially sustainable.	1	2	3	4
77. Our school promotes the values of social sustainable development, such as compassion, respect, equity, equality, cooperativeness, HR, non-discrimination, tolerance and justice.	1	2	3	4
78. South African education is relevant to the needs of the community and the wider South African society.	1	2	3	4
79. Teaching and learning in South African schools result in individual behavioural changes.	1	2	3	4
80. South African education creates learning environments which cultivate and appreciate diversity.	1	2	3	4
81. South African education enhances reflection and self-critique.	1	2	3	4
82. Education in South Africa promotes the use of various teaching and learning techniques and pedagogies.	1	2	3	4
83. Social values such as equity, justice, commitment, discipline, peace and trust are integral to the moral fabric and ethos of South African education.	1	2	3	4
84. South African education develops critical thinking and problem-solving attitudes.	1	2	3	4
85. Issues of sustainable development are primarily dealt with in Natural Science and Geography.	1	2	3	4
86. Environmental education amongst other things focuses on social issues such as equality, equity, democracy and poverty eradication.	1	2	3	4
87. South African education embraces types of learning which can promote social transformation.	1	2	3	4
88. In South African education, sustainable development and environmental education are closely related.	1	2	3	4
89. South African education promotes the integration of various and diverse knowledge and knowledge systems.	1	2	3	4
90. In South Africa, lifelong learning holds the potential to reduce poverty and emancipate and improve the quality of life of its citizens.	1	2	3	4
91. The aims and objectives of my subject are linked to social transformation and social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
92. In South Africa, teaching and learning promote reflection upon experiences and existing knowledge, routines, norms, values and interests.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
93. Women's knowledge in particular, forms an integral component of knowledge in South African education.	1	2	3	4
94. South African education develops active, engaged, informed, concerned and competent citizens.	1	2	3	4
95. Non-governmental organisations, as well as community based organisations are actively involved in South African education.	1	2	3	4
96. Environmental education is responsive to the needs and challenges of education for sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
97. South African education embraces local needs and demands.	1	2	3	4
98. In South African education, knowledge is grounded in local communities.	1	2	3	4
99. Deep transformative learning takes place in South African schools.	1	2	3	4
100. Education policies articulate the vision of a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4
101. Environmental education assists in creating a social sustainable South African society.	1	2	3	4
102. South African education reinforces social inequality, social injustice and discrimination.	1	2	3	4
103. South African education promotes the production and dissemination of new knowledge.	1	2	3	4
104. South African education enables learners to develop critical thinking skills in order to ask critical questions and to determine for themselves what needs to be done to change the situation.	1	2	3	4
105. Meaningful learning environments that accommodate diverse interests, values, ways of thinking and doing, norms, views and perspectives are created.	1	2	3	4
106. The vision statement of my school promotes social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
107. South African education is sufficiently transformed to develop in learners the values associated with social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
108. Social themes of environmental education are integrated in other learning areas.	1	2	3	4
109. South African education develops in learners, teachers and the broader community, skills which enable critical reflection on social issues.	1	2	3	4
110. South African education contributes towards a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4
111. South African education embraces learning rather than teaching.	1	2	3	4
112. I regard environmental education as a synonym for education for sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
113. South African education is sufficiently critical to expose ideology, contradiction and politics.	1	2	3	4
114. South African education policies are effective in providing learning opportunities for all, based on constitutional guarantees of equal educational rights and non-discrimination.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
115. South African education aims at challenging the <i>status quo</i> of inequality in society.	1	2	3	4
116. Social sustainable development could be achieved through environmental education.	1	2	3	4
117. South African education promotes the transformation of society.	1	2	3	4
118. South African education is relevant to the broader South African community.	1	2	3	4
119. South African education empowers all learners, teachers and the broader community socially, economically and politically.	1	2	3	4
120. Social issues of environmental education are integrated into my learning area.	1	2	3	4
121. Governance structures in schools are sufficiently empowered to take ownership of schools.	1	2	3	4
122. Traditional knowledge forms an integral component of knowledge in South African education.	1	2	3	4
123. I am convinced that South African education is oriented towards social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4

IF YOU ARE NOT A LIFE ORIENTATION TEACHER OR A LIFE ORIENTATION FACILITATOR, THIS IS AS FAR AS YOU HAVE TO GO TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

SECTION C

THIS SECTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS TO BE COMPLETED BY LIFE ORIENTATION TEACHERS.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
124. Colleagues and the SMT's treat Life Orientation (LO) as equally relevant and important as other subjects.	1	2	3	4
125. Learners understand the value of LO in social and personal transformation.	1	2	3	4
126. I am committed to teaching LO.	1	2	3	4
127. I am sufficiently trained to deal with complex critical social issues, such as racism, prejudice, HIV/AIDS and inclusion.	1	2	3	4
128. LO is focused on achieving a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4
129. LO develops in learners the values and dispositions required for a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
130. I think the role of LO in creating a social sustainable society is underestimated.	1	2	3	4
131. I understand the value and place of LO in achieving a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4
132. LO contributes to the transformation of South African society into an equal, just and free society.	1	2	3	4
133. The themes of social sustainable development are explicitly stated in LO.	1	2	3	4
134. Learners are not interested in the social issues of race, inclusivity or exclusivity and (in)justice.	1	2	3	4
135. LO succeeds in developing in learners understanding and respect for cultural diversity.	1	2	3	4
136. I regard the themes (issues) of environmental education as exclusively concerned with environmental sustainability.	1	2	3	4
137. LO empowers learners to become agents of social change.	1	2	3	4
138. LO is not oriented towards achieving a social sustainable society.	1	2	3	4
139. LO develops balanced and confident learners who can contribute to an improved quality of life for themselves and others.	1	2	3	4
140. The aims and objectives of LO are explicitly linked to issues of social sustainable development such as equality, equity, inclusion, human rights and justice.	1	2	3	4
141. LO aims at global citizenship.	1	2	3	4
142. Learners are empowered through LO to become active citizens.	1	2	3	4
143. LO brings about personal change in the life of the individual.	1	2	3	4
144. LO transforms the South African society into a fair, just and equitable society.	1	2	3	4
145. The principles of LO are focused on social sustainable development.	1	2	3	4
146. Learning taking place in LO transforms learners.	1	2	3	4
147. LO succeeds in equipping learners with skills, values and knowledge for self-fulfillment and meaningful participation in society.	1	2	3	4
148. Through LO, learners become more tolerant and respectful towards people different from themselves.	1	2	3	4
149. LO gives me hope for the future of South African society and its people.	1	2	3	4
150. Through LO, the values of lifelong learning are developed in learners.	1	2	3	4

We wish to know about collaborations between you and other teachers **during this past year**. Reflect on your practices. For each, consider how frequently you engage in the following. Use the following scale:

- 1 – Not at all**
- 2 – Rarely** (e.g. once or twice this year)
- 3 – Often** (e.g. once or twice a month)
- 4 – Always** (e.g. once or twice a week)

	Not at all	Rarely	Often	Always
151. I work collaboratively with teachers in other learning areas.	1	2	3	4
152. I link critical social issues to my subjects.	1	2	3	4
153. I use subject content to sensitise learners to social issues and challenges.	1	2	3	4
154. Learners initiate discussions on critical social issues.	1	2	3	4
155. I engage learners in discussions on South Africa’s common values.	1	2	3	4
156. I involve members of the broader community in teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4
157. We discuss issues of social sustainable development in class.	1	2	3	4
158. I create situations where learners are challenged to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to solve real-life social challenges.	1	2	3	4
159. In my teaching and learning I encourage learners to reflect on their attitudes and values.	1	2	3	4
160. I challenge learners to act on and confront social injustices in order to bring about change.	1	2	3	4
161. I draw on other knowledge systems, such as indigenous or local knowledge, in my teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4
162. I use diverse teaching and learning strategies in my class.	1	2	3	4
163. I am sensitive to the cultural and contextual relevance of my teaching and learning approaches in class.	1	2	3	4

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY. IT IS REALLY APPRECIATED.

ADDENDUM B: PERMISSION LETTERS

Room 110 Winkie Direko Building
University of the Free State
Bloemfontein
9300
11 November 2012

The Director: Strategic Planning, Policy & Research
Room 304, Old CNA Building
Maitland Street
BLOEMFONTEIN
9300

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a PhD-student registered at the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State. I am currently busy with research on Education for Sustainable Development from an Education Policy Study perspective. My central research question is:

Is South African education policy and practice responsive towards the challenges of Education for Sustainable Development in order to realise a social sustainable community?

I would therefore wish to conduct my research amongst secondary schools in the various educational districts of the Free State province, through an educator-survey. I believe they could provide me with valuable information pertaining to my research. The questionnaire will not take longer than 20 minutes to complete, and it could be answered at the convenience of the educators, any time after normal school hours.

Participation of educators in the research is very important and I do appreciate it. I want to assure you that ALL information obtained through this questionnaire will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and only for research purposes. Do note that the questionnaires are not numbered. All the scores will be aggregated during the analyses. This means that no individual, school or district will be identifiable from the research report. The research and the questionnaire were approved by the Ethics Board of the Faculty of Education, University of the Free State. It therefore adheres to all relevant ethical requirements.

Thank you for your co-operation

Yours sincerely

Kevin Teise

Tel: 051 401 3576/0723024678

Email: TeiseKL@ufs.ac.za



education

Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Enquiries: LV Aekker
Reference: 1647/145 - 2012

Tel: 051 404 9283
Fax: 051 8878 878
E-mail: research@edu.fs.gov.za

2012 - 11 - 27

Mr KLG Telse
131 Genbrand Drive
Uitsig
Bloemfontein
9306

REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.
2. **RESEARCH TOPIC: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: EXPOSING SOCIAL SUSTAINABLE POLICY IMPERETIVES FOR SOUTH AFRICA**
3. **YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT HAS BEEN REGISTERED WITH THE FREE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.**
4. Approval is granted under the following conditions:-
 - 4.1 The name of participants involved remains confidential.
 - 4.2 The questionnaires are completed and the **interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time.**
 - 4.3 This letter is shown to all participating persons.
 - 4.4 A bound copy of the report and a summary on a computer disc on this study is donated to the Free State Department of Education.
 - 4.5 Findings and recommendations are presented to relevant officials in the Department.
5. The costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. **You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing to:**

**DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY AND RESEARCH,
Old CNA Building, Maitland Street OR Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301**

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

**MJ MOTHEBE
DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY AND RESEARCH**

Structurale: Strategic Planning, Policy & Research - Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300 - Room 301, Old CNA building,
Maitland Street, Bloemfontein 9300 - Tel: 051 404 9283/ Fax: 051 8878 878 E-mail: research@edu.fs.gov.za

www.education.gov.za

Room 110 Winkie Direko Building
University of the Free State
Bloemfontein
9300
21 January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a PhD student registered at the Faculty of Education, at the University of the Free State. I am currently busy with research on Education for Sustainable Development. **I am attempting to establish the extent to which South African education policy and practice is responsive to the challenges in education towards a social sustainable community.** In order to understand the views of educators on this imperative in education, I need your assistance. I kindly request that **ten (10)** of the educators at your school, **teaching Grades 10-12**, take part in this survey by completing the questionnaire that accompanies this letter. Your participation in the research is very important and I do appreciate it.

As I need to receive input from a variety of educators, I request that educators who represent the **diversity of people and subjects** in your school be included. However, I specifically need the participation of at least **two educators who are teaching Life Orientation (Grades 10-12)**. I believe that all these educators will provide me with valuable information pertaining to my research.

The questionnaire should not take longer than 20 minutes to complete. It must please be completed at the convenience of the educators, and not during school hours. I wish to assure you that **ALL** information obtained through this questionnaire will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and be used only for research purposes. Please note that the questionnaires are not numbered and all the scores will be aggregated during the analyses. This means that no individual or school will be identifiable from the research report.

The research project and the questionnaire were approved by the Ethics Board of the Faculty of Education, at the University of the Free State. They therefore adhere to all relevant ethical requirements. **Please send questionnaires back, within two weeks after you have received it, using the enclosed envelope.**

Thank you in anticipation for your co-operation

Yours faithfully



Kevin Teise Tel: 051 401 3576/0723024678/Email: TeiseKL@ufs.ac.za