UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE

Exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility: Parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions

by

John Charles Bertram

Thesis presented to the Faculté d’éducation
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

December 2004

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Faculté d'éducation

Exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility:

Parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions

John Charles Bertram

a été évalué par un jury composé des personnes suivantes:

Sylvain Bourdon  Président du jury
Normand Bengle  Directeur de recherche
France Jutras  Codirectrice de recherche
Denis Trudelle  Autre membre du jury
Jean-Marie Miron  Évaluateur externe

Thèse acceptée le
RÉSUMÉ

This section presents an orderly synopsis of material presented in the current study. Conciseness and clarity are the principal aims of the résumé.

All work associated with this study is directly due to a long interest in secondary school daily life and interrelationships among ‘parents’, children/students and school personnel. As well, this candidate is interested in ever-changing power relationships, socio-economically, among parents, children/students and school personnel (the state). Formal university Master-level work on the topic of relations between ‘parents’ and public education in Québec was accomplished by the writer between 1973 and 1978. The present study, with broadly-based concerns, examines one component of said interrelationships in relation to a single Québec, English-language, public, secondary school. It is understood throughout the study that words like ‘parent(s)’ and other words having this base are, in thought, in quotation marks because of a commonly-experienced immense variety of ordinary parent situations although, legally, it may be understood that, for any given child/student, a responsible adult ‘parent’ may be, if required, indicated.

Chapter One gives the title, Exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility: Parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions and presents material leading a reader into understanding why such a study is undertaken. Certain word meanings are clarified, a research problem is explained and education as a public concern is explored. In a section on a possible rationale for the study, an attempt is made to suggest a necessity to comprehend significance of school-based parental educational responsibility because of the topic’s perceived basic significance. A prominent theme of all post-graduate work at this university, that of interrelationships among training, practice and research, is addressed in relationship to the study. Context of the research problem is explained. A research purpose is stated along with a principal research question, namely, How do parents, teachers and administrators conceive of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility? A section deals with a perceived significance for the study and a conclusion venturing recognition of an importance for school daily life of mutual comprehension of the research phenomenon by school stakeholders.

Chapter Two is the literature review. Much of the beginning of the chapter is based on acknowledgement of the immense area of ongoing research of parent involvement in school-site daily life. Many theses continue to be written on innumerable topics associated with what is generally recognized as helpful parental involvement in school-site daily life. Added to this section is a section on current learned journal material on the area of parental school-site involvement. General works are then recognized in various fields of study of social relationships and general biology to show the breadth of the concern of parent-child relationships as a basis for later parent-child/student-school personnel interrelationships. A short section on legal background material is presented with a note that this is a vast field of its own, components of which may be recognized as having some bearing on practically all areas of parent, child/student, school personnel interrelationships. A short section outlining critical importance of the content of Québec and other possible official literature on the topic of parental involvement is school life also appears. Delimitations of literature studied are ventured prior to a brief concluding section.
Chapter Three commences more-focussed attention to this study in its explanation of methodology. An apology is offered on a decision to employ a qualitative methodology type with special attention to words like 'understanding', 'discover' and 'meaning'. In general, to be noted, is that data gathered and analysed may lead to formulation of general understanding and possible presentation of a hypothesis. With completion of the study in hand, a possible hypothesis may be that formulation of helpful school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel is founded on school stakeholders’ mutual knowledge and comprehension of a school community’s conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Items of research significance, problem, question and method are successively treated with emphasis on research helpfulness offered through data gathered by in-depth interviews. Additional sections deal with sampling and pertinent factors of the research site. A section on analysis is then presented prior to a conclusion. Attention to a perceived exploratory nature of the present study is emphasised for useful appreciation of its possible significance.

Chapters Four, Five and Six present material on analysis of data contributed through seven in-depth interviews involving nine interviewees. Interview questions are structured to hopefully provide responses relating to three successive time periods of interviewee lives: past (Chapter Four), present (Chapter Five), future (Chapter Six). Material of these three chapters provides analytical insight into data contributed leading to Chapter Seven’s analytical itemization of interview material.

Chapter Four deals with interview material relating to interviewees’ present perceptions of past experiences with personal manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Of necessity, primary remarks concentrated generally on interviewee perceptions of their parents’ demonstration of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Such remarks generally preceded data material on interviewees’ personal experience of their past school-based parental educational responsibilities. Setting forth of salient points made by each interviewee is followed by an analytical commentary giving rise to recurring regularity revelations as well as noting differences among remarks made. Categories of ‘reliance of households upon the relevant education institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life’ and ‘conceptual uniqueness of each domestic arrangement/household and its core values’ are selected as pertinent in discussion of most prominent points made by interviewees regarding their individual perceptions of past experience of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Chapter Five, focussed on present perception of interviewees of their present demonstration of school-based parental educational responsibilities, deals with considerably more data than that offered for the previous chapter’s remarks. Design of this chapter relies on a three-part division of questions and responses referring to the present. For each division is presented basic data ideas followed by analytical remarks and categorizations. For the first division of this chapter, categories suggested are the same as those outlined in the previous chapter although two subcategories are suggested for the second one, namely, ‘acknowledgement of a broad, firmly-held, multi-faceted involvement reluctance regarding collective school-based parental educational responsibilities with uneasy, hesitant acceptance of decisions made by official and other school-based groups formed thereby’ and ‘domestically-felt, school-originated, unresolved problems bespeaking home-to-school communications gaps’. Regarding the second division of this chapter, the descriptive category suggested as pertinent is identical to that of the first subcategory quoted in the previous sentence.
Categorization respecting the third and final subdivision of data regarding the present involves the first category presented in chapter four. Material of this chapter is, in a sense, of most help for a reader to comprehend the chief aim of the study, namely to understand how school stakeholders conceive of present performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities and what such responsibilities may involve.

Chapter Six deals with the most important points made by interviewees and analysis thereof, regarding interviewees' present perception of possible personal future demonstration of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Primary observation of data contributed for this interview part would indicate slim willingness and even ability to make helpful remarks regarding what might helpfully take place in the future. Analysis followed by an attempt at categorization yielded a repetition of the category, 'reliance of households upon the relevant education institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life'. It appears, in general, that broad-based vision of significance and possible dimensions of a comprehensive school-based parental educational responsibility is hazily present and probably not much contemplated by school stakeholders.

Chapter Seven deals with analytical itemization of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed by interviewees. Items are analytically subdivided with the primary exploratory research purpose in mind. Note is taken of items specified by parents, teachers and an administrator respectively and of items common among all interview data. A reader will understand an absence of relationship between mention of any and all items and any possible actual performance. Following appear items related to components of school-based parental educational responsibility discussed by interviewees in a sense of interviewee perception of their embeddedness in forms of obstacles to be overcome or problem situations seeking helpful responses to effective carrying-out of particular school-based parental educational responsibilities.

In Chapter Seven, descriptive analysis charts, research significance charts and summary charts are employed in setting out details for both major sections of the chapter. In this way, a reader may gain a sense of the numbers of components of possible school-based parental educational responsibilities actually mentioned through in-depth interviews and of the scale of challenges to better understanding of interviewee perceptions, conceptions and actual, effective manifestation of said responsibilities. The chapter closes with an extensive conclusion.

Chapter Eight, a summary and discussion, forms this study’s concluding chapter. Part of the chapter is devoted to considerations of literature studied in preparation for gathering data for research purposes. Certain research hesitations because of perceptible assumptions in literature studied as sources and roots of gaps, like assumptions of parent concern and capability, school personnel expectations regarding parental educational responsibility and school personnel knowledge of parental educational expectations are discussed. Six theoretical sub-implications respecting general theoretical implications of this study in relation to Québec official document are presented. A brief explanation of unanticipated findings is offered. As well, implications of the current study regarding research, training and practice precede a conclusion for the study. Within the conclusion, a possible hypothesis for future use is suggested as a possible connection between the current study and possible future work related to the study's theme.
RÉSUMÉ

Cette section contient un résumé structuré du matériel contenu dans l'étude à laquelle ce document réfère. La concision et la clarté sont les principaux objectifs de ce résumé.

Tout le travail associé à cette étude est une conséquence directe d'un intérêt de longue date au sujet de la vie quotidienne dans une école secondaire, ainsi que des interrelations entre les « parents », les enfants/élèves, et le personnel de l'école. De plus, l'auteur de ce document s'intéresse aux relations de pouvoir socio-économique entre les « parents », les enfants/élèves et le personnel de l'école (l'État). Un travail de maîtrise explicite au sujet des relations entre les « parents » et l'éducation publique du Québec a été entrepris par l'auteur entre 1973 et 1978. La présente étude, avec un champ d'intérêt plutôt large, se préoccupe d'un aspect en particulier des dites interrelations en ce qui concerne une seule école publique anglophone québécoise. L'on tient pour acquis, tout au long de cette étude, que des mots tels que « parents » (et tout autre mot ayant une acception semblable) sont placés entre guillemets puisqu'il existe une grande variété de situations parentales ordinaires, bien que, du point de vue légal, nous acceptions que pour tout enfant/élève, un adulte responsable dit « parent » puisse être indiqué, au besoin.

Le premier chapitre explique le titre, Exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility : Parents', teachers' and administrators' conceptions (Examen de la compréhension de la responsabilité éducative parentale, en lien avec l'école : conceptions des parents, enseignants et administrateurs). Il présente un certain nombre de faits pouvant aider à comprendre pourquoi une telle étude mérite d'être entreprise. On y précise les définitions de certains mots, le problème de recherche est éclairé et l'on fait un survol du thème de l'intérêt public concernant l'éducation. Dans la section portant sur le rationnel de l'étude, l'auteur tente de faire part de la nécessité de comprendre le sens de « responsabilité éducative parentale en lien avec l'école », point pertinent puisqu'il explique ce sur quoi se penchera l'étude. Le thème récurrent de tout travail au niveau du doctorat en éducation à l'Université de Sherbrooke, c'est-à-dire celui des interrelations entre la formation, la pratique et la recherche, sera abordé en lien avec cette étude. On y explique également le contexte du problème de recherche, soit comment le phénomène de la responsabilité éducative parentale en lien avec l'école est-il perçu par les parents, les enseignants et les administrateurs ? Enfin, l'étude comporte une section portant sur l'importance que l'on accorde à ce genre d'étude, et une conclusion recommandant l'importance
de la compréhension mutuelle de la recherche de la part des intervenants dans le milieu scolaire est avancée.

Le deuxième chapitre fait le bilan de la littérature publiée à ce sujet. Une Grande partie du début de ce chapitre se concentre sur la quantité toujours croissante de l’implication des parents dans la vie quotidienne de l’école. Maintes thèses d’étudiants sont encore composées sur des thèmes innombrables associés à ce que l’on reconnaît généralement comme étant une implication parentale aidante dans le milieu scolaire quotidien. De surcroît, une section traitant d’articles de revues académiques courantes qui touchent le sujet de l’implication parentale en milieu scolaire paraîtra dans ce chapitre. Un survol des travaux dans les divers domaines d’études de relations sociales et de la biologie générale est ensuite offert, permettant de démontrer l’intérêt qui est porté envers les interrelations parent-enfant, bases de futures relations parent-enfant/élève-personnel enseignant. Est ensuite présentée une courte section sur le matériel portant sur le contexte légal, tout en notant que ceci constitue un vaste champ d’études en soi, dont certains aspects peuvent avoir un impact sur presque tous les niveaux des interrelations parents-enfant/élève-personnel enseignant. Enfin, une dernière section souligne l’importance critique du contenu de cette littérature (québécoise et autre) traitant du sujet en question. L’auteur définit les limites de la littérature étudiée avant d’offrir une courte conclusion à ce chapitre.

Le chapitre trois de la présente étude porte sur la méthodologie. L’auteur explique sa décision d’employer une méthodologie qualitative accordant une attention spéciale aux mots tels que « compréhension », « découvrir » et « sens ». Il est à noter que les données recueillies et analysées visent une compréhension. Une fois l’étude complétée, une hypothèse pourrait être formulée sur les bonnes pratiques et politiques des écoles concernant les interrelations entre parents, enfants/élèves et personnel enseignant. Cette hypothèse serait basée sur les connaissances mutuelles des décideurs en milieu scolaire à propos des diverses conceptions de la responsabilité éducative parentale. La pertinence de la recherche, le problème, la question et la méthode sont traités tour à tour, tout en mettant l’emphase sur l’utilité d’une recherche effectuée à travers l’information recueillie lors d’entrevues plus approfondies. Des sections supplémentaires abordent le sujet de l’échantillonnage et les facteurs pertinents concernant le site de la recherche en question. Est ensuite présentée une section sur l’analyse, suivie d’une conclusion. Dans la
présente étude, afin d’apprécier pleinement son importance, l’emphase est mise sur la compréhension de sa nature exploratoire.

Les quatrième, cinquième et sixième chapitres présentent l’analyse des données recueillies au moyen de sept interviews avec neuf sujets. Les questions posées dans les interviews étaient formulées de sorte qu’elles suscitaient des réponses concernant trois périodes successives dans la vie des sujets : le passé (chapitre quatre), le présent (chapitre cinq) et le futur (chapitre six). La matière contenue dans ces trois chapitres donne un aperçu des données qui ont contribué à l’élaboration, dans le chapitre sept, de détails analytiques.

Le quatrième chapitre porte sur le contenu des interviews en ce qui concerne les conceptions courantes des sujets interviewés à propos de leurs expériences passées avec les manifestations personnelles de la responsabilité éducative parentale basée à l’école. Les commentaires se concentraient généralement sur les perceptions qu’avaient les sujets de leurs parents en tant qu’actants de la responsabilité éducative parentale. Ces commentaires précédaient généralement les informations concernant l’expérience personnelle des sujets interviewés en matière de responsabilités éducatives parentales. Tout en soulignant les points forts de chaque sujet interviewé, l’auteur offre un commentaire analytique permettant de voir les remarques qui reviennent régulièrement chez les sujets interviewés, et il note parallèlement les différences qui ressortent dans chacun des commentaires. Les catégories de « fiabilité de chaque ménage concernant le choix des institutions d’enseignement permettant d’atteindre les buts que l’on se fixe dans la vie » et « l’unicité conceptuelle de chaque ménage et ses valeurs premières » sont ainsi choisies comme étant les plus pertinents dans la discussion des remarques apportées par les sujets interviewés.

Le cinquième chapitre, qui se concentre sur la perception qu’ont les sujets interviewés de la démonstration des responsabilités éducatives parentales, génère une plus grande base de données que celle suggérée dans les remarques des chapitres précédents. La présentation de ce chapitre se divise en trois sections touchant aux questions et réponses en ce qui concerne le présent. Chaque section présente l’information de base, ainsi que des remarques analytiques de l’auteur et différentes catégorisations. Pour la première section présentée dans ce chapitre, les catégories
suggérées sont les mêmes que celles du chapitre précédant, bien que deux sous-catégories sont offertes pour la deuxième, c'est-à-dire « la reconnaissance d'une implication solide, multiple et continue dans les responsabilités parentales éducatives parentales combinée à des décisions précaires et incertaines de la part de groupes originaires du milieu scolaire » et les « problèmes non-résolus ayant pris naissance à l'école et ayant été retransmis dans les ménages, témoignant de manquements de communication entre le ménage et le milieu scolaire. » Concernant la deuxième section de ce chapitre, la catégorie descriptive qui est suggérée comme étant pertinente est identique à la première sous-catégorie mentionnée précédemment. L'auteur fait ensuite une catégorisation de toute l'information concernant le présent offerte au chapitre quatre, formant la troisième et dernière sous-division. La matière contenue dans ce chapitre est, essentiellement, un outil permettant de comprendre le but ultime de cette étude, soit de connaître comment les décideurs en milieu scolaire perçoivent les responsabilités éducatives parentales ainsi que les conséquences qui y sont associées.

Le sixième chapitre porte sur les remarques les plus pertinentes des sujets interviewés ainsi que leur analyse, le tout concernant le point de vue qu'ont les sujets face aux responsabilités éducatives parentales et de leur manifestation en milieu scolaire. La première observation provenant des données de ces interviews indiquerait peu de volonté (et même de possibilité) de faire des commentaires constructifs concernant ce qui pourrait aider dans le futur. Une analyse, suivie d'une tentative de catégorisation, a fait ressortir une catégorie se répétant à maintes reprises : « fiabilité de chaque ménage concernant le choix des institutions d'enseignement permettant d'atteindre les buts que l'on se fixe dans la vie ». Il semble, en général, qu'une vision plus élargie des dimensions possibles et de ce que peut signifier une responsabilité éducative parentale en lien avec l'école n'est présentée que vaguement et qu'elle ne sera probablement pas pris en considération par les décideurs en milieu scolaire.

Le septième chapitre traite de l'analyse des composantes d'une responsabilité éducative parentale telle que discutée avec les sujets interviewés. Chaque composante est sous-divisée de façon analytique tout en gardant bien en tête l'objectif de la recherche exploratoire. L'auteur note chaque composante tel que spécifié par les parents, les enseignants et un administrateur, respectivement, ainsi que toutes les composantes communes dans tout le matériel contenu dans
les interviews. On comprendra l’absence de lien entre les mentions de chacune de ces composantes et de toute performance possible dans le moment actuel. Apparaissent ensuite les composantes reliées à la responsabilité éducative parentale discutées avec les sujets interviewés. Leurs perceptions prennent en considération comment surgissent certains obstacles et comment certains problèmes peuvent être résolus en cherchant des réponses permettant d’accomplir quelques responsabilités éducatives parentales en lien avec l’école.

Dans ce même chapitre, des tableaux analytiques, des tableaux démontrant la pertinence de la recherche ainsi que des tableaux résumant les grandes lignes de la recherche sont utilisés pour faire ressortir les deux sections principales du chapitre. Ceci est un moyen d’assimiler un certain nombre des multiples composantes, mentionnées au cours des interviews, qui forment la responsabilité éducative parentale en lien avec l’école. Ces tableaux aideront aussi à mieux comprendre les perceptions des sujets interviewés ainsi que les manifestations actuelles efficaces des dites responsabilités. Le chapitre se clôt par une conclusion exhaustive.

Le chapitre huit, présentant un résumé et une discussion, sera le dernier chapitre de cette étude. Une partie du chapitre est consacrée à la littérature étudiée en guise de préparation à la collecte de données nécessaires pour cette recherche. Cependant, l’auteur a dû hésiter quelques fois au cours de sa préparation à cause de certaines manques dans la littérature. Par exemple, on prend pour acquis l’intérêt et la capacité mêmes des parents, et les attentes et connaissances du personnel enseignant quant aux responsabilités éducatives parentales. Ces questions sont ultérieurement discutées. Six implications théoriques de cette étude en relation avec les documents officiels de Québec sont présentées. Une courte explication de certaines découvertes non-anticipées suit, et une discussion des implications de la présente étude dans le domaine de la recherche, de la formation et de la pratique précède la conclusion de l’étude. Dans cette conclusion, l’auteur donne une idée de l’utilité de cette étude et suggère des pistes pour des aux travaux futurs traitant de ce thème.
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REMERCIEMENTS

Je tiens à souligner que je dédie cette thèse à la mémoire du Professeur Alan Jones du Département de l'Éducation de l'Université Bishop's. Le professeur Jones a joué un rôle important pendant mes études en vue de l'obtention du grade de Master of Education, entre 1969 - 1978.

Je désire remercier très profondément mon directeur de recherche, Dr. Normand Bengle, et ma codirectrice de recherche, Dr. France Jutras. Ils ont toujours été là pour m'encourager, m'aider et m'inspirer.

Je désire offrir mes plus sincères remerciements aux Dr. Denis Trudelle de la Faculté d'Éducation de l'Université de Sherbrooke et Dr. Jean-Marie Miron du département des sciences de l'éducation de l'UQTR pour avoir accepté de participer à l'évaluation de cette thèse.

J'offre aussi mes remerciements amicaux aux personnel de la Faculté d'éducation, des bibliothèques de l'Université de Sherbrooke et de la Faculté et la bibliothèque de l'Université Bishop's pour leur assistance exceptionnelle.

Je remercie, en toute sincérité, Julie Fredette, étudiante de l'Université Bishop's, qui a préparé la traduction du résumé.

J'offre aussi mes remerciements à mon épouse, Pamela, pour son soutien dévoué et indéfectible.
PART ONE

Presentation of the Research Problem and this Exploratory Study’s Method

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 ‘Exploratory Study’ Meaning and Dimensions

This is a qualitative, exploratory study regarding a component of school stakeholders’ lives associated with an English-language, Québec public secondary school. The title is “Exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility: Parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions”. Widespread approbation exists for quantitative and qualitative increase of school-based parental involvement or participation. The larger picture of development and/or continuation and/or evaluation of a school’s policies and practices affecting meaningful or significant interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel lacks investigation, for one school, of parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. The study, exploratory in nature, seeks a comprehension of parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ of one secondary school’s conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. For a particular research area beset with paucity of information, Patton suggests validity and usefulness of an exploratory research mode (2002, pp. 192-193). From the outset, one is unaware as to both one secondary school’s stakeholder conceptions and dimensions of said conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

1.2 Focus of the Study

At the outset must be realized that, however both the information gathered and the methodology employed may be understood as transferable and/or generalizable, the focus of this study is on developing, continuing and evaluating useful interrelationships among parents,
children/students and school personnel of one English-language Québec public secondary school. Careless or unwarranted comparison and contrast allegations concerning features or characteristics of different school communities may prove inadvisable.

1.3 Key Word Meanings

‘Conception(s)’ means simply what ‘school-based parental educational responsibility’ involves and/or could involve (Barber, 1998, p. 293) for parents, teachers and school administrators in policies and practices of ordinary, daily school life. Each day, public school personnel realize, “Moreover, children who come to school come from somewhere. Teachers need to have some sense of what it is that children bring with them, what defines their present understandings, mood, emotional state, and readiness to deal with the subject matter and the world of the school” (van Manen, 1991, p. 7).

Throughout, the word ‘parent(s)’ and all words using ‘parent’ as part of another word or expression are understood to be within quotation marks, for at least three reasons: (1) the social composition of so-called family/household groups, in certain instances, may defy norms commonly thought to be understood (Collier et al., 1993, pp. 9-18); (2) “Artificial insemination, sperm banks, surrogate motherhood, *in vitro* fertilization, frozen embryos, and surrogate embryo transfer ...” (Achilles, 1993, p. 214) render it difficult to clarify a dictionary first meaning of ‘parent’ as “a person who has begotten or borne a child; a father or mother” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, Vol. XI, p. 222); (3) legally, though certain individuals may be considered adult legal guardians (parents), the designation ‘parent(s)’ may be used unofficially by household members and others to designate someone(s) ostensibly parentally responsible at a particular time and/or in relation to a particular set of household circumstances.

‘School-based’ refers to parental educational responsibilities associated with their children/students attending a school, bearing directly upon school life needs and interests of both children/students and school personnel springing from curricular and other areas of school life. This
exploratory study do not question continuing existence of the school as an educational (instructional, pedagogical, learning) organization in society. Where parents may be perceived as those legally and otherwise principally responsible for seeing to appropriate schooling for their children The concern here is with school-based parental educational responsibilities which arise because the children concerned carry on parts of many days each school year with children of other households and school personnel associated with one Québec English-language public secondary school community. ‘School-based’ does not mean, necessarily, ‘school-site-located’ because many perceived school-based parental educational responsibilities are understood by both parents and school personnel as effectively and helpfully carried out in domestic, and perhaps other, settings.

1.4 Research Problem

Succinctly expressed is the research problem for this intended exploratory research: A vast research, official, research and general literature enmeshes complementary and interrelated topics of parental and school personnel educational rights and responsibilities. Québec public school personnel expect manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility to effectively carry on the daily school programme (curriculum and/or activities), trying to attain school goals with and for students, a constituent part of which is described as a socialization task (Ministère del’Éducation, 2001, p. 3). With the significance of public school personnel expectations regarding the importance of the manifestation or demonstration of school-based parental educational responsibility in mind, assuming the continuing significance of the phenomenon for school socialization tasks, analysis of exploratory research on parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility (looking for similarities, commonalities, differences, inconsistencies, gaps) may help an individual school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Knowledge of kinds of similarities and kinds of differences found in parents’, teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility can only help stakeholders to understand each other better.
Better understanding of subject matter of significance of parental input in upbringing of young humans may also emerge.

1.5 Education as a Public Concern

"Education is a public concern" (Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation, 2001 (d), p. 2) is asserted along with affirmation that the adults primarily responsible for the education of children are parents. The Civil Code of Québec states, "The father and mother have the rights and duties of custody, supervision and education of their children" (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001, Tome 1, p. 706) and that, "The person having parental authority may delegate the custody, supervision or education of the child" (Ibid., p. 710). Note is also taken of "L'école relève de la responsabilité partagée des parents, de la société civile et de l'État. Ce partenariat vise à fournir à tous les enfants une éducation intégrale de qualité" (Ministère de l'Éducation, 1999, p. 82) and that a recent Minister of Education declared, "Parents have an important role in this process. They will have to provide support for their children by giving them a home that has everything needed for them to succeed in school" (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. v). Later in the latter document, however, mention of parents is inexplicably but plainly omitted in a description of the school community: "Along similar lines, the Québec Education Program aims to provide an opportunity to approach learning from a cooperative perspective. This perspective should be shared by all members of the school community - students, teachers, administrators and other professionals - who must work together as a team to create optimum teaching-learning conditions and to make the school a genuine learning community" (Ibid., p. 6). Public schools exist to satisfy needs and interests of children because of overlapping rights and responsibilities of, at least, the State and parents. Widespread agreement exists on the value of manifestation of parental support for school programmes (curriculum and/or activities).

Seeming clarity and straightforwardness, however, sit uneasily beside items like, "If boards were to seriously listen to parents, they would encourage rather than hinder the growth of private schools in the public sector" and "It does not require massive consultation to realize that parents are shunning community high schools ... concerned parents, those most likely to become leaders at the
community level, have given up on local schools” (Macfarlane, 2002, p. B3). A recent government
document states, “With regard to the governing boards, the participants mentioned that it was
difficult to obtain parent representation” and “The multiethnic character of the Montréal region
makes it a major challenge to inform parents about the changes associated with the reform. Indeed,
in some schools, 80 percent of the students’ parents do not speak French or English” (Conseil

This study strives to explain pertinence of knowledge about school-based parental educational
responsibility as a significant factor for each school’s policies and practices regarding
interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. A section is devoted to
recent relevant literature so that the research purpose, significance, problem, the general research
question, and present research delimitations may be better understood. A methodology section
follows to present data gathering and analysis procedures. What exploratory research shows about
the significance of comprehension of school-based parental educational responsibility ensues.

1.6 Rationale

Clear description of a rationale for recognition of a desirability, if not a necessity, to
comprehend the significance of school-based parental educational responsibility as a fundamentally
meaningful component of Québec society’s institutionalized public education system is argued. Civil
Law provisions in doctrine, legislation and jurisprudence deal with a responsibility of parents for
their children’s education, apart from any reference to statutorily-founded and maintained public
schools. People of a school jurisdiction of Québec, through elected governments, have an organized,
tax-supported public school system, aims and goals of which are broadly supported, in great part
through manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility. Maintenance of this public
school system is seen as meaningful, a significant part of Québec’s socio-economic, education life.

Public school personnel require manifestation of school-based parental educational
responsibility to permit their effectively working with school students to achieve school aims and
goals through each public school's programme (curriculum and/or activities). Possible legal conflicts which could beset Civil Code parental educational responsibility in general (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001, p. 706) as it meets a reliance of public school personnel upon manifestation of a school-based parental educational responsibility seem to have been generally avoided, possibly because any one organized public school deals with children from many households. This strengthens the perception of school personnel requiring parental participation to attain school aims and goals rather than that of an organized school community parent network engaging support of public school personnel for attainment of parent-determined educational aims and goals or even plainly discernible school programme components supporting parental educational efforts in general by studying, for example, parenting or parenting tasks, or even school-based parental educational responsibilities in particular.

The Civil Code provision of delegation of educational responsibility by parents (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001, p. 710), normally to school personnel, may be perceived by some parents and others in many different ways, as diminishing or perhaps seeming to completely remove ultimate parental educational responsibility. Each public school's tasks regarding policies and practices governing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, rest on numerous tacit assumptions of what may compose parents' school-based educational responsibility, chiefly because parental participation and involvement, seen through government documents, dissertation and related literature, does not question the existence of public schools but, rather, seeks ever more intensified parental involvement in public school daily life to help children/students attain school-set and school-directed educational aims and objectives.

The concept of schools and parents as educational partners is frequently expressed in government documents although Civil Code provisions about parental educational responsibility make no specific reference to schools. The reality of informally-organized parents facing officially-sanctioned (by legislation) organizations called public schools and their personnel does not mean that, conceptually and perhaps legally, it is not parents themselves who require manifestation of participation and involvement of teachers in their children's education and not the more familiar, quietly- and customarily-accepted reverse position.
1.7 Training, Practice, Research

Relevance of this exploratory research in relation to organized educational training, practice and research links is ventured. The fundamental nature of the task of raising children to become responsible adults, on the part of parents, school personnel and others, forms a unifying element.

The exploratory research idea springs from the researcher’s Québec, English-language, public secondary school teaching career experience. The researcher noticed successive academic years pass with constant programme and school success criteria changes and scant school-parent contact beyond official requirements, individual cases requiring special contacts and customary school event activities involving parental presence. The Civil Law position on the fundamental nature of parental educational responsibility, with its accompanying delegation provision (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001, Tome 1, pp. 706, 710-711), provides room for ambivalence regarding said responsibility. State institutional education systems, theoretically, could function with minimal school-parent communication but, in reality, public schools could not work without ongoing demonstration of school-based parental educational responsibility as daily support for successful maintenance of school programmes (curricula and/or activities). While details of school goals, programmes and criteria may be easily found, the nature of school-based parental educational responsibility remains a subject frequently referred to, but little understood, for policy and practice purposes of a given public school. Knowledge of school stakeholders’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility rests mainly on official assumptions of supposed stakeholder viewpoints.

Linking practice with research, Johnson and Christensen state, “One of the most fruitful sources of ideas for beginning researchers is their own experience as educators” and “Many research ideas can arise from practical issues that require a solution” (2000, p. 37). Similarly, Anderson and Arsenault say, “The decision to embark on a research project may be motivated by personal or professional reasons and is influenced by all the macro- and micro-forces in the conceptualization” (1998, p. 28). Anderson himself suggests, “Most students are inclined to develop research interests out of their experience rather than through exposure to the research literature” (1998, p. 37; similarly,
Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 16). Broome and Tillema conceptualize professional knowledge as a fusion of theory and experience. Key to an exploratory study on parental and educational personnel conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility is, “It is a well-documented empirical fact that teachers’ pedagogical attitudes and beliefs are of practical significance for their teaching” (1995, p. 263).

A greater challenge is meaningfully linking training with practice and research and the pertinence of this particular exploratory research. For training personnel, links may be clearer because of their links, through themselves, to their particular professional practices. When Karsenti and Savoie-Zaje allege relevance as in “... de permettre à tout enseignant de trouver des solutions, au moyen de la recherche, pour améliorer sa pratique ou résoudre des problèmes qui y sont liés” or claim, “La recherche en éducation participe de façon significative à la fois aux théories et à la pratique éducative” (2000, p. 10), educational training facility personnel may perceive an immediate relevance of imparted skills and knowledge. Despite Cavanaugh’s hesitations, like prominence of “academic culture, the dominance of research as a valued faculty activity, and the traditional organization of professional curricula” (1993, p. 109) or Sternberg’s interest in abilities for expertise development with a caution that “instruction should be geared not just toward imparting a knowledge base, but toward developing reflective, analytical, creative, and practical thinking with a knowledge base” (1998, p. 18), the links, for trainees themselves, among training, practice and research remain misty because, by definition, trainees are in a ‘becoming’ process, the very nature of which personal state of affairs implies a necessity for comprehension of trainees’ perceptions on possible links as being probably ephemeral and subject to constant adjustment. Hensler succeeds in usefully addressing training aims: “Il s’agit plutôt de les initier à une pratique réflexive, de les amener à considérer leur enseignement comme objet privilégié de recherche et de leur apprendre progressivement à théoriser leur pratique” (1992, p. 15). Numerous references may be mustered for researchers’, trainers’ and practitioners’ viewpoints but the often uncertain states-of-mind of trainees-in-training remain challenging, and certainly complex, to comprehend, often simply because of implications implicit in the training concept itself.
Literature reviewed plainly highlights significance of parental participation in school life as a factor related to achievement of student academic success, a link joining practice and research. Aspects of parental participation, such as parental presence, availability, community status, competence, rights and responsibilities, are possible areas for expanding research. For Québec, recent adoption of site-based school management (Statutes of Québec, 1999, I-13.3, Sec. 42-95) indicates validity for a research study involving a single public school. Linking training and preparation of teachers to such research means possible expansion of training consideration regarding the concept of a public school, its stakeholders various functions, communication responsibilities and attention to its programme (curriculum and/or activities) as directly influencing the quality of academic and general school daily life. Necessary attention by school personnel to requirements associated with professional conduct regarding a school programme does not obviate pertinence of school personnel attention to circumstances and characteristics, problems and challenges faced by students and students’ parents in components of their daily lives beyond a school area and outside school hours.

1.8 Context of the Research Problem

Public schools exist partly because of parental exercise of delegation rights tied to parental authority (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001, Tome 1, p. 710) with school personnel acting perhaps in loco parentis, and partly because the school’s part in a child’s education “is most closely related to the well-being of the society as a whole, and is thus the main object of the state’s legitimate concern” (Crittenden, 1988, p. 120), the exercise of parental pedagogical duties in relation thereto being thought of as accomplished in loco societatis (Ibid., p. 220).

For many years, here in successive paragraphs considered from the legislative adoption of compulsory school attendance in 1943 (Rapport du surintendant, 1945, p. xiii), various official Québec viewpoints on school-based parental educational responsibility have been documented. Constancy of official references indicates official concern about school-based parental educational responsibility. Each reference may be considered, research-wise, from the point of view of the manner in which it treats the significance of overlapping rights and responsibilities of parents,
children/students and school personnel (the State). In 1945, a child's rights were paramount:
“Présenté sous cette forme, le plaidoyer en faveur de l’enfant ne peut heurter l’autorité paternelle” (Ibid., p. xiv). In 1964, parental educational prerogative seems enshrined in, while, “toute enfant a le droit de bénéficier d’un système d’éducation qui favorise le plein épanouissement de sa personnalité ... parents ont le droit de choisir les institutions qui, selon leur conviction, assurent le mieux le respect des droits de leurs enfants” (Ministère de l’Éducation, Premier rapport, 1965b, pp. 143, 149).

The mid-1960s Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education ventured that parents are less passive and more active due to their perception of the benefits of schooling although success for helpful relationships between parents and public schools depends on “la qualité de l’information que reçoivent les parents au sujet de l’école et du système scolaire” and “l’esprit civique et le sens du bien commun qui animent les parents, les enseignants et les administrateurs scolaires” (Rapport de la commission royale d’enquête sur l’enseignement dans la province de Québec, Volume V, 1966a, p. 219). Significant is material on the relative status of State and parents, partnership of parents and school personnel relative to children/students and increasing importance of the State. Attendance is not “seulement de l’intérêt de l’enfant lui-même et de son avenir, mais aussi de l’intérêt de la société” (Ibid., p. 220). Although “on reconnaît aujourd’hui certains droits naturels à l’enfant, entre autres le droit au plein développement de ses sens et de ses aptitudes”, one sees that “L’État est le gardien de ses droits, et doit aider les parents à assumer certaines responsabilités dans ce domaine ...” and “on peut donc affirmer que l’État et les parents sont maintenant des partenaires, chacun selon son fonction, dans l’éducation de la jeunesse” (Ibid., p. 220). Parents, éducateurs naturels de l’enfant” can help, not only with reading, moral instruction and taking an active interest in school life but also with “visites de musées, concerts, pièces de théâtre, promenade instructive à la ville ou à la campagne” (Ibid., p. 224). Collaborative roles for teachers and parents are suggested (Ibid., pp. 225-227). Parents are to be seen as acting as parents and citizens to build a “plus profonde solidarité avec l’ensemble du milieu québécois”, a sign of “progrès social et culturel” (Ibid., p. 228). Note is taken that particularity of what may be defined as ‘solidarité’ and ‘milieu québécois’ is left to the reader.
Ministerial and Superior Council of Education materials serve to formalize State-parent relationships, for the benefit of the child. Collaboration, "active et éclairée entre la famille et l’école, grâce aux divers moyens offerts par la participation, est indispensable au bien-être de l’enfant, au progrès de la réforme scolaire et à la valorisation de la famille" (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1968b, p. 35). Though "le principal sujet de droit en éducation demeure toujours l’enfant" (Ibid., p. 54), teachers are described as "les principaux agents de l’éducation et qui, dès lors, doivent s’efforcer de connaître la mentalité particulière du milieu où ils enseignent et être attentifs à tous les problèmes familiaux et sociaux pouvant affecter le rendement scolaire de leurs élèves" (Ibid., p. 54; bringing to mind van Manen, 1991, p. 7, quoted on page 1 of this work). Though parents are said plainly to have "la première responsabilité dans l’éducation de leurs enfants" (Ibid., p. 328), in acting on school committees, they "serviront de support au rôle que les enseignants remplissent auprès de leurs enfants" (Ibid.).

So may be understood, regarding religious education, for example, though parents "sont les premiers responsables de l’éducation de leurs enfants" because "parents, tout en étant les éducateurs les plus rapprochés de leurs enfants, se sentent souvent démunis pour assumer leur tâche d’éducateurs chrétiens" (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1970b, p. 348).

Government documents, as a source, wrestle with the puzzle, well summarized in a 1975-1976 Report: "La participation des parents constitue depuis longtemps une préoccupation dans notre système scolaire. Elle semble ne pas avoir réussi cependant à s’inscrire dans le fonctionnement quotidien de ce système, d’une façon qui soit satisfaisante tant pour les parents eux-mêmes que pour ceux avec lesquels ils entrent en communication" (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1977a, p. 27). The 1977 Green Paper gave extensive attention to parental participation both on committees and helping teachers. Strong is "La participation dans le monde scolaire n’est ni plus facile ni moins malaisée que la participation dans les autres secteurs de l’activité sociale; elle y est non moins essentielle" (Ministère de l’Éducation, 1977, p. 131). A fourteen-volume report on parental participation in school committees appeared between 1978 and 1980. In the last volume appears the crux of school-parental relationship: Where “parents membres de Comités d’école ont répondu, dans
94.2% des cas, que ce sont les parents les premiers responsables de l’éducation scolaire de leurs enfants” (note the general term ‘education’ qualified by the specific term ‘scolaire’), 65.7% des répondants pensent que, de ce fait, l’école et la Commission scolaire doivent reconnaître le droit des parents à définir le genre d’éducation scolaire que ceux-ci veulent donner à leur enfant” and “28.5% disent que néanmoins, en mettant leurs enfants à l’école, ils cèdent de fait cette responsabilité à cette dernière” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, Fascicule 14, 1980a, p. 19). A 1989 document expresses concern for developing parental competency while also recognizing, “C’est que l’école et la société exigent beaucoup des parents, sans toutefois les soutenir suffisamment dans leur rôle” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1989a, p. 47). While parental competency development should be prioritized, interestingly, the task is to be assumed by “divers organismes familliaux et associations de parents”, not by schools (Ibid., p. 48). Competent or not, parental influence on children is recognized: “En effet, autant par ce qu’ils sont que par ce qu’ils font, les parents créent le climat dans lequel les enfants se développent et fixent les contenus de leur initiation culturelle. Dans les actes les plus élémentaires et les plus quotidiens de la vie comme dans les plus complexes et les plus imprévus, les parents transmettent leurs manières de sentir, de penser et d’agir” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1989b, p. 5). A 1994 document says of parental competency, “ces compétences parentales doivent être aujourd’hui reconnues, valorisées et soutenues par la société en général et l’école en particulier” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1994a, p. 76). Another 1994 document on renovating school curricula declares, “Il s’avère aujourd’hui que l’école prépare à l’exercice des rôles sociaux de la vie d’adulte: le rôle de parent, ...” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1994c, p. 21).

The significance of the school-based parental educational role is recognized in parts of the reports of the Commission of the Estates General on Education of 1995-1996. “Le personnel scolaire insiste davantage sur l’importance de développer les compétences parentales, sur la nécessité d’offrir une aide et un soutien à ceux dont les enfants ont des difficultés et sur un engagement plus grand de leur part” (Commission des États généraux sur l’Éducation, 1996b, p. 25). Considering the frequent references to parental involvement, the final report of the Commission, however, had only minor suggestions on the topic of parents: “Donner aux parents, de façon régulière, une information complète sur le cheminement scolaire de leurs enfants” and “Encourager une action plus délibérée
des comités constitués de parents en matière de sensibilisation et d’information des autres parents ainsi que de soutien au développement des compétences parentales” (Commission des États généraux sur l’Éducation, 1996b, p. 85).

Around and about 1996 and 1997, while one Superior Council of Education report put parents in the centre, “Le premier défi est de permettre aux parents, à titre de responsables premiers de l’éducation de leur enfant, de maintenir un rôle actif quant à l’éducation du jeune enfant tout en ayant recours à un service éducatif donné” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1996a, p. 60), a second one says of the Estates General viewpoint placing “bien l’accent sur la complémentarité des rôles entre les différents partenaires de l’école” but, “Sur la question du rôle des parents, il demeure toutefois insatisfaisant” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 1997a, p. 15). From the documents featured, a reader sees a constant concern to express official meaning for school-based parental educational responsibility with varying opinions about its dimensions and extent.

From December of 1997, public schools of Québec have parents in school decision-making (Smith, Foster, & Donahue, 1999, pp. 141, 163-164). Even with this major reform, familiar themes about parental school involvement appear. A challenge for anyone attempting to gain some insight and/or comprehension of school-based parental educational responsibility from government document evidence is that no matter what may be stated by way of particular performance duties like participating in school governing board or parent participation organization procedures (Statutes of Québec, 1999, 1-13.3, Sec. 42-96.4) or helping children/students to accomplish homework assignments, clear definition of responsibilities seems to take second place to expression of government and school expectations of performance of certain slotted school-based parental roles, such as that of acting on school governing boards, for example. Compartmentalization of potential energizing forces has packaged various ranges of specific responsibilities while possible broader school-based parental educational (instructional, pedagogical, learning) concerns are channelled into various organizational arrangements ahead of required time and energy being given to the broader needs and interests of children/students. School-based parental educational responsibilities seem to be clearly stated, with a specificity emphasis. How school personnel and adult legal guardians can
work together to satisfy educational needs and interests of children/students seems to take a secondary place.


Plainly stated in a 2001 document appears, “Un des facteurs associés à la réussite scolaire chez les jeunes enfants d’âge scolaire est la coopération famille-école et la participation des parents à la vie scolaire de leur enfant” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 2001a, Les élèves en difficulté de comportement à l’école primaire ..., p. 32). Reference to young children, considering the tone of any and all documents dealing with school-based parental educational involvement, may be clearer were ‘enfants’ not qualified with ‘jeunes’.

A recent document, ponderous and solemn in tone, tries to grapple with public education and the State in present globalized socio-economic-political times. Specific references to parents are few. Of 1970s times is stated, “Toutefois, la place des parents à l’école y est mal définie et tous les intervenants éprouvent une malaise devant cette situation” and of late 1990s’ school Governing Board provisions, one reads, “Ces derniers font de l’école une véritable communauté éducative en lien avec son milieu et donnent aux parents l’occasion d’exercer un pouvoir réel sur les orientations de l’école” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 2001d, p. 18). The latter observation is stated as though expressing a general solution to the question of school-based parental educational responsibility. Loftiness of tone and weightiness of theme herein mean specific mention of school-based parental educational responsibility is absent though the human reality of contemporary
household situations, as children/students are directly and indirectly affected on a daily basis, is treated in a section, "La transformation de la famille québécoise" (Ibid., pp. 34-35). Families are not alone being transformed without transformations or, at the very least, adjustments being experienced in every organization involving families.

Official sources evidence a phenomenon, 'school-based parental educational responsibility', in public schooling, which designated authorities recognize as meaningful and treat as an asset for public schooling educational efforts on behalf of children/students. What is here argued, on behalf of this exploratory research, is, simply, that aspects and dimensions of the specific subject area of school-based parental educational responsibility, based on conceptions of parents, teachers and school administrators, regarding the phenomenon in relation to its possible relevance to a school's policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, remains unexplored hitherto for a Québec English-language public secondary school. Hopefully, revelations emerging from the study may also encourage practical realization of the significance of the comprehensive topic of school-based parental educational responsibilities as a very critical component of upbringing of school students in general.

1.9 Research Purpose

The purpose of the exploratory study is to describe and comprehend, for one Québec secondary public school, parents' teachers' and administrators' conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. In-depth interviewing of a valid sample of said stakeholders or constituents would be the method employed for generation of data to be analysed with a grounded theory approach.

Plainly, parents' school-based educational responsibilities may be described, from the point of view of expectations of both the Québec government and public school personnel, as both collective and individual. Collectively, parents are expected to participate in meetings called to form official school bodies such as the Governing Board and Parent Participation Organization (Statutes
of Québec, 1999, 1-13.3, Sec. 42-96.4) as well as to execute responsibilities attendant upon possible election to office of any of these official bodies. Individually, parents are expected to support compulsory school attendance legislation (Statutes of Québec, 1999, 1-13.3, Sec. 14-18) and, unofficially, to attend meetings called by school personnel for education-related situations of children for whom they are legally responsible. In addition, parents are unofficially expected to support school education efforts such as students’ homework and to speak and act in a positive and helpful manner with their children and others in a community regarding school goals and programmes (activities and/or curriculum). Beyond the foregoing, parents are frequently asked or expected to help with volunteering with library and/or sports and other school activities and class or school projects or trips. Parents are further generally expected to attend and support school sports, drama, music and other events.

1.10 Research Question

Material detailed later in Chapter Three explains the interview format and philosophy. A hallmark of the in-depth strategy is upon its utility in helping to comprehend the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility in relation to daily school life, as conceived by parents, teachers and administrators.

The principal research question is, **How do parents, teachers and administrators conceive of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility?** Sub-questions appear in Chapter Three. What is here presented in bold typeface represents the heart of what is involved in this study. All sub-questions associated therewith constitute attempts to request and permit interviewees to offer data helping a researcher to understand more of how the particular phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility is actually conceived in reference to a single research-site Québec, English-language, public, secondary school community and its stakeholders. Subquestions are presented to interviewees in a time format of past, present and possible future experience.
1.11 Limitations of this Exploratory Study

A study to find out parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility is based upon persons associated with one Québec English-language public secondary school site. Validity of usefulness of the methodology, as it may be shown to affect a school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, for transferability and generalizability is argued while pertinent, particular results of data analysis would probably be more useful for stakeholders of the school research site.

The exploratory study rests upon an idea of finding out what may lie behind forms, amounts and degrees of parental school-based participation/involvement in school life, shown in Chapter Two to be overwhelmingly viewed as significantly favourable for quality of student school attainments. The study seeks to find out aspects of the nature of school-based parental educational responsibility, as conceptualized by parents, teachers and school administrators, the chief actors, apart from the students themselves, among a school’s stakeholders. Where school-based parental participation may frequently be observed, felt and described as being wide-ranging and accepted as helpful, important and significant for the quality of a school’s daily life, much of the meaning presently derived comes from official reports, documents, records, addresses or even manuals (Smith, Foster, & Donahue, 2001). What this study seeks is to find out what forms the construction of part of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility from actors’ words voicing conceptions of what school-based parental educational responsibilities mean.

1.12 Research Significance

School-based parental educational responsibility is, undeniably, an important component in children’s/students’ school success. A reality of a complex, highly-organized, hierarchical tax-supported public education system interacts with a broad variety of unorganized households, the responsible parents of which are expected to daily demonstrate school-based parental educational
responsible. At the same time, we have an absence of any clear idea, for any one school, of what the designated parent individuals, teachers and school administrators think is involved in school-based parental educational responsibility along with an absence of public school programme (curriculum and/or activities) attention to possible comprehension of the phenomenon.

The exploratory study investigates one school’s stakeholders’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility as part of a ceaseless search for helpfully-constructed, officially-cloaked or otherwise-derived expressions used to describe legal, social and educational interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. A 1999 Québec ministerial document, for example, conjures with this ongoing description problem, recognizing needs and interests of the child co-existing amid those of parents and the state (mostly school personnel). One reads, “les parents ont le droit et surtout la responsabilité de l’éducation de leurs enfants, droit qui découle en réalité de ceux de leurs enfants, il s’ensuit qu’ils possèdent aussi le droit de s’associer librement pour poursuivre en commun la mise en œuvre de cette obligation qui leur est confiée” (Rapport du groupe de travail sur la place de la religion à l’école, 1999, p. 86). Further, on one hand, one has “le principe en vertu duquel l’éducation des enfants relève de la responsabilité des parents et de la société civile , et, d’autre part, le fait que les enfants possèdent des intérêts fondamentaux qui fondent les droits dont l’État a la responsabilité d’assurer l’exercice à tous, et ce, en pleine égalité” (Ibid., p. 87).

Apart entirely from a plain knowledge gap, then, practical use of knowledge, for school stakeholders of one school, of parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities may helpfully affect that school’s development, sustenance and possible evaluation of its policies and practices regarding interrelationships among its parents, children/students and school personnel, beginning with the nature and content of official and unofficial school communications with households. It is understood that because of the established organization of public schools on a province-wide basis and lack of formality in any organizational sense of parents, initial impetus for possible changes will likely emerge from school organizations.
1.13 Conclusion

This exploratory study in no way seeks alteration of viewpoints gained from studying conclusions of copious available research work on parent involvement/participation in school daily life. What is sought is ordinary recognition of a research value of comprehension on the part of parent, teacher and administrator stakeholders (constituents) of one secondary school of their respective and sometimes, but not necessarily, commonly-shared conceptions of what they understand as components of school-based parental educational responsibilities as significant considerations for development and/or sustenance and/or evaluation of helpful policies and practices regarding interrelationships among the school’s parents, children/students and school personnel.

The next chapter will present literature investigated bearing on parent participation/involvement in daily school life and on school-based parental educational responsibilities. An attempt to understand breadth dimensions of this study’s focus is therein shown.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This is an exploratory study about what is perceived as a significant component of parental involvement and influence in a Québec English-language public secondary school’s daily life. The subject is parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. Plenteous is material of the literature review presented here focussed upon increasing both quantity and quality of varieties of parental involvement in school-based life, chiefly for trying to attain what is seen as better achievement by students of school-set aims and goals. Such writings explore themes explaining, on one hand, hindrances and support lacks to parental involvement in particular schools and school systems and, otherwise, benefits for parents themselves, their children/students and school personnel of increased parental involvement in school-based life. Throughout, including this exploratory study, no questioning exists of a seeming inherent rightfulness of continuing existence of schools as part of children’s social and cultural learning of their growing up years.

In this literary review, a reader may notice a general absence of attention to comprehension of what secondary school stakeholders may find helpful regarding effective secondary school policies and practices relating to interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, namely, conceptions of parents, teachers and administrators of a particular school’s parents’ sense of their school-based parental educational responsibility, something apparently assumed to be a part of a school’s daily life, yet critical for it’s educational (instructional, pedagogical, learning) function. Relevance and pertinence of this exploratory study to reveal features of this assumed component for a single school is therefore suggested.

This particular exploratory study thus seeks to understand more about what may be a significant factor which school personnel associated with any individual school could find helpful
to know about for development and/or viability and/or evaluation of a school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. The factor is, simply, school-based parental educational responsibility as conceived by parents, teachers and administrators of one Québec English-language, public, secondary school.

Accordingly, this literature review is divided by types of literature into, hopefully, manageable areas, each of which is explained as helpfully as possible to show what may be therein found to aid an interested person to know what may be pertinent to understand more concerning the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility.

2.1 Current Dissertation Material

Material of this section serves to alert a reader as to the influence of organized education as practised, mostly in the North American setting. Pertinence of this material for Québec situations must be examined for each individual case. The range of research subject areas is large, all sharing a perspective of rightfulness and/or helpfulness about some form(s) of manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility, without questioning the institutionalization of educational (learning, pedagogical, instructional) effort through organizations commonly known as schools.

Governing much dissertation material is a concentration upon school-based parental educational responsibility in the sense of parental participation in school life as a significant factor within present school settings, programmes and purposes. Forms of parental participation in school life are studied and researched, seemingly with a tacit understanding and assumption of a critical component behind such participation, this being knowledge of parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of the students’ parents’ understanding of their school-based parental educational responsibilities. “Parental involvement can be helpful in increasing student achievement in school” (Shackelford, 2000) speaks for many examples and encapsulates the heart of such material. Other recent examples reinforce this predominant characteristic (Barnard, 2001; Bettler, 2001; Gallagher, 2001; Heinrich, 2001; Hollinger, 2001; Novey, 2001; Raterink, 2001; Shearin, 2001; Simon, 2001;
Young, 2001). Concern for the school institution is central, among concerns and problems of curriculum, leadership, funding and others.


Some research deals specifically with parental roles, like those of fathers (Dean, 2000; Lewis, 2000) or mothers (Dellagnalo, 2000; Johnson, 1999; Stefany, 1999). Student attitudes to parental roles in school-based parental participation concern Harris Wyatt (2000) and Johnston (2000).

Perspectives of parents themselves on their involvement in school life is of considerable interest (Burns, 2000; Thompson, 2000; Acuncius, 1999; Askew, 1999; Borman, 1999; Clark, 1999; Jones, 1999; Shea, 1998; Tatro, 1998). Broader varieties of parental choice for their children's schooling has been a concern: Rittman (2001), Roberts (2001) and Benton-Evans (1998), for example, examine home schooling.

General concerns for parental school involvement mark Fletcher (2001) on one state's


School principals and their dealing with matters of parental involvement may be of interest (Benavides, 2001; George, 2001; Laviolette, 2001; Lommerin, 2000) as well as perspectives of teachers and parents of principals’ actions (Stockton, 1998) and a principal’s views on parental school-based participation (Richardson, 2001). Also important are administrators’ views of school climate links to decision-making responsibilities in general (Yee, 2001).

Research has also examined parental school participation where local communities and their leaders constitute an additional dimension in the communications network in continual formation in a school area, best expressed as interaction of home, school and community (J.R. Stadler, 2001; Fuentes, 2000; Gold, 2000; Pepler, 2000; Burke, 1999; Lachman-Fitzgerald, 1999; Guetachow, 1998; Schefelbine, 1998).


effects on children’s/students’ school achievement. Rafferty (1999) conducts a general inquiry into parental features as they affect children in school.

How parental school participation is affected for situations where parents have been in parent-education programmes provides yet another dimension (Echols, 2000; Tarooq, 2000; Yockelson, 2000; Dubois, 1999; Kosten, 1998; Scheidler, 1998). Ward (1998) includes a study of Glasser’s parent training model.

Dissertation material examined understandably emanates from a myriad of household-school relationships of innumerable school communities, social and other characteristics of stakeholders of which influence intensities and kinds of evident ongoing interrelationships. A matter of how this material helps understanding possible answers to the principal research question remains.

It is preliminarily argued that, through dissertation material, whatever components of school-based parental educational responsibilities may be therein and thereby elucidated, the fundamental subject of parents’, teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of what constitute school-based parental educational responsibilities for a particular school are not explored. Further, whatever may be thought of as helping to present a form or pattern of some kind of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility, from dissertation or any other material mentioned in this chapter, a reader must bear in mind that this exploratory study’s premiss is that, for any particular school, the validity of what may be designated as components of school-based parental educational responsibility, for any individual school, is partly in the words of parents, teachers and administrators interviewed of the research-site school. All studies do share in some way, shape or form, a concern for helping students achieve school-set aims and goals. Studies also share a tacit or acknowledged realization of daily functioning of a school community’s households and, separately, a school community’s school organization, while also considering interrelationships between these social realities. A realization seems present of possibilities of cooperative and collaborative measures involving parents and schools but they seem to remain as fairly distinct entities.
While influence of school personnel expectations of household (mostly parental) manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility for achievement of school aims and goals affects all of a school community’s households, functioning of a school community’s households itself affects daily school life. Dissertation material reveals research attention to increasing household (mostly parental) understanding of school aims and goals, whether this means school personnel time and effort, instructionally or quasi-instructionally or in types of appeal to involve available and willing parents in many forms of school-based involvement. Some research studies deal with parent concerns for adequate recognition by school personnel of what such parents perceive as rightful, justifiable and needed influence on school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Not found, however, as earlier suggested, are studies focussed on a fundamental knowledge component behind or underpinning studies examined, namely, conceptions of parents, teachers and administrators of individual schools of school-based parental educational responsibilities as a basis for effective school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel of a school in question.

A broad range of dissertation studies shows concern for both quantity and quality of parental school involvement as a factor in student school achievement. Throughout runs an unexpressed normative rule about school daily life, namely, that interest, at the very least, of possible public school personnel expectations, of parents in the schooling process in general, is sought. Are stakeholders of schools satisfied, in general, with manifestations of such interest, with little exploratory investigation of significant components of such interest?

2.2 Current Learned Journal Material

Journal material on aspects of school-based parental involvement is plentiful. A judicious selection of recent contributions is presented. To be noted is the similarity of themes treated to those found in dissertations. Individual learned journal titles may alert a reader as to possible leanings of subjects therein treated and why such subjects are therein investigated and explored in certain ways.
One fundamental element is that the general social task of children’s upbringing along with legal aspects of delegation of parts of parental responsibilities, with the latter’s complexities, remains a concern, addressed by Conte (2000), for example, in an article, “In loco parentis: Alive and well”, with its assertion, “Schools continue to be institutions to which parents look for help in their efforts to best serve their children” (p. 195).

Works of Epstein (1986, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1998) must also be acknowledged here as being of a fundamental nature, if only that she seems to be often quoted, as by Graue (1998), in this work’s non-fiction section, or by Jones (2001). Epstein’s editing of a 1991 Phi Delta Kappan issue, on parent involvement, is significant. Her analysis of “six types of involvement in a comprehensive program of partnership” (1993, p. 710) points out that hundreds of practices evidence each type, that each type has problems in “successfully reaching or involving all families” (Ibid., p. 711) of any one school and, finally, that each type leads to “different important outcomes for schools, students, and for families” (Ibid.). A second important point relates to an observation that an overwhelming theme which seems to determine many factors of parental participation is, as a title suggests, “Linking parent involvement with student achievement” (Desimone, 1999). Earlier, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler argued, “We assert that the most important questions concerning parental involvement in children’s education address why parents choose to become involved and why their involvement, once underway, often positively influences educational outcomes” (1995, p. 310). Parents seem to have an anxiety that their children achieve according to standards of other authorities, namely, the schools, as in an article on case studies of families at work on third-grade homework tasks (Jianzhong & Corno, 1998). These other authorities seem not to relate their expectations of performance of school-based parental educational responsibility to any reciprocal school responsibility to support, through specifically-developed policies and practices, including educational (instructional, pedagogical, learning) ones associated with their curriculum and/or activities, such preformance.

A 1994 Québec study of parenting style relating to parental participation and social success addressed, as the opening sentence suggests, “L’abandon scolaire constitue une préoccupation sociale dans l’ensemble de l’Amérique du Nord” (Deslandes & Royer, 1994, p. 63). A similar subject,
relating to parenting style, was addressed by the same writers and two others in a 1997 article (Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte & Bertrand, 1997, pp. 191-207). The seriousness of the general overarching problem for parents forms the nub of a legal article of 1999 in which one reads, “Généralement, les parents ont, à l’égard de leurs enfants, des devoirs impératifs: aliments, garde, éducation, entretien, et ils détiennent sur eux l’autorité” (Pineau, 1999, p. 343).

A series of 1999 articles, all in the same issue of a North American journal, demonstrate a widespread concern about parents and their roles associated with institutionalized education (Epstein & Sanders; Georgiou; Grossman; Kelley-Laine; McKenna & Willms; Ravn; Sanders & Epstein; Street, 1999). A UNESCO article by Redding begins with frank observations: “Everywhere there is pressure for children to learn more in school. The new economy demands that young people leave school with strong abilities to read, write, calculate and apply disciplined thoughts to the solution of problems” (1999, p. 5).

Parental input in decision-making seems to be an ongoing concern (Ethridge, Hall & Ethridge, 1995; Wignall, 1996). Some doubt on the efficacy of legislated norms is expressed: “What has become very clear is that schools and school boards that want parental involvement will work toward it whether or not there is legislation. The legislation itself has done very little to break down the inherent obstacles that were there in the days of the PTA” (Duma, 1998, p. 14). Some find answers for concerns in simple forms like, “Here I describe another source of support, one which has proven very effective for some parents: a regular meeting of parents who have children in the same grade at the same school” (Vandrick, 1999, p. 249). One article reaches over the parent-school theatre to possibilities for teacher-training institutions offering trainees course material on family issues (Knight & Wadsworth, 1999, pp. 315-325).

Concerning perspectives of people of other continents and countries, communication and travel permit more interrelationships to be better understood. Gonzalez (1998), for example, deals with parenting education challenges in Spain, Street (1998) with similar subject matter related to secondary schools in the United Kingdom. A French article stresses parental support for school
policies along with a viewpoint of very separate realms of school and home, with little comprehension on teachers' parts of a need for more than minimal communications to parents (Barroux, Dupuis, Cédelle, Truong, Baumard, Bronner, & Séry, 2000). Minassian (2001) expresses French teachers' concerns for more school-household contacts. From such material, comparisons and contrasts may be made with North American parent-school personnel situations.

A careful regard of significant 2000, 2001 and one or two 2002 journal articles, many of a research variety, reveals ever more aspects of parental participation and its connections with children's school achievement. Constant appeals relating to problems of schools adequately serving various types of minorities suggest certain inflexibilities in school organizational, social and perhaps instructional structures. One could even suggest that part of the problem may lie simply in the schools themselves being organizationally and otherwise very confident in the manner in which personnel carry out educational programmes, in such a fashion that time and effort have not been invested in examining how the school programme is evaluated by members of the community it supposedly serves. One article examines "empirically whether low-income working parents face significantly different nonfinancial barriers to parental involvement than those faced by higher income working parents" (Heymann & Earle, 2000, p. 25). Showing confidence in school personnel, a 2001 article supposedly examines children's expectations regarding parental performance. Not only does the writer assert that, "By encouraging communication, schools also become part of the solution" (Galinsky, 2001, p. 28) but she also declares, "We need to ensure that we respect those parents who are raising their children well - whatever their work status and lifestyle. We must also encourage those who are not doing a good job to find help so that they can improve" (Ibid., p. 26; similarly, McCartyhe, 2000). Problems of mobility battling stability of residence concern Fisher, Matthews, Stafford, Nakagawa & Durante (2002). Regarding a school serving children of migrant families, we read, "In other words, schools were successful not because they subscribed to a particular definition of involvement, but because they held themselves accountable to meet the multiple needs of migrant families on a daily and ongoing basis" (Lopez, Scribner, & Mahitivanichcha, 2001, p. 253); similarly, Lopez, 2001). School communications with African American parents concern one pair of authors (Walker-Dalhousie & Dalhousie, 2001). Interrelationships of African American fathers and their age

Unsupported confidence suffuses an article of a Canadian province's family policy effect on childhood development and care (Tougas, 2000). Caution, however, tints the concluding paragraph assertion, "It is still too early to judge whether Québec’s new childcare system matches up to all of these criteria. Nevertheless we can see straightaway that it is based on sound principles: accessibility, affordability and quality" (Ibid., p. 23).

Journal articles deal with a multitude of concerns linking parents, their children and school personnel. Research-type material must be partly evaluated, measured and otherwise understood according to the particular journal wherein a given article appears. A wealth of learned journal subject matter featuring school-based parental involvement is not wanting. How material studied helps to answer, in some way, the principal research question is complex because, while school-based parental involvement is very much at the centre of most journal material examined, the idea of finding out parents', teachers' and school administrators' conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities is not evident. Schools continue as a major unquestioned factor of everyday life, even with home schooling, because in most communities few children are home-schooled. Parental participation is seen, however, in general, in relation to supporting school aims and policies, hoping children's/students' academic results improve.

2.3 General Non-Fiction Work on Parental Educational Responsibility

Though not centred necessarily on particular local situations, work herein referred to serves to guide and affect broad thinking about the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility. It also serves to illustrate forcefully and plainly the universality of official concern as to helpful forms or patterns for the responsible adults designated customarily and officially as parents to be made aware of their school-based educational responsibilities.

Crittenden (1988) deals with parent-state power relationships relating to education rights and responsibilities. Key points are, "The line between the rights of parents and of the civil society is very hard to draw in the sphere of formal education" (Crittenden, 1988, p. 168) and the "State’s actions
should be consistent with the prior right and responsibility of parents in the education of their children” (Ibid., p. 195). Teachers may exercise educational responsibility ‘in loco parentis’ but a modern state may, on the other hand, “require ... parents to exercise their immediate pedagogical authority ‘in loco societatis’” (Ibid., p. 220). Modern states have awesome powers. Leach’s comments on hesitations about the State role in education may be helpful: “... even those who wish to keep child-rearing (and sexual) practices free of public regulation must accept that education concerning them is a public responsibility” (1994, p. 240).


An education encyclopaedia article by Epstein (1992) distinguishes critical parent-school involvement patterns as, “separate”, “sequenced”, “embedded” and “overlapping” spheres of influence, all with a centrality of concern for the child (pp. 1140-1141). Key for this exploratory research is, “Educators need to know more about the families of their students in order to capitalize on family strengths in helping children succeed” (Ibid., p. 1147). Graue echoes Epstein with a perceived necessity“to explore the foundational assumptions that frame proposed parent involvement activities” (1998, p. 2) as she deals with theories of Bakhtin, Epstein, Comer, Lareau and others (Ibid., pp. 3-12).

University of Alberta’s van Manen addresses pedagogical aspects of learning (1991, 1997). He reminds us that “children who come to school come from somewhere” (1991, p. 7) and, “While parents are excused, the schools are often accused of improperly preparing children for the responsibilities of their own parenthood” (Ibid., p. 6).
Works may be cited as indicative of widespread concerns over parents and school personnel working together effectively. Schneider and Coleman (1993) edited a work entirely on the subject of parental participation in school. A work, edited by Henderson and Berla (1994), examines sixty-six studies of parent, child/student, school personnel relations, centring on the beneficial effects of effective parenting and parent-school personnel co-operation for improving students’ academically- understood achievements but no study therein examined begins with understanding conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. Goldberg (1997) reminds us of the importance of parent-teacher collaboration from the time of a child’s earliest school experience. Dodd and Konzal (1999) have one chapter on parent involvement in a work on improving secondary schools. Bromfield (2000) writes for elementary school parents and, on delegation of parental educational responsibility says forcefully, “While that transfer of hand from parent to teacher can be both comforting and bittersweet in the moment, its power is more symbolic. It stands for the years of education to come, during which, we hope, there will be a strong and effective partnership between home and school, between parent and teacher - an alliance that, more than any corporate or governmental collaboration, holds the key to our children’s and our country’s future” (p. vii).

Parenting education has been a controversial topic. Stern (1960) suggests, “Schools have an unrivalled opportunity for the education of parents and for co-operation with them and, by making use of it, to make their own work with children more effective” (p. 14). Callahan (1974) declares, “Optimistically, I foresee parent education becoming a part of every curriculum, community organization, and church, complete with apprenticeship programs in which young people could go into families or work with children in group settings” (p. 193). Fine (1980) argued, “Concurrent with the rising of parents’ interest in parent education programs, there is growing interest in teaching parenting skills to school-age children” (p. 20). Masterpasqua (1992) explores virtues and benefits of teaching parenting in schools, arguing that it helps parent-child-school personnel relationships as well as helping to prepare students (possible future parents) for aspects of their adult social experience and responsibility. Corsaro (1997) writes, “Surely, courses that prepare children and adolescents for parenthood can be developed and encouraged as important options” (p. 270). Goldberg (1997) advocates closer relationships between parents and teachers of young children. A
Canadian, Mary Gordon (1999), outlines specific techniques of “a classroom-based parenting program designed for elementary school students” (p. 1). An ERIC document (1999), with no author mentioned, discusses a guide for “a one-half credit technical laboratory course for grades 10-12 (which) ... teaches parental responsibilities” (p. 1). Another ERIC document, by Cutting and Tammi (1999), involves a parenting course in a Scottish high school, claiming for present-day students an improvement in “the way in which young people handle life within their own families”, being hopeful that the course will “increase the quality of life for the next generation of families” and “establish good parenting as the foundation for other aspects of personal and social education” (p. 7). Falon (2001) has a belief that, “The goal is for nurturing children to become nurturing parents” (p 1). To summarize, choices must be made by stakeholders regarding use of school time, funds, personnel and other resources.

Parental school-based educational responsibility is the subject matter for many recent local works. Delhi and Januario (1994) combined in a detailed study of parent-school relations in Toronto. Holmes (1998) and Osborne (1999) write about parent-school relationships in a Canadian setting. Després-Poirier and Dupuis (1999) treat the Québec situation. Work by Miron and Tochon (1998), focused on Québec, avers that “Le parent est un éducateur” and “La réflexion sur des cas vécus avec les enfants développe la compétence éducative” (p. 21). Their second work contains helpful chapters like “Les attitudes et les pratiques éducatives parentales” (Tochon & Miron, 2000). Three books meant to be manuals for Québec public school stakeholders come from the Office of Research on Educational Policy at McGill University (Smith, Foster, & Donahue, 1999; Smith, Foster, & Donahue, 1999; Smith & Donahue, 1999). Each of these works presents more than sufficient historical and legal background to provide school stakeholders a sense of how recently-legislated formal relationships among parents, school personnel and communities may work for society’s benefit. In addition, practical information is therein provided for all people involved in site-based management systems of school administration. Alvi, Dekeseredy and Ellis (2000) produced a sociological study exploring parent-school problems in a North American context, thereby recognizing certain distinctions.
We cannot ignore sociological, anthropological and biological aspects. Martin (1996) explains themes like altruism (p. 20), inclusive fitness (p. 265), kin selection (p. 285) and parental care or responsibility (p. 375). The human place in the scheme of things is explored by Paul (1957) and Dawkins (1976). A pithy study by Schaffer (1977), *Mothering*, says “For the social scientist there is the opportunity of learning about the origins of behavior and picking up some of the clues that may explain how personality is formed” (p. 2). Huizinga (1975) presses one to consider parenting and education with “Of course, most of these sometimes frantic educational and parental attitudes and actions, often disguised as care, originate in fear of the child’s failure” (p. 398). The writer, Carl Zimmer, answering my question “Why parenting?”, wrote a personal “Evolution has shaped parental care, but we’re a long way from sorting out its effects” (2001). Wilson’s *Sociobiology: The new synthesis* (1977), its more manageable sequel, *Sociobiology: The abridged edition* (1980) and an earlier *On human nature* (1978) help in forming ideas of human parenting’s significance, treated as part of a larger animal field. Trivers’ *Social evolution* (1985) links natural selection and social behaviour of animals, including humans. Other works to broaden understanding of human parenthood are those of Tanner (1990), Goldsmith (1991), Clutton-Brock (1991) and a lengthy, profound and wide-ranging study by Hrdy, *Mother Nature: A history of mothers, infants and natural selection* (1999). Both Hrdy and Gittins (1993) write on recent discoveries about maternal instinct. Zimmer’s systematic work, *At the water’s edge: Macroevolution and the transformation of life* (1998), has an important place because readers are called to consider broad dimensions when conceptualizing development of trends when using natural selection ideas as a base. Siiter (1999) helps a reader to understand how studies of animal behaviour may be relevant in understanding human parenting practices, implications for education systems’ relationships with parents and the phenomenon of human cultural evolution. Harris and Ross (1987) say. “We assume that humans have a genetically controlled propensity shared with other primates to find infants emotionally appealing and to derive emotional satisfaction from holding and fondling them and from watching and helping them play and learn” (p. 10). Harris (1990), alone, says, “Society needs children even if sexually active adults do not” (p. 233). A gripping sensation of the place of humanity as a living phenomenon among other living phenomena helps in appreciating arguments of Waller (1998) which decry attempts to set humans apart from the world of other animal life.
Hans Jonas, through Western philosophy routes, searches for foundations of human responsibility. Inspiring are thoughts such as our everyday familiarity "with one most widespread case (deeply moving, even to the spectator) of elementary nonreciprocal responsibility and duty, which moreover enjoys immediate recognition and spontaneous enactment: the duty to the children one has brought forth and who without the continuance of procreation into provision and care must perish" (1985, p. 39). Unfortunately, Jonas’ contention that care of offspring "requires no deduction from a principle, because it is powerfully implanted in us by nature or at least in the childbearing part of humanity" (Ibid., p. 39) may be overstating the nature of parental care or parental educational responsibility. Education is mentioned in broad terms and parental care summarized as "the pure being as such, and then the best being of the child" (Ibid., p. 101).

All works cited in this section serve to set school-based parental educational responsibility within cultural boundaries in the sense of legally-recognized institutionalized educational jurisdictions. A recognition of education jurisdictional uniqueness for aims/goals and programmes (curriculum and/or activities) is made, thereby illustrating that a seemingly universal harmony of recognition legislatively, customarily or in other ways of rightful is better expressed as understanding separate existences of schools and school systems and household/family units. The principal research question, which seeks understanding of parents’, teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, goes to the centre of what may be a significant foundational support for school policies and practices governing ongoing interrelationships between the two social units of schools and households/families, is not itself helpfully answered through material herein presented. Deliberate focus on a research site specificity of school-based parental educational responsibility in no way, however, denies relevance of recognition of the breadth of its aspects. What is to be noted is that ample material may be found which, even for research purposes, may illustrate in some way or other what a reader may classify as an example of school-based parental educational responsibility but no such example may tell what a parent, teacher or school administrator interviewee informs a researcher as his/her conception(s) of school-based parental educational responsibility, relevant, realistically, for needs of his/her school community alone.
2.4 Legal Background Material

Legal dimensions of school-based parental educational responsibility are approached with a caution that anything herein presented may be regarded only as indicators of a vast research field of its own. Needs and interests of children are of paramount importance.


For particular parental educational responsibilities, current versions of Québec education legislation must also be consulted. Such matters as compulsory attendance (Statutes of Québec, 1999, 1-13.3, ss. 14-18) and sections on school governance (Ibid, ss. 42-95, 96-96.4) are important.
For clarification on giving children full use of their civil rights, one cannot ignore the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (1991). Giving each of us a pause to reflect, in the context of present turbulent times, one reads, "the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity" (Ibid., p. 12).

Legal components of school-based parental educational responsibility affect daily life of children/students, their legal guardians, usually parents, and school personnel but often have impact only if and when circumstances dictate necessity for bringing attention to them. At the same time, legal aspects of public school daily life for all school stakeholders deserve careful study. Encouragement for more plain and ordinary study in a jurisdiction’s schools of legal components of parental school-based educational responsibilities may help young people better prepare for possible future parental roles and in turn, help students to better achieve school aims and goals. Research-wise, a study of legal school-based parental educational responsibilities of any educational jurisdiction help a researcher comprehend certain social features of a given society and indicate societally accepted norms. What a researcher may reveal as a jurisdiction’s features of school-based parental educational responsibilities may not be found plainly in research interviewees’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, thereby opening possible future research areas.

2.5 Government Document Material

In Chapter One, in setting the problem of this exploratory study, extensive reference is made to the field of governmental documentation. Through careful reading of material therein outlined, chiefly produced by either the Québec Ministry of Education and the Superior Council of Education of Québec, a reader may learn of the long preoccupation of Québec officialdom over both defining and expressing ideas of school-based parental educational responsibility. The essential problem faced may be expressed by suggesting that a reader is confronting a highly organized and structured, tax-supported public education system dealing with children/students of innumerable households and
‘parental’ situations, such households and ‘parent’/children situations forming undeniable, present but generally unorganized, social realities. Schools and school personnel are seen as concerned about meaningful school-based roles for parents and having certain expectations regarding manifestation school-based parental (educational) responsibilities rather than that organized parent groups may be seen as demanding certain educational performance components of school personnel.

2.6 Delimitations of Literature Studied

Description of useful relationships between others’ research, accomplished and available, other materials of literature read, and research proposed, is attempted in order to better understand both present research delimitations and possible significance of this exploratory study. A summary of what literature reviewed does explain in order to justify this exploratory study leads to thinking of limitations of this exploratory study.

Recent research and other material studied unites in concern for many needs and interests of schoolchildren/students as well as upholding the ideal of optimum parental participation or involvement in school-based activities as a critically significant support component helping school personnel and students to accomplish school-based goals. A bias is clear towards aspects of intensifying and increasing, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the phenomenon of parental involvement in school life. Continuing existence of schools and school systems is unquestioned. Even where home schooling is a focus, studies deal with solving mostly individual school or school jurisdiction and individual student learning problems. Studies are not premised on replacing existing schools or school systems. A shared aim supporting recent work investigated is simply to increase meaningful and helpful parental participation in school life where ‘meaningful’ is qualified by school stakeholders’ perceptions of improvements in individual students’ academic results and/or better functioning interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Problems spring from community socio-economic and/or perceived ethnic, racial, poverty, gender and other minority issues as well as evaluation of effective communications among a school’s stakeholders.
General sociological, anthropological and common biological or sociobiological literature is examined to gain some understanding of why human parenting exists and of some characteristics of its nature. For people of each community, it is important to understand that, despite all that may be said about parenting roles, rights, responsibilities, competencies in a sociobiological sense and other areas of parenting, institutionalized education (learning, pedagogy, instruction) seems secure, being widely seen as a necessary, even important societal component of national identities and even nations’ *raisons d’être*. Customarily, through state legislation, various forms of schooling exist. Parents of their several households from many cultural backgrounds enrol children in public schools according to choices available legally, economically, intellectually and possibly other ways. School personnel are then bound to rely on students’ parents for effort and support in furthering school aims. The agenda is set, however, mostly by schools, as broadly-accepted individually and collectively human organizations.

In bridging an appreciation for long- and deeply-considered significance of parental involvement in school life, supported by copious research, and the focus of this exploratory study, it may be helpful to stress that this study in no way seeks to unsettle research conclusions presently available for consideration. The exploratory study sets out merely to explore and perhaps expand understanding of an aspect of parental participation not conventionally considered, certainly in the education jurisdiction research site. The study seeks understanding of parents’ teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility for more knowledge-based policies and practices behind a school’s management of official and unofficial interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. For any school, helpful policies and practices may be developed better with pertinent knowledge of how school-based parental educational responsibility is conceptualized by a school’s parents, teachers and administrators. Attempts to clarify the nature of relationships between a school’s numerous households and the institution of a given school may help formation, continuance and evaluation of current school policies and practices governing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
2.7 Conclusion

No claim or pretence exists that works herein cited may be considered as comprising all meaningful areas written about the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility. What is hoped is, simply, that works cited may help a reader comprehend helpfulness of knowledge about the phenomenon for more efficient and effective policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel of a single Québec English-language public secondary school.

In the next chapter is outlined this study’s methodology and methods employed to both gather and analyse data associated with the research-site school community. What literature studied reveals about the core topic is thereby put to a practical use.
Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Research Work

For purposes of leading a reader carefully and in an orderly manner, this chapter will first explain, as clearly as possible, pertinent factors of the methodology employed for this exploratory research study. Then, material on methods, conceptually associated with the methodology material presented, will be explained.

Methodology used in preparing this study may be distinguished from a description of research methods employed to achieve a given purpose. Briefly, methodology may be considered as a science of methods. This researcher considers helpful and attempts to put to use the observation that, "dans une recherche de nature vérificatoire ou confirmatoire d'une hypothèse, le cadre théorique est plus circonscrit et «fermé», au point de départ, que dans le cas d'une recherche exploratoire, qui vise à examiner un terrain en vue de formuler éventuellement des hypothèses" (Gohier, 2000c, p. 100).

The purpose of this chapter is to present, clearly and plainly, methodology governing methods, and methods themselves, employed in order to effectively carry out the work's purpose: to produce an exploratory study of a single Québec public secondary school's parents', teachers' and administrators' conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. A challenge for a researcher or a reader is that of conceptually separating what may already be formed in the way of ideas, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of what school-based parental educational responsibilities are or could be from what parents, teachers and administrators interviewed for this study reveal. One seeks to find out actual concepts of some of one school's stakeholders of a phenomenon perceived as a possibly significant item of knowledge useful for the research-site school's development of and/or continuing use of and/or evaluation of policies and practices regarding the school's interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
Throughout this chapter, one primarily measures, not the merits or otherwise of the research purpose, significance, problem or question except in their differing relationships to the matter of the methodology and methods employed in order that this exploratory study may helpfully elucidate some components of the phenomenon of a single Québec public secondary school’s parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. In responding to the interviewer’s questions, material presented by interviewees may contain information which could be categorized as perhaps formative, a result, or otherwise ancillary, in one way or another, of critical interview conceptions. The nature of the relationship of such material to other material deemed as essential, central, important or, research-wise, considered pertinently significant for this exploratory study’s purpose, must be kept in mind.

One looks for a conceptual background to how the intended exploratory research may serve to achieve the research purpose which is the help derived regarding formation of and/or continuing and/or evaluation of policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Herein lies a connection between methods and methodology.

3.2.1 Description of the General Perspective

This researcher supports the direct manner suffusing the statement, “A research method is an approach to addressing a research question or problem” (Anderson, 1998, p. 85). Critical is a realization about how a researcher proceeds to both find out what is to be researched and works with what is found out to produce useful results. Helpful is the forceful simplicity whereby Savoie-Zajc and Karsenti stress, “Comment vais-je faire cette recherche?” (2000, p. 128). A partial answer to the latter question lies in persons to be met, sampling and samples, data assembly to answer research questions and identifiable objectives (interview, poll, ...?...), type and design of interview protocol and methods of data analysis to be used (Ibid.).

Numerous reasons support a decision as to the usefulness of qualitative methodology. This researcher shares some writers adding conceptual components like “qualitative-humanistic-
discursive" (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 4) and likes their claim, "As the former (i.e. quantitative) becomes more and more sophisticated in the analysis of statistical data (and their work becomes less comprehensible to those who have not studied the techniques), the latter becomes more and more convinced of the irrelevance of such analyses to the seemingly nonreplicable and nongeneralizable events in which its practitioners are interested" (Ibid.).

A principal reason for maintaining appropriateness of qualitative methodology rests in the intention to find out about school-based parental educational responsibility in the natural setting of a Québec, English-language, secondary public school. Creswell's outline of qualitative paradigm assumptions strengthens this researcher's decision that this is an appropriate methodology, in stating, "The study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (1994, pp. 1-2). Pertinent also is, as Bogdan and Biklen express it, "There is a logical connection between the techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing and phenomenological theory and inductive reasoning. If you want to understand the way people think about their world and how those definitions are formed you need to get close to them, to hear them talk and observe them in their day-to-day lives" (1998, p. 32). Although the technique of in-depth interviewing is a strategy chosen to obtain data, we note this may be combined with observation techniques, as may be sensed in certain parts of data analysis (Arsenault & Anderson, 1998, p. 119; King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 19). Arsenault and Anderson qualify this component with the term "Applied", referring to research "concerned with addressing problems of the world as they are perceived by participants, organizations or groups of people. Applied research is action-oriented and aims to assess, describe, document or inform people concerned about the phenomena under investigation. Findings are intended to have an immediate and practical value" (1998, p. 121). Since this exploratory study is based upon its possible utility for a school's policies and practices regarding ongoing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, pertinence of the Arsenault and Anderson viewpoint may be considered as useful and practical.
Strengths of qualitative methodology necessary for proposed research relate to this study’s search for components of conceptions of actors. “L’analyse de type qualitatif visera la meilleure interprétation possible des faits sociaux tels qu’ils sont vécus par les personnes directement concernées, soit les chercheurs et les chercheuses, et les sujets de recherche” (Bouchard, 1994, p. 6). Knowledge gained for this exploratory study, using qualitative methods, takes account of “invisibilité de la vie quotidienne” in the sense of its being customarily glossed over and not analysed, investigates “détails concrets de la pratique”, considers “les significations que les événements prennent pour les gens d’un milieu donné” in that one can learn natures of differences in viewpoints of people supposedly involved in similar roles, and learns how to relate an organization with its socio-economic setting (Lessard-Hébert, Goyette, & Boutin, 1995, pp. 27-28). While qualitative methods of gathering data by interviews puts the interviewer-researcher into the world of the interviewee, this study is done with full realization that the role of the researcher in the process is always a question, especially regarding validity of data so gathered because of characteristics of the researcher vis-à-vis the interviewee (Savoie-Zaje, 1997, pp. 281-282). While other writers admit “a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues that do not attend quantitative approaches”, which “can be sorted into technical ones that address entry and efficiency in terms of role, and interpersonal ones that capture the ethical and personal dilemmas that arise (always!) during the conduct of a study” (italics are authors’, Marshall & Rossman, 1995, pp. 59-60), this researcher thinks types of strategic, ethical and personal issues are equally present in quantitative-type studies.

Ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological underlying assumptions are examined. Ontologically, it is understood that what parents, teachers and administrators reveal of their thoughts and experience of school-based parental educational responsibility may be understood as an actuality or reality. This researcher shares an observation that, in effect, “multiple realities exist in any given situation: the researcher, those individuals being investigated, and the reader or audience interpreting a study” (Creswell, 1994, pp. 4-6). Though the research process conceptualizes school-based parental educational responsibility in terms of group- or collective- and individual-types, several varieties of comprehension of what is involved in school-based parental educational responsibility will be stated. Epistemologically, we think, “the researcher
tries to minimize the distance between him- or herself and those being researched” (Ibid., p. 6). Since
the exploratory study begins, as it were, with public school personnel expectations of manifestation
of school-based parental educational responsibility components, it is important that individuals in
the sample group are heard in the context of ordinary public school daily life. Recognition is made
of the undeniable fact that interviews-in-depth processes taking place between a researcher and
individuals in the research sample chosen, in and of themselves, form phenomena not a part of
ordinary daily life for any interviewee and for other persons associated in any way with the research
site. In turn, this means that whatever may be said by any interviewee must, ultimately, be considered
in terms of its research context within processes of ordinary day-by-day school life. Axiologically,
material sought as parts of research data is value-laden. Here it is important to note a value difference
in data content as revealed to a researcher and to balance this with comprehending researcher values
and biases. Rhetorically, this researcher understands, “Words as understanding, discover, and
meaning formed the glossary of emerging qualitative terms” (Ibid., p. 6). Methodologically, this
researcher hopes, “inductive logic prevails. Categories emerge from informants” which “provides
rich ‘context-bound’ information leading to patterns or theories that help explain a phenomenon”
(Ibid., p. 7). On questions of accuracy, techniques such as triangulating can be used for coping with
different information sources.

For purposes of an exploratory study, points made by Johnson and Christiansen are felt to
support both Creswell (1994), and Marshall and Rossman (1995, pp. 142-152), and, as well, hit
home. “Qualitative researchers tend to rely on the inductive mode of the scientific method, and the
major research objective of this type of research is exploration or discovery. This means that
qualitative researchers generally study a phenomenon in an open-ended way, without prior
expectations, and they develop hypotheses and theoretical explanations that are based on their
interpretations of what they observe” (Johnson & Christiansen, 2000, p. 312). Official literature,
including statutory and regulation material, is readily obtainable detailing working interrelationships
among the Québec Ministry of Education, a pertinent school board and its various groups of
employees but this exploratory study ventures into assumption-laden, conceptual terrain where
unorganized parents live with ongoing interrelationships among organized groups herein mentioned.
Ten qualitative research characteristics based on Patton (1990) in Johnson and Christiansen (2000) further support this researcher’s determination to use qualitative methodology. Briefly, these ten characteristics tell of “studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally”; immersing in “data to discover important categories, dimensions, and interrelationships” (inductive); adopting a holistic perspective where, “The whole phenomenon under study is understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its parts”; using “... thick description ... capturing people’s personal perspectives and experiences”; directly contacting people whereby a “researcher’s personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry and critical to understanding the phenomenon”; attending to “process”; assuming “each case is special and unique”; realizing findings fit into a particular context “dubious of the possibility or meaningfulness of generalizations”; maintaining importance of “understanding the world in all its complexity” ahead of concern over “degrees of objectivity or subjectivity”; keeping an openness “to adapting inquiry as understanding deepens and/or situations change” (2000, p. 313).

The focus of this exploratory study is understanding parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions and comprehension of components of school-based parental educational responsibility. Analysis and other research-related work done with data is dedicated to gaining helpful understanding of such conceptions. For each of these three categories of persons, cognizance of a vast range of possible influencing factors must be made in analysing expressed ideas about school-based parental educational responsibility. A parent, for example, can be influenced by a host of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding themselves, their children and the school as well as by their children’s attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding them (their parents) and the school, and including what they think are the school’s attitudes, beliefs and behaviours regarding themselves, as parents, and their children.

3.2.2 Limitations of an Exploratory Study

In considering possible limitations of exploratory research, certain introductory remarks of respected writers this researcher thinks may be helpful are offered. Patton suggests a negative
(seemingly because a field may not be amenable to quantitative assessment or measures) reason for qualitative methodology itself where “for particular phenomena or outcomes, no acceptable, valid, and reliable measures exist” (2002, p. 192), reference here being made to research on phenomena like creativity, self-esteem and standardized achievement tests (Ibid., pp. 192-193). Referring to exploratory research itself, Patton argues, “In new fields of study where little work has been done, few definitive hypotheses exist and little is known about the nature of the phenomenon, qualitative inquiry is a reasonable beginning point for research” and later “Exploratory work of this kind is the way that new fields of inquiry are developed, especially in the policy area” (Ibid., p. 193). In explaining purposive sampling, Patton alerts the reader, “In the early part of qualitative fieldwork, the evaluator is exploring - gathering data and watching for patterns to emerge. Over time, the exploratory process gives way to confirmatory fieldwork” (Ibid., p. 239). Through the latter remark, this researcher realizes the pertinence of Strauss and Corbin work (1990) on the role of grounded theory for which one understands, “Grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon” (bold as in Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 24). A possible key to usefulness of a research relationship between exploratory research and grounded theory is,

“Also underlying this approach to qualitative research is the assumption that all of the concepts pertaining to a given phenomenon have not yet been identified, at least not in this population or place; or if so, then the relationships between the concepts are poorly understood or conceptually undeveloped. Or, perhaps there is the assumption that someone has never asked this particular research question in quite the same way, so it is as yet impossible to determine which variables pertain to this area and which do not. This reasoning creates the need for asking a type of question that will enable us to find answers to issues that seem important but remain unanswered” (Ibid., p. 37).

This researcher thinks the spirit of exploratory grounded theory research may be in appreciating that “discovery is our purpose, we do not have beforehand knowledge of all the categories relevant to our theory” (Ibid., p. 50). An initial limitation built in to the concept of exploratory research is a simple inability to suggest measurable extents of the significance of findings.
This study to find out parents', teachers' and administrators' conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility is based upon one Québec English-language public secondary school community research site. Validity of usefulness of the methodology and methods to determine the nature of these conceptions and how they may be shown to affect a school's policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, for transferability and generalizability may be questioned, but pertinent, particular results of data analysis would probably be more useful for stakeholders of the selected research site school community.

This exploratory study rests upon an idea of finding out what may lie behind forms, amounts and degrees of parental school-based participation/involvement in school life, earlier shown to be overwhelmingly viewed as significantly favourable for quality of student school-related attainments. We seek here to find components of the nature of school-based parental educational responsibility, as conceptualized by parents, teachers and school administrators, the chief actors, apart from the children/students themselves, among a school's stakeholders. Where school-based parental participation may frequently be observed, felt and described as being wide-ranging and accepted as both helpful, important and significant for the quality of a school's daily life, much of the meaning presently derived comes from official reports, documents, records, addresses or even manuals, such as that of Smith, Foster, and Donahue (2001). What this present study seeks is to find out what forms the construction of part of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility, from actors' words voicing conceptions of what school-based parental educational responsibility means.

Rather than undue focussing upon ideas of limitations of a type of legitimate research, both a researcher and a reader may consider helpful realistic possibilities for a school's policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

3.3.1 Research Significance

In Chapter One, the general topic of this exploratory research significance was broached. A connection between general significance and methodology is herein sought. While one may suggest
valid conceptualizations of how knowledge of parents', teachers' and administrators' conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities may be for development and/or continuing existence and/or evaluation of a given school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among a school's parents, children/students and school personnel, analysis of actual content of what is offered by interviewees in the data-gathering stage may open entirely unforeseen areas of research concern. 'Conclusions' can become possible beginnings for yet other inquiries.

In contextualizing present research significance, realization must be made of socio-economic and socio-cultural particularities of a selected research site. In this case, one examines conceptions of interviewees associated with a particular Québec English-language public secondary school community. Except for certain individual household circumstances and situations, parents interviewed would tend to have had parental experience of elementary school involvement of one kind or another, which experience may influence the nature and content of remarks made in these in-depth interviews. Not to be omitted is the realization that data-gathering took place at a particular time in the recent past and possible irrelevance of material gathered and analysed because of this time factor. Lastly one must recognize that data-gathering involved only certain people of many possible choices. Many parts of any research work involve processes of choice and selection.

3.3.2 Research Problem

A vast research, official and general literature enmeshes complementary and interrelated parental and school personnel educational rights and responsibilities topics. Québec public school personnel expect manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility to effectively carry on the daily school programme (curriculum and/or activities) of trying to attain school goals with and for students, a constituent part of which is described as a socialization task (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 3). With the significance of public school personnel expectations regarding the importance of the phenomenon of manifestation or demonstration of school-based parental educational responsibility in mind, assuming the continuing significance of the phenomenon for school socialization tasks, analysis of exploratory research data of parents', teachers' and administrators'
conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility (looking for content similarities, commonalities, differences inconsistencies, gaps) may help an individual school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Knowledge of kinds of similarities and differences found in parents’, teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility can only help all stakeholders’ to understand each other more helpfully.

Acceptance is requested of the inherent research weakness of the fact that any research-type investigation involving persons involved with any human organization is itself not usually a component of customary daily life for any subject involved. In turn, this means that any and all information gathered from research sample individuals must be understood as having been gathered in a research mode. Many attitudes, beliefs and behaviours forming part of ordinary daily life of interviewees may be made evident differently in a research situation. A prudent researcher may precede conclusions suggested with cautions about them arising from a research context of one kind or another.

3.3.3 Research Question

A hallmark of this in-depth interview exploratory study is on its purported utility in helping to comprehend the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility in relation to daily functioning of a Québec English-language public secondary school. It is herein argued that knowledge of school stakeholders of what parents, teachers and administrators of the research-site school conceptualize as parts of school-based parental educational responsibility is helpful for useful school policies and practices regarding ongoing interrelationships among a school’s parents, children/students and school personnel.

The research question is, “How do parents, teachers and administrators conceive of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility?” This question is subdivided in three subquestion sections as in the interview protocol appearing in an Appendix to this thesis.
A first subquestion section seeks interviewees’ conceptions of parenthood through contemplating their personal past as to their own experience of their parent(s) and how they conceive they gained useful knowledge for their own parenting responsibilities, relating particularly to school-based experience. Interviewees are also asked how they think parenting responsibilities have changed their personal lives. A second subquestion section requests interviewee responses to their present school-based parental educational responsibilities. For this section interviewees are requested to express what they think are their school-based parental educational experiences, in what ways they are involved, possible instances of school-based parental educational irresponsibilities, school-based parental educational responsibilities they do not enjoy, feel possibly inadequate about or even try to avoid. Questions also ask interviewees to discuss how they conceive of their present parenting responsibilities and present research-site-school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. The third and last subquestion section requests interviewee responses to possible helpful future changes or developments of school-based parental educational responsibilities and research-site-school policies and practices regarding helpful interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

How a person acts or behaves at any moment and how a person conceptualizes such acting or behaving are complex matters. Also complex is a design for eliciting helpful responses with an interrogatory pattern comprehensible and related to everyday life for various interviewees. The tripartite form comprising sub-questions is founded upon a basic past, present, future perception of interviewee conceptions. For the first part of the interview, understanding an interviewee’s conception of his/her personal development of conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility, sub-questions seek interviewees’ viewpoints of how they think they developed personal conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, in a context of relative influence of their parental figure(s) examples along with what interviewees see as their personally-formed ideas for school-based parental educational responsibilities. The chief point of the second part of the interview is an interviewee description of present-time conception of their own school-based parental educational responsibilities, in particular by describing how or in what ways they actually execute what they conceptualize as significant components of their school-based parental educational
responsibilities with relation to children/students for whom they are personally presently responsible and pertinent school personnel. The orientation of the third part of the interview is to seek an interviewee's personal ideas, in terms of perception of possible helpful changes or "improvements" in policies and practices relating to current interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel of the research-site secondary school. The researcher wanted to enable interviewees to differentiate presently-functioning policies and practices and development of possibly more desirable or helpful policies and practices governing interrelationships among parents, children/students and research-site secondary school personnel.

Throughout, no question exists about the rightful existence of the public school system and the evident desire of employed persons associated with the school to involve parents meaningfully in the ongoing daily life of the school. What is argued is that conclusions formed as a result of analysis of data gathered from interviewees may be significantly useful for effective and efficient school policies and practices involving interrelationships among the research-site school's parents, children/students and school personnel. It is further argued that questions like the research question have not previously been asked of the research-site school's stakeholders although an underlying, tacit assumption exists of widespread acceptance on the part of parents of a school's households of many components of what could be termed school-based parental educational responsibility, all without knowledge of the actuality of how this phenomenon is conceived or understood by the school's stakeholders.

3.4 Research Method

Within the general apology for employing a qualitative methodology, this researcher thinks a description of how data-gathering, analysis and other measures for giving this exploratory study form and substance is necessary. To be noted is an underlying question as to the most helpful geographical sites for gathering data, trying all the time to retain both a naturalness of context as well as encouragement for subjects to carefully fulfill the research demand for thoughtfully producing significant material to be eventually analysed to act as a background for valid research conclusions.
In-depth interview techniques are favoured for data-gathering for this exploratory study. Gordon (1992), Kantor (1995) and Savoie-Zajc (1997), for example, are seen to emphasize the exchange of information characteristic of interviewing in general. Gordon discusses involvement of twelve useful skills in interviewing, under headings of planning, doing, analyzing and reflecting (1992, pp. 3-7). This conceptualization enables one to adjust both interviewing style and formulation of questions because exchange implies meaningful information transmitted both ways, some of which may indicate a need for appropriate modifications in the style of interviewing and the nature of the questions. Kantor, this researcher observes, stresses, “unlike a lecture or an interrogation, an interview is an exchange of information. So, although one party may be called ‘interviewer’ and the other ‘interviewee’, both parties play both roles” (1995, p. xv). Savoie-Zajc, it is noted, defines an interview as “une interaction verbale entre deux personnes qui s’engagent volontairement dans pareille relation afin de partager un savoir d’expertise, et ce, pour mieux comprendre un phénomène d’intérêt pour les personnes impliquées” (1997, p. 265). Patton is thought helpful in arguing that “The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective. Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (2002, p. 341).

The nature of interviewer-interviewee relationships is a notable concern. Seidman, this researcher notes, ponders it at length as he advises avoiding a full “We” relationship by “saying enough about myself to be alive and responsive but little enough to preserve the autonomy of the participants’ words and to keep the focus of attention on his or her experience rather than mine” (1991, p. 73). One must recognize that in a case “to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient avenue of inquiry” (Ibid., p. 4). If interest is in participants’ subjective understanding, interviewing can be helpful (Ibid., p. 5). McCracken, helpfully, deals with similar problems, recognizing a necessity to “establish a relationship of substance and some kind of ‘connection’ with the respondent” and that “it is possible to allow the intimacy to obscure or complicate the task at hand” (1988, p. 26). For Patton, this researcher sees, “As an interviewer, I want to establish rapport with the person I am questioning, but that rapport must be established in such a way that it does not
undermine my neutrality concerning what the person tells me. Neutrality means that the person being interviewed can tell me anything without engendering either my favor or disfavor with regard to the content of her or his response” (2002, p. 365). In general, it is to be hoped that both interviewer and interviewee mutually learn helpful things from each other.

Advantages of interviews are numerous. Thomas and Brubaker reinforce values of the entire interview strategy. They are observed to claim interviews value respondents’ opinions and the interest shown “can enhance the diligence and care with which interviewees answer questions” (2000, p. 154). Clarification of points, amplification and possibly pertinent digressions can be helpful. Above all, “interviews can provide an in-depth understanding of a respondent’s motives, pattern of reasoning and emotional reactions that is not possible with questionnaires” (Ibid.). As Taylor and Bogdan point out, “Qualitative interviewing has been referred to as nondirective, unstructured, nonstandardized, and open-ended interviewing. We use the phrase in-depth interviewing to refer to the qualitative research method” (1998, p. 88). Further, the latter writers claim that the interviewer is the research tool and that “the role entails not merely obtaining answers but learning what questions to ask and how to ask them” (Ibid.). Marshall and Rossman emphasize a purposeful role for interviews. They claim it of importance that “the participant’s perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it” (1995, p. 80).

Helpful with necessary sampling dimensions, Johnson and Christensen suggest that, for understanding experience of an item like parental educational responsibility, “in-depth interviews with up to 10 people” (2000, p. 314) are appropriate. “In-depth information of a participant’s thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about a topic” may be gained (Ibid., p. 144). With Johnson and Christensen’s typology, this exploratory study involves a judicious combination of the informal conversational interview category to allow discussion of the interview topic and following “all leads that emerge during the discussion” (Ibid.) and the interview guide approach because “topics and questions are provided on an interview protocol” (Ibid.). An interviewer may vary the order and alter wording of questions in the protocol, if necessary (Ibid.).
Particular note must be made that this exploratory study research is described as being based upon the idea of understanding more about school stakeholders’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. This serves to help gain some understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility conceptualized, in part, without consideration of intervention of exterior organized groups and the nature of the relationship between parents and schools which children attend for a programme in an organized educational institution. Interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel do influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviours in the several domestic situations whence students come each school day and whither they daily return. A reader should be aware of the ongoing interchange of influences of both the effects of household cultural situations of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours upon public school daily life and effects of public school cultural situations of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours upon daily life of households.

This exploratory research study seeks some understanding of parents’, teachers’ and school administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. A reader becomes aware of an ongoing interchange of influences of both effects of household attitudes, beliefs and behaviours situations upon public school daily life and of public school attitudes, beliefs and behaviours situations upon daily life of households and individuals of households. Because an ongoing interchange of influences is recognized, a question may linger as to the motivation source for parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ viewpoints. Responses may spring partly from concern of an interviewee for more effective functioning of his/her parent, teacher or administrator role and from concern for effective interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. While entities denominated as households may exist and carry on as households without consideration of teachers and administrators and their schools, activities of teachers’ and administrators’ daily school lives and a school’s daily life require parental and household input of various kinds. Verbal expression of parents’, teachers’ and an administrator’s conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities reveals key ingredients to be considered for effective and efficient policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
3.4.1 General Research Method Design

The general design or plan of this exploratory study involved three processes. First, data was gathered through seven in-depth interviews with a total of nine persons. The nine persons interviewed included one secondary school administrator, a male and a female secondary school teachers and six parents of secondary school students.

Secondly, tape-recorded spoken data was transcribed, word for word. A lengthy narrative description of each interview was then written. This interview and descriptive data were then analysed, using grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in an effort to arrive at a conceptual point where hypothesising becomes possible.

Thirdly, certain conclusions, based upon the analysed data, were set down, as clearly and succinctly as possible. The conclusions are also used in a reflective manner in the final chapter.

The process was intended to be straightforward because an intention is that conclusions may be useful for stakeholders of the research-site school to consider for developing, continuing with or evaluating policies and practices regarding ongoing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

3.4.2 Research Context, Site and Subjects

The jurisdictional context for this exploratory study is that of a single Québec English-language, public secondary school and the household community from which students attend daily. The school board responsible for daily operation of the research-site school is the Commission scolaire Eastern Townships, a board having 20 elementary schools, 3 secondary schools, 1 Alternative School, 2 Adult Education Centres and 2 Vocational Education Centres. An appreciation of the breadth of the geographical area from which students attend is a statement that the board school buses travel over 16,000 kilometres daily. Nine elementary schools’ graduates attend the
research-site school, with the addition of newly-registered secondary school students and, occasionally, a student from outside the nine ‘feeder’ schools because of a study programme available only at the research-site school.


A board publicity sheet says, “Naturally, parents are the most welcome part of the community! We encourage our students’ parents and guardians to be involved in their local school to foster creative, collaborative relationships”. The same sheet later states, “We maintain our community commitment through publicly elected commissioners, parent representatives and other local volunteers” and “With the constant interactions amongst stakeholders, important vision and decisions are arrived at in a collaborative and collegial manner” (2002).

Subjects who were approached and were also interviewees were the school principal, a single female teacher having no children at her residence, a married male teacher with two children, mothers and fathers of two households, a married mother with children and a divorced mother of a secondary school student. Each in-depth interview lasted approximately one and a half hours. Willingness of all interviewees contacted to be interviewed on the subject of this particular research idea constituted a formidable positive feature. Before participating in an interview, each interviewee read and signed an interview consent form, a copy of which appears in the appendix to this chapter.

3.4.3 Sampling

Sampling is complex for a researcher who is “the principal data collection instrument” in qualitative research (Anderson, 1998, p. 123; Creswell, 1994, p. 145, to similar effect). This exploratory study elicited material from parents, teachers and an administrator of one Québec
English-language public secondary school to find out their conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. A single secondary school was selected for purposes of validity and transferability of research results. Since policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel are generated for purposes of one school, usefulness of data obtained by in-depth interviews of stakeholders of one school are probably limited to that school. Research results concepts, however, may be useful for other research sites, as well as data assembly techniques, analysis and utilization methods of research results.

For utility purposes of a selected school, a fair representation of school personnel would increase validity. Likewise, for practical uses of a school, would be possible differences and inconsistencies within the responsible legal adult guardian pair or group of a household. Since interviews were ‘in-depth’ and each of about one and one-half hour’s duration, the total of six interviews is in accordance with various text paradigms (Johnson & Christensen, 2000, p. 314). Taylor and Bogdan, however, helpfully say, “Neither the number nor the type of informants needs to be specified beforehand. The researcher starts out with a general idea of which people to interview and how to find them, but is willing to change course after the initial interviews” (1998, p. 92). Seidman offers criteria of sufficiency “to reflect the range of participants and sites that make up the population so that others outside the sample might have a chance to connect with the experiences of those in it” and of saturation or an interviewer realizing he/she “is no longer learning anything new” (1991, p. 45). Lastly, “the criteria of sufficiency and saturation are useful, but practical exigencies of time, money, and other resources also play a role, especially in doctoral research” (Ibid.). In a similar vein, Savoie-Zajc claims, “Toutefois, au fur et à mesure que la recherche progresse, cet échantillon est révisé; le chercheur se donne même la possibilité d’inclure d’autres participants” (2000, p. 180). Creswell suggests, “The idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select informants . . . that will best answer the research question. No attempt is made to randomly select informants” (bold as in1994, p. 148). He further advises careful consideration of setting, actors, events, process (Ibid., p. 149). Babbie specifies characteristics of purposive or judgmental sampling (1992, pp. 230-231). For identifying certain elements of the target population, preliminary interviews with a population subset can be helpful (Babbie, 1992, p. 230). Bogdan and Biklen suggest simply,

Persons interviewed are associated with one school and its community. The decision to use a secondary school site was made. Parents of secondary school children may have a child at an elementary school but their experience with school-age children is probably long for most have had at least six years' experience dealing with, at least, legislated aspects of parent-school interrelationships regarding governing boards and other official school bodies as well as frequent school attendance provisions, completion of various written forms and attendance at parent-teacher interviews as well as experience of unofficial responsibilities like homework assistance, moral support and giving time to school classroom needs and other school-related needs and wants. More capacity for reflection on the parent role is possible. Ranges of viewpoints on school-based parental educational responsibility may be influenced by gender, age, self-esteem, culture, socio-economic status, variations of parental domestic designs, all factors not influenced by the school principally and by school-based items like success of offspring, among others. Attention is given to possible ranges of parent viewpoints in selecting parent interviewees.

Numerous points about samples must be considered. Seidman reminds us that, “The job of an in-depth interviewer is to go to such depth in the interviews that surface considerations of representativeness and generalizability are replaced by a compelling evocation of an individual’s experience” (1991, p. 42). As to connectivity, “the researcher may find connections among the experiences of the individuals he or she interviews” (Ibid.). Then, “by presenting the stories of participants’ experience, interviews open up for readers the possibility of connecting their own stories to those presented in the study” (Ibid.). Evidently, understanding the complexities of a situation takes preference over a reader being able to respond directly to an interviewee’s story. LeCompte and Preissle introduce criterion-based sampling (1993, pp. 69-78) and probabilistic sampling (Ibid., pp. 79-82). Helpful is, “Most educational research is a complex combination of the variants of criterion-based selection and probabilistic sampling. Choice of selection and sampling strategies depends on
the goals and questions formulated by a researcher, the nature of the empirical unit to be studied, the overall theoretical and conceptual frameworks informing the study, and the credibility intended or sought by the researcher in generalizing or comparing obtained results” (Ibid., pp. 83-84).

Careful reading reveals, for parents to interview, because a single school could represent at least two hundred households, a form of quota selection because of its conceptual proximity to unfeasible comprehensive selection (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 72). “Quota selection provides a subset that approximates a population. It does not supply the precise representation provided by random and systematic sampling, but the selected units do correspond to relevant dimensions characterizing the population” (Ibid., p. 77). Patton, calling criterion-based sampling “maximum variation sampling” (1990, p. 172), claims the heterogeneity weakness as an asset: “Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects of a program” (Ibid.). A researcher here is “looking for information that elucidates programmatic variation and significant common patterns within that variation” (Ibid.). Along with the foregoing sampling criteria, systematic probabilistic sampling would be used (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 78-79). Parents of four school households were selected. In two interview cases, both parents made themselves available as interviewees: a reader should be conscious of possible constraints to freedom of expression on the part of each parent in such cases.

A credibility hazard of small samples is remarked upon by Patton (1990): “...the utility and credibility of small purposeful samples are often judged on the basis of the logic, purpose, and recommended sample size of probability sampling. What should happen is that purposeful samples be judged on the basis of the purpose and rationale of each study and the sampling strategy used to achieve the study’s purpose. The sample, like all other aspects of qualitative inquiry, must be judged in context - the same principle that undergirds analysis and presentation of qualitative data” (p. 185). He adds that a researcher should also “discuss how the sample affected the findings, the strengths and weaknesses of the sampling procedures, and any other design decisions that are relevant for interpreting and understanding the reported results” (Ibid., p. 186). Pertinence of extensive
commentary on sampling procedures remains problematic. Significance of what is accomplished with available data remains important.

Interviewees represented parents, teachers and an administrator associated with a single Québec English-language public secondary school. The administrator is the male school principal (teacher) of more than five years’ standing, as well a husband and father of two former students of the research-site school. He is assisted with administration responsibilities for the school of about one thousand students by two vice-principals, one male and one female.

One teacher is a mid-thirties, married female, with no children, of more than five years’ standing, involved in both classroom teaching and extra-curricular school activities. This teacher is demonstrably thoughtfully concerned about students of her classes and about the quality of daily secondary-school life.

A second teacher is a mid-forties married male, with two younger children, of more than ten years’ standing, involved in both classroom teaching and extra-curricular school sports. He is also markedly thoughtfully concerned about students of his classes and about the quality of daily secondary school life.

Two parent interviewees are married, in their late forties, the mother and father of three children, two of whom are presently students of the research-site school. Both parents are very aware of their children’s daily school life, its associated student rights and responsibilities. The father is a school-board employee, having security work responsibility at the research-site school. The mother is a stay-at-home person, though involved in parent group activities at an elementary school.

A third parent interviewee is a divorced mother, in her late forties, a mother of children, one of whom is a research-site school student. She is an aware and concerned parent who has been a member of at least one school-related parent committee. She is cognizant of individuals and groups involved in the running of the research-site school.
The fourth parent interviewee is married, in her late forties, a mother of children, at least two of whom are research-site school students. This woman is an elementary school employee, responsible for specially assigned students with particular learning and other disabilities. She is very aware of her children’s school-related rights and responsibilities, concerned with the quality of daily secondary school life, through the lives of her children.

The fifth and sixth parent interviewees were a woman employed by a financial institution and a man independently employed in his restaurant-café, parents of two students of the research-site secondary school. Neither parent takes part in any collective parental school-based activities. Each parent is very concerned about how a secondary school helps to prepare students for either further studies or for entering the labour force.

Interviews for school personnel were held at the research-site school and, for one teacher, at another school site. Parent interviews were held at parents’ homes except for the third parent interviewee who was interviewed in a university library discussion room. Each interview was tape-recorded, from which recordings verbatim transcriptions were prepared. The transcriptions were then employed as bases for carefully-structured narrative interview descriptions, all with a view to provision of suitable material for analytical examination.

How a person acts or behaves at any moment and how a person conceptualizes such acting or behaving are complex matters also complex is a design for eliciting helpful responses with an interrogatory pattern comprehensible, comprehensive and related to everyday life for various interviewees. The tripartite form comprising subquestions is founded upon a basic past, present, future perception of interviewee conceptions, explained in Section 3.3.3 of the thesis.

Throughout, no question exists about the rightful existence of the public school system and the evident desire of employed persons associated with the school to involve parents meaningfully in the ongoing daily life of the school. What is argued is that conclusions formed as a result of analysis of data gathered from interviewees may be significantly useful for effective and efficient
school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among the research-site school's parents, children/students and school personnel. It is further argued that questions like the research question have not previously been asked of the research-site school's stakeholders although an underlying tacit assumption exists of widespread acceptance on the part of parents of a school's households of many components of what could be termed school-based parental educational responsibility, all without knowledge of the actuality of how this phenomenon is conceived or understood by the school's stakeholders.

3.5 Data Analysis

The main question to be answered in this explanatory chapter is how answers to the principal research question may be revealed in such a manner that this researcher can show how parents, teachers and administrators conceptualize school-based parental educational responsibility. Throughout, a question may linger: What do words offered the researcher, in this instance on school-based parental educational responsibility, actually mean in relation to answering the chief research question?

Each verbatim in-depth interview transcription or transposition formed the basis for a narrative description of each principal interview component, through which a reader may follow the course of each interview and read in an orderly fashion what each interviewee said in response to questions asked. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) make helpful introductory remarks:

"Documents of experience can be content analyzed, that is, themes, issues, and recurring motifs within them can be isolated, counted, and interpreted. Alternatively, such documents can be read as narratives, or stories, wherein the researcher analyzes the narrative, temporal, and dramatic structures as a text, forsaking the rigor of counting, for a close, interpretive reading of the subject matter at hand. This reading can be supplemented by the semiotic method, which searches for oppositions, categories, and linguistic structures in the text" (pp. 358-359).

Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994) examine the matter more closely. Narrative analysis, they claim, is "loosely formulated", taking "the perspective of the teller", meaning that "themes, principal
metaphors, definitions of narrative, defining structures of stories . . . and conclusions are often defined poetically and artistically and are quite context bound” (p. 465). Certain semiotic approaches, they say, may provide ways to examine and analyze a narrative but “The process of linking or connecting expression and content is social and depends upon the perspective of the observer. A sign is essentially incomplete because it requires an interpretant, or context” (Ibid., p. 466). Noted is a caution that, “As meanings collect under an ideological canopy, unpacking them becomes more complex and problematic, and knowing the culture becomes essential” (Ibid., p. 467). Thus, these writers aver,

“Content and narrative analysis struggle continuously with the problem of context as the embeddedness of a text or story within personal or group experience. Semiotics seizes on signs and how they mean, obviating the question of experience, the self, and much of the Western attitude toward literature and the social sciences. Emphasis shifts to codes, paradigms, and explanations for the ordered meaning of a text, rather than the character, biography, or intent of the writer or subject of the writing” (Ibid., p. 474).

Briefly, what an interviewee has ‘said’ may not correspond entirely with what he/she ‘meant’.

Despite possible interminable discussion of interpretation processes, actual school-based interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel continue. The research-site school policies and practices regarding such interrelationships carry on. With the wording of the principal research question and sub-questions of the interview protocol in mind, realizing the research project is in the nature of an exploratory study, useful uncovering of how parents, teachers and administrators conceptualize school-based parental educational responsibility is attempted. One looks for comparisons, contrasts, gaps, inconsistencies, agreement and disagreement areas respecting nature, possible backgrounds and implications of policy and practice recognition, in order to stress convergences, divergences and what may be opposing forces along with reasons for them.

Patton’s point about data analysis is pertinent: “Because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach used will be unique. Because qualitative inquiry depends, at every stage, on the skills, training, insights, and capabilities of the researcher, qualitative analysis ultimately depends on
the analytical intellect and style of the analyst” (1990, p. 372). One may also note Taylor and Bogdan: “The reason why so many people find qualitative analysis so difficult is that it is not fundamentally a mechanical or technical process; it is a process of inductive reasoning, thinking, and theorizing” (1998, p. 140). Full realization of issues like “labor-intensiveness (and extensiveness over months or years) of data collection, processing and coding data, the adequacy of sampling when only a few cases can be managed, the generalizability of findings, the credibility and quality of conclusions, and their utility in the world of policy and action” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.2) must be acknowledged.

This writer sees ‘analysis’ as a process in operation from the commencement of a work of proposed research, beginning with the very idea of selection in a person’s mind of a situation or phenomenon which captures a human’s attention for any one or more of innumerable possible reasons. At least four processes for data gathering and treatment may be discerned. The first process is that of deciding the optimal type of research unit with preliminary rationalization of time and other resources needed for assembling data.

Secondly, arrangements for in-depth interviews with stakeholders constitute a form of analysis in that productive and helpful interviews require thoughtful selection of subject-persons as well as careful choices of interview sites and times. When a researcher hopes research results involve actual helpful measures for school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, a general attitude of gratitude for the time and effort taken by subjects is prominent.

A third analysis process is the actual carrying out of in-depth interviews. A consensus of desire and intent that interview sessions be diligently executed has been experienced.

The data-analysis process involving data treatment, is complex. Acknowledgment of helpful suggestions of respected research methods writers is readily made although, for practical purposes, reference is herein made to only one or two.
Within the analysis process, school-based parental educational responsibility is, *a priori*, understood as having two dimensions, collective and individual. Collective responsibilities are generated legislatively and by regulation, involving parental participation to form and/or be on official school bodies. Individual responsibilities are partly legislated, like the injunction to support frequent school attendance and parental rights and duties outlined in the Quebec Civil Code. Other individual responsibilities are unofficial, like helping with student homework and other school-related tasks, talking positively at home and in the community about school matters, volunteering help for school personnel, sports coaching and supporting school cultural and athletic events. Responses should increase knowledge of perceptions of stakeholders about school-based parental educational responsibility.

The context of data analysis relates to generation of grounded theory, inspired principally by work of Strauss and Corbin (1990), previously referred to in this study on page 66, and associated works of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978) and Strauss (1987). Other works like those of Taylor and Bogdan’s typology with attendant propositions (1998, p. 147) and Johnson and Christensen’s hierarchical categorization (2000, pp. 434 - 437) can also be particularly helpful. Techniques of coding, axial coding, selective coding regarding core categories, meaningful linking of sequences because of possible changes in conditions, responses and/or consequences of such changes following logical sequences on the path of inductively generating meaningful grounded theory are extensively discussed in Strauss and Corbin (1990, pp. 96 - 142). All analysis work of this type may lead to possible hypotheses formation springing from perceived research conclusions of this present study.

This exploratory study sought to examine and analyse parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Norms and assumptions associated with norms regarding school-based parental educational responsibilities may be numerous. From narrative descriptions of interview transcriptions, however, conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities elicited that the nature of patterns found through examining convergences and divergences (Patton, 2002, pp. 462-466) among conceptions expressed, may be detected.
Through careful consideration of perceived commonalities, contrasts, oppositions, contradictions and gaps of conceptions expressed on the precise topic of school-based parental educational responsibilities, helpful understanding of parental, teacher and administrator conceptions provide material to be studied for generating, continuing and/or evaluating school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. From an understanding of parents’, teachers’ and administrators’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, development of an “inductively derived theory about a phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 24) is ventured for possible future research projects.

3.6 Conclusion

It is hoped the material presented for this chapter helps a reader to comprehend the background to and the processes whereby the researcher progresses from data-gathering to data-analysis, to eventually reach a stage where valid and helpful research conclusions may be ventured. For an exploratory study, the emphasis is on uncluttered steps taken with a realization of having no valid preconceived ideas of the form and content of concepts revealed through this exploratory study.

The following chapter marks the commencement of the second part of this research study. First is a presentation of an introduction to this study’s data analysis. Data analysis itself involves four chapters. Chapters four, five and six treat data contributed in relation to interviewee conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility on a past, present and future basis while the seventh chapter deals with itemization of a wealth of material on the core subject of the study. An eighth chapter involves concluding discussion of data revelations in relation to literature studied.
PART TWO

Data Analysis and Discussion

Data Analysis Introduction

Analysis of research data obtained from nine interviewees during seven in-depth interviews may be regarded as part of a process of experiencing and examining, chiefly, mental impressions of deeds and words which, in turn, bestow a variety of comprehension of the present research phenomenon, namely, to explore the understanding of parents’, teachers’ and an administrator’s conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. Analysis of interviewees’ words seeks to clarify this researcher’s mental impressions of responses to questions, the primary intent of which was to request verbal expression of interviewees’ personal conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. What may be herein elucidated, in its turn, will leave this researcher and a reader with yet other mental impressions of the interviewees’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility as a further step in perhaps helping both formation and/or continuation and/or evaluation of effective policies and practices regarding useful interrelationships among parents, children/students and personnel of a single English-language Québec public secondary school. Some mental impressions left upon the researcher and a reader of this work may form a basis for future research work on the theme of parental educational responsibility in relation to educational responsibilities of other persons carried out at different times in the life experiences of children/students.

In-depth interviews followed a tripartite format, based upon past, present and future perceptions of interviewees’ lives. The central, key interview question is that introducing the second or ‘present’ section of each interview, a question requesting an interviewee to describe what he/she thinks the expression ‘school-based parental educational responsibility’ means. One may regard the three parts of each interview as bearing closely, each in its own way, upon that central question.

Data gathering contexts can affect research. The interview process itself is an unusual
occurrence of ordinary daily life for both researcher and interviewees. Recognition is made that simply being asked to participate in an in-depth interview, agreeing to become involved, the site and time for each interview, the bearing of what has transpired for both researcher and interviewee during the interview day and other former events may affect both what is spoken and how it is spoken. All analysis commentary thereon admits attentiveness to this caution. In addition one may sense that interviewees were asked not only to respond to certain particular questions formulated for all interviews but were also challenged to contemplate a collection of particular responsibilities as parts of a very significant phenomenon of many adult lives. Regarding the foregoing point, because of the prominent presence in our lives of schools as highly-organized educational (pedagogical, instructional) institutions, and general societal unquestioning acceptance of childhood attendance and other kinds of support for these institutions, the idea of school-based parental educational responsibility having dimensions beyond school-initiated and organized programmes and activities may be ephemeral for many interviewees. Vigour of a school-home relationships tends to be greater than that of any home-school relationship.

Within each of the following three analysis chapters, the format will be similar. The presentation of analysis from data gathered involves (1) presentation of a description of interviewees’ singular experiences, (2) an analytical interpretation of the sense of the experiences so expressed and (3) a preliminary and tentative categorization. An inductive approach will be employed to explore interviewees’ actual conceptions of what they understand of their school-based parental educational responsibilities as well as ideas which may be presented of the phenomenon in general.
Chapter Four

Analysis of Interview Data, Part One (The Past)

Introduction

Part One of each interview requests interviewees to express ideas drawn from interviewees’ past school-based experiences with their parents and interviewees’ life situations leading to their present parenting practices, emphasizing school-based parental educational responsibilities.

The principal research sub-question regarding interviewees’ past was “What do you consider the dominant influences on formation of your present experience of parenting, in particular related to interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel?” The idea was to help an interviewee to consider the formation of his/her viewpoints forming a background for presently-operating conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility. Interviewees were requested to express their experience of their own childhood household in so far as their adult caregivers (parent(s)) were concerned with ‘parental’ educational responsibility and to express ideas they themselves consider they learned either themselves, from their parents or from other persons in other situations about parenting in general and relations between their parenting and the experience interviewees have of their offspring attending school.

Presence and parts of interviewee parents’ school-based support are beheld with evidence of both actual school presence-involvement in school-related activities and domestically-based non-school-presence situations. Examination of responses to questions of Part One (The Past) of interviews should not, necessarily, reveal elements of patterns based upon administrator, teacher or parent categorization because the chief intent of Part One questions was simply to help interviewees contemplate the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility by recounting experiences of earlier times in their lives in order to see it as something, the performance or lack of which, may have affected them as their own social life continued with friends, partnerships, marriages, upbringing of children and careers.
Interest may be found, in Chapter Five on The Present analysis, by examining possible connections in individual interviewee situations between what was said of their parents' performance of school-based parental educational responsibility and their present conceptions of components of their personal school-based parental educational responsibility.

4.1 Interviewees' Singular Reported Experiences

First, what interviewees reported of parental performance of school-based parental educational responsibility is presented. This is followed by pertinent analytical commentary and a tentative categorization of data.

The administrator, Interview #1, ventured, “My parents always saw education as being a priority and they were always very supportive and also always applied a little bit of pressure for us to do well in school”. Further, one reads, “When they could, in the earlier years, they were very involved in our homework in helping if we needed the help and as we went on into the high school they were always willing to provide support as encouragement and compassion when we find things that were difficult”. “They went to parent-teacher interviews”, “It was never an issue of whether the school was right or I was right” and “There was an expectation that things at the school were going to be dealt with at the school” constitute the heart of the administrator’s recollections of his parents’ school-based parental educational responsibility. We note an administrative mind sorting out clear compartmentalization of household and school fields of activity, yet acknowledging relationships between them.

The female teacher, Interview #2, early on said “They (parents) were very involved in my schooling”. In greater detail, “my mother was on the school committee and my father was on the school committee through my high school. They were involved in things I participated in at school, things like a play, soccer games at high school, art activities, anything that I was involved in.” For academic aspects, “At school they came to parent-teacher nights. They talked with me after parent-
teacher nights to do with what my teachers had said, and also if it was from their own perceptions of me and how I was doing at school or what interested me. If they thought there was a problem, they contacted the teachers with whom I was experiencing the problem or difficulties”. In conclusion, we note, “I always thought my parents were very interested or were aware of what was going on at school, which went better because of my extra-curricular involvement”.

The male teacher, Interview #3, was terse. “Their idea of parenting was just drop us off at the school and felt it was the responsibility of the school to do all our education, to teach us to read, write, math” and “My parents came to every parent interview to discuss my academics and were quite severe with some of the teachers because they always wanted me to push ahead but the school never allowed that to happen with me” deal with the academic side. Items like “...every sports event that I was involved in, my parents were usually always there” shows support for general school effort.

A mother and father, Interview #4, couple spoke of their parents’ support for schools but in a very domestically-based way. The mother said, “I remember my parents being willing to help with schoolwork and with homework, more on an elementary level but also in high school. I think that when I got to high school they kind of found that the subjects had changed so much that they weren’t as capable of helping with math or that type of thing but they were, they were always eager to help when they could”. In contrast, the father said, “My mum played more of a tutoring part than my dad. My dad seemed to come home from work zonked, not unwilling but you sort of never awoke the sleeping giant. It really, he sort of left Mum holding the bag and Mum would help us a lot”.

The presently single mother, Interview #5, allowed parents as being “very supportive of my education, a lot of our education” and they “helped with homework” though “mainly my mother, went to parent-teacher interviews for us to find out how we were doing”.

A mother and wife, Interview #6, observed “Parenting today and parenting of yesteryears is very different”. Later, she declared, “My parents were always...my father particularly was always very involved in our extra-curricular activities that were non-sportive. My mother was always a
willing soul to help with homework and things but, even at that time, talking twenty or thirty years ago, when I was in school, even at that point, my parents would look at our homework and say, ‘Oh, Gee, I don’t know how to do that’” and “My parents were involved when it was their interest”.

Of a second mother and father pair, Interview #7, the mother recounted, “Well, what I recall was, . . ., my parents never said, ‘Well, school’s important to finish’. I don’t know, I never felt comfortable in school, very, very uneasy feeling in school”. She also said, “My parents always thought the school was right, always, so they supported the school that way”. The father added, “I found school back then more discipline than there is now”. Significantly for the present, the father also said, “Back then we never thought about going to college either. Very seldom did I ever hear anyone talk about college. It was a big thing to get through high school. Well. No, pretty well went with the school. It was a lot different then. Like, where I went to school my parents knew all the teachers. They pretty well knew before I got home what I did that day”. For both mother and father, neither sets of their parents attended parent-teacher interviews; on this matter, the mother said, “Not my parents. No. No” and the father, “I don’t remember that”.

The two remaining questions of Part One asked interviewees, first to recount experiences leading to becoming a parent, including possible plans about children and, second, to express viewpoints on changes in their activities and responsibilities brought about by raising children.

The school principal, #1, and his wife were both employed in the school milieu. Key were, “but certainly with our children, as far as they were concerned, we supported the school and we supported them but never in an adversarial situation with the school. If they felt wronged in any way, we tried to get them to see there was more to it than what they could see and there was probably a good reason why the school was with the teachers or the principals for that matter”. Connecting parents and schools, he said, “parental responsibilities relating to schooling, No, I don’t think it changed anything. Parenting changes everything, changes our lifestyle, changes how we approach things but I can’t really equate it with school.” Further, he added, “Having had children of my own I’m sure has helped because I mean I’ve seen my children go through all the stages right up until
they're young adults now. So, certainly, that has helped me to see that even the most quiet child in the school setting can have little fits of anger and temper tantrums". The latter point is further explored by, "On the home front, I think that all parents experience that and, likewise, that someone may be very quiet at home may be not so quiet here in school". A difference is made between parenting and teaching with the observation that "to have your own children adds another dimension". To be noted is that the principal does not display a need or desire to see what parenting and teaching share, in terms of raising children.

The female teacher, #2, married but not a parent, argues that a team approach on the part of parents, even if they're separated or divorced, is helpful for children.

Interviewee #3, the male teacher, admitted personal strong-mindedness, holding off from parenting because "I wanted my kids to have every opportunity they could get in the world today" and "I'm very strong-minded on giving my children all the advantages and getting them involved in a number of things. I sort of feel that the way to educate them and keep them interested is to do lots of activities with them". The latter point meant "I've sort of erred in the side of doing too many things. My kids are involved in numerous sports, too many. We're always running with them but I can always see that they're growing as they do their activities".

For the mother and father, #4, "our habits probably changed" and "as far as actually becoming a parent, we planned that we wanted to have children and wanted to have that experience, to give them a good home and a good childhood and enjoy them as much as we could". For this pair, the smooth running of the domestic scene is of great importance. Homework is a priority. "We do activities that are family-oriented." "It doesn't take long for your kids to know that you care and you want them to do well, that we care for them and love them and want the best for them". Life in general, including school, should reflect ideals of the home, according to this mother and father.

The divorced mother, #5, observed, "I was working all the time and I wanted to be part of their growing up and what they did learn and I wanted to try and give them some values; not just the
learning part but the interaction”. Appreciative realization of the significance of strong home-school connection is evident.

A plethora of material was contributed by the mother, #6. For her, life certainly changed with a family. “I think parenting is the hardest job in the world. Sometimes you do it well. sometimes you don’t. You have to learn from your experiences”. This parent remained at home for her children’s elementary school years, feeling it was both a right and a responsibility. For this study, a pertinent observation is that for teenagers, “a lot of the times, the academic part of the school just is not the major focus. The social aspect, which is the hardest thing for them. Interrelationships”. She also sees great differences between her teenage years and those of her children.

For the mother and father, #7, “school is very important and not just finishing high school but also to go on to college”. Children mean, “Two more responsibilities that we have to deal with, their character and so on and so forth”. Lifestyles have changed “And as far as activities, well, some, it has changed our life in activities but these are the kids of the future so sometimes it’s a small price to pay to give up some activities for our kids to profit in the future”. Like the mother of #6, these parents feel they learn from their experience. “And now we know how our parents could have felt and I also think we’ve learnt from it”.

With the foregoing rigorous presentation of response data for Part One of the interviews, an interpretation of the individual interviewees’ experience may help in forming categorizations.

4.2 Analytical Interpretation of Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

An introductory observation may be ventured in that all interviewees share their parents’ non-questioning of both the existence of the public school as an institution and its demands, mostly in the tacit form of said schools’ expectations that children/students were to be regularly present, cared for with understandably different viewpoints on physical and mental components of such care and, in appropriate ways, readied to take part in the daily school programme (curriculum and/or activities). Interviewees also reveal their parents’ support, in one or other ways, for a school’s educational
efforts, whether this involves school-presence involvement or home-situated involvement. Plain also is that the only interviewee who mentioned parental school-presence involvement in official types of committees was the female teacher, when a student from Sherbrooke, whose father was a university professor and mother comfortable in committee-type fora. This ability to function in committee-type activities is certainly seen as something of particular interest for very few parents. Factors of distance, city versus country and other items may be specified as reasons for many parents’ non-participation in school-sited official and other meeting groups but factors of feelings of inadequacy and other alienation items as well as hearsay about official groups functioning with mostly-pre-set agendas play big roles.

Shared by all interviewees, regarding memories of their parents’ school-based parental educational responsibilities, is a conceptual compartmentalization structure to help understanding of interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Parents’, children’s and a school’s rights and responsibilities are not perceived as enmeshed though they are connected. The view is of a society wherein the different components have their functional areas but descriptions of meaningful school-located activities of parents are missing, except for the #2 interviewee, both of whose parents seem comfortable with committee-type work and processes as a part of school daily life. Official and other possible school-located meeting group involvement is just not regarded by many parents as a significant or even required or expected part of school-based parental educational responsibility.

Most interviewees acknowledge their parents’ presence at school for student sports, arts and entertainment presentations and parent-teacher interviews. The fact that most spoke of school-located activities involving parental presence, with interviewee #6 specifying non-athletic school-located student extra-curricular activities as of interest to her father, shows this parental interest and presence stood out as meaningful and even significant for them, as students. Evident also is that for most interviewees’ parents, such school-located involvement was perceived as a kind of fulfilment of parental devotion to offspring’s education sectors of their lives. General respect by such parents of school institutions in general is plain.
Significance of the school institution, however, as a daily life factor for interviewees’ parents varied considerably, despite the previously noted broad acceptance of the school institution by community households. For the administrator’s parents, #1, completing school was seen as a necessity and continuing to university success was strongly encouraged. The male teacher, #3, stated clearly that his parents viewed the school as the agent chiefly responsible for ‘education’. In #6, the mother states clearly parental involvement “when it was in their interest”. For the mother and father of #7, it is stated that parents never voiced a viewpoint about the importance of finishing school. Such variety of viewpoints about the everyday experience of school on the part of interviewees’ parents alerts a reader to other divergent viewpoints as interviews proceed.

Differences exist also from data of varying degrees of comfort on the part of interviewee parents with their offspring (interviewees) coping with school. Mothers seem more at ease as being concerned with offspring’s school experiences and fathers in Interviews #4 and #5 are said, for differing reasons, to be not involved in children’s daily school life. Once again, there seems to be a way of coping with life by tacit compartmentalization of responsibilities.

4.3 Preliminary Categorization

From the first three paragraphs of 4.2, three recurring regularity revelations emanating from interview data of, (1) broad acceptance by households of the rightfulness of the school institution as a factor in lives of young people, (2) conceptual compartmentalization of parental, young people’s and school’s effort areas, these areas connected but not enmeshed, and (3) acknowledgment of meaning for young people of parental school-site presence for school sports, art and entertainment events, suggest a primary categorization may be warranted. Through all Part One interview data a reader may suggest a category of reliance of households upon the relevant education institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life, all because the ‘school’ is such an organized, structured and accepted public institution serving a number of different types of households, responsible adult caregivers of which are not organized for purposes of, meeting-wise, dealing with the pertinent school’s ‘parental’ type of concerns. With this centrality of interest for so many community households, the school provides ways for household members to voice education
concerns of many kinds. In all of this, one may note that needs of households to enable offspring to succeed in the school are not necessarily addressed. Absent from interview data in Part One responses is information leading one to suggest that the school itself might have a more direct educational role in helping parents cope with the broader task of educating their offspring.

Material of the last two paragraphs of 4.2 reveal presence of data not easily tumbling into patterns, suggesting a variety of divergence. Further, this material helps a reader discern expression of certain information which is of interest in trying to find out how school-based parental educational responsibility is understood.

The matter of planning for possible parenthood reveals relatively little planning takes place partly because so much attention goes to maintenance of the household relationship with pregnancy and birth of offspring, each with its manifold uncertainties and particular needs, becoming such major household events. What may or may not take place and what should or should not take place as the offspring are raised are simply not treated as major topics of thought and discussion. The more and more common experience of parents leaving children with other adult caregivers early in children's lives because one or both parents stress maintenance of workplace connections means relatively less and less parental thought and concern about how the children spend their waking hours each day. That emotional and informational gaps widen between parents and offspring should not cause surprise when, from early on in children's lives, children are deliberately separated from their parents for extended periods of time. The entire concept of interrelationships of significant and meaningful dimensions existing among parents, children/students and school personnel may be ephemeral in numerous ways for many parents. As all these events in children's early years unfold, the actuality of less and less parental planning seems evident. It may then become quite difficult for parents to realize how much of a grip on their children's lives is possessed by factors such as, for example, peer influence and influence of the school. In short, not only may the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility be difficult for an interviewee to contemplate, but also the entire phenomenon of parenting children in general may seem at times almost overwhelming in its possible future implications.
In its turn, the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility may actually be given little or practically no thought beyond that required to deal with more-or-less constant reminders through everyday life conversations among adults about the nurture of children, childcare facilities versus home care, the appropriate age for enrolling a child in a school programme and other similar matters. From that point, through eleven or twelve years of raising a child or children, the school’s communications to parents about school occasions when it is expected that parents will be present, individually or collectively, and school times when a child or children request parental presence, oblige parents but with their possibly relatively little general understanding of the meaningful dimensions of parental educational responsibility or, more specifically, school-based parental educational responsibility. It is little wonder few parents seem involved in school-site committee and other work.

The three previous paragraphs, considered together, show presence of regularities of gaps in interview data concerning (1) possible thoughtful parental family planning activity in anticipation of offspring births and (2) detailed or organized ideas of what may be realistically or actually involved in school-based parental educational responsibility. This observation may suggest a category of **conceptual uniqueness of each domestic arrangement/ household and its core values**. The question arises whether or not this feeling of speciality of each and every household makes it difficult for many parents to feel like participating in school-site school involvement where items of commonality shared by many or practically all households may be discussed along with so-called purely school concerns. It must be ventured that some parents simply do not wish to discuss publicly matters they regard as private household concerns, even if some of these concerns have dimensions affecting their school-based parental educational responsibility.

Differing conceptualizations of school-based parental educational responsibilities may be sensed by considering interviewees’ viewpoints of parental school-based parental educational responsibilities regarding parents who, on the one hand, think of a school principally as of use to them, as parents, as in Interviews #3 and #7, in the sense of helping them to bring up their children and parents who, on the other hand, see that they can be of real and meaningful use to the school itself in aiding its educational efforts and fulfilling its educational tasks. It may be suggested that
interviewee parents who performed school-located participation tasks, as in Interviews #4 and #5, had a degree of personal confidence and self-esteem not shared by other parents, each of whom seemed to unhesitatingly support the school’s role in society but in a kind of negative fashion, by themselves simply keeping away from the school site, along with their opinions and often their considerable strengths, which could have been useful to the school trying to provide educational experience for a community’s children.

Differing ideas of school-based parental educational responsibilities may also be seen in that some parents reinforce the school’s educational message at home where other parents see the school as an institution there to reinforce household values. Interviewee memories of their parents show examples of these differing viewpoints. The #1 parents, though home-based, strongly support offspring trying to continue formal education as long as possible. On the other hand, interviewees of #7, almost reluctantly concede the probability of their offspring going, at least, to CEGEP following secondary school, out of sheer necessity of obtaining meaningful employment.

It could be suggested that various viewpoints exist on the interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel because the school itself is a highly-organized structure operated by a highly-organized school board, all overseen and administered by a highly-organized ministry of education, all of which highly-organized structures face mostly unorganized collections of households. The intertwining of raising offspring to be ‘independent’ in a society requiring networks of functioning interconnections calls for consideration. It seems inevitable that some parents, undisturbed by what they learn are policies and practices functioning in their children’s school, become perceptibly supportive of the school’s educational efforts on their children’s behalf whereas other parents, upset by school-site incidents reported by offspring or school policies and practices become distanced in various ways from both the school and, sometimes, their children.

4.4 Conclusion to Part One Analysis

A conclusion may be drawn about the relationship between data contributed for Part One (The Past) and the sub-question to be answered as to dominant influences on formation of present
parenting experience. Responses to the question about interviewee parents and how their examples may have influenced interviewees' parenting practices were straightforward in nature. Interviewees did not hesitate unduly in responding, express reservations about their memories or employ expressions indicating possible faulty information. Details of features of interviewees' parents' parenting characteristics in relation to school efforts were fairly precise. All evidence so presented, however, seemed framed like pictures on a wall, frozen in time, interesting to recall but not having a necessarily close connection with present experience. Influence of parents' parenting could be admitted but in a spirit of how different present living conditions influence parenting today in such a way that present parenting practice seems something newly-forged and continuously adapted by interviewees to enable them to cope with present home and school situations.

As one thinks about data contributed as responses to Part One questions, one may see acceptance of household existence and a sense of responsibility of each household to help schools to function through the guise of helping one's offspring to cope with school daily life. Uneasy are household feelings about the worthwhileness of all school programmes and personnel responsible for their successful functioning. Stronger are feelings of trying to maintain a sense of security and worthwhileness of household values.

A tacit assumption exists that school life legally and socially affects lives of children and parents of households of a given school. Many domestic values, some tenaciously guarded and treasured, do not get to affect daily school life, let alone get aired. Although Part One is seen as offering a means of having interviewees feel more confidently able to talk about present ideas of school-based parental educational responsibility, assurance of concern for development and evaluation of helpful interrelationship policies and practices among parents, children/students and school personnel may be sensed.

The following chapter analyses data contributed by interviewees relating to their conceptions of present-time performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities. In one sense, material so contributed may present forcefully how school-based parental educational responsibilities are conceived. In another sense, however, absence of purposeful reflection may be discerned because
interviewees concentrate on present-time dealing with home and school situations, viewing possibly problematical situations with understandable urgency.
Chapter Five

Analysis of Interview Data, Part Two (The Present)

Introduction

Questions of Part Two, on interviewees’ present time experience, may be understood as having three divisions. The first division of four questions asked interviewees to describe their understanding of their present-day, school-based parental educational responsibility, also noting examples of what they thought of as exemplifying their and others’ school-based parental educational irresponsibilities, telling about ways they comprehend as fulfilling their individual and collective school-based parental educational responsibilities and what they think of, or how they evaluate, this fulfilment. The second division, of three questions, requested interviewees to discuss school-based parental educational responsibilities, already mentioned, which make themselves uneasy or uncomfortable, responsibilities which they consider as possibly lacking in meaning or significance for them and responsibilities, the fulfilment of which, they have avoided or possibly have wished they could have avoided. The third and final division of questions of this interview Part requested interviewees to tell of ways they might have fulfilled school-based parental educational responsibilities if they were to re-do their parenting tasks, ways interviewees think that school policies and practices experienced by them regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel could be helpfully altered, possible help schools could offer parents experiencing parenting difficulties related to offspring’s school education in particular and to offer any further reflective comments on the pivotal interview topic, the subject matter of the first question of Part Two.

To cope with data analysis of Part Two of interviews, a straightforward process is followed. For each of the three divisions of Part Two questions, first, a full description of the material contributed by each interviewee is presented. Second, a judicious and careful interpretation to clarify and explain pertinent parts of the seven interviews is ventured. Finally, a preliminary and tentative categorization of the previous interpretation is offered. A reader must be aware of the fact that the
topic of all interviews is a phenomenon experienced, in some way or form, by all adult child caregivers but rarely, if ever, a topic upon which such caregivers are asked to expound.

5.1 First Division of Part Two of Interview Questions

5.1.1 Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

As descriptions of responses are studied, because of the caution mentioned at the end of the Introduction to this chapter, readers may understand a general lack of clear organization of interview responses. As interviews took place, frequently an interviewee would think of something he/she considered significant enough to be mentioned although the particular topic so mentioned did not necessarily ‘fit’ the pertinent part of a given interview.

The administrator, #1, adopted a systematic approach. A parent is to take the “whole package”, attending to a child’s “physical well-being, their spiritual well-being, and their overall education”, from a child’s birth. This interviewee soon moved to “the instructional process that goes on in school”, implicating parents as home-site “facilitators”, helping school personnel “to whom they have entrusted their children” with motivation, stimulation and a suitable homework-accomplishment atmosphere. Parents and children are described as “partners” and parents are said to be best seen by children as actually performing some work-related tasks while children do homework, an instance of how “parents lead by example”. Parent-related educational tasks are conceptualized as firmly home-based. When collective, school-based parental educational responsibility is discussed, clear evidence is presented that both the particular school Governing Board and Parent Participation Organization forming and functioning remain problematic, possibly, in part, because of distance of the school from most school households’ communities. Not experienced but said to be desirable is “the better-informed parents are, the better the chance that they will participate fully in the educational process and these committees were set up with that in mind, to increase parental participation”. Throughout the interview, ideas about school-based parental educational responsibilities, as a phenomenon in itself, seem absent.
Of parental school-based irresponsibilities, the administrator spoke of lack of nutrition and of adequate money from home for lunches. As well, some parents, “Couldn’t tell you if the child has math and English or history in a given school year, for example. They don’t ask any questions. They don’t want to know”. The interviewee returns to his opening theme, “I think if you’ve made the decision to have children then you’ve made the decision to allocate the amount of time you need to raise them. And, taking an interest in what they do is part of that”. Such parents also avoid parent-teacher meetings, knowing neither teachers nor courses taken by their children.

In performance of duties relating to school-based parental educational responsibilities, the administrator emphasized, “it’s pretty rare that I do not talk to at least one parent on a given day”. He enjoys such contacts, whether initiated by telephone calls or letters to arrange appropriate meetings or springing from situations of parents appearing at the principal’s office without previously contacting the school. Discussions are of many types, such as problem-solving of items like bullying or school course and teacher ones. In addition, “In terms of meetings, well, I have some very set organizations to which I report”, like the school Governing Board and Parent Participation Organization. Some years, many parental requests occur, compared with other years. Of his many duties, the administrator admits, “I find it hard when we can’t help using the parents as partners. That I find difficult when parents, for one reason or another, either they don’t have the ability to be an effective partner or they don’t have the desire to be an effective partner. Or there’s just no parent”. Disturbing to the interviewee are situations where more help is needed than that provided, or that could be provided, through school facilities.

A research-site female teacher, married but not a parent, Interview #2, offers a very role-based approach to school-based parental educational responsibilities. “Ya, I enjoy my job. I would not still be doing my job if I didn’t enjoy it”. Emphasis throughout the section is her professional satisfaction derived from meaningful student-teacher relationships. Both girls and boys have confided in her and she feels that, for some students, the fact she is a female teacher is important in understanding her professional school role. She considers parent-teacher contacts best initiated by parents because while a family may have a number of children, a teacher “may have 150 students”. Parents, in her
experience, also show up to help with class trips and some school-site functions like library help. Many helpful parent-teacher contacts take place because of student extra-curricular sports and other events as well as on individual classroom and other school-related problems.

The interviewee stressed the value of these individual contacts ahead of collective activities of school groups because “that only meets a selected number of parents, not going to cover the entire population or even the diversity of a population of a school”. Unsolicited comments on official groups involved interviewee ideas of, for example, school region representation to help form them.

On parental school-based irresponsibility items, parents have asked the interviewee her ideas on disciplining a child. “Sometimes they expect you to tell them what to do and other times there’s nothing you can say is right”. Parents making excuses for a child’s inappropriate behaviour is criticized. Professionally, the interviewee listens to both students and parents on difficulties each has with the other and “I think my role is to be a support for both the child and the parent, maybe to explain to the child why their parent might be behaving or saying certain things or coming down on them the way they are”. On knowledge of physical and other abuse visited upon children forms of parental irresponsibility, this teacher relies on reporting to people at school or elsewhere who are qualified professionally for giving such help.

As a young married woman, the interviewee considers she is regarded by others differently than a young single female teacher. In school, an ongoing challenge is “how to get a child to do something without alienating the child”.

The male teacher, Interview #3, is clear though terse. A child “should have all the essential things that he needs to fulfill his days” As a teacher, he expects the student “had a good breakfast, when he comes to school his parents are supportive, that he has an attitude to respect what goes on in the school and to have the correct attitude to fulfill his school day”. Parents should check up on their children, even to requesting school personnel if a child was in a class on a given day.
Interesting to the interviewee are that many parents not needed to be seen regarding their offspring's school-related achievement are those most evident on parent-teacher nights. As a science teacher, the interviewee appreciates parental interest in a subject though they may have limited ability to discuss it at home. A sharp observation is that for many parents, parent-teacher meetings are “more a report card than achievement of the curriculum”. On the other hand, poor student discouragement often arises “because their parents are always pointing the finger and blaming someone else rather than let them take the responsibility”.

Of collective parent school-based responsibilities like official school groups, this interviewee talked of “meetings over and over again about the same thing and nothing gets accomplished”. More meaning is seen through individual parent-school personnel contacts.

The mother and father of Interview #4 concentrate on individual parental home-site school-based educational responsibilities. Even before Part Two, the father ventured, “I guess that when our kids take priority, and their lives, their homework, they come first”. The first response of the father for this Part illustrates this feature, “The first thing we always ask our kids when they get home, ‘What do you have for homework?’” While the mother is said to be more closely involved in this overseeing of homework, the father adds, “The more you do your homework, the more prepared you are, the better student you’re going to be. And that’s our role, to make sure they know that homework’s not going to get done by itself”. Statements of offering homework help to their offspring when they are capable, encapsulates these parents’ viewpoint and vision upon their school-based parental educational responsibilities. The father, a school security employee, spoke of daily contact with their children’s teachers, instilling a knowledge of importance to “Make sure that they’ve got their work done. Come to school, come to class properly equipped to work with their pencils, pen, books, notebooks. I want to know about everything”. Through daily attention to children’s homework, these interviewees claim to avoid instances of being told of problems on parent-teacher nights as “by then they could be behind or, completely lost in something”. Further, parent-teacher nights “are attended by parents whose kids don’t need to be told how well they’re doing” but real problems occur because of “the ones who should go but don’t show up”.
Non-involvement in collective parental school-based educational responsibilities is because, as the father stated, “My experience at the high school level, a lot of things are cut and dried before the meeting is even called”. People serving on official school committees are said to have voiced such opinion, saying they “don’t go any more because their input, it’s listened to but a lot of decisions are made before it’s discussed”. The father states his awareness of present difficulties the school has drawing required and expected parent participants.

On possible parental irresponsibilities experienced by interviewees, some parents “maybe have good intentions but they’re so busy with other activities that they don’t really have any time at home with their kids”. Parents’ attention to their work, shift work, dysfunctional homes, school students permitted to have part-time jobs for money seen as necessary for various reasons, lack of attention to seeing children have breakfast prior to leaving for school leading to the school’s breakfast programme are all cited as observed examples of parental irresponsibility.

With the point made of the father’s constant contacts with his children’s teachers, possible because of his daily work at the research-site school, no response is offered by either parent in a description or opinion of their school-based parental educational responsibilities, leaving the extensive data on homework supervision as their chief school-based parental educational responsibility ingredient.

Interviewee #5, a divorced mother coping alone with a research-site school student offspring, mentions many components of school-based parental educational responsibilities without providing many details of description of her performance of such responsibility. She initiates her responses to this Part’s questions with an affirmation of her home-based viewpoint with, “We probably feel that the school is responsible and should teach them everything but I don’t agree. I think it starts at home and we have to instill what some of the basic things to be taught and there’s also the school to reiterate what we’ve taught and I don’t think that’s being done as much now as what it used to”. To reinforce the home-based perspective, she said, “I needed to be at home with them in the evening because I was the only parent”. This interviewee did participate on official school committees,
frustrating because “lots of times your hands are tied as to what can be done” though she mentioned, “I still get the newsletters and minutes of the meetings”.

This interviewee shows concern for balancing “as the children get older, they don’t want you looking over their shoulder”, “a part of their responsibility to know what their homework has to be done for the next day and also to keep it in their agenda so they know when their assignments are due” and her action, “I still try to ask several questions. Sometimes I even check the school bag to see if there are any books there”. She also attends plays and band concerts and Review Night, “I usually go to that even though I’ve been around the school many, many times”.

A matter bothering this interviewee is school problems experienced by students who have academic difficulties. Very important is “how do you try to encourage them to put a little bit of effort for one or two years of their life because it is something that they will need and not for them to feel that they’re going to drop out”. She stresses the parental want to see their child graduate while recognizing a parent not experiencing their offspring’s school success possibly asking himself/herself if it was his/her (the parent’s) fault. She also notes other parents’ irresponsibility in not being aware of their offspring’s school attendance record though evidently condoning their children’s part-time work.

Interviewee #5 is very aware of the overall school situation but contributes more opinion than description of her parental school involvement. It is possibly because her mind is occupied over her career, her divorce and the general task of monitoring her offspring’s secondary school experience to her satisfaction, hindered by lack of adequate time and home support. Because of the numerous school and public life issues mentioned by her in her responses, an interviewer notes a lack of personal satisfaction with successfully keeping track of her offspring’s daily school life.

Interviewee #6, a married mother, opens her responses to Part Two questions boldly stating “As a parent of a high school student, I think that my first responsibility is to make my child understand that they have a responsibility for their education”. For this interviewee, this means
herself "experiencing new things academically, not to be afraid to try new things". Important for this mother is having her offspring "respect differences of other children", to do which, curiously, "they're going to fail, occasionally, but that doesn't mean that they're a failure. And if I can make them understand that, I think that they'll be able to find their way through high school and, on top of it all, I hope, with a sense of self-respect". Then, "I always ask my children if they have homework. It's a nightly thing". A lengthy explanation follows about the different homework-accomplishing styles of offspring pointing out that if it is not done, they are responsible for accepting consequences. In this activity, set at home, lies the principal commitment to school-based parental educational responsibility.

Regarding collective parental educational responsibilities, this interviewee admits not attending, "not because I don't want to but because I'm involved where I work (an elementary school). So, it's just time. It's not feasible for me but I try to keep, without being present, I try to keep aware, through speaking with other parents who are on the Governing Board and try to be aware that way, of different issues that are going on". No other excuses are offered for this non-involvement.

This interviewee, however, contributes long explanatory passages of problem issues experienced by offspring at the research-site school with scant approbation of school personnel handling of many such situations. Criticism is offered on the matter of fees for taking part in certain extra-curricular activities to cover transportation expenses. As well, school personnel handling skills, for some in-class situations involving her offspring, do not impress the interviewee.

Of irresponsible parenting, the interviewee "always feel bad for those children who are having continuous problems at school, be it with teachers or anything else, and the parents don't support their child I find that, as a parent, to be irresponsible". Equally to be criticized are parents who do not help offspring who would like to take part in extracurricular activities but parents do not help. "I know it's not always possible because of time and workloads, finances and different things but you could go to one game, you could go to one concert". "Your child is trying to enrich their life by getting involved in these things. They need the parental support".
The interviewee does explain that she attends sports events, concerts and other activities if her children are involved. Parent-teacher meeting times are also attended but, perhaps because of what the interviewee considers inadequate handling by school personnel of classroom incidents involving her children, “I have found that I’ve had to use the interview time to bring up issues that shouldn’t be brought up at interview time. But, as a parent, sometimes it’s the only time you can get hold of, it’s, you know, again, you’re talking life and time”.

Interview #7 parents offer direct and frank material of what they consider their school-based parental educational responsibilities. The mother says, “Well, I find today the teachers want the parents not only to be parents but also to be their teacher at home, compared to when I went to school. And also they want us to discipline our children for things that they have done at school”. This parent regards the teacher as a legitimate guardian of her children at school and, therefore, responsible at school for discipline issues arising there. When the interviewees were in school, “the teachers never called home if there was a problem in school”. “And the teacher had control of that classroom, each and every one of them. and if somebody got out of hand, that teacher took care of the problem”. In general, as the mother expressed it, “And I find the school always seems to, let’s push it on the child and the child, let’s push it onto the parent. When it’s turned around and going against the school, it’s a different story. They don’t look at the problem the same way”. General criticism of present-day teacher training and teacher school work (union) contracts is offered, in great part because of a recent decision to charge all school households with school supervision fees. “But it seems like the teachers aren’t there for the children like they were back. and again, all teachers want the same pay, the same increase but, as far as I’m concerned, it’s like any job. Not each teacher, not every teacher deserves it either”.

The mother explains her attention to her children preparing acceptably for the school day through attention each night to homework accomplishment and each morning to personal hygiene, cleanliness and obtaining a good breakfast. Quickly, criticism of the school breakfast programme is detailed as an indication of some parents’ irresponsibility.
On matters of homework, for the research-site school years, these parents see how their offspring cope with homework and other school-related tasks up to the first parent-teacher meeting, as a result of which possible changes are implemented at home, hopefully for better student success.

Regarding participation in collective school-based parental educational responsibilities, a hint of sarcasm lies in the father’s remark, “Maybe when I get a little older. It seems everybody is thinking for themselves and they’re not thinking about the other people”, as though members of a Governing Board act, at times, in fairly undisguised personal self interest. The mother stated, “I’ve never heard so much about why it is important to go to these meetings so they elect people but I’ve heard of different people that were on the Board, that they would share information, ‘cause I work in a public place, and they would say we walk in with our ideas, our suggestions and so on and so forth but you have the principal, then you have that one teacher and it’s already planned and it’s going to be done their way and that’s it”, all of which confirms some other interviewees’ viewpoints. Later, regarding avoidance of certain responsibilities, the mother said, “Well, the PPO, I have nothing to do with it”. In later remarks about actual regional representation on official school groups, a suggestion is made about need for more regional representation, “where they don’t just take them from Lennoxville and Sherbrooke”. A kind of alienation is felt about people involved in school committee-type fora.

As to examples of parental educational irresponsibility, these interviewees regard other parents’ action and inaction as of minimal concern. “We have our own situations, we have our own goals and as long as we aren’t hearing that it doesn’t involve my household and I don’t know that it’s safe hearing, what I mean by that, nobody’s getting molested or whatever or abused in any such way, that is, we just let them deal with it” bespeaks the prevailing household viewpoint.

As an example of parental educational responsibility in action, the mother mentioned an incident involving her son when a teacher suggested the son, apparently sleepy in a Level Five class, as being old enough to be responsible for his own demeanour and achievement in a class. The mother turned the entire episode around as illustrating what any teacher should be able to find out for him-/herself because teachers of previous school levels submitted records of student achievement and
character which should have been consulted. In its turn, the criticism extends to suggesting such lack of teacher knowledge and expertise as leading to some students falling between the cracks of platforms of school expectations. Once more, a reader sees a compartmentalized conceptualization of life as though it is composed of fairly independent and unconnected fields of activity, such as those of households, schools and others.

From the material presented in this section, a preliminary analysis involving convergence and divergence is set out, eventually to contribute to tentative categorization of concepts. Since this division of Part Two is regarded as containing the interview’s pivotal question, careful analysis of interview data offered seems merited.

5.1.2 Analytical Interpretation of Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

This section of the data analysis process shows how interviewees agree upon a manner of concern for certain themes as well as how interviewees disagree in differing ways upon other themes. Careful consideration of what is herein presented will lead to preliminary categorization of material for helpful comprehension of interview data.

A school-based parental educational responsibility, both discussed and shown to be a serious concern for all interviewees, is that of their children acceptably and successfully accomplishing school-assigned homework. Probably, for all interviewees themselves, school homework was a similar high-priority concern for them as former secondary school students. Each interviewee, perhaps, had other school-based matters to attend to, such as transportation, classroom and teacher problems, generally coping with peers and all others at their schools, sports events, other extracurricular activities and other unspecified items but homework accomplishment was likely a daily school life student responsibility shared in one way or another by all interviewees, frequently involving differing varieties of parental concern. For interviewees requested to consider the nature of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility, homework accomplishment is universally discussed but other ordinary school life items like daily school attendance and reading
children for daily school life, food, shelter and other childcare matters are not always discussed in household settings.

What is more difficult to determine is parental satisfaction that school-based parental educational responsibility is regarded as sufficiently attained when offspring succeed with homework tasks. Certainly the matter of homework is school-based and ties households to school aims in general but it also signifies a responsibility set by schools for households to accomplish in a manner not shared reciprocally by virtually any household concern seen by any given household as important or sufficiently critical to be recognized, respected or otherwise dealt with through school persons in relation to a household’s offspring in their daily school life. Though not supported by parents of all households, periodic parent-teacher interviews, usually a minimum-school-attendance-by-parents, often have homework matters as a significant item of discussion.

School personnel interviewed, even if not parents themselves, all deal with overseeing of homework as something regarded as a primary item of school-based parental educational responsibility. Each parent interviewed tends to relate homework accomplishment not only to the school itself but to other matters of a domestically-based household value system. A lingering feeling, it seems, exists that homework accomplishment may be as school-based as it can possibly be but unless it is also regarded as fitting in with a household’s value system or household’s priorities, it probably would receive less approbation by parents of households, themselves not organized collectively in any socially systematic or significant way.

All interviewees share, for differing reasons, however, misgivings of one kind or another, about collective school-based parental educational responsibilities. The administrator, Interview #1, has, as part of his responsibilities, overseeing forming and functioning of official and other school groups like Governing Board and the Parent Participation Organization. He acknowledges a long-standing participation problem of obtaining parents for the Parent Participation Organization, using his explanation as a means of voicing certain views. He said, “If other organizations, like the PPO for example, were more active, I think more parents would be well informed. We have a problem
with that in this school in terms of parental involvement in organizations like the PPO. The particular difficult detail of distance from the school site of all households beyond the Lennoxville-Cookshire environment is cited. The female teacher, Interview #2, having a professional, though no personal stake in either Governing Board or Parent Participation Organization, expressed, “In terms of bodies, there is the Governing Board. I think it tends to be the same type of parent, the same people participating yearly on that”. In addition, she details the distance factor as critical as well as there being no constitutional provision for regional representation. The male teacher, Interview #3, though professionally bound, expresses frustration with a perception that committee meetings involving parents seem to be prolonged and numerous with few helpful outcomes. Interview #4's mother and father, themselves not involved in any official school group, mention anecdotally what they’ve heard about agendas for committee meetings being pre-arranged with a result of few items on participants’ minds being voiced. The mother of Interview #5 had elementary school experience with official school groups. Lack of appropriate representation, however, is expressed although it relates to a later question. She ventures, “I just don’t feel that my views or my say would have much input. (It) doesn’t give you a broad idea of all the students there because there are some from very rural areas that maybe the majority of the people on those committees are from cities and towns and it’s just hard to get the two to see the same views”. The Interview #6 mother excuses herself, regarding official school groups, in terms of time but, “I try to keep aware, through speaking with other parents who are on the Governing Board and try to be aware that way, of different issues that are going on”. Interview #7 parents detail frustrations similar to those mentioned by Interview #4 parents, again based on hearsay about meetings not open for viewpoints to be expressed from the floor. Later in the interview, one reads, “It seems to be all that same kind of clique. It’s a friend of a friend of a friend, you know, that seems to be touching. Definitely. It’s all the same group of people”.

Careful examination of interview data shows differing reasons for parental eschewing of possible school-based parental educational responsibility manifestation by caring about meeting-type collective parental educational responsibilities. Foremost seems unease or even discomfort about participation in committee-type activity because of a combination of possible lack of personal self-
esteem and plain feelings of personal ability/confidence in handling meeting-type situations. For many parents, 'meetings' and meeting procedure are hitherto unknown experiences. For many parents, it seems, certain 'types' of parents may be comfortable with meetings but many are decidedly uncomfortable about them. On top of this discomfort are interview indications of hearsay evidence that only some topics of possible parental concern succeed in being discussed at official and other school-located meetings. Curiously, despite the hearsay evidence concerning possible restrictive practices regarding breadth of topics to be discussed at official and other school-sited committees, some parents may be reluctant to voice publicly opinions about many matters of parent-child/student relationships they regard as their particular household matters and definitely not matters possibly subject to either analysis or critical appraisal by anyone beyond persons connected to or with a given household. Where households are located, distance-wise, from the school and the type of parent attracted to committee-type school-based involvement share as further salient twin factors behind inadequate and generally unsatisfactory parental representation.

Undeniably, the fact that daily school life is seen as significant for children/students of a community's households, that adult child caregivers of many households experience problems of many kinds coping with their offspring's school attendance and daily life, only certain items of a household's connections with schools are regarded as important and/or interesting enough to engage interest and involvement of parents. A kind of sanctity of each household exists whereby dealing with school-assigned homework and attending parent-teacher interviews seem to have general approval as concerns meriting parental involvement but other school-based matters which could well involve parental contributions and involvement are generally deemed as of interest and/or concern for certain kinds of parents only.

Difficult, perhaps, for persons employed as school personnel and thousands of others associated in some official way with official and other school-based groups, people such as ministerial and school commissions personnel, and members of the general public, to understand, is the breadth and profundity of parental unwillingness to become involved in the numerous official and other groups, all a part of collective school-based parental educational responsibility. Interesting may
be observations that day-care and school groups involve usually at least ten, twenty or even thirty children and that such a manner of 'schooling' children is hardly ever questioned but that, later in life, when many of such children have become themselves adult caregivers/parents, official mandating of school-based groups for school-related decision-making rarely draws many willing participants. Perhaps all the years of day-care and school involved practically no decision-making power for day-care and school groups/classes as decision-making units and hardly ever were attempts ever made by those in power (day-care providers, teachers) to indicate to individuals in these groups (children/students) that possibilities for group power could exist along with instruction and training in how group-power actually works. Where official and other student groups like student councils or extra-curricular clubs and societies do function, actual power tends to be minimal in nature. Thus, students proceed to post-secondary programmes and post-secondary institution extra-curricular life with very little experience of group decision-making, often leaving only the extroverts to form practically all official and other group bodies at any post-secondary institution. With the many rights and responsibilities of parenthood, unless a given parent has had previous experience in group formation and group decision-making or for any other of a number of reasons feels confident or comfortable with it, it seems a quality of semi-anonymity sets in for many parents whereby their children/students coping with daily school life and homework tasks become the major foci of attention and concern. Participating in school-based group decision-making, which may or may not involve influencing a participant's offspring, is simply not regarded as critical or in any way important or necessary for many parents.

5.1.3 Preliminary Categorization

The first three paragraphs of 5.1.2, following the short introductory paragraph, support an observation of commonality, among all interviewees, of concern for their children's/students' homework accomplishment. In turn, the observation lends credibility to a preliminary tentative categorization of relevant data as illustrating a category already tentatively formulated regarding interview data of Part One of interviews, namely that of reliance of households upon the relevant education institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life. Where
personal and other household circumstances, different personalities and varying competencies have some parent persons involved in official and other school-organized and school-sited groups, helping teachers in classrooms and with school-related trips, sports and other extra-curricular activities, all interviewees mention the matter of concern for school-assigned student homework tasks.

The category delineated in the previous paragraph reinforces the undeniable strength of the highly-organized public school system in general as it deals with a multiplicity of different households, not organized in any group fashion for purposes of dealing with school and household issues undoubtedly affecting many of them. Also, the suggested category shows that households in general share concern of matters they can all, or practically all, deal with without intervention of special measures initiated by either households or schools to deal with issues faced by children in school daily life.

Material of the succeeding four paragraphs of 5.1.2 may lend support to reinforcement of a second data category, previously suggested in Chapter Four, that of **conceptual uniqueness of each domestic arrangement/household and its core values**. Merited also may be consideration of a prominent possible subcategory of this broad second category of interview data. The subcategory may be worded as **acknowledgement of a broad, firmly-held, multi-faceted involvement reluctance regarding collective school-based parental educational responsibilities with hesitant acceptance of decisions made by official and other school-based groups formed thereby**.

It seems that participation in official school-based meeting groups is simply not an activity widely perceived as meaningful or significant for parents in general. Aside, however, from any and all considerations of possible significance, many parents are just not comfortable in such groups because, by participating, they become vulnerable through speaking and often feel they lack confidence, or sometimes sheer bravado as well as skills necessary to form and, with conviction, give voice to pertinent thoughts about their children’s school life. Issues involving children’s daily school life, if ‘action’ seems required, seem most often dealt with through telephone calls to particular school personnel or through individual parent-teacher communication or meetings.
Through the seven interviews' data, a second possible subcategory of the aforesaid second data category may be evident. This may be termed a subcategory of various **domestically-felt, school-originated, unresolved problems bespeaking home-school communication gaps**. Such situations arise because they are dependent upon three stages at least. A student, personally affected by a school-site situation, must have communicated his/her version of what happened within his/her household. A parent must then have discussed and/or thought about what a student reported. Finally, a parent must have attempted to make someone among pertinent school personnel aware of the domestically-felt situation. For school-based action to take place, a given issue must merit mention at some school-based meeting. Often perhaps, such situations remain parts of parents' and children's/students' experience and memories, remaining not adequately or fully resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned. Situations of numbers of such unresolved situations may result in a school community undergoing possibly unnecessary fitful and not effectively-planned changes of policies and practices.

5.2 Second Division of Part Two of Interview Questions

5.2.1 Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

The second division of Part Two interview questions asked interviewees to discuss what they considered components of school-based parental educational responsibilities, the possible carrying out of which made them feel uneasy or uncomfortable, they felt possibly lacked meaning or significance and, finally, they could report actually trying to avoid performing. The purpose for including these questions was to request interviewees to consider the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibilities more fully because in responding to the initial, and the interview’s pivotal, question of the first division of Part Two questions, and the last question of said first division, each interviewee was responding to his/her personal understanding and present involvement but not necessarily considering other possible facets of school-based parental educational responsibilities.
The administrator, Interview #1, expressed discomfort with situations where school personnel, for various reasons, are unaware of the kind of support or lack thereof, a given student has at home for his/her accomplishment of personal and school-set educational goals. Even more serious, the administrator finds difficulty, "when parents, for one reason or another, either they don't have the ability to be an effective partner or they don't have the desire to be an effective partner. Or there's just no parent. Those things I find difficult. When we know that there is more help needed than what is provided". With school-based parental educational responsibilities which may lack meaning, the administrator finds much time and effort he spends on satisfying his perceived role on the school Governing Board possibly wasteful "because, basically, it's still the management responsibilities that are incumbent upon the principal when so you know there's a lot of times that going through all that information, in the sense that all the work ends up being the principal's anyway". Regarding this last point, the interviewee sees a necessity to balance detail of possibly necessary information parents require with the necessity to efficiently carry out his daily work. Illustrative is, "It's just that it's another level and it's not necessarily parental. It's another level of a responsibility and work that was added on to school principal's that really they don't need to make schools run efficiently". On possible attempts to avoid what he perceives as school-based parental educational responsibilities, the principal says, "Myself, I know there are questions I wanted to ask and things I wanted to know about my children's education and, as far as I'm concerned, these are parents' prerogatives and that's their rights. So, really I don't try and avoid any of them, really".

The female teacher, Interview #2, has a highly-developed professional view of her school-based educational responsibilities. What makes her uneasy or uncomfortable is the possible child abuse question of some households. "I really don't feel strong enough or educated enough in that field to deal with that and I don't want to say I'd be passing the buck but I don't think I'm the right person. That would make me uneasy or uncomfortable". Further, she says, "Telling a parent how to discipline their child, I would never assume. Never... I'm their teacher. I'm not their parent". As to school-based parental educational responsibilities this interviewee finds lack meaning, "...creating argument for argument's sake is not meaningful". Here this teacher strives to ensure that involving parents in meetings about students having academic problems must be because of serious, ongoing
difficulties being unresolved. The same kind of thinking governs this interviewee’s remark about taking up an administrator’s time; the matter must be sufficiently serious and not otherwise able to be handled. Regarding school-based parental educational responsibilities matters this teacher deliberately avoids, she admits, “Very important. Governing Board. Ya, that’s pretty much it, I would say. I used to join committees but the committee process became disheartening. So, I kind of avoid it”. Were she a parent, she admits she might change her mind but, generally, “Committee-type things are just annoying”.

Interview #3 with the male teacher produced minimal material with concentration upon a response to the first question. He said, “I’m sort of uneasy with parent involvement when they’re involved in some of their meetings within our education system, especially like the Governing Board. There seems to be numerous meetings over and over again about the same thing and nothing gets accomplished. It just gets bogged down. The agenda could go, the agenda could have three items on it and go for three or four hours and nothing accomplished”. A personal opinion of lack of educational significance of certain committee work prevails.

Mother and father parents of Interview #4 do not respond to the three questions of this division in any order. The father expresses dismay with the fact that parent-teacher interviews seem to be attended mostly by parents of students who are already coping very well with school academic and other demands. He claims much more frequent parent-teacher contact than that offered by formally arranged parent-teacher evenings is important. In part, this is because in the interview, the father stresses his role as a school employee permits him to speak with his children’s teachers daily. On the subject of Governing Board matters, the father says, “Again, I may be repeating myself but a lot of things are cut and dried before you get to a Governing Board meeting”.

The mother of Interview #5, with committee experience, says, “I think that from past experience, being on the Governing Board, lots of times your hands are tied as to what can be done”. She admits the importance, however, of such committees as they deal fundamentally with a school’s students. Blame is placed by this interviewee on budget cutbacks for appearance of numerous
problems such as transfers to regular classes, most likely larger groups, from special classes. "The meetings are the big things that bothers me because you can't really get out and voice what you really feel lots of times". This interviewee sees education in general as so important, she would not use a word like 'meaningless' for any part of it. She admits, however, an avoidance of secondary school Governing Board and Parent Participation Organization involvement "because of, probably being such a large school that I just don't feel that my views or my say would have much impact. (The committee) doesn't give you a broad idea of all the students there because there are some from very rural areas that maybe the majority of the people on these committees are from cities and towns and it's just hard to get the two to see the same views".

Central to Interview #6's mother's points, regarding parental educational responsibilities which make her feel uneasy or uncomfortable, is, "I try to get my child, my children tools to solve their own problems. Sometimes it doesn't work and it makes me uneasy to feel that a teacher has not been respectful of my child's attempts to overcome the problem". In turn, such a situation is said to necessitate this interviewee's intercession to find out the source of the classroom problem and possible solutions. Respecting possible responsibilities which may be perceived as lacking meaning, the interviewee responded, "Sorry. I don't think there's anything that's unmeaningful, really". Similar feelings govern her feelings of official school group activities and having an interest in students' extra-curricular sports and other activities. As far as trying to avoid certain situations, "I try to avoid confrontation if possible. I try to avoid just hearing my child. I try to think of what might have actually happened. I try to avoid taking sides I guess is what it comes down to, 'cause I know that being a teacher in today's high school can't be easy. So, I try to avoid being just a parent". Although the interviewee adds that she tries to avoid being negative, she emphasizes again giving her children tools to fix problem situations but "I try to avoid fixing my children's problems".

Parents of Interview #7 acknowledge importance of meeting teachers, "to know them as much as you can know them through an interview. Um. To try and figure out their way of thinking and their personality and then you gotta compare your notes with your kids when they come home and saying, okay, no, no, the child is outa line here. Instead of always blaming towards the teachers, because it's
not always the teacher’s fault”. The mother stresses she is not uneasy or uncomfortable facing her children’s teachers regarding possible problem situations. The remainder of the interviewees’ responses to second division of Part Two questions consists of material on lack of meaning for them of participating in collective school-based parental educational responsibilities: “And what’s the sense of investing your time, attending the meetings and so on and so forth, when higher-up is going to make the decisions anyways? And they’re not even going to listen to your input so? Why waste your time?” Factors of perceived ‘clique’ characteristics of official and other school-sited groups coupled with the travelling distance problem for all parents except those living around Sherbrooke and Lennoxville complete these parents’ responses to these second division of Part Two questions.

Though responses of some interviewees were brief to questions of the second division, at least each interview’s data includes some thought-provoking material. An observation may be made that although interviewees showed willingness and ability in formulating responses to the various individual queries of the interview, none demonstrated any contemplation of school-based parental educational responsibilities as a critical and time-consuming, worthwhile, lifelong task. Viewpoints lacked expression of comprehension of a comprehensiveness of the whole phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility.

5.2.2 Analytical Interpretation of Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

Because of a certain possible negative quality inherent in questions of this division, in the sense that interviewees were asked about facets of school-based parental educational responsibilities possibly not previously commented upon by them, interviewee responses tend to be slightly defensive in character. Apart from a defensive character, some fresh aspects of school-based parental educational responsibilities were mentioned.

Interesting varieties of responses were presented regarding school-based parental educational responsibilities interviewees considered made them uneasy or uncomfortable. For the most part, items mentioned were possible measures parents could take requiring extra exertion on their parts
regarding their offspring's school experience. The female teacher of Interview #2 reacted by conceptually compartmentalizing various school-related tasks in terms of fitness for teacher or other life roles, thereby transforming ideas of possible uneasiness and lack of comfort to notions of role-appropriateness. Most other responses made mention of how parents' secondary school students handled various class and school social and academic situations.

Respecting school-based parental educational responsibilities interviewees might have considered lacking in meaning, in general, although some responsibilities did not involve some interviewees, such as collective school-based parental educational responsibilities, interviewees found significance in all such activities. Neither harsh criticism nor derisive remarks about various school-based parental educational responsibilities were voiced.

On possible avoidance of some school-based parental educational responsibilities, several interviewees singled out participation in collective parental school-based educational responsibilities such as Governing Board and other official school groups. Interview #6's mother is the sole interviewee addressing matters of avoidance whose response dealt with avoiding certain ways of handling her children's personal school situations as opposed to naming types of responsibilities to be avoided.

5.2.3 Preliminary Categorization

Most data gathered in response to second division of Part Two questions was remarkably positive in nature, recognizing the possibly negative mode of the manner in which questions are worded. The questions succeeded in having interviewees mention school-based parental educational responsibilities not previously mentioned in earlier Part Two responses.

Responses did, however, reinforce earlier noting of widespread hesitation about involvement with collective school-based parental educational responsibilities. Though reasons given for non-involvement demonstrate the power of possible inaccuracy of hearsay remarks about many activities
of official and other school-sited groups, it is important to recognize a widely-sensed lack of confidence in and feeling of non-worthwhileness about such groups and about possible interviewee input at meetings of such groups. For this reason, the previously-ventured category of acknowledgement of a broad, firmly-held, multi-faceted involvement reluctance regarding collective school-based parental educational responsibility with hesitant acceptance of decisions made by official and other school-based groups formed thereby seems valid as a summation of responses to the second division of Part Two questions.

Experiences of adult caregivers of households (parents) bringing up offspring seems one proceeding from stage to stage of offspring’s lives as a journey into an unknown land. Because the nature of school daily life is imbued with a future-oriented trend, whether the primary task is thought of as that of preparing students for a future or of students preparing a future, (though for all humans, life involves, in one way or another, a combination of both preparation for a future and of a future) the nature of the entire upbringing experience means or involves constantly dealing with new experiences, preparation for which may be fitting, inappropriate or non-existent or mixtures of various parts of these. This may be a strong reason why interviews do not reveal presence of contemplation of an entire phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility and seem to be recitation of differing individual parental school-based experiences.

No denial is postulated of the presence of much very thoughtful concern among adult child caregivers regarding many individual components of offspring school-based experience. The data contributed by interviewees demonstrates this concern feature clearly and is perhaps a reason for quite lengthy responses to different questions from interviewees simply because something mentioned in a question may have piqued recall of thoughts and opinions which did concern particular interviewees because of particular school-based experiences felt to be significant for some reason. Despite frequent long passages of data on different parts of interview material, it remains difficult to sense interviewees’ possibly more comprehensive understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility as an significant phenomenon of parental daily life.
5.3 Third Division of Part Two of Interview Questions

5.3.1 Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

This third and concluding division of four questions, though centred throughout on interviewees’ present school-based parental educational responsibilities experiences, sought responses requiring reflection of what had been offered as responses to the first and second divisions questions of Part Two. Interviewees were asked, first, about possible changes to their parenting policies and practices or styles in general had they known then what they have learned up to the present time regarding parenting. Secondly, a question asked for interviewees’ reflections upon possible changes they would try to put in place regarding their school-based parental educational responsibility in particular. Thirdly, interviewees were asked to state how they thought the school itself might help some school parents cope with their own school-based parental educational responsibilities. Finally, interviewees were asked to mention/suggest possible helpful changes to present school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

The intention behind formulation of the third division questions was one of deliberately challenging interviewees to grapple with school-based parental educational responsibilities as a phenomenon in itself by having more of its dimensions mentioned in questions themselves. Interviewees, whose responses to this point were centred mainly on household-sited school-based parental educational responsibilities, would be asked more directly to consider further possible implications of school-based parental educational responsibilities in terms of working relationships among stakeholders of a secondary school community. Considering no interviewee knew what questions would be posed prior to interviews, the depth of thought involved in many responses seems interesting. Along with mention of most situations or problems, discussion often continues at length.

The administrator, Interview #1, discusses sketchily his personal parenting experience and though he admits errors, minimizes their effects: “We made some mistakes but I don’t think there
were any major mistakes that couldn’t be, that couldn’t be fixed. There were no life-altering mistakes, nothing that was critical to the development of our own children”. He soon moves to his professional duties, speaking of examples where parents admitted to him they should have listened earlier and carefully to his words about their children’s school problems. Also he mentions cases of parental co-operation with his efforts as principal, with students, when they seemed to function well at school but such co-operation turned sometimes to distrust, antagonism and lack of co-operation about working with the principal if a child experienced school-related problems. In such cases, parents are said to defend their child/ren against conventional school rules.

Steps taken by the administrator to change school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel include information sessions for parents in the autumn instead of in February or March as well as orientation half-days for incoming Level One students and their parents in late spring. A problem with all such sessions concerns parents who themselves had school problems with the school attempting to help these parents think more positively about the same school when it concerns their offspring. In addition, the administrator mentions school-organized workshops for parents in anger and anxiety management in two local communities as a contribution made by the school for parents having difficulties coping with their children facing school-related problems.

On the matter of school-home communications, the administrator speaks positively about the school website and mailing of newsletters instead of requesting students to take such items to their parents. For parents wishing to communicate with school personnel, the administrator points out virtues of voice mail. An admission is also made of real difficulties some parents have in getting themselves to the school because of distance, lack of a vehicle and other similar reasons.

The female teacher, Interview # 2, married to a man but not herself a parent, succeeds in presenting numerous pertinent comments on school-based parental educational responsibilities. Through her responses runs, not only a strong fibre of a sense of professionalism and pride in her career role as teacher but, from her personal experience both as a student and as a present-day
teacher, a consciousness of importance and significance of developing and maintaining helpful interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, for all concerned.

She begins with the importance of parents and teachers listening to their children/students and, in relation to parent-teacher meetings, suggests parents would do well to talk with their offspring before attending such meetings. Presence of children/students at parent-teacher interviews is questioned. According to this interviewee, as part of their listening to and observing of their own children, parents should be attentive to physical, mental and other changes taking place in their children as they progress through secondary school. To reinforce her idea of the importance of such changes, the interviewee telephones households she thinks should know about student problems or successes. Such communication is also made to the child. “So, whatever I tell a parent, I also tell the child”. The acuity of the interviewee’s perception is seen when she then goes on to say, “I know that may contradict what I was saying about parent-teacher interviews and the child present but in terms of positive things, I’m very open with both the parent and the child”.

As to school-organized workshops dedicated to helping parents, the interviewee is direct: “They don’t want to go and have a bunch of people talk. They want to go and have practical advice. So, the more practical advice you can give them, the more practical and common sense, common sensical you can be in dealing with a parent”. On the other hand, this interviewee praises various support personnel available to both parents and students but overall, “I don’t want to speak for my colleagues but I think we could all do better at giving good positive information to parents and I wish I did it more”. The importance of attention to more positive contact with parents is stressed and dearth of the same is suggested as a possible reason why parent-teacher nights are frequently seen as being occasions not generally attended by parents of children having school problems.

Finally, this interviewee deals with the school-home communication situation. Several varieties of communications are mentioned like newsletters, report cards, agendas and notes as well as newspaper notices. Comments are scarce about effectiveness of different communication forms made, though some students are said sometimes to keep certain critical information from reaching
parents appropriately. All remarks are made on this topic with the full realization that “you can’t know what goes on in a home. Only as much as someone tells you. And anyone may not tell you the honest truth of what’s going on”. Despite her not being a parent, this teacher’s observations and comments upon school-based parental educational responsibilities are carefully structured and remarkably rich in helpful content.

A male teacher, Interview # 3, thinks parents are unnecessarily taxed for children’s binders, books, photocopying and extra-curricular activities. On the other hand, this interviewee thinks many things could well be dealt with through more parental school-site involvement, from providing more money to “painting ceilings up, getting new tables in the cafeteria”, not to mention too much fast food items in the school cafeteria. This teacher stresses attention given to inappropriate components of institutionalized education like new telephone systems with voice mail and e-mail contacts and comments, “a lot of people have the idea that the teacher sits in front of a computer and a telephone for three or four hours a day rather than in front of thirty students”. Parents are also said to not voice concern over the amount of time some children invest in part-time work when such time would probably be far better spent on academic pursuits. To compound the nature of parent-school problems, the interviewee doubts successful implementation of recently-proposed reforms because of the percent of present school personnel heading for retirement and the number of new personnel not acquainted with Québec culture and likely to learn with only a year or two of teaching having been accomplished.

The third interviewee makes numerous pertinent comments on secondary school daily life but principally in a spirit of frustration and expostulation with scarce thought presented as to the overall phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Interview # 4 involves a father and mother who share a strong sense of rightfulness about the manner in which their household and its members function. Much data contributed by the interviewees illustrates this sense of rightfulness. Details, such as the almost daily father’s informal questioning of his son’s and daughter’s teachers about their offspring’s school progress, are stressed.
While ample time is taken to question the value of parent-teacher nights because the interviewees’ perception is that such nights involve principally parents of students not experiencing learning problems, the father argues for frequent parent-teacher contact in other ways: “Like, you need to be in contact with the teacher, maybe if you can’t do it daily, like I do, do it on a weekly basis”. In the high school concerned, commonly a teacher has over one hundred students, showing immediately unfeasibility of the nature of such a plain-sounding sensible idea.

On their own parenting practices, interviewees admit comparison of one child with another is not helpful. “Each one has certain things that they come to us for help with”. The search is for each child’s academic weaknesses and helping each child to obtain required tutoring or other help.

Critical remarks on the secondary school classroom situation involves observing class time lost for many teachers and students because of “the two or three kids in the class being destructive” but quickly turning to a domestic source in that, “I think discipline in some homes is a lost art. I think it’s the kids who run the show from what I see at school sometimes”. Assurance is found, however, by the male interviewee, who states, “As a parent, I know our home environment is good and discipline is not a problem”. Areas like sex education are criticized because “they’re not teaching them enough responsibility”.

On interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, the interviewee mother thinks, “if parents were given course outlines for what their children were taking so that they would know what was going to be covered throughout the year and what their responsibilities were as far as homework and how assignments were to be done”, it would help. The father wants better school communications, with parents given a chance for input although this involves possible interference with teacher duties. Periodic school communications, it is alleged, simply do not arrive in all homes and this is seen as a serious problem for both household members and school personnel.

Missing from this interview are thoughts on possible ways a school might help parents experiencing problems coping with their children as students. Possibly this gap is explained by the
strong sense on both the father’s and the mother’s parts of the virtuous nature of their household life and its many associated responsibilities.

The divorced mother, Interview # 5, contributes thoughtful data in responses to this division’s questions. On thinking about how present parenting practice might have differed from past actuality, the interviewee says, “I would probably get more involved with the homework” but “when they get to be in Level Three, Level Four, you try to back off so they can do it on their own” Her rationale is that “you try to give them some responsibility because at some point they have to take responsibility if they’re going on to college”. As with numerous secondary school parents, this parent supports the idea of extra-curricular activities but cannot afford the transportation costs or time commitments.

On how schools could help parents cope, this interviewee stresses “discipline is a key issue” and that “parents don’t take the responsibility to discipline their children but they expect the school to do it”. Further, “It has to be something that’s done at home as well as in the school”. In addition to discipline tasks, “conflict resolution is a big thing” because it is “just the whole life, and that is where our society has fallen now, not caring about people beside you”. As a general observation, this interviewee selects, “I think parents (and later, teachers) should be more aware of what actions they are portraying because that’s what the children pick up”.

In relation to interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, the interviewee contributes further evidence of ongoing problems of pertinent school communications reaching homes but mentions no solution. Helpful dimensions of parent-teacher nights are suggested with a condition that interviews be kept brief because of both the numbers of parents present and the number of teachers who have classes with any given student.

Interviewee # 6 is very realistic, with a dialogue offering actual examples involving her offspring to support points made, arguing that present parenting knowledge would probably not have changed parenting practice “because each one has been a different experience. What works for one doesn’t work for all”. In further analyzing this response, the interviewee admits, “If we could go back
and do things over, I guess there’s a lot of things we’d say we’d do differently but I can only say that major issues that have come up I would probably do differently because I wasn’t satisfied with the outcome”. A difference is made between doing something differently and the same thing better.

On the matter of the school offering parents help in coping with their student offspring, while the interviewee admits awareness of many parents who might benefit from such help, two problems are mentioned which may impede such a process. Many parents who could benefit would not necessarily participate; secondly, “the schools have to focus on the children because if they’ve come this far, the children, then what they’re doing, when I talk about negative things, they’re learning it from somewhere”. As to the broader problem of parents not being present for parent-teacher interviews, while this interviewee mentions “force tactics”, like not mailing report cards, she realizes the improbability of such measures actually being taken by any school.

Regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, matters of parental and school personnel awareness, regarding both actual problem situations and what can and might be done in terms of devising effective solutions, are specified. Bullying, alcohol consumption and smoking are mentioned with dismay regarding the manner in which some school personnel seem to deal with them. Chief among many difficulties in forming effective school policies is consistency. Problems of acceptable student clothing, school communications and various behavioural offenders, for example, are shown to have had varying proposed solutions. This interviewee, however, does place an onus of commitment on students themselves. “If it were little children, elementary children, I would say, ‘Ya, there’s definitely parental responsibilities and they need ideas and different practices but we’re talking about adolescents who, hopefully, by this time have formed some kind of responsibility for themselves’”. Student experiences of the interviewee’s family connected with personal commitment to student activities’ commitment, are cited.

Merits of Interview # 6 data are the richness of examples, actual experiences of family student members and hesitation to present finalized varieties of judgment on any of the innumerable situations mentioned. A reader may remark on such hesitation to comment and it is to be noted.
Mother and father interviewees of Interview # 7 offer numerous pertinent comments on questions of this division. Regarding possible changes to present parenting with much experience behind them, the mother offers the idea that “parents, in a respectful way, no matter if they believe in what, they should just say it, in a respectful way because there’s always good to come out of it. So if you have something on their mind or if you’re feeling a certain thing about a particular child, they should just say it, without any judgment being passed”. From this point, school matters, like appropriate student clothing and suitable student school behaviour, are discussed at length.

A point is made about problems for both teachers and parents because of differing discipline attitudes and policies in homes and at school, often leaving a child not understanding sufficiently what is expected behaviourally in either home or school.

Support is offered for a general idea of availability of school help for parents experiencing difficulty coping with their children. Problems of families with both parents working, the nature of contemporary household life in general and “because I don’t know of any home that’s perfect and everybody lives through a hard time”, encapsulate a multitude of possible scenarios where help might be appreciated.

Regarding school policies and practices affecting interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, school communications problems are mentioned. For these parents, not connected employment-wise with the school system, reliance on frequency and clarity of communication material are important. School communications actually reaching intended recipients is also cited as a problem. Parental concerns regarding school bus behavioural problems is also addressed. The variety of issues raised reveals the nature of concerns felt by many parents about their offspring’s school experience.

With the foregoing material, a reader may sense a strength of school-household links concerns. Experience by children of household and school life demonstrates interconnectedness of parents and school personnel regarding children’s lives. While much attention is devoted to
description and nature of school personnel working lives, similar kinds of attention do not seem to attend concerns of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility. Awareness and manifestation of a study subject area of raising children as a legitimate and significant part of daily school life remains like an opportunity lost for school children/students to study (learn about, discuss) and a possible means of comprehension of some profound social and educational parenting role functions. Always clearer are ways school personnel expect their institutionalized education efforts to be supported through parental school-based involvement.

5.3.2 Analytical Interpretation of Interviewees’ Singular Reported Experiences

Here we study themes and their dimensions treated by interviewees through responses to questions developed for interviewee reflection regarding matters upon which interviewees have probably already expressed ideas. We look for possible new themes and the manner in which interviewees have reflected on themes already identified.

On the subject of interviewees’ household parenting policies and practices and possible present changes because of knowledge gained from earlier experiences, viewpoints range from an administrator, Interview # 1 denying personal feeling of requiring reassessment and change, a wish on the part of the female teacher, Interview # 2, that her parents had consulted her prior to attending parent-teacher interviews to report to the interviewee teacher viewpoints learned at interviews, through particular matters like more careful supervision of homework and better understanding of school course requirements of the divorced mother, Interview # 5, more courage to speak up at appropriate times if offspring appear to experience school-related problems of Interview # 7 and expression of thought that each offspring is a separate type of challenge and personality requiring individual interchange of opinion and interaction of Interviews # 4 and # 6, in each of which interviews such opinions are presented with substantiation of careful thought. A reader may conclude that some form of serious thought about present parenting tasks based on knowledge gained from earlier parenting experience is certainly possible, though not always acknowledged or admitted.
Regarding interviewees’ opportunity to comment upon school-based parental educational responsibilities specifically and comprehensively clearly, the conceptual stretch from ability and willingness to discuss various parenting situations of a domestic environment and parent-child/student situations arising from or because of the school environment to envisioning a unifying and comprehensive subject of a school-based parental educational responsibility phenomenon is not made ordinarily. The grip of school-related tasks and projects upon use of domestically-sited time and other resources meets little or no possible reciprocal grip of domestically-related situations upon use of school-sited time and other resources. Although parents, legally, are responsible for the matter of education of offspring, the design and construction of the education component seems left to an organized, institutionalized education system’s personnel. How individuals designated as parents are involved with the school system seems up to school personnel following legislative, ministerial and other official guidelines.

As to possible help a school could offer parents having difficulties coping with school-based educational tasks, predominantly interviewees suggest little. They commend examples given of workshops for parents on anger and anxiety management, introduced originally for students in the school. No suggestion as to what forms possible school help for parents might take beyond examples mentioned appears. Performance by parents of tasks supporting school personnel education efforts is firmly and unquestioningly established but amorphous and evanescent is the idea of performance by school personnel of tasks supporting parental school-based educational responsibilities.

On school policies and practices affecting interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, interviewees offer numerous comments upon an array of subject matter bearing in some way upon the general subject of the interview question. Generally, responses bespeak a perceived chance to voice concerns on a wide variety of school-related concerns felt by parents of school households to be troublesome in one way or another. Important concerns are communication of important school information to parents and the manner in which such communication is executed. As well, interviewees comment upon the methods of contacting school personnel when a need is felt for such contact. Criticism is made over evident general inability to gain involvement of parents
whose children do not achieve school-related academic goals, even for parent-teacher interviews. Interviewees also criticize teaching personnel handling of discipline and lack of effective attention to items like bullying. The chief characteristic of responses to the last question of Part Two is a lack of consistent pattern of parental school-related concerns.

Data contributed by interviewees does not lead to easy formulation of tentative categories. Reinforcement of perception of school-based parental educational responsibility is critical for school daily life but a phenomenon constantly changing in its shape or form and dimensions according to the manner in which personnel of the institutionalized education system structure requires different forms and strengths of support at different times.

5.3.3 Preliminary Categorization

Responses to questions of this division seem to suffer from paucity of fresh ideas and/or insights. Thus, categorization risks generalization, meaning possible omission of some critical data and/or blandness of description which may encompass more material and ideas than warranted by data contributed. Much data contributed represents forms of reaction to structures, designs, plans and situations with which interviewees interact daily in relation to the pertinent school and its personnel.

Regarding responses to the first question of this division, a reader notes data present details of domestic parent-child relationships with no reference to possible readings, evidence of knowing experiences of other households or other possible sources of new information to alter current parenting policies and practices. Data reveals a range from denial of need to change items (Interview # 1), through actually described possible changes like more homework supervision and more knowledge of course requirements (Interview # 5), more courage to speak up at appropriate school-related venues (Interview # 7), the need to be attentive to children about observed changes and to keep as much discussion about positive changes as alive as possible (Interview # 2), to interviewees claiming individual characters of children necessitate adaptations of one kind or another without acknowledgement of having learned anything in particular about one child’s upbringing manageably
transferable to upbringing of another child (Interviews #4 and 6). Any actual changes are based upon child-rearing experience of each interviewee household.

Specificity of reference to school-based parental educational responsibilities does not manifest itself beyond ideas presented in earlier parts of the interview. It is evidently a very small area of parental school concern. Earlier responses to direct questions about the thesis topic showed remarkably little evidence of school-site school-based parental educational responsibilities involvement, for this division we find no fresh evidence of such experience and consequently, no ability to make further comment upon the matter. Any words found on the actual research topic itself form a variety of reaction to school-generated information of various kinds.

Regarding interviewee ideas of how schools themselves could help some parents cope with their school-based parental educational responsibilities, no new ideas emerge from the data than ideas previously mentioned of actual parent workshops, favourably regarded, on anger and anxiety held in one or two communities. This shows, perhaps, the idea that schools may actually have a role in helping parents cope in such ways has not been previously mooted.

On the question of school policies and practices requiring changes, a wealth of concerns is evident on a variety of items relating to school daily life, like discipline, clothing, bussing and transportation, extra-curricular activities fees, school curriculum and other such matters. Since such items are given a fair amount of discussion, it is plain they are matters which trouble interviewees and indicate areas for which interviewees would like to see evidence of school personnel willingness and/or intent to effect helpful appropriate changes.

For reasons treated in the previous paragraphs of this 5.3.3 section, it is suggested data contributed for this third division of 'The Present' part of the interview may well be included in two previously suggested categories: reliance of households upon the relevant education institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life and conceptual uniqueness of each domestic arrangement/household and its core values. A comprehensiveness of school-based
parental educational responsibilities remains ephemeral. The phenomenon seems to remain as a noted particularity with no consciousness of its possible dimensions.

The sixth chapter deals with interviewees’ data on present conceptions of possible future performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Certain interviewee reflection of previously-presented material may be present.
Chapter Six

Analysis of Interview Data, Part Three (The Future)

Introduction

Designing an interview protocol with minimal conceptual difficulties for volunteering interviewees, it was thought helpful to align questions in a time format, thereby hoping interviewees could and would relate responses requested to time passage experience of ordinary everyday life. The researcher also hoped, as each interview proceeded, thoughts about what school-based parental educational responsibilities could involve and include might show themselves through data possibly becoming more organized and, perhaps, more complex, as interviews continued. While the general purpose behind all interviews is exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities through analysis of administrator, teacher and parent concepts, trying to comprehend an essence of a phenomenon may be equalled or even surpassed in significance by the nature of relationships which may be shown between the given phenomenon and both components and spatio-temporal educational contexts in which the phenomenon may be conceptualized as being ensconced.

With such thoughts, this third part of the interviews, titled briefly “Future”, requests interviewees to remark upon possible future school policies and practices which may helpfully affect interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, all within the idea of learning about school-based parental educational responsibilities. Possible key ingredients which may bring about or foster meaningful interrelationships, like school curriculum and/or activities, school policies and practices regarding school-household communications, are named to encourage, stimulate and organize interviewee thoughts. While encouragement, stimulation and organization may be considered important or at least helpful, for research purposes it is also important that we see how people actually think of the research topic in ordinary daily settings.

The concluding interview question requests freely-offered comments of any kind on the research topic and questions of the interview. By having merely two questions in this concluding
section, it was hoped interviewees would feel freer to possibly express themselves broadly and with less restraint.

6.1 Interviewees’ Singular Recorded Experiences

The administrator, Interview #1, discusses both need and possibility for increasing both numbers and complexities of parent-information sessions each year, saying, “we realize that a lot of the stuff is complicated for parents just because they’re not in it every day like we are. I mean it’s complicated for us. We see it every day”. He mentions school endeavours to get critical information on school matters to parents through mailings, Internet messages and newspapers. The matter of teachers communicating with parents is also discussed.

A discussion ensues on observations of both virtues and problems of one- and two-parent households. The principal emphasizes needs of a child for a sense of stability, no matter what design a household possesses. Key to the administrator viewpoint is his stating that, in effect, parents who want to be informed are often the same ones who want to become involved in school-sited groups like Governing Board. Important here is, “I think that parents who wanted to be informed were informed before as it is now. Parents who want to be on the Governing Board just because they want to be informed, they are informed”.

A concluding piece of data contributed by the administrator is expression of personal frustration that Governing Boards and other official school bodies have created more work for school administrators. He says, “All these other committees that we have to attend, all these other things that we have to see to, in my opinion, really don’t add anything to, and as a matter of fact they take away from what we’re trying to do in the schools”, duties the administrator designates as “administrative management, not human management in a school sense”.

It is, however, important to note that the frustration felt by the administrator, noted in the previous paragraph, must be set within the interviewee’s greater vision of the purpose behind the
existence of his school. He declares simply but firmly, “And, basically, what is school all about? It’s about helping children to become better learners. So that they’re continuous lifelong learners, and in order to do that, you have to have some pedagogical strategies. You have to have an understanding of how children learn, how the mind functions and you have to have a lot of energy and be dynamic. And that’s no different than it ever was”. Presumably this interviewee carries on his career responsibilities with these ideas foremost and uppermost in his mind.

While a reader may note that not much of the administrator’s data seems to deal with what one could designate as future developments, important for a researcher to understand is that what is said constitutes the administrator’s actual response on matters which may concern future developments. Factors of present states of affairs are discussed as though a tacit understanding prevails that they will remain this way, however, over future time with minor adjustments and adaptations.

The female teacher, Interview #2, offers commentary, guarded constantly by her strong sense of professionalism meaning, in part, not intruding even by remarks, on possible discussion areas she would consider more fittingly commented upon by other persons. Thus, she fairly rapidly glosses over what she thinks she may helpfully say about school policies and practices, allowing a remark “that with administrators who are more upfront and more direct, they’re more respected. I’m not afraid to say that”. After some remarks about, “I kinda spoke around things and came back to things and connected them in my lateral way of thinking”, as a way of reaching the planned conclusion of the interview, the interviewee then embarks on presentation of nearly three more pages of concluding remarks.

These concluding remarks contain many pertinent thoughts. The topic of the interview she considers “a very important topic”. Then she says, “I think that parents have a role to play, and, the bigger the role they play the more satisfied they’d be with their child’s education” Opinions, she suggests, should be voiced before possibly unfavourable decisions are rendered. “So, I really think that if you really want to see changes happen, that you have to be vocal about it but not in a way that
alienates”. Specifically, “if your child is struggling, you need to be more involved, not less involved. But then again, it’s your choice to be involved as you want” to be aware, she asserts, is, at the least, a possible fundamental step.

Virtues and problems of both single-parent and two-parent households are discussed. For either situation a good support system is critical for children. For any and all households, “I think it’s just being aware of what is going on in your child’s life will make them a happier child and a happier child makes for a better, a better student because they’re able to handle things, able to handle being in a classroom with thirty other people and getting what they need from it”. A return is made to the importance of a good base and support system and, “I don’t just mean academics, I mean everything in school. Stuff in the halls and getting involved and enjoying the experience hopefully”. A personal reason for going to school daily may simply be for one subject or one extra-curricular activity. Despite the concern this interviewee has for fundamental household needs children seem to seek, her observation is that some students may be said to have a more personal relationship with a teacher seen each school day than with either parent, especially for children of households divided through separation and divorce.

Consideration is given, finally, to students of different cultures in the school. Such children often have parents who “have to support their child, making transitions”, their parents often being professional people who seem to move their household frequently, relatively speaking. Schooling, for members of such families, is seen as an important experience.

Despite the variety of concluding remarks, the female teacher does not deal with future time orientation of this interview part. Concerns are mentioned, perhaps, as ones needing future attention because they cause some present difficulties.

The male teacher, Interview # 3, emphasizes problems of present conditions in the school. E-mail and other parent-teacher or parent-school communications seem to him to be used beyond practical considerations. Successful implementation of school reforms are said to be jeopardized by
inappropriate staffing policies. Within schools, usefulness of staff, and other official school group, meetings is decried. Some students are said to spend excessive time and energy fulfilling part-time employment requirements, presumably with parental approbation. Above all, for this interviewee, some parents are said to take much teacher time with unneeded communications. For useful interaction among parents, children/students and school personnel, “there have ot be some sort of controls. It’s okay to be open and demanding of the teacher’s time but there has to be some understanding that he (a parent) can’t tax him”.

Brevity and even terseness characterize the male teacher data. Presumably the future emphasis intended for this part is dealt with through mentioning numerous workplace frustrations affecting present-day teacher career days as issues requiring future helpful solutions.

The mother and father of Interview # 4 offer numerous remarks. Much is said about difficulties for everybody every time a new provincial government or minister of education appears. Wisdom of many policies is questioned. Budget cuts are blamed for often ineffective school-parent communications. Repeated is, “a parents’ night isn’t a night when we should be catering to the honour roll kids. It’s the ones who are suffering, the ones who are struggling. That’s the ones we gotta reach”. Children of separated parents are said to have great difficulty coping with school daily life. Numbers of students loitering at night in Lennoxville on week nights is said to be due to parents as well as to students in difficulty at school because parents are not aware about their children’s lives. A short but key remark, with many implications affecting comprehension of these parent interviewees’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility, is “You gotta be there”.

Interview # 4 data deals with what these parents consider serious present-day problems. Much material seems based upon a fairly firm conviction that their household parent-child relations are carried on in a virtuous manner compared with what they seem to think about what may be going on in other households.
The divorced mother, Interview # 5, regarding the future, confines remarks to some characteristics and components of present school life in the spirit of suggesting positive features augur well for future development.

Favourable comments are made about present long school classroom sessions. Criticism is levelled at costs for student extra-curricular involvement. School communications with households are said to be adequate. The no smoking policy is commended. In-school student suspension practices are said by the interviewee to be better than having a student sent home. Availability of computer time in local libraries is addressed as a partial solution for students without personal computers. finally, the children’s grandparents are praised as some of the most interesting ‘teachers’ her children have.

A future orientation for policies and practices seems embodied in comments on numerous school life features. Possibly the interviewee’s experience on official school groups makes her realize a certain lack of realism often attends comments made in a spirit of speculation.

The mother of Interview # 6 offers yet further commentary based principally upon a time-line perception of school daily life, arguing principally that she felt greater confidence in and had more admiration for school life of the school’s earlier years than for the present time. “I’ve seen a deterioration, but it’s not just parental deterioration” remains unsupported because it is followed by criticism of the school programme with so few shop courses available and presently only for students who have passed Level Four courses. “They (students) are not coming out with the sense of fulfilment today as they did thirty years ago” The school band leader is then commended on behalf of the interviewee’s daughter with the claim that the girl’s interest in band involvement is what keeps her at school.

As to parents, “You have good parents and you have bad parents” and “I think you’ve got other parents who just don’t consider it to be important. They have these kids and that’s it”. The latter comment helps the researcher understand why so little perception seems to exist as to interviewee
conceptualizing a phenomenon of school-based parent educational responsibilities, let alone parenting itself as a comprehensive topic. Plain statement of actual thoughts on pertinent matters remains important.

School personnel are said to experience little "opportunity to deal with the unproblems". This may be an explanation for this interviewee perceiving some teacher difficulties with many classroom discipline situations.

Interview #6 ends with voicing doubts about the school academic standards suitable for CEGEP success and expression of anxiety about students obtaining adequate mother tongue language skills in view of school board bilingual competence policy aims.

Rather than obtaining viewpoints about school policies and practices relating to helpful future interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, any future viewpoint seems to involve the idea of many present conditions in their future manifestations.

The mother and father of Interview #7 offer a mixture of criticism of certain present tendencies in school policies and practices as well as fears for both present students and future high school students and their respective futures. In particular, the absence of guidance assemblies to explain to higher level students choices available and the sheer amount of high-tech hardware and software skills apparently required for academic success make this couple uneasy. In addition, interviewees criticize teachers of computer-related topics as inadequately trained. More regular parent-teacher contacts are suggested. In conclusion, a need for more school personnel awareness of the variety of communities and households served by the school is stressed.

Interviewees of the last interview present numerous ideas based upon unease with the present school system. A future orientation must be based on attempts to remedy present problems. A reader may wonder if an ongoing problem for parents coping with educational institution changes is simply the perceived rapid rate and force of change before certain difficulties may be adequately overcome.
6.2 Analytical Interpretation of Interviewees’ Singular Recorded Experiences

Response data contributed by interviewees to the two Part Three, ‘The Future’ questions demonstrate attention, for the first question, to expressing personal thoughts about items listed at the end of the question as possible research-site school areas of concern. Once interviewees saw or heard the listed items about the school programme, school policies and practices and parenting ideas and practices related to school-based parental educational responsibilities, responses concentrated on personal reactions to mental impressions, often long-held, of particular school-related items of concern.

Secondly, most data consists of aforementioned personal reactions regarding numerous particular school matters which, for one or another reason, stand out as parts of secondary school life, meriting attention of pertinent school personnel, as a given interviewee might say. Prominence of these concerns is in itself of critical interest because it indicates endurance of mental impressions gained by most interviewees during their own secondary school student days, through conversations between them and their secondary school student offspring, among their peers, because of ongoing interest in secondary school life or possibly conversations between interviewees and friends/acquaintances and school personnel themselves. Of greater interest for this research of these concerns is how mental concentration of interviewees their prominent school concerns seem to prevent them from expressing ideas about a comprehensive school-based parental educational responsibility, as a significant life phenomenon, out of which conceptualization may emanate one or several particular school concerns. The entire organized education system, with all its problems, remains a readily conceptualized life phenomenon. How this education system relates to school-based parental educational responsibilities seems seldom, if ever, treated or thought about.

Thirdly, although data has little or no indication of the nature of improvements or changes visualized by interviewees as being necessary, to be noted is that some concerns relate to what took place in an interviewee’s secondary school life, seen by said interviewee as of a superior quality for one reason or another to present-day secondary school life. Such concerns often remain matters of
fixed opinion as school life goes through constant change because of legislation, regulation and/or budgetary reasons.

Fourthly, data of this third interview part shows practically nothing fresh on the research topic of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Perhaps the field of an organized, highly-structured, public education system becomes increasingly complex to understand. It is one thing for school personnel themselves to cope with changes and reforms. It is another thing for parents not connected with schools except through offspring attending school, to comprehend enough about present-day school life beyond what concerns offspring. A parent sees the school-student bond as more important to maintain for the child’s own future than to try to understand possible extension of parental school-based educational responsibilities as well as giving attention to ordinary concerns of household and career life. Certainly, the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibilities as a comprehensive item does not seem much thought about, if at all.

6.3 Preliminary Categorization

Striving to categorize data contributed in response to questions of this part, a reader is at pains to point out significant passages comprised of material not addressed previously in interviews. This is due to the fact that these persons questioned about the future in relation to a given institution seem to consider present-day conditions of the institution with the idea that some conditions will continue to exist into the future without a perceived necessity for changes while other conditions or factors are perceived as needing some change but without much urgency.

Data reveals many school-based parental educational responsibilities seem to be carried on with tacit understanding and minimum or no comment. Items actually given data space comprise some major concerns of school-based parental educational responsibility evidently causing unease and/or anxiety. Interviewees do not express ideas of how items of school life mentioned could or might be changed but brandish them as needing attention. These factors lead the researcher to suggest yet again a categorization of data as a reliance of households upon the relevant education
institution sorting out meaningful achievement goals in many areas of life. Herein lies realization of force of offspring interaction with school peers and school personnel upon household daily life.

Outstanding through data contributed is an observation that, however much concern career-educators and parents have about some kind of educational responsibility parents have or should have or are understood to have in relation to their children, evidence of consciousness or realization of a comprehensive responsibility conceived as a phenomenon is scant and scarcely existent. It seems much of the content of perceived school-based parental educational responsibility is the voicing of school-based concerns heard about from, or seen to be affecting, offspring with minimal indication of either school-site involvement or of how parents may perceive a kind of wholeness of a recognizable, complex and significant role of school-based educational responsibility.

The following chapter deals with analysis of the complexity of interviewee data on the general topic of school-based parental educational responsibilities. How much the subject is in the minds of interviewees is itself revealing.
Chapter Seven

Analytical Itemization of Interview Material

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to helpfully present an analytical itemization of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed by interviewees. Throughout, the intention is for a reader to sense a close connection between material presented and the principal research purpose of this work, namely, to explore understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities through analysis of conceptions of this phenomenon gathered by in-depth interviews with parents, teachers and an administrator of the research-site school.

The researcher does not suggest that components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed by interviewees bear a relationship to any performance or manifestation of such components. Value of interview material and presentation thereof lies principally in richness of their quantity and quality. Sheer number and variety of school-based parental educational responsibility components are remarkable; frequent instances of extensive interview data concerning individual components of school-based parental educational responsibilities demonstrate clear evidence of both considerable depth and broad range of interviewee concerns.

Orderly subdivision of component presentation is meant to help a reader make sense of material presented and increase insight regarding the research purpose of exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Components and commentary thereon are followed by charts and commentary thereon of perceived obstacles to, or problems with, effective achievement of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed together with stress on possible connections between said obstacles and school-based parental educational responsibilities components. All material is dedicated to its possible helpfulness in an ongoing quest to more helpfully and extensively explore understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities.
Data material herein is out of its context. This characteristic is hereby stressed. As a result, both perception and understanding of actual interrelationships of data material is not experienced by a reader.

7.1 This Chapter's Presentation Methods

Work commences with charts of items of this research's phenomenon discussed in in-depth interviews. These are analytically subdivided, always with the primary research purpose in mind. Note is taken of items specified by parents, teachers and an administrator respectively and of items common among data from all interviewees. To be stressed is that mention of any and all items of school-based parental educational responsibilities by interviewees is not research-wise linked to actual performance of any and all items. Charts treat parent, teacher and administrator components, summary of component significance and common items of interviewee charts. Commentary on all charts is offered.

Subsequently, of particular and special interest, appear items related to components of school-based parental educational responsibility discussed by interviewees in the sense of interviewee perception of their embeddedness in forms of obstacles to be overcome or problem situations seeking helpful responses in order that particular school-based parental educational responsibilities may be effectively carried out. Subdivision of such obstacles and possible problem situations has been ventured, for the three interviewee divisions of parents, teachers and school administrator, into those seemingly household-sited and thus possibly to be dealt with as different households deem appropriate, those seemingly school-sited and possibly to be dealt with through school personnel and those seemingly requiring some response perhaps necessitating cooperative action of household and school personnel or other meaningful joint action. Commentary is also offered.

The chapter closes with a conclusion commentary. Links between material of this chapter and other parts of this research work are ventured here.
7.2 Components of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

Herein are components of school-based parental educational responsibility mentioned in all in-depth interviews. Charts detail parent-contributed items, teacher-contributed items and administrator-contributed items. Components of each chart are understood as school-based parental educational responsibilities presently commonly understood in various ways, but seemingly broadly accepted. Pertinence of the charts lies principally in the number of components of school-based parental educational responsibility mentioned by interviewees. Each chart has been subdivided into five subsections: Home-Site Performance Manifestation With Offspring Presence, Home-Site Performance Manifestation Without Necessary Offspring Presence, School-Site Performance Manifestation With Offspring Presence, School-Site Performance Manifestation Without Necessary Offspring Presence, and Attitudinal. Similarities of some entries of all charts are noted.

Since the purpose of in-depth interviews was to find out the nature of parent, teacher and administrator conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, material gathered is seen as being within a context of ongoing, daily, interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel of one Québec English-language, public, secondary school. Conceptions revealed may helpfully affect the nature of policies and practices regarding said interrelationships for stakeholders of the research-site school.

As this chapter’s itemization structure is considered, for purposes of the principal research purpose of exploring understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility through understanding conceptions of administrators, teachers and parents as revealed in remarks made in in-depth interviews, nothing mentioned in this chapter in any way detracts from the contextual analysis work of the previous three chapters. Such contextual analysis deals, not simply with words and expressions, but with the order of spoken remarks, the manner in which remarks are made and other important factors affecting gathering of research data through in-depth interviews. Comprehension of context is critical.
Insight is hopefully provided through decontextualized itemization, study of which may help the principal research purpose. Realization of dangers of loss of meaning and significance of words and expressions, when any words and/or expressions are considered, discussed or analysed out of their interview context, is admitted. First, however, the large number of components of school-based parental educational responsibility mentioned by all interviewees is, nevertheless, revealing. Second, the fact that so many areas of school-based parental educational responsibility are mentioned within a framework of some form of problem or difficulty, perhaps to be somehow resolved or even if not resolved, indicates the subject matter of this research remains as something affecting ongoing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. An appreciation of the breadth and depth of concern of interviewees in particular and of parents in general of the state of daily school life and how components of this daily school life affect both parents and offspring is revealing. With an appreciation of this aspect, a reader gains a sense of the complexity of the term 'school-based', realizing that interviewee concerns are very certainly 'school-based' though many may not be school-sited. Because the entire experience of ordinary school days is associated with a period of human life where certain household members, the children, are absent from the household site for much of a given day but expected to live and function both at a school and as part of a household, many potentially complex social and other concerns are daily met by both children and parents.

To aid in studying data contributed by interviewees, a number of charts are employed to helpfully systematize presentation of the varied interview material and possibly encourage development of helpful conclusions regarding policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
7.2.1.1 Descriptive Analysis of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

Chart 1. Descriptive Analysis Chart of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home-Site Performance With Offspring Presence</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*food, clothing, shelter</td>
<td>*food, clothing, shelter</td>
<td>*physical, spiritual well-being and education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*be there</td>
<td>*be there</td>
<td>*support of school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*positive thinking about school daily life</td>
<td>*positive attitude to school life</td>
<td>*homework help</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support of education in general</td>
<td>*home-centred support of school in general</td>
<td>*home-help and appropriate domestic atmosphere for its accomplishment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*communicate constantly</td>
<td>*communicate with offspring frequently and effectively</td>
<td>*parental pressure and encouragement to study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*speak up in a respectful way</td>
<td>*voice opinions where and when appropriate</td>
<td>*support children but not against school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*oversee homework tasks</td>
<td>*homework help</td>
<td>*show positive side to schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*good’ home, discipline and responsibility, children a priority, they know what is expected</td>
<td>*parent support for children but not against the school</td>
<td>*keep children motivated, stimulated about school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support school, sometimes with school being always right</td>
<td>*reading, attempting to comprehend school communications</td>
<td>*make use of e-mail, voice mail to reach school personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*attention to school communications, course outlines, requirements</td>
<td>*reading, attempting to comprehend appropriate curriculum, activity material</td>
<td>*stability of ‘family’ at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*child to understand he/she is responsible for his/her education</td>
<td>*domestic team approach to school daily life</td>
<td>*develop sense of ‘ownership’ in learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*children to know about parent availability for homework, school events</td>
<td>*be aware of offspring life in general and school experience</td>
<td>*parents facilitators in school process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*care about awareness of school life, homework</td>
<td>*consider school personnel advice, warnings about school-site behaviour and academic work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Home-Site Performance Without Offspring Presence | *positive thinking about school daily life  
*support of education in general  
*talk up in a respectful way  
*good home, discipline, responsibility, children a priority, know what is expected  
*support of offspring school, sometimes to extent of school being always right  
*attention to school communications, course outlines, requirements  
*awareness of school life, homework  
*support child commitment to part-time work combined with school activities  
*understand effects on children of school restrictive budgetary practices  
*encourage summer part-time work  
*school no-smoking policy supported  
*recognition of other adult help in child's upbringing (e.g. grandparent)  
*support school efforts to have students dress appropriately for daily school life  
*attend to teacher communication of student school problems  
*fostering offspring social development, don’t let children rule  
*respect peers, teachers, environment, global setting  
*avoid confrontation, negativity  
*recognize school personnel expectation of parental total awareness of offspring schoolwork  
*read newsletters, minutes of official school groups  
*recognition of effectiveness of workshops for parents on school-related matters  
*support school breakfast programme as realistic handling of lack of basic care | *positive attitude to school life  
*support of school in general  
*voice opinions where and when appropriate  
*reading, attempting to comprehend school communications  
*reading, attempting to comprehend appropriate curriculum, activity material  
*domestic team approach to school daily life  
*be aware of offspring life in general and school experience  
*consider school personnel advice, warnings of school-site behaviour and academic work | *pressure and encouragement to study  
*support for children but not against the school  
*motivation, stimulation to achieve in school  
*stability at home |

| School-Site Performance With Offspring Presence | *presence at:  
a. school events (e.g. graduation)  
b. school sports, activities events  
*seek parent-oriented school course outlines  
*support needs of ordinary students who work well without high academic achievement  
*make parent intervention in school timely  
*attend teacher communication of student school problems  
*recognize effectiveness of workshops for parents on school-related matters | *presence at:  
a. school events (e.g. graduation)  
b. school sports, activities events  
*volunteer in sports, classes, other activities  
*become involved with offspring school experience | *orientation day for Level Ones |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-Site Performance Without Offspring Presence</th>
<th>*presence at parent-teacher meetings *seek parent-oriented school course outlines *support needs of ordinary students who work well without high academic achievement *make parent intervention in school timely</th>
<th>*presence at: a. parent-teacher meetings, interviews b. school information sessions c. special meetings called for individual students *school official group formation and other similar sessions</th>
<th>*parents to get involved in school official groups *parent-school contacts important *attend parent information sessions *cooperate with school communication efforts, as voicemail, e-mail, meetings, circulars *workshops for parents of children who attended school organized workshops previously</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal</td>
<td>*be there *positive thinking about school daily life</td>
<td>*be there *positive attitude about school life</td>
<td>*show positive side to schools *develop sense of ownership in learning *think of selves as facilitators in school process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2: Summary Chart for Section 7.2.1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home-Site Performance With Offspring Presence</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*personal children a priority *all home educational performance in personal children’s interests</td>
<td>*support class, school as educational units *input effort, interest, awareness of school matters</td>
<td>*pressure, encouragement *facilitating school instructional process *suitable homework atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-Site Performance Without Offspring Presence</td>
<td>*broad awareness of school life influence on home to be nurtured and appreciated</td>
<td>*support class, school *question only quantity, quality of one’s input</td>
<td>*support school *be aware of, read, try to understand school communications, verbal and written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Site Performance With Offspring Presence</td>
<td>*though present for child, show some concern for class, school aims</td>
<td>*significant presence expected</td>
<td>*volunteer, get involved, communicate with school personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Site Performance Without Offspring Presence</td>
<td>*be actively involved for benefit of personal children</td>
<td>*parents have serious role to play, with teachers, in name of education though regarding personal children</td>
<td>*obtain class, school information, curriculum material, participate in official and other groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal</td>
<td>*personal children are very important in life *parental care, interest are critical</td>
<td>*positive attitude *interested, involved presence in student’s life</td>
<td>*stability of home *school effort is worthy of visible parent support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2.1.2 Commentary on Charts of Section 7.2.1.1

Commentary on the foregoing charts of school-based parental educational responsibilities relates to three points. First, the relatively lesser number of school personnel components of the research phenomenon indicates school personnel role-conscious and role-based representation of a highly-organized and structured organization and few ‘demands’ regarding parental performance of their school-based educational responsibilities because much daily school experience is carried on with many tacit assumptions about community and parent understanding of basic requirements for any school or school group to function. Second, more components of school-based parental educational responsibilities are mentioned by parent interviewees because many parental concerns begin around and within the domestic settings of interviewees, each with its particular viewpoints and concerns. Third, the variety of parent components indicate a plain reality of actual ongoing domestic concern about many factors of the organized public school system although at no time does a parent question the rightful existence of the school and the education system in general. A feature of parent-interviewee components is the notable lack of items connoting much physical presence at school and actual involvement or participation in elements of daily school life. Strong feelings of how schools are supported as long as values therein represented coincide or resemble domestic values prevail.

7.2.1.3 In-Depth Interview Data-Revealed School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities: Common Parents, Teachers and Administrator Interviewees Itemized Components

Though parent, teacher and administrator interviewees approach discussion of school-based parental educational responsibilities from differing viewpoints, four common items emerge. Commonality of items must not, however, conceal possibly differing motivations or reasons for discussing such items. Parent interviewees are primarily concerned with their individual children and each child’s daily school-based life. Teachers and the administrator express primary concern for organizational functioning, the effectivity and efficiency of which depends greatly upon school-based parental educational responsibilities components performance. Role consciousness is evident.
The first common item is the item of basic care involving food, clothing and shelter though the administrator talks of physical and spiritual well-being. Later, in analysing obstacles to successful performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities, to be noted are items reflecting lack of consciousness of, at least, adequate degrees of provision of items of basic care.

A second common item is a basic support for the school with teachers and the administrator stressing a need to have parents see a positive side to school life. Though no interviewee questions the rightfulness of schools to exist and function helpfully as a part of daily life, factors such as fairly large percents of present parents, whether former students or not, who did experience problems in their secondary school life, make school personnel aware of why some present students have difficulties of various kinds with their daily school life.

All interviewees share concern for a third item, homework accomplishment, with the administrator adding a responsibility of parents providing a domestic-site atmosphere conducive to homework activity. An additional observation is made by at least one teacher of many parents being demonstrably incapable of offering any meaningful help to their children in some subject areas.

A fourth common item is that of presence of parents at school for certain events. Parents and teachers share items such as attending school events, like graduation or sports and drama presentations as well as parents turning up for parent-teacher interviews and/or meetings. The administrator's data is very role-based and his desire for parent presence is centred on formation and functioning of official school groups involving parents.

A reader could rightfully conclude this short section with an observation that basic interviewee conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities all focus on fundamentals of such responsibilities. Lacking, however, is evidence of consciousness of a comprehensive phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibilities with clear sense of priorities or even of a greater possible number of common items. Institutions of households/families and of schools may be inextricably bound together with ultimate deference of
differing types of households to the customarily more clearly enunciated and organized aims of educational institutions.

7.2.2.1 Research Significance of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

Chart Explanation

A new human is being raised. Humans now performing child-raising will inevitably be supplanted by others. Institutionalized education functions with a similar recognition that other persons than those presently managing and operating schools will replace present incumbents. Neither responsible adults of domestic settings nor personnel of schools nor, in actuality, other adult persons, can know clearly how human upbringing is to be most helpfully or beneficially effected. All work in this exploratory study, including preparatory reading of official, research and general literature, shows multiplicity, complexity and profundity of thoughtful detail with numerous ideas concerning young persons' upbringing and school-based education.

Data obtained for this exploratory study deals with a child upbringing component, shows lack of clarity and concordance of vision on the part of responsible adults. No mention is made of a perceived human necessity for either parents or school personnel to be adults responsible for human offspring upbringing but, in the research setting of this work, such persons are significant. Adult behaviours may be thought of as interventions of one kind or another in lives of offspring.

Fundamentally, school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed by interviewees relate to realizing some humans now being raised will be stakeholders in future experiences of a related variety. Some domestic, school and other values derived from elsewhere now regarded as meaningful seem treated as necessary in some way for young humans to retain while provision is also made for opportunities for offspring to develop their own ideas about such and other values for their own evaluation.
The present task is to determine what interviewees seem to be actually telling us regarding school-based parental educational responsibilities with reference to secondary school students. This chart is based upon clinging and releasing interventions of parents, teachers and an administrator regarding teenager upbringing. Clinging interventions seem made by parents and/or school personnel and others with assumptions of values being critical in some way for teenage offspring to learn about and retain. Releasing tendencies illustrate underlying understanding that the manner of a young person carrying out a behaviour or representing an attitude or value is up to the young person, always realizing items not herein discussed could form part of future upbringing experience.

Clinging and releasing actions are a phenomenon of all human interchanges, whether physical or verbal. In bringing up young humans, however, they become significant as those humans involved in raising young humans try to sort out activities, carrying out of which are vested more and more with humans being raised. Regarding this work, secondary school age young humans are at the heart of sorting out rightfulness of clinging and releasing activities.

Chart 3. Research Significance Chart of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinging Domestic-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*food, clothing, shelter</td>
<td>*food, clothing, shelter</td>
<td>*food, clothing, shelter</td>
<td>*domestic stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*be there</td>
<td>*be there</td>
<td>*be there</td>
<td>*supportive pressure and encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*communicate constantly</td>
<td>*communicate with offspring often and effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*'good' home, discipline and responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Releasing Domestic-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</th>
<th>*speak up in a respectful way</th>
<th>*voice opinions where and when appropriate</th>
<th>*support children but not against the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*recognize young persons watch the way adults carry on to solve problems</td>
<td>*be aware concerning offspring life in general and school experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*teenage students require less sense of daily adult control</td>
<td>*domestic team approach to school life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*recognize other adult help in child's upbringing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*developing offspring socially, don't let children rule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*respect peers, teachers, environment, global setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*avoid confrontation, negativity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinging School-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</td>
<td>positive thinking about school daily life</td>
<td>positive attitude to school life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support of education in general</td>
<td>*home-centred support of school in general</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*speak up in a respectful way</td>
<td>*homework help</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*oversee homework tasks</td>
<td>*reading, attempting to understand school communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support offspring school, sometimes to extent of school being always right</td>
<td>*reading, attempting to understand curriculum and activity material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*attention to school communications, course outlines, requirements</td>
<td>*motivation to achieve in school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*care about awareness of school life, homework</td>
<td>*consider school personnel advice, warnings about offspring school-site behaviour, academic work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*understand effects on children of school restrictive budget practices</td>
<td>*parents as partners concepts to be considered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*school no-smoking policy is supported</td>
<td>*presence at school events, parent-teacher meetings, school information sessions, special meetings called for individual students, school official group formation and other similar sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*use of in-school suspension more effective than sending same student home</td>
<td>*volunteer in sports, classes, other school activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support school efforts to have students dress appropriately for school daily life</td>
<td>*become involved with offspring school experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*attend to teacher communications of student school problems</td>
<td>*supportive pressure and encouragement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*recognize school personnel expectation of parental total awareness of offspring schoolwork</td>
<td>*see school in positive light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*read newsletters, minutes of official school groups</td>
<td>*support the school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*recognize effectiveness of workshops for parents on school-related matters</td>
<td>*parents as partners' but many situations prevent effectivity of concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support school breakfast programme as realistic handling of lack of basic care</td>
<td>*homework help with suitable atmosphere for its accomplishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*presence at school events, sports and activity events, parent-teacher meetings</td>
<td>*information sessions are important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*seek parent-oriented course outlines</td>
<td>*workshops for parents on school-related matters are useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*support needs of ordinary students who work well without high academic achievement</td>
<td>*cede to school to solve its own problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*adequate communication with parents is always important and often critical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releasing School-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</td>
<td>*speak up in a respectful way *make child understand he/she is responsible for his/her education *children to know of parent availability for homework and school events *support child commitment to part-time work and school activities *encourage summer part-time work *supply cash for offspring extra-curricular activities *longer class times mean less homework anxiety *respect peers, teachers, environment, global setting *avoid confrontation, negativity *make parental intervention in school timely</td>
<td>*voice opinions where and when appropriate</td>
<td>*instructional process of school is critical and all learning 'tricks' possible should be used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Offspring Values, Behaviours Respected by Parents, School Personnel</td>
<td>*speak up in a respectful way *support child commitment to part-time work and school activities *encourage summer part-time work *supply cash for offspring extra-curricular activities *recognize young persons watch the way adults carry on and solve problems *teenage students require less sense of daily adult control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chart 4: Summary Chart for Section 7.2.2.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinging Domestic-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*concern for relationship between parent and child</td>
<td>*didactic on parent team approach to education matters</td>
<td>*didactic on domestic stability and 'pressure' on children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releasing Domestic-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</td>
<td>*teens are soon future adults</td>
<td>*parental awareness of student life, school life is important</td>
<td>*support kids but not against the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinging School-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</td>
<td>*detailed, numerous, all for individual children</td>
<td>*home-centred support for school, education *total awareness of school life expected</td>
<td>*parents to facilitate school instructional process *develop sense of ownership in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releasing School-Based Educational Values, Behaviours</td>
<td>*recognition of teen developing learning and out-of-school work responsibility</td>
<td>*appropriate opinions</td>
<td>*school process is serious, important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Offspring Values, Behaviours Respected by Parents, School Personnel</td>
<td>*demonstration of responsibility, competence in life to be respected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2.2.2 Commentary on Charts of Section 7.2.2.1

Chart examination shows two outstanding features. Each feature shows a fundamental basis for difference of outlook on the place of school-based education on respective parts of parents, teachers and administrator.

The first feature demonstrated is the grip upon basic outlooks of both school personnel and parents, of concern for effectively running school institutions. At no time did an interviewee question in any way a rightful existence of school institutions as a part of everyday life. Though outlooks vary considerably on particular school items like curriculum, manner of coping with curriculum, school activities, sports, ways of governing or running schools and other matters, continuing existence of schools seems unquestioned as an item of human daily life. While recognizing a strong role of schools as a common part of daily life, it must be stressed that school personnel generally commence discussion about school-based parental educational responsibilities from a point of view of maintenance of integrity and effectiveness of class and school groups, as units, whereas parents commence discussion of like responsibilities from a point of view of their children's individual roles in class and school groups as well as evaluation of influence of class and school group units on individual children. In each case, however, broad and deep concern for running an effective school is paramount for parents, teachers and the administrator.

The second feature demonstrated clearly is that of differing rationales of school personnel and parents for discussion of school-based parental educational responsibilities. School personnel voice primary concern with the group, as in class units or school units ahead of regarding needs and wants of individual students. School personnel data reveals reliance upon performance by parents of numerous school-based parental educational responsibilities but study of school personnel wording of such responsibilities shows primary concern for smooth management of class and/or school units. Parent interviewees, though educational responsibilities are clearly school-based in nature, voiced, outlined or explained them with particular individual children in mind. A fundamental basis for
parent concerns about school lies in care for individual persons and ways to help individuals. As far as class units or school units are concerned, parent interviewees voice concern for needs and wants of their individual children to such an extent that societal aspects of school experience seem almost absent from parental data contributed. Whether the matter of discussion involves possible parent roles in official groups or actually helping teachers with some class activities, all approaches on the part of parents seem governed by concerns about individual children. The strong parental concern for the quality of school life of each child of a domestic unit further demonstrates an evident lack of a parental perception of an entire phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility. Throughout parent interviews, discussion focuses on individual children of a given household.

Once again, perception of a possible lack of reciprocity of basic viewpoints may merit attention. Very simply, possible lack of reciprocity lies in clear school personnel reliance upon parental performance of numerous school-based parental educational responsibilities while perceptible school personnel concern for curriculum or other support for ongoing strength and effectiveness of parental efforts and tasks in general seems generally absent.

7.3.1.1 Interviewee-Perceived Obstacles to Effective Achievement of
School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

Chart Explanation

All interview data reveal evident concerns of parents, teachers and the administrator regarding experienced or conceptually-present stumbling blocks of ordinary daily life towards effective performance, on the parts of interviewees or even of other similar people, of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Interviewee discussion of obstacles, in each case, is stirred into discussion of each interview’s questions in such a fashion that analysis suggests their mention, for some interviewees, as possible excuses for recognizable gaps in interviewee data contributions on their own performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities. For other interviewees, discussion of obstacles is connected to observations of performance and non-performance of certain
school-based parental educational responsibilities. In each and every case, obstacles are a component of interviewees’ thought processes.

Charts dealing with discussed obstacles are in two pairs. First are a plain descriptive chart and summary chart of the same, subdivided into obstacles probably best dealt with in domestic units, those probably best dealt with by school personnel at school and those probably best dealt with by cooperative action on the parts of both parents and school personnel. Second are an analytical chart, herein called a research significance chart, and summary chart of the same, subdivided into obstacles offered in the sense of non-performance excuses, those offered in the sense of observations and those purely conceptual in nature.

It is hoped that, with the use of charts, a certain facility may be acquired by a reader in gaining an appreciation of the actual apparent prominence in interviewee minds and personal experience of impediments of various kinds in possible effective performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities. First, the simple appearance of frequent references to such impediments shows how much ideas of personal performance of effective school-based parental educational responsibilities are present in many parents’ daily lives. Secondly, these frequent references show the seriousness of general parental concern for offspring daily school life. Thirdly, references indicate personal parental concern with their own evaluation of how school-based parental educational responsibilities are carried out. Fourthly, it is possible that frequent interviewee reference to impediments show opportunities for school personnel to develop components for school curricula and related activities to help present and future possible parents cope more confidently with school-based parental educational responsibilities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacles</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestically-Sited</td>
<td>*basic care needs of food, clothing, shelter may be worse than acknowledged</td>
<td>*ridiculous excuses for offspring inappropriate school behaviour</td>
<td>*unsuitable activity on the part of parents when children to accomplish homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With at Home</td>
<td>*have good intentions but become busy in too many fields at one time</td>
<td>*inappropriate home-site remedial behavioural steps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*students not ‘ready’ to work in school evidences poor parenting</td>
<td>*argument with offspring or school personnel for the sake of argument</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*ease of condoning student part-time work on school days</td>
<td>*condoning offspring part-time remunerative work ahead of schoolwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*daily life difficulties for children of split households should be recognized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*young people on the loose in town on week nights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*doctrines of “Kids can do no wrong” and “Your parent is your best friend” may not be helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*absence of offspring from any school class or activity should be noted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*parents have foundational social discipline tole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*actuality of parental family planning (in general, not just sexually) is inadequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*parents ‘telling off’ teachers in front of offspring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*some parents simply do not care about school, homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Sited Obstacles Probably Best Deal With by School Personnel</td>
<td>*poor conditions of class textbooks used daily in school *constitution, representability and meetings of official school groups need attention *waste of class time on discipline is unfortunate *sex education emphasis on information and freedom is decried *better assurance of school communications reaching parents is needed *school personnel should be seen to reiterate what parents have already taught children *apparent lack of money for extra-curricular sport and activity bussing is decried *major focus of secondary school is social ahead of academic *presence of bullying, drugs, drinking, sex-at-school not faced *teacher inconsistent treatment of individuals’ behaviour situations *loss of 'shop' courses in secondary schools not addressed *amount of attention to second-language competence seems excessive *teacher issues of young personnel, not necessarily skilled in particular areas, doing a job ahead of helping children, expecting parents to help with homework as well as other parenting tasks questioned *more school guidance work with senior students would be helpful *pre-set agendas of official school groups</td>
<td>*social, educational, other problems for effective formation of official school groups *physical distance, lack of adequate transport for effectivity of official school groups *philosophy of structures of official school groups regarding parents *repetitive nature of meetings, pre-setting of agendas for school official groups *addressing fact of high percent of parents who were former students who had school problems *certain school subject matter beyond parent competency for homework help</td>
<td>*inordinate amount of administrator work time on managing official school groups *inability to identify problems in official school groups formation *physical distance, lack of adequate transport for effectivity of official school groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With by School Personnel-Parent Cooperation | *parent awareness of different standards prevailing in different classes of a similar subject and level  
*many parents of students not achieving standards do not attend parent-teacher meetings  
*awareness of effects felt in households of new programmes, policies, ministries, ministers  
*school bus transport discipline needs attention  
*constitution, representability and meetings of official school groups need to be addressed with school presentation involving parents | *receiving, not receiving by parents of school communications of all kinds  
*presence of offspring at parent-teacher meetings  
*difficulty of setting meeting times between school personnel and parents  
*phenomenon of parents 'slipping away' from the picture unless specially contacted  
*perceived waste of school time on warnings about drugs, alcohol, sex and other problems  
*individual parents who monopolise school personnel time with telephone calls, visits, e-mails | *difficulty in setting meeting times between school personnel and parents  
*motivation, stimulation of offspring to achieve in school  
*meaninglessness of parents as partners concept when parents make no attempt to know about their offspring's school experience |

**Chart 6: Summary Chart for Section 7.3.1.1**

| Domestically-Sited Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With at Home | *multi-faceted  
*governed by individual household customs | *illustrate conflict between individual household custom and orderly control of class, school | *perceived organizational needs met with difficulty because of household priorities |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School-Sited Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With by School Personnel</td>
<td>*evidence of detailed communication of shortcomings of class, school daily experience of children</td>
<td>*inordinate time, effort on school official groups, shortcomings of optimum communication with parents interfere with teacher role</td>
<td>*inability to identify reasons why parents, teachers approach official groups work with hesitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With by School Personnel-Parent Cooperation</td>
<td>*frustrations of parents' 'School-Sited Obstacles Probably Best Dealt With by School Personnel' comment shortcomings bedevil more effective parent-school relations</td>
<td>*teacher role fulfilment prejudiced by multifaceted parental and administration demands</td>
<td>*meaninglessness of 'parents as partners' when so many lack background, achievement, effort to pay sufficient attention to school information, groups, events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7.3.1.2 Commentary on Descriptive Analysis Charts of Section 7.3.1.1**

Verbal expression of possible obstacles to effective achievement of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities by school personnel and parents displays considerable...
differences. School personnel, although possibly parents themselves, address interview questions from the point of view of the daily operation of their place of work. Parents, although the central topic of the interview is school-based parental educational responsibilities, set out to respond to interview questions from domestic environments. Tides of school life flowing onto strands and into crevices of domestic shores are met by windy waves of domestic concerns permeating institutional walls and their protective films of finely- and closely-constructed public school life to demonstrate ultimate individuality and particularity of individual student lives as blending instruments for school and home values, beliefs, attitudes, goals, activities and other respective features.

Regarding obstacles best dealt with at home, school personnel venture four items of irritation showing a kind of impatience with characteristics of some parents vis-à-vis their perceived coping with offspring attending secondary public school, said offspring trying to satisfy school demands on attitudes, behaviour and accomplishment of school-set goals. All obstacles are strongly connected to smooth running of school daily life and deal with parental behaviours appearing to impede demonstration of one or more helpful school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Obstacles ventured by parents are numerous, more detailed and show diverse concerns. All relate to school-based parental educational responsibilities inspired by differing domestic-site situations. They show presence of actual situations experienced by children and form an affirmation of a perceived foundational role of parents in children’s social life. Some obstacles discussed are behavioural in nature while others express basic social and economic situations known personally or through community connections.

A second section deals with obstacles probably best dealt with by school personnel. School personnel interviewees cite several school organizational, social and philosophical situations. All obstacles are related closely to daily school life and a perceived requirement that such life proceed in as orderly and recognizably-structured a fashion as possible. Parents are part of students’ personal schooling experiences but are generally considered by school personnel as a group.
Parent interviewees, in relation to the second section present numerous obstacles, all of which share a characteristic serious parental concern on behalf of themselves and their offspring trying to experience, as a part of their lives, an acceptable, happy and meaningful-to-remember secondary school experience. Items like poor condition of textbooks, encounters of bullying and drinking, inconsistent teacher responses to different students in behavioural situations bespeak actual parent concerns, many of which seem not met with helpful school personnel responses.

A third section lists obstacles the researcher thinks could be best dealt with by school personnel-parent cooperation. School personnel interviewees, true to role-based perspectives of themselves, discuss many perceived parent behaviours along with one or two clearly school-centred problems of curriculum time misuse and meaninglessness, in many cases, of official, much-cited ideas of parents understood as partners in the broad picture of a child’s education experience. The obstacles discussed by school personnel are clearly ones requiring discussion for meaningful resolution but tend to be items not reaching agenda lists for meetings of various kinds which involve parents and school personnel. Some items may, for example, be discussed in ordinary parent-teacher interviews, gaining thereby acceptance of both parties, but, in the mass of general school concerns which fill time of meetings, never gain meeting time for meaningful thought.

Parent interviewees, regarding the third section, demonstrate presence at domestic sites of concerns which have probably emanated from children mentioning them in family discussions because they affect daily school-site experience and daily journeys to and from school. Items are fairly educational-institution-basic in nature but are things which weigh heavily on minds of students and their parents. Everyday events, like realizing different standards of work achievement prevail in different classes of a similar grade level are nagging problems. Challenges for ordinary parents to cope with frequently-changing standards, programmes, policies and even government personalities are profound actualities.

Generally, a reader may note the much-stressed feature of varying types of households and their respective responsible adults (parents), among which household array are numerous public
schools, representatives in themselves of a highly-structured, long-established and seemingly broadly-accepted institutionalized education system. Connectors of these two societal realities are household offspring. A question lingers as to whether or not schools and their personnel could do much more to help understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities among children/students, parents and school personnel as a more accepted part of daily school life, for the benefit of all school stakeholders with the simple argument that school personnel rely on effective performance by household responsible adults of school-based parental educational responsibilities for school daily life.

7.3.1.3 Research Significance of Interviewee-Perceived Obstacles to Effective Achievement of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

Chart Explanation

The following research-significance chart of interviewee-perceived obstacles to performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities shows discussed obstacles in relation to significant human relationship factors regarding the research-site school. To study daily life of any school, categorization similar to that herein employed may help a reader to focus on critical factors regarding particular daily school life situations needing attention.

A reader is reminded that all charted expressions are simply those discussed by interviewees although, for any presented category, other situations could be suggested. Chart categories relate closely to the purpose of this exploratory work which is to comprehend conceptions of parents, teachers and an administrator of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

The chart takes into account five categories. Three categories relate to perceived present conditions affecting daily school life. These are interviewee-perceived socio-economic conditions, school stakeholder-perceived institutional operational obstacles and stakeholder-perceived institutional structural problems. Two categories relate to behavioural matters, such as ongoing inter-stakeholder behaviour and instances of school-based parental educational responsibilities avoidance.
Chart 7: Research Significance Chart of Interviewee-Perceived Obstacles to Effective Achievement of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Conditions</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*good intentions but parents become busy in too many fields at any one time</td>
<td>*parent condoning of offsprings part-time remunerative work ahead of schoolwork</td>
<td>*inability to locate problem of satisfactory formation of school official groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*actuality of basic care may be worse than acknowledged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*daily life difficulties for children of split households should be recognized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*parents have foundational social discipline role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*actuality of parental family planning (in general, not just sexual) is inadequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*parental condoning of student part-time work on school days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Stakeholder</td>
<td>*poor condition of classroom textbooks</td>
<td>*social, educational problems for formation and functioning of school official groups</td>
<td>*inordinate time on managing school official groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Institutional</td>
<td>*waste of class time on discipline is unfortunate</td>
<td></td>
<td>*inability to locate problems of formation of school official groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational Obstacles</td>
<td>*sex education emphasis on information and freedom is decried</td>
<td></td>
<td>*difficulty of setting mutually satisfactory meeting times between parents and school personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*assurance of school communications reaching parents is missing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*teachers should reiterate what parents have already taught children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>*apparent lack of money for extra-curricular sport and activities bussing decried</td>
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<td>*presence of bullying, drugs, drinking, sex-at-school not faced</td>
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<td>*amount of attention to second-language competence seems too much</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*teacher issues of young personnel, not necessarily skilled in particular subject areas, doing a job ahead of helping children, expecting parents to help with homework as well as other parenting tasks</td>
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<td>* Teacher perspectives on students regarding inconsistent treatment of them needs attention</td>
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<td>*more school guidance work with senior students would be helpful</td>
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<td>*teachers should more readily contact parents over discipline and/or achievement problems</td>
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<td>*awareness of different standards prevailing in different classes of same subject in one level</td>
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<td>*school bus transport discipline problems require attention</td>
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<td>School Stakeholder Perception of Inherent Institutional Structural Obstacles</td>
<td>*constitution, representability, meetings of school official groups need attention *major focus of a high school is social ahead of academic *loss of ‘shop’ courses in secondary school not addressed *awareness of effects felt in households of new programmes, new policies, new ministries, new ministers</td>
<td>*philosophy of structures of school official groups involving parents needs attention</td>
<td>*meaninglessness of ‘parents as partners’ concepts when parents make no attempts to know about their offspring school experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Stakeholder Behaviour</td>
<td>*absence of offspring from school class and/or activity to be more carefully noted *parents ‘telling off’ teachers in front of offspring *some parents simply do not care about school and homework *lack of school personnel awareness of effects felt in households of new programmes, new policies, new ministries, new ministers</td>
<td>*argument with school personnel/offspring for the sake of argument *presence of offspring at parent-teacher meetings *individual parents who monopolize school personnel time with telephone calls, visits, e-mail *condoning student part-time work ahead of schoolwork</td>
<td>*motivation, stimulation of offspring by parents *inappropriate domestic atmosphere for homework accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Based Parental Educational Responsibility Avoidance</td>
<td>*condoning of student part-time work on school days *possibility that students not ‘ready’ to work in school is evidence of poor parenting *young people ‘on the loose’ in town on week nights *doctrines of “Kids can do no wrong” and “Your parent is your best friend” may not be helpful *some parents do not care about school, homework *many parents of students not meeting achievement standards do not attend parent-teacher meetings</td>
<td>*ridiculous excuses advanced by parents for offspring inappropriate school behaviour *inappropriate home-site remedial behavioural steps *parents ‘slipping away’ from the picture unless specially contacted</td>
<td>*parents as facilitators of school instructional processes not understood *‘parents as partners’ concepts meaninglessness when parents make no attempt to know about their offspring’s school experience</td>
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<td>Chart 8: Summary Chart for Section 7.3.1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parents</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teachers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administrator</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-Economic Conditions</strong></td>
<td><em>daily life tasks for many are difficult</em></td>
<td><em>focus on effects of lack of performance by parents of school-based parental educational responsibilities on school (class) daily life</em></td>
<td><em>inability to locate problem of satisfactory formation of school official groups indicates lack of administrator knowledge of actualities of daily life household situations</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School Stakeholder Perception of Institutional Operational Obstacles</strong></td>
<td><em>offspring-generated items of class and school life</em></td>
<td><em>frailty of significance of school official groups compared with importance of effective class, school life</em></td>
<td><em>perception that management of school official groups interferes with meaningful administrative work</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Stakeholder Perception of Inherent Institutional Structural Obstacles</strong></td>
<td><em>various items from school official groups, through courses not offered</em></td>
<td><em>attention needed regarding school official groups</em></td>
<td><em>parent performance needed though philosophy of 'parents as partners' questioned</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-Stakeholder Behaviour</strong></td>
<td><em>more accountability of school reporting absences, etc.</em></td>
<td><em>items of parental irritation for teachers</em></td>
<td><em>impatience with parental non-realization of household input needed for school success of offspring</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-Based Parental Educational Responsibility Avoidance</strong></td>
<td><em>observations of 'deficient' parent behaviours by interviewees</em></td>
<td><em>inappropriate parent behaviours noted</em></td>
<td><em>wish parents understood role of 'instructional process facilitators'</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7.3.1.4 Commentary on Charts of Section 7.3.1.3**

Examination of these research significance charts reveals abiding presence of contemplative obstacles perceived by interviewees to effective achievement of school-based parental educational responsibilities. It is as though performance and/or attempted performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities resemble responses to personal knowledge or at least cognizance of one or more possible obstacles to such possible performance. One may wonder in how much activity we all become involved as a result of pressures we feel to perform or try to perform certain deeds 'expected' of us in various roles in which we act through our life experience(s). Is the entire experience of growing up something involving constant reinforcement of where others perceive us
to 'be' in the form of pressures to act and do various things perceived as 'expected' in one way or another by humans among whom we are associated as we proceed through life? Do such factors account, in part, for varieties of both households and household values and behaviours coming to grips with a structured, complex and highly-organized public school system and its personnel who represent it with an appearance of a degree of homogeneity of goals and methods for their successful attainment?

Certainly an analysis of parent interviewee material reveals great variety of particular concerns showing relationship of different household values and matters having significance for household members having to cope with relatively focussed viewpoints, attitudes, behaviours and values of an organized public school system. Obstacles discussed by teachers and the administrator relate closely to stringencies and requirements of running a class and/or school with minimum disturbance or appearance of conflict or dissension. Parents face numerous family and household responsibilities as well as school-based educational responsibilities. With offspring of households attending schools, parents face constant reconciliation of household needs and wants and school-based needs and wants of household offspring as well as of school personnel. School personnel regard performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities as necessary and assume such responsibilities are performed or attempted on behalf of successfully running classes and a school.

7.4 Links Between Interviewee-Perceived Obstacles to Effective Achievement of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities and Interviewee-Perceived Components of School-Based Parental Educational Responsibilities

A research phenomenon stressed by this researcher is that each interviewee-perceived obstacle to effective achievement of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed may be shown to directly and/or indirectly affect performance of one or more components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed. The primary research importance of obstacles discussed is that interviewees were asked questions only about past, present and possible future
manifestations of school-based parental educational responsibilities in their respective lives. In each interview, however, may be found material on interviewee-perceived obstacles to effective achievement of one or more school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Consciousness on the part of all interviewees of broad ranges of school-based parental educational responsibilities is shown in that obstacles to effective achievement of one or more responsibilities occur in each interview dialogue either as recognition of personal attitudinal or behavioural shortcoming regarding such responsibilities or as some kind of personal or other need to venture an excuse for non-fulfilment of one or more school-based parental educational responsibilities. Though each obstacle mentioned may be conceptually connected, in a particular interviewee’s thinking, in the context of each interview, with one or more particular school-based parental educational responsibilities, each obstacle may be shown to have wide-ranging effects on fulfilment of other school-based parental educational responsibilities components contributed by the same interviewees.

An example, for purposes of this research, could be the school administrator’s mentioning of parents who carry on, during children’s school homework time, activities such as, for example, watching television, activities not conducive to helping children achieve effective homework accomplishment. This single obstacle may be shown as an example of how numerous other school-based parental educational responsibilities performance may be unhelpfully affected, as discussed by the same interviewee. Examples of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities possibly affected could be household support of the school, spiritual well-being, parent roles as facilitators of the school instructional process, keeping children helpfully motivated and academically stimulated, parental ability to discuss problems at parent-teacher interviews, demonstrable attention to messages of official school information about course outlines and many other matters, evidence of a sense of cooperation between parents and school personnel and support for ideas of parents as partners with school personnel in helping household offspring achieve school-related goals.
It is important, therefore, that a reader be aware of easily-shown conceptual connections between obstacles contributed by interviewees and components of school-based parental educational responsibilities discussed by the same interviewees. For each interviewee, obstacles to effective achievement, and components of school-based parental educational responsibilities form a meaningful network which should be respected by any interview analysis undertaken.

7.5 Conclusion

A description, for clarification purposes, may now be justified and appropriate as to how one may helpfully understand school personnel and parent interviewees’ conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities emerging from available data.

In-depth interview data of school personnel and parents reveal itemization of components of school-based parental educational responsibilities with perceived obstacles and/or domestic and/or school situations embedded in a problematic format to effective performance of itemized components. This data helps readers to understand conceptions of parents, teachers and an administrator of school-based parental educational responsibilities to better analyse and comprehend actual performance of home-site and school-site behaviour bespeaking manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibilities, consisting mostly, apparently, of an overseeing presence and availability for homework accomplishment, possible discussion with offspring of school-related matters and school-site presence for parent-teacher interviews, school sports and activities events. A balance seems sought, throughout, between adult sensing of a secondary school student need to develop a sense of personal responsibility for school achievement and life management as well as the ability to maintain both sufficient parental understanding of an offspring’s school-related successes and problem situations along with knowledge of how to manifest school-based parental educational responsibilities in an appropriate manner. Along with whatever relationship patterns which may be in existence at any domestic site, school personnel, through a school’s policies and practices governing interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, may have expectations of manifestation of certain school-based parental educational responsibilities, some of
which have a status of assumptions about such manifestation supported with little or no evidence of school stakeholders' consideration of actual effective performance of pertinent school-based parental educational responsibilities.

The foregoing observations concerning actual effective performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities may themselves be considered with contemplative understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities gained from official government literature, legal material of many kinds like statutes, regulations, doctrine and jurisprudence, topical material and research-type material on school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Of importance, however, is to note a primary purpose of this research is to explore understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities through analysis of conceptions of parents, teachers and an administrator of a single Québec, English-language, public secondary school of the said phenomenon. In turn, one possible future step could be description of actual perceptible behaviour of parents of the research-site school manifesting school-based parental educational responsibilities, helping further to develop and evaluate helpful policies and practices governing interrelationships among parents, children/students of the research-site school. Pertinent official, topical and research literature terminology, structures, patterns and even behaviours may more helpfully implemented if an understanding exists of a basic need for school-site adaptations suitable to local physical, educational and socio-economic environmental conditions.

Literature touching the general subject heading of parent involvement or participation in school daily life indicates kinds of active school-based presence of parents not necessarily revealed in this research. Official documentation, pertinent general literature on the topic, innumerable learned journal and actual research material make much of such active, parental school-based and school-site presence. Accomplishment of this evidently active parental school-site presence seems not central in this research into conceptions of parents and school personnel of their school-based parental educational responsibilities. Interview material indicates kinds of centralities of attention to school-based concerns of parent persons as emanating mostly from basic attention to individual
domestic responsibilities, situations and problems. Possibly, relatively few parents of a school feel themselves sufficiently competent, experienced, appreciated and assertive for active school-site involvement, certainly a frequently-referred-to ideal of so much government and other available pertinent material. Helpfully blending of educational efforts of domestic environments and school institutions, focusing upon needs of a child/student as the unifying one who, ultimately, suffers or benefits therefrom, seems not universally achieved.

Regarding a totality of reading and research carried out by the writer, perhaps helpful at this point is presentation of five pertinent points learned about conceptions of parents, teachers and an administrator about school-based parental educational responsibilities. An aim here is maintaining attention to a school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

First, public secondary-school personnel conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities are shaped and have dimensions directly reflective of their work-related roles in a complex, long-standing, highly-structured, quite hierarchical, organized public education system in which each employee performs fairly specific, delineated tasks. Such attention and concern necessarily goes into effective performance of career-related, school-site-situated tasks that actual thinking and considering possibly helpful school-site participation roles for parents seems difficult for already strained resources of time, personnel, finance and facilities.

Second, parent conceptions of their secondary-school-based parental educational responsibilities display recognition of daily secondary school experience as a meaningful social reality for their children and themselves. Coping with this reality is seen as involving, in varying degrees, some or all of the following: household nurture and care, including dialogue; attention to homework tasks; attendance at school events involving offspring and presence at official school-organized occasions like parent-teacher meetings, governing board meetings and others. Realization of a fundamentally home-situated nature of most school-based tasks in the perception of parents is noteworthy and critical.
Third, while most parent conceptions of secondary-school-based parental educational responsibilities include recognition of collective parental educational responsibilities regarding formation and participation in officially-mandated groups (e.g., governing board, parent participation organization), little actual participation is evident for reasons of either time or perceptions of relative irrelevance and uselessness of such groups, their duties and accomplishments. Individual, regular parental participation/involvement in daily secondary-school life does not involve interviewees significantly. How school-organized groups, involving parents, are actually evaluated is critical. for this study.

Apart from officially-mandated bodies in school-organized settings (e.g., parent-teacher meetings, governing board or other such settings), no significantly-perceptible dialogue, discussion or information interchange seems to take place between responsible adults of school community households and school personnel on matters of education in general or institutionally-wrought education in particular. Almost invisible forces seem present supporting parent hesitancy and school personnel lack of openness over helpful discussion on school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

Secondary school households and a school seem to function, each with their philosophies and behaviours, as fairly separated conceptual entities, leaving children/students to balance demands, interests, needs and wants of each to form their personal visions of life, without, necessarily, forming concepts of unities of vision and purpose, shaped and shared by parents, children/students and secondary-school personnel, regarding upbringing, including education of the children/students. A sense of crystallization rather than one of fluidity of ideas and habits seems predominant.

The next chapter involves discussion of analysis revelations possibly relating to literature studied for conducting the present exploratory study. Certain conclusions are therein ventured.
Chapter Eight

Summary and Discussion

Introduction

That explanatory material of the two preceding chapters may have research meaning, relating it to literature reviewed in the second chapter of this study is required. The nature of such a relationship may be better understood through examination of perceptions of possible gaps between features of literature reviewed and present research actualities as well as of perceptions of links, or lack thereof, within literature reviewed and respective educational efforts of parents, described in this study as school-based parental educational responsibilities, and of school personnel, all on behalf of children/students.

A section follows on theoretical implications of this study's relationship to official education documents of Québec. That section's purpose involves demonstration of constancy and intensity of official concern regarding parent educational roles, though showing lack of clarity of definition and dimensions of such roles, alongside ongoing re-exposition of state educational aims, recognizing availability of considerable state organization, funds, legislative and related state powers.

Unanticipated findings involving both literature and present research are explained as fully as possible, related to this study's purpose. Fresh perceptions of this study place foundations of feasible and helpful interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel on fairly basic grounds of mutual household-school relations. In many ways, children/students are the principal household-school connectors as they are centres of concern for both parents and school personnel.

A link expressing present research to the conceptual unity of purpose of research, training and practice is addressed. Possibly, helpful components for policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel may be thereby ventured.
Suggestions for further research based upon findings of this study are then made. A reader may thus recognize a semblance of conclusion as well as visualize possible relevant paths for future treading. A sense of fluidity among literature reviewed, present study findings and possible future trends and developments should be felt. A phenomenon, it is suggested, may be as helpfully and deeply appreciated through realization of nature and dimensions of its possible relationships with other components, principally educational in nature, of human everyday life as through striving to describe features ostensible and/or supposed features of what may be thought of as its essence.

8.1 Meaning or Significance of The Present Study Related to Its Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to explore understanding of school-based parental educational responsibility through analysis of in-depth interviews of parents, teachers and an administrator of a Québec, English-language, public secondary school to learn their conceptions of the phenomenon. Key to understanding the purpose is the verb ‘explore’, the use of which indicates both a possibility of fresh perceptions relating to the nature of a concept as well as possible revelation of both the nature and depth of its possible dimensions.

This present study, categorically, is within literature examples of on basic ever-changing relationships among persons such as parents and/or teachers and institutions such as schools, school boards or commissions, ministries and states regarding various kinds of rights and responsibilities concerning bringing up children/students. One thinks here of Crittenden (1988) on general matters of rights and responsibilities of parents, schools and the state, van Manen (1991, 1997) on social issues concerning school personnel, parents, children/students and parenting, and Smith, Foster & Donahue (1999) on application of Québec legislation and regulation in school governance and official school groups. Complex are challenges of understanding such relationships when school personnel function with fairly clear and established programmes in highly-organized institutionalized school (education) systems and parent persons of a school community remain unorganized as identifiable groups except, for school purposes, in ways mandated usually by the school.
Literature read in preparation for conducting in-depth interviews revealed presence of assumptions on the part of many persons associated with institutionalized education and evidence of ambition, willingness, even eagerness and capacity to engage parent persons in various ways within organizational daily life of schools. Works of Shackelford (2000) on creating a parent involvement programme, Barnard (2001) on early parental intervention school participation, Butler (2001) on parents’ goals, Gallagher (2001) with Latino North American students in mind are representative. Such plainly-evident involvement of parent persons in school daily life accompanies attempts to broaden activities of parent participation and the parent base performing these activities, often involving varieties of pleas emanating from recognition of lack of deemed possible and appropriate participation involving various community groups identified variously as socially, economically, educationally, or in other ways, overlooked and/or excluded.

All work studied shows a lack of broad understanding within school communities of what school-based parental educational responsibilities, seen as a phenomenon in itself, might or might not include as one possibly useful basis, probably with others, for development of helpful policies and practices of any school community regarding ongoing interrelationships among a school’s parents, children/students and school personnel. Mindful of this, this research study sought to learn more about how certain notable school stakeholders conceive of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

8.2 Relationship of The Current Study to Prior Research

8.2.1 Introduction, Emphasising Meaningful Knowledge Gaps

A comparison of features of literature reviewed for this study with features of research findings of this study reveals a number of knowledge gaps. Literature reviewed seems rich in issues and problems of extensive and deep parental involvement in school life, a great part of such involvement involving school-site presence. Factors encouraging such performance may be a meaningful topic of research.
Where literature reviewed features an array of issues and problems of parental involvement, a picture, generally, is that of commonly-accepted and appreciated parental school-site presence. Numerous seem the ways in which parents find personal satisfaction and enjoy school personnel approbation in their school-site educational activities. Work of Burns (2000) and of Thompson (2000), both on parents’ perceptions of their school involvement, Acuncius (1999) focussed on parental knowledge and beliefs about a middle school’s philosophy and practice, Clark (1999) on school goal achievement, are pertinent. Present research findings, however, indicate general hesitancy and, possibly, feelings of incapacity and lack of justification regarding school-site parental pressure and possible parental roles. Parental concern for children’s school success remains prominent but based upon much home-site school-based thought and action. One parent ventured, “I find today the teachers want the parents not only to be their (the children’s) parents but also to be their teachers at home”. Another parent said, “... a lot of things are cut and dried before the meeting is even called”.

Research literature reviewed shows parental educational involvement in many areas of educational concern beyond immediate activity for and with children such as regarding school policies, school decision-making and striving for answers to actual exclusion of identifiable individuals and groups in such matters owing to social, economic, educational or other reasons, not to exclude certain parental incapacity or feelings of incapacity. Present research findings indicate rare comfort with school-site meeting situations with school contacts occurring predominantly through and on account of a medium of children/students. This study also shows evidence of more simple parent concerns about offspring school experience, much of these concerns emanating from home-sited voicing of observations and experiences.

Research literature reviewed also reveals expanding, or attempts to expand, dimensions of parental involvement, meaning that many different perceptions of the possible extent of parental educational responsibility are broadly and often profoundly felt. Gold (1999) on organizing community involvement and Townsend (1999) on factors influencing parent participation, are representative. Present research shows individual components of possible parental educational responsibility but not possession of a general vision of a phenomenon of school-based parental
educational responsibility. Individual activity items, such as overseeing homework or reading school communications carefully, or a selection of them, in which parents are found involved at school are accepted as an extent of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Neither parents nor school personnel seem aware of possible significance in contemplating or acting upon a more comprehensive or global understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities, as a unitary phenomenon.

Characteristics of much research literature rest upon fairly profound convictions that, somehow, increased parental action and parental words injected into school life have positive effects upon student school achievement. Peyton (1998) on collaborative family-school conferencing as a non-deficit model and Silverman (1998) on parental construction of meaning in educational reforms are pertinent examples. Attention seems given to increasing parental presence and decreasing parental restraints to school life, school-site involvement, as in Hubbard (1999).

Between literature reality of parent school involvement and this research findings of parental caution and involvement hesitancy lies an ultimate rationale for the present study in that, possibly, knowledge of how parents, teachers and an administrator of one Québec English-language, public secondary school conceive of school-based parental educational responsibilities may generate perception of a necessity to develop helpful policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel springing from better knowledge of the phenomenon. If school personnel, parents and school communities in general base expectations for manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibility on tacit and other assumptions of parental capacity and forms of possible interest in school involvement which may not be present or only scarcely so, possibly helpful and effective organizational structures and activities may not materialize. A general concern is that a reader senses this researcher's attempt to strengthen attention to what he considers a very fundamental component of human daily life, made more and more complex as time proceeds, namely school-based parental educational responsibilities, but centred firmly and resolutely on its significance for strength of a characteristic of helpful relationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
8.2.2 Literature Assumptions as Sources and Roots of Gaps

Research and learned journal literature studied on parent-school relationships involves certain assumptions. Basic is an assumption that since parents seem concerned about their offspring, they are also concerned with institutions and other factors determining components of offspring lifestyles and personalities. Pepler (2000) on bridging relational gaps between schools, parents and communities and Thaman (1999) on perceptions of parents on their school-site involvement, are helpful. Schools are examples of organized institutions central to young persons' life experiences and many parents seem at least minimally connected to school sites.

Dissertation and learned journal material, at first hand, appears in content overwhelmingly generated from perceptions of parents as seeming to seek ever greater awareness of school processes and ever deeper personal school-site involvement (Larson, 1998; DeLaney, 2000). For their part, school personnel require manifestation of parental performance of school-based parental educational responsibility so that students may better achieve school-set goals. School personnel, however, in literature of learned journal material, do not appear to perceive a reciprocal requirement or possibly an advantage that they (school personnel) might well support parents in parental school-based efforts.

Assumptions on the part of both parents as to qualities of both schools available and school personnel mask actualities of household life in many cases. Two prominent situations of this study are, first, lack of both widespread parent willingness and feelings of capability of assuming various school-site roles and, second, parental awareness of significant changes in school programmes followed by offspring compared with programmes of their (parents') experience.

Literature presents illustrations of industrious parents involved in school life in such a way that a reader may well consider appearance of a reverse situation as more or less unthinkable as far as student school success is concerned. Spears (2000) on finding common ground between parents and teachers on issues of parent involvement is an example. To be realized is that one reads material featuring 'industrious' parents which does not itself indicate how many parents of any school
community share similar outlooks. Further, where a study features evident non-representation of some group of parents of a school community in decision-making or other school activity situations, the setting out of the particulars of such situations may be the work, not of persons of the perceived under-represented group but of others who seem to think it in the interests of a school community that members of a particular group of parents be better represented. Generally, school students reside and conduct daily life at or close to home environments. Students, principal connectors between parents and school personnel, are effectively with school personnel for a relatively short time each day. Parental input as to awareness of school life factors and how offspring are functioning, is critical.

Literature features of forms of parental involvement and studies of various parent groups not effectively represented in school matters of particular school communities indicate presence of unsustainable assumptions, tacit or otherwise, of school personnel regarding parent concern and capabilities. Moseman (2000) on primary teacher beliefs and McLemore (1999) on school personnel perceptions of parent school involvement are of interest. For any school community, awareness on this point on the part of school personnel in a financially-supported, complex organization of schools of a variety and admittedly unorganized household personnel seems minimal and, apparently, of amazingly small concern to given groups of school personnel.

Research and learned journal literature have many studies evidencing parent concerns for forms of at least recognition in overall life of the school community (Davis, 1999; Burns, 1999). The literature displays variety, from seeking more decision-making power to finding out why parents from, perhaps, minority groups or prevented by forms of perceived incapacity, social, economic, educational or other kinds, are not effectively involved in daily life activities of their offspring's school. Such studies show school personnel assumptions of parent concern and capacity to be signs of plain lack of awareness on the part of school personnel of the types of households from which children daily attend school. Assumptions held by school personnel are probably untenable in the context of most school communities.
Many parent involvement studies evidences non-acceptance of and dissatisfaction of one kind or another with the state of parent-school relationships, a desire for change and a sense of perceived need for some kind of school-site parental action. Useful examples are McLaurin (1999), Rafferty (1999) and Shackelford (2000). School-based parental educational responsibility carried out only or mostly in household contexts, as the current research found, with children themselves as the sole household members acting as home-school connectors, is evidently not widely regarded as entirely useful, worthwhile or justifiable in literature studied.

Contrasted with research literature positions, the current study finds parents generally very concerned about their offspring school experience but not perceiving as worthwhile, possible participation in many school-site functions except in spectator or audience roles. The entire field of what school personnel may assume takes place regarding parental educational responsibility is seen as being carried out mostly in a household context. A mother interviewee expressed herself, “I think that it starts at home and we have to instill what some of the basic things to be taught (sic) and there is also the school to reiterate what we’ve taught and I don’t think that is being done as much now as what it used to”. While comprehension of domestic education-related tasks is evident, a certain resistance to supposed requirements of parental interest and action in school-determined responsibilities involving school-site participation and even home-site action beyond supervisory roles is seen. Parent interviewees of the seventh in-depth interview voiced disapproval of being expected, beyond household-site parental responsibilities, to be also responsible for supervising her offspring in accomplishing school-assigned homework.

8.2.2.1 Literature Assumption of Parent Concern and Capability and Research Actuality Revelations

Features of literature studied rest upon two assumptions: (1) of school community parental concern for improving daily life of offspring school experience for the benefit of offspring’s possible attainment of school-set aims or goals, a concern set in a notable desire to do something towards furthering such school-set aims or goals; pertinent here could be Crowe (2000) on connecting parents
and schools, Fuentes (2000) on the value of parental involvement, Johnston (2000) on increasing parent involvement in looping class situations; (2) of school community parental capability to set aside both time and energy sufficient to perform effective and helpful, mostly school-sited roles to improve interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel for the ultimate benefit of offspring's possible attainment of school-set aims or goals, a capability set in a general feeling of parental self confidence to perform effectively and helpfully as individuals or in groups to achieve such interrelationships improvement. Each assumption allegation should be supported. Tharp (2000), on school decision-making, is helpful.

Concerns addressed, related to school life, in literature studied, are impressive in quantity. Research and learned journal literature reviewed in Chapter Two reveal the immense variety of concerns addressed through the topic of parent involvement in schools. Studies like these and others, all touched upon on pages 18 - 22 of this work, give an excellent picture of the breadth of parent concern for conditions of everyday school life. Subject matter of these research studies and articles touch many components of everyday life binding students to combinations of household-site and school-site experiences. This impressive breadth of subject matter indicates that numerous components or factors of school life are perceived as significant for investigative purposes. Breadth of subjects also indicate perceived need that innocuous remedial steps may be inappropriate and insufficient and lead to deepening of problem situations and that serious organized research should take place in order that something useful and potentially meaningful for the future may result. For reference purposes, since a listing here would be unhelpfully repetitive and very lengthy, a reader is advised to refer to the Chapter Two pages mentioned for confirmation.

Above all, however, the breadth of subject matter of such detailed research studies shows that many easily-held assumptions about institutions devoted to normally quiescent pursuits of the world of organized learning and gaining proficiency in many skills, may be questioned or at least seen as fit in some way for investigatory pursuits. Questioning and investigating involved is a combination of studies undertaken because of what may be perceived as shortcomings of school-site situations and other studies undertaken in order to comprehend school-site situations more profoundly. A study like
that of Runnenbaum (2000) on alcohol and drugs, would be an example of the former while the Fletcher (2001) study on a state response to national parent involvement initiatives may be an example of the latter.

The second assumption mentioned is that of school community perception of parental capability to initiate and carry out projects for significant change. Capability perception may be that of a researcher as part of a perceived under-represented or excluded group or that of a researcher on behalf of some group perceived chiefly by the researcher as being inadequately represented or excluded from meaningful involvement in school life.

Studies on aspects of exclusion are mentioned in this study's second chapter, chiefly of people of linguistic or other social features perceived as distinctive in one way or another, not to exclude parents excluded by poverty and educational standing, from school decision-making and power associated with it. Of particular note are De La Sierra (2001), Fernandez (2001), Foster (2001), Muldrew (2000), Perez (1999), Viramontez (1999).

This research data reveals different features of parent concern and capability than those gained by reading about literature studied. A very domestically-centred nature of apparent parent conceptions of their possible school-based educational responsibilities must be emphasized. A relatively narrow scope of such possibly pertinent responsibilities is another observation worth noting as it appears certain parents simply do not regard particular importance is associated with many possible school-site roles associated with parents. Observations are herein ventured to show a gap in our ordinary understanding of how we may conceive of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

8.2.2.2 Assumption of School Personnel Expectations of Parental Educational Responsibility

As remarks are ventured on observed features and characteristics of research-type literature, emphasis of present research absence of evidence of strong personal parental perceptions of capability and confidence regarding parent participation/involvement in school-site roles may be
suggested as a common enduring basis for comparison and contrast with research-type literature studies. Literature reviewed through Chapter Two shows absence of school personnel seeking to know anything regarding their school community parents’ ideas of school-based parental educational responsibility as a reason for varieties of research studies on, school-site, parental role topics. Rather, a tacit understanding of school personnel expectations of school-based parental educational responsibility performance exists, performance in the sense of ongoing support of parents for mostly school- (or broader educational jurisdiction base) set aims. School personnel knowledge of how school community parents conceive of their (parents’) school-based parental educational responsibilities is not a literature concern. Research studies on parental school involvement seem to rest mostly on an assumption of how school-based parental educational responsibilities may be understood by school personnel. Midgett (2001), Schluter (2001), Brigdon (1999), Clark (1999), Murphy (1999) are all helpful.

With the previous paragraph in mind, present research may be shown to support the idea therein ventured only insofar as it also reveals no research-site comprehensive ideas regarding school-based parental educational responsibility. Stakeholders of a school seem to carry on school daily life without seeking to understand each other’s comprehension of school-based parental educational responsibilities as one basis for development and evaluation of school policies and practices regarding helpful interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. The present study, then, supports an observation of an assumption of school personnel understanding of school-based parental educational responsibilities without their seeking to understand how their school community parents themselves may understand the phenomenon.

A salient difference from literature examined in Chapter Two is that literature abounds in school community parental dynamism and determination for more school-site parental involvement (studies of Breese (2001), Enfield (2001), Wilson (2001) and DeLaney (2000) are helpful) and current research seems to show a lack of such development. Although current study parents support the school and tasks seen as part of daily school life, overt enthusiasm for parents assuming school-site roles is not present.
8.2.2.3 Assumption of School Personnel Knowledge of Parental Educational Expectations

A reason for research literature studies on increasing parent school-site involvement is lack of knowledge on the part of school personnel of what school community parents themselves expect regarding school education programmes and ways they function. Cosby (2001), Hobenecht (1999) and others deal with these ideas. Where school personnel expectations concerning parental performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities may be understood, the related concern of parental educational expectations is addressed only where questions arise on student attainment of school aims and goals and this mostly because of school community parents perceptions of their own confidence and capability to tackle such matters.

This research study supports this observation by showing school personnel’s major concern is based firmly on ministry, board and school guidelines with some concern about parent ability and willingness to help children/students attain such education objectives and certainly not upon school personnel knowledge of school community parental educational expectations, themselves a part of the larger subject of school-based parental educational responsibilities. No doubt exists that public schools do make known various parental school-site supportive roles for both individual and collective parental involvement/participation in school daily life. A gap, however, reveals itself in that an assumption on the part of school personnel seems to exist that parents, hopefully in representative numbers, will present themselves for such roles, mostly because parents are perceived by school personnel as part of the extended scheme of attendance, supported by legislated terms, of a school community’s children and legislation, with backing of articles in government educational publications, has outlined at least certain particular parent roles like participation on governing boards and/or parent participation organizations. Many helpful conditions, then, for school-site parental involvement are indeed present but, ultimately, if school personnel are unaware of the manner in which parents conceive of their own school-based parental educational responsibilities, hopes great and small for parental school-site involvement may not helpfully, representatively materialize. This research also shows a major concern of school personnel, regarding parents, is how well parents can supervise homework tasks and how well parents comprehend school
communications about the school programme. Many common, seemingly innocent, assumptions of school personnel regarding student parents may be lacking in substance.

Three fundamental conditions of possible parental home-site and school-site helpful educational involvement may remain unhelpfully unknown. These are the sheer ability of parents to comprehend sufficiently regarding their offspring school programme in terms of literacy level and personal educational attainment, feelings of parental capability to participate in either home-site or school-site educational involvement and willingness-interest of school community parents to become involved in components of school-based parental educational responsibilities. So long as school personnel remain unaware of these school community parent conditions, assumptions about parental interest and capabilities may be practically useless. With determination of school personnel to become aware of these conditions, helpful measures of many kinds could materialize in terms of a school’s policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

8.2.3 Significant Links as Sources and Roots of Gaps

A purpose behind this chapter is that of arguing a profound necessity of seeing significance, in terms of helpful school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, in linking considerations of, for example, expectations for successful student educational attainment with mutual knowledge among school stakeholders of school-based parental educational responsibilities associated with a given school community. Both research literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the present exploratory study reveal absence of evidence of understanding of the phenomenon when school stakeholders address numerous educational problems and situations regarding student attainment of school aims and goals.

A reason for observed apparent lack of understanding on the part of school stakeholders of what school-based parental educational responsibilities may and/or could involve is that public schools are complex, state-supported institutions with a primary necessity of legislated conditions
for separating children from parents for school purposes. So much a part of daily life have schools become that it seems meaningful links between parents and school personnel are established mostly because of school initiatives. An entire school-based 'educational' role of parents may be that with participation conditions set, for the most part, by school personnel.

8.2.3.1 Realization of a Link Necessity Between 8.2.2.2 and 8.2.2.3

Literature reviewed and current exploratory research unite in an area of assumptions on the part of school personnel regarding both manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibilities and actual knowledge of parental educational expectations. Manifestation on the part of parents of their school-based parental educational responsibilities seems understood by school personnel in a sense closely related to school personnel awareness of their school's educational aims and goals but not in a broader sense of understanding how parents themselves conceive of such responsibilities. As to what parental educational expectations may be, school personnel seem to rest with assumptions of similarity of viewpoint to school personnel educational expectations. Current parental educational expectations, however, may be reflective of past parental school experience and a main point seems lack of school personnel seeking to know how parents actually presently think on the matter. A possible link between both assumptions could helpfully develop through seeking knowledge of school stakeholders of each other's conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities. Were parents aware of how school personnel actually think about school community parents' conceptions of their (parents') school-based parental educational responsibilities and school personnel were aware of how parents actually think of school personnel's conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities, helpful links could result to, ultimately, benefit children's/students' academic pursuits.
8.2.3.2 Links Regarding Mutual Awareness of
School Personnel Needs and Wants and Parental Needs and Wants

Research literature material on the matter of links between respective school-based needs and wants of school personnel and parents demonstrates mainly parental school-site centred activity with tacit recognition of educational value in parental school-site activities and these, not only because of possible parental recognition of and response to, school personnel communication of their own school-based needs and wants but partly because of certain pro-active parents themselves enlarging the scope and dimensions of their perceived school-based, school-site involvement. Shackelford (2000), Mapp(1999) and Yamada (1998) address needs issues. Parent involvement/participation becomes something of its own with a raison d'être, aims, purposes and expression of its own needs and wants because parent individuals of the various studies play active roles of one kind or another, many springing from assumption of value and rightfulness of parent persons being experienced as some significant component of school-site educational persons. Because of a quality of pro-active parental, school-site participation, perceived needs and wants of parents become known. General results of active parental participation mean more perceived accountability of actual school personnel and seeking of parents in order that higher percentages of parents become involved in school-based activities and broadening forms of parental involvement to school decision-making levels.

Research literature features parents feeling capable and confident in school-site roles and, in these respects, acts as a contrast to revelations of this exploratory study sited in one Québec, English-language, public secondary school where capability and confidence regarding possible school-site parent roles are not generally evident. This study shows much parental school-site involvement because of legislated conditions, without evidence of groundwork to know basic characteristics of responsible adults (parents) of school community households.

In relation to the current research, a prominent underlying assumption throughout is that of a school institution as an accepted part of everyday life and therefore making known its needs and wants and/or its personnel making known their needs and wants, all such needs and wants being
quietly acknowledged and accepted as a part of normal school life by parents. Needs and wants of a school and of its personnel may also be seen as embodied chiefly in school and school personnel expectations of parental support in the sense of parental recognition, comprehension and appropriate action in terms of manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibilities to help a school and school personnel achieve educational aims on behalf of children/students.

A school possesses both organization and resources to make known needs and wants, regularly employing such factors to carry out related functions. Variety of interview material contributed by parents related not to open acknowledgement of needs and wants but to parent viewpoints regarding approbation or disapprobation in varying degrees of the manner in which school personnel relate to daily school life of children/students. Throughout parent interviews, an almost uniform parent assumption is that of ongoing school daily life with school personnel needs and wants changing mostly because of technology developments but not wavered in relation to expectation of forms of parental support.

On the other hand, parent interviews, while evidencing unquestioning acceptance of the role of the school as a part of offspring daily life, show differing approaches to the conditions of daily school life, springing mostly from differing vantage points, socio-economic, educational and others, of each parent interviewee whereby certain parental school-based needs and wants are enumerated. A big difference, however, appears in relation to any and all such parental needs and wants in that no expectation appears as to the school or school personnel helping parents satisfy such enumerated needs and wants. Parental needs and wants remain at a level of tacitly-accepted conditions of daily domestic/household and community life apart from the school. One senses, then, school personnel, in general, have views of school-based parental educational responsibilities, views institutionally-inspired, defined and contained, with little or no open recognition of the possible nature of school-based parental educational responsibilities sited chiefly at or associated with households of a given school community. Thought on rightfulness and pertinence of meaningful school-related work taking place away from a school site with little or no accessibility by participants to attention of school personnel is required. Varied conditions of community households make uniform schoolwork results
an unrealistic expectation. Development of the last-mentioned situation could have implications for ordinary student school marks and other school-related results.

8.2.4 Theoretical Implications of The Current Study Regarding Official Documents

Since 1943, official documents, including statutes, have regularly contained information and opinions on school-based parental educational responsibilities. In this respect, official documents offer a reader one version for possibly understanding dimensions of educational roles of parent persons and Québec public school personnel. Through all this time, the Québec Civil Code articles 599 and 601, specifying parental responsibility for educating children have remained unchanged with a proviso that parents have a right to delegate to others this education responsibility (Baudouin & Renaud, 2001). Thus, to read the following in a 2002 government report is to reaffirm something basic and, in essence, often previously repeated.

“Pour le Conseil, il ne fait pas de doute que l’État doit continuer à jouer un rôle de premier plan en éducation... Pour le Conseil, l’État doit demeurer au cœur du processus de décision en éducation... Dire cela, ce n’est pas nier pour autant la responsabilité incontournable et première des parents à l’égard de l’éducation de leurs enfants, ni non plus de la société civile en général. C’est rappeler néanmoins que l’éducation est un bien commun et, qu’à ce titre, elle engage la responsabilité de l’État.” (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation, 2002(d), p. 7)

Some theoretical implications are here considered relating the present study to official documents. Recognition is made of a government responsibility to state clearly its priorities and its vision along with legislation and regulations pertaining thereto. This indicates recognition of an official document reality which, at any time and in various ways, may not help realization or understanding of actual policies and practices being followed in particular school communities. It is difficult to know how much knowledge of any actual local community supports much official written material.
8.2.4.1 Theoretical Implication of Unorganized Household Groups

Parent interviewees of the present study show a diversity of ‘unorganized’ households of a school community, such households being tenuously united through their children attending the same school. To be strongly emphasized is that, however official statements regarding respective rights and responsibilities of the state and of parents may be worded, they remain products of a highly-organized, publicly-funded system trying to reach and influence parts of lives of many kinds of responsible parents. Parents are of differing ages, socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, religions, educational attainments, life philosophies and other meaningful components of human existence. How messages and communications of various kinds are received and viewed by parents of a school community are items bound to be treated differently. Possibly, in the case of the present study, school personnel, trying to implement various provisions of recent education reform initiatives, find themselves beset with many kinds of responses to communications requesting forms of parental school-site involvement, some helpful and others unhelpful, because the same personnel simply do not themselves know as much as they could know about students’ parents in order that effective policies and practices be formed and implemented regarding pertinent stakeholder interrelationships. Present research showed plentiful evidence of parent concern and interest in school progress of their offspring along with remarks about school personnel performance, showing thereby certain grassroots pressures for appropriate action. With forces both from above and below being felt, in order to have such forces work together helpfully, preparatory, investigative, probably school-initiated work may be required.

8.2.4.2 Theoretical Implication of Basic Nature of Most Parent Concerns

Parent interviewees of the present study voice school-related concerns fairly basic in overall content. School-based parental educational responsibility is clearly founded on firm and unquestioning recognition of school attendance experience as significant and important for offspring but features of parental and offspring household life mark interviews as important items to be mentioned. Establishing understanding of philosophies and kinds of relationships among members
of households is as important for interviewees as discussion about offspring school-site experience. Virtually always, it is how offspring school-site experience affects household daily life which constitutes much material of how interviewees discuss school-based parental educational responsibility. For some, school personnel are expected to reinforce attitudes and behaviours regarding social relationships which parents have tried to encourage and 'teach' offspring. Disturbance of established household social priorities through inadequate school communications or revelations of school life in conversations between parents and offspring constitute difficulties for parent interviewees. If offspring seem to cope with school-set tasks and experience both classroom and extra-curricular fulfilment, this satisfies parents almost more than attending school activities and events, parent-teacher interviews and other school-related sessions.

8.2.4.3 Theoretical Implication of Hesitant Parent School-Site Involvement

All interviewees express reservations about possible collective school-site school-based parental educational responsibility roles. This observation does not diminish importance or significance of official documents, their apparently unceasing reminders of a to-be-respected fundamental priority status of parental educational responsibility and commentary on school-site collective parental participation tasks seen as important. School personnel interviewees speak of difficulties forming a governing board, the administrator expressing a seeming inability to determine helpfully why so many difficulties abound over successful board formation while teachers spoke of frustrations personally felt over repetitiveness and general conduct of meetings attended. Parent interviewees sometimes mentioned participation on school committees associated with elementary schools, mentioning scarce time and other factors for non-participation on school committees of a secondary school and personal viewpoints of possible pre-set agendas and impressions of lack of gratitude on the part of school personnel present for parental concerns and opinions. Factors of location of meetings being distant from many school community homes, difficulty obtaining actual transport and others must also be recognized. Officialdom is not to be questioned as to the genuineness of desire to have parents experience collective involvement. Like so many other well-intentioned measures, means of dealing with details of particular school communities is lacking.
8.2.4.4 Theoretical Implication of Time-Consuming Parenthood Tasks

All interviewees speak positively of their own parents' and their own carrying out of school-based parental educational responsibilities. One must clarify this statement with an observation that actual carrying out of such responsibilities is sometimes school-sited and at other times is home-sited but in each case, clearly school-based in nature. Interviewees speak at length and comprehensively of their own and others' educational efforts on behalf of their offspring.

Considerable information is offered on household-site change and development of offspring, together with attitudes, behaviours and philosophies, all indicating raising and educating offspring are major household concerns. Much material is provided on offspring school experience together with criticism of school policies and practices, including items featuring teachers, whose ways of dealing with certain matters of school student life are said to be inappropriate or inadequate.

From such material, as a kind of commentary on official document stress upon parents being considered as primary responsible figures in educating their children and making plain attempts to involve parents in school-site committees and boards, a reader realizes parent reality involves excuses for not being able, for various reasons, to take part in collective parent school-based activities and that the same parents spend a great deal of time in activities connected with offspring school experience but this time is spent around households. Parents may not agree with certain school expectations, policies and practices but evidently do not generally feel able to devote or to deliberately set aside time and energy to attend school-site meetings unless such a meeting involves a matter closely related to offspring school experience. Related to this time-consumption part of school-based parental educational responsibility is, possibly, more school personnel concern with supporting parents’ home-sited, school-based educational responsibilities.
8.2.4.5 Theoretical Implication of Relative Meaninglessness of Parent-School Partnership

For some time, official documents have ventured an idea of partnership regarding a school community contribution to children’s education. The administrator interviewee mentioned certain meaninglessness of the term ‘partnership’ when contemplating certain parents unacquainted with their offspring teacher names, school courses and other seemingly important points of offspring school experience. Interestingly, a recent official document detailed certain parental unease and misgivings about present school experience of offspring. Precise anxieties are mentioned accompanied by real present difficulties.

“Par ailleurs, ils s’interrogent concernant le redoublement: que va-t-on leur proposer pour remplacer cette mesure? Ils mettent en doute la capacité des enseignants et des autres personnels à travailler en équipes-cycles; ils s’inquiètent que leur enfant soit un peu le cobaye de cette réforme; ils s’interrogent sur le fait que, en mettant l’accent sur les compétences transversales, on risque de négliger les connaissances de base; ils pensent que la réforme favorise davantage les enfants avec des difficultés au dépens de ceux qui réussissent.

“L’analyse des propos des parents montre que plusieurs d’entre eux ont de la difficulté à avoir une opinion claire sur la réforme et l’organisation en cycles d’apprentissage parce qu’ils estiment qu’ils n’ont pas reçu les informations adéquates. Devant cette situation, ils éprouvent un sentiment d’insécurité et s’attachent aux aspects traditionnels de l’école qu’ils disent bien connaître: le bulletin, les notes, la moyenne du groupe, la dictée, etc”. (Conseil supérieur de l’Éducation. 2002(d), p. 23)

Interviewees stressed differences between their secondary school experience and what they learn of offspring school experience. Chief among differences is a sense of complexity in present reforms which makes reforms difficult and time-consuming to understand. Again, school personnel could help immensely by explanation but this probably must be well thought out to avoid parental frustration and expression of excuses to avoid trying to learn more about recent changes. As if it is insufficient for parents to sense offspring will lead lives very different from those of their parents, it increases parental sense of alienation if they find they do not easily understand what school personnel themselves are trying to accomplish. Students’ parents, always present in an overall comprehension of who are stakeholders of a school community, simply cannot be assumed to be as helpfully aware and understanding of school daily life as may be commonly thought.
8.2.4.6 Theoretical Implication of One-Sided View of Parental Educational Responsibility

Through official documents a reader may learn of expectations of school organizations regarding manifestation of performance of school-based parental educational responsibilities. What official documents do not contain is material on how school personnel themselves may help support parents in parental educational responsibilities tasks. The observation that parent interviewees do not question rightfulness of school organizations providing meaningful educational life-experience for their offspring does not also mean that parents perform their school-based educational responsibilities with confidence, enthusiasm and ease or that some realization on the part of school personnel of parent problems and difficulties performing expected school-based educational responsibility tasks and expression by school personnel of their (school personnel's) need to help parents in various ways, would be inappropriate. Rather, the observation of parent interviewees not questioning rightfulness of school organizations in general provides a foundation upon which much constructive thought could develop on more effective use being made of wider stakeholder awareness of the possible significance of effective manifestation of school-based parental educational responsibilities in a school community.

8.2.4.7 Concluding Thought on Section 8.2.4

This research acknowledges a reality of official document commentary and opinion, often founded on a legislative base. Official recognition of perceived importance for a parental role on school governing boards and other school-site official groups is made. Inherent weakness besets much implementation of such roles, however, unless schools themselves, as part of their programme, include instruction and use of ordinary public meeting forms in order that secondary school graduates may eventually demonstrate both personal confidence in and willingness to serve on official committees. In this way, school-site parental participation could become less of a personally-felt unattainable challenge and public issue and possibly lead to improvement of school-home communications and interaction of many kinds.
8.3 Explanation of Unanticipated Findings

A source of unanticipated findings lies in present school settings of ongoing educational reform. Current reform, organizationally and conceptually is an infusion of changes meaning both introduction of new materials, persons and concepts into a highly structured public education system and simultaneous, significant alterations and reconfigurations of materials, persons and concepts already functioning in the public education system (Statutes of Québec, 1-13.3, s 42-96.4). While the aforementioned changes take place, an added challenge is that of comprehending constant changes in all other areas of life and how current public education reform may be understood as a part of yet greater systems. Particularities of phenomena have meaning in attempts to comprehend meaningful interrelationships within and beyond supposed edges of the same phenomena. School-based parental educational responsibilities concepts emerge from different interviewees’ views and experiences. Common elements may be a particular school used as a research site and members of its school community. Household elements and designs vary from ratios of respective parents and offspring ages through number of offspring, parental backgrounds, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and innumerable other items. School personnel, discussing components of school life not intimately connected with school organizational and conceptual fields, also display varieties of approaches.

Interviewees specify school-household communications as an item of interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel having inherent problems. Transmission and delivery features are specified and actual reading and understanding are only indirectly mentioned. Because such communications seem fraught with numerous problems, they may be regarded as an associated reason for unanticipated research findings because comprehension would be a plain reason for adequate mutual realization of school and home needs and wants in relation to an entire school programme and school-based parental educational responsibilities in particular. Within communications as a topic, related activities like consultation, itself generally an understood word but whose dimensions, weight, adequacy and even essence, prove relative in many ways, must be considered.
Regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, unanticipated findings may result from numerous considerations. A school, its governing board and school board have as their responsibility a forming and shaping of labels and levels of any institutional change, with or without reform matters. Plans and development of such changes must be somehow communicated among a school's stakeholders. For many stakeholders, a grasp of mere labels may often be an extent and depth of comprehension. Present research shows plainly a lack of school personnel consciousness of preparedness of community parents to deal even with communications regarding change. Along with such revelation goes a realization of lack of policies and practices to effectuate helpful change through ensuring parental comprehension of communications. So it is that gaps may appear and broaden between school community households and school personnel if a school avails itself mainly of only parents feeling competent, confident and willing to act on school-site, school-based parental educational responsibilities activities. Other parents show concern for their offspring school experience but lack, maybe sometimes only in their own self-perceptions, capability, confidence and willingness to act.

Through some items mentioned, a researcher may find insurmountable difficulties for schools to instruct or include within a school programme interrelationships matters in addition to responsibilities of paying sufficient and adequate attention to carrying on present school programmes. Limitations of personnel, facilities, time and other resources play a role.

8.4 Implications of the Current Study for Research, Training and Practice

This exploratory study on concepts of school-based parental educational responsibilities has profound implications for bringing to light and actionable attention, significant features of daily life of a secondary school not openly plain or discussed or even acknowledged as meaningful. These features, if studied, directly affect research, training and practice associated with a school and it's community. Many indeed are factors of interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel in ordinary daily life remaining both problematic and unnoticed.
For research, understanding conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities may be seen as foundational in comprehension of how school stakeholders actually function because it is focused on a dimension of interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, greater understanding of which through organized research, can directly influence both the nature of school policies and practices regarding such interrelationships and how such policies and practices are developed, evaluated and sustained. Conceptions themselves on school-based parental educational responsibilities can be simply the beginning of other closely-related research on how and why stakeholders think the way they do about a given phenomenon and how and in what ways stakeholders may work at, if deemed appropriate and needed, possibly changing some stakeholder conceptions.

Where school-site research conditions may permit relatively neat space, time and personnel components for organizing particular research projects, this current research may retain a focus on a particular school but examines school life from a number of differing social vantage points. A sense of cohesion and controlled solidity of a research base may not be as prominent as a more difficult task of examining thoughtfully-developed verbal expressions about a single school-related phenomenon reveals complex ideas. Challenges are numerous once an attempt is made to comprehend certain dimensions of school life outside a particular school site.

Training of school personnel may be seen as both a preparation of personnel for work day life associated with one school within an extensive institutionalized education system and as a foundation upon which such personnel may embark on careers in school life with a realization that particular socio-economic, educational and other characteristics of each school community are important to understand if careers associated with any individual school are to have appropriate and fitting components and pertinent dimensions. Acquisition of sufficient general knowledge associated with any time period and geographical setting and knowledge of school programme material supposedly fairly central to school life careers may be regarded as only a start for school personnel, to enable some sense of commonality of purpose among school personnel of an educational jurisdiction to prevail. Application of such knowledge, however, is to be seen as possible, with differing degrees
of effectivity and efficiency, depending upon school personnel attention to comprehension of conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities currently prevalent in a given school community. Though ‘partnership’ ideas are expressed to describe school households and education ministry ideas of meaningful school-based relationships linking households and the school, perhaps ideas of complementarity of school-based efforts on the parts of parents and school personnel respectively may be a more realistic descriptive terminology because of actuality of members of households of any school community, not organized in any formal manner, who exercise various degrees of educational effort, and supposedly work concurrently, somehow, with organized school personnel and their associated, carefully-formed education programmes. Training of school personnel could well include study of both quality and quantity of possible significant educational complementarity items available in a school community that personnel may realize how educational efforts of household members can actually effectively and efficiently aid any school-based programme.

Throughout discussion of implications of the current study for practice, the matter of policies associated with all school-based practices is to be understood as mutually, closely bound. Policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel are at the centre of this study’s ultimate purpose and are conceptually, though not in actuality, always inseparable.

First, Québec school programmes are known and publicized through many means available to a highly-organized, statutorily-based, tax-supported, institutionalized education system. Aims and purposes behind school programmes are upheld by watchfulness of school personnel who succeed in engaging many students and their parents supportive of school educational efforts. Meanwhile, however, school personnel or others associated with a school organization, do not apparently investigate school stakeholder conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibility in order that more meaningful effort and energy be devoted on the part of all school stakeholders to school programmes. Through such investigations, as this exploratory study reveals, knowledge of conceptions of stakeholders of school-based parental educational responsibilities can provide school
personnel especially helpful points for comprehending and evaluating students served by a school. For example, school personnel evidently do not investigate how many, and in what manner, parents are capable of comprehending school communications, written or otherwise, regarding school education matters. Also, school personnel probably know little about both the nature of their school households’ conceptions of their (parents’) overall school-based educational responsibilities and of school personnel themselves’ conceptions of the same phenomenon.

The present study, secondly, begs the question of school personnel ability and willingness, realizing constraints of school personnel working conditions and other possible work-related resources, to employ knowledge gained from judicious reading of parental and school personnel conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities in developing and evaluating helpful policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel. Pertinent policies and practices might combine pedagogical, instructional, educational effort and reaching parents in such a manner that parents realize school is really attempting to enable parents to act with their respective offspring as seems most helpful for offspring school experience. This idea springs from an observation that interviewees do not appear to question a rightfulness of a school existence and pursuit of school-set educational aims using all available resources of a school community. With this conceptual foundation of evident school community acceptance of a school’s educational effort appears an unequalled opportunity for constructing an adaptable, workable and useful thing for which educational sincere efforts of all school stakeholders are regarded as valued.

A third implication of this study for practice comes through possibility of school personnel publicizing a recognition of school-based parental educational responsibility of a school community whereby concentration is made of both challenges many parents face in attempting to carry out such responsibilities and, with such challenges in mind, offering school resources to help parents carry out their school-based parental educational responsibilities. Open recognition by school personnel of a school community’s conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities may promote a reciprocal effort to formulate appropriate policies and practices regarding interrelationships among
parents, children/students and school personnel. Forms such open recognition may take could be very significant.

Fourth, appropriate recognition by school personnel may be one of realizing an organized initiative to do something useful with information gained of school stakeholder conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities rests with a given school. A school with its organized resources is an entity capable of doing something ahead of expecting unorganized parents of school community households to act. Implementation, at first, of useful policy and practice measures may realistically be slow because of required groundwork but patience, determination and persistence may also be features of such efforts.

Practice, in a broad sense, could grow in its scope to take more serious and concentrated account of education responsibilities envisioned by parents and school personnel of a school community. Some responsible adult stakeholders of a school community may regard all activity denominated as educational as solely a responsibility of school personnel. From current research, however, parents show much school-based concern for daily school life experience of offspring. A task is linking parental concerns to more open recognition by school personnel of school-based parental educational responsibilities with equal recognition of how school personnel may help parents fulfill such responsibilities. A beginning could be made with a realization of how relatively little of what transpires at a secondary school may be understood by many parents.

This current research has many possibilities of helpfully aiding needed research, training and practice in relation to day-to-day operation of a public secondary school. Foundational would be a realization of the fundamental importance in a school setting of recognition and adequate comprehension of a school community parents’ conceptions of their school-based parental educational responsibilities. From a comprehension of the latter phenomenon may materialize more useful and helpful comprehension of what school personnel can realistically expect in terms of manifestation of school community parents’ school-based parental educational responsibilities. What can be realistically expected, in turn, may act as a basis for development, sustenance and re-
evaluation of school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

8.5 Conclusion

Individual research units have conclusions. Because of interrelatedness of all things, however, and of conceptual projects in particular, a sense of fluidity may helpfully join this work with efforts of other projects of similar fields of thought. From where one researcher puts both writing and speaking implements to rest, other projects may emerge and develop.

A key result of this exploratory study may be a perceived usefulness for more open recognition of mutual school-based needs and wants of both parents and school personnel. Knowledge of mutual needs and wants would help development, sustenance and evaluation of helpful school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.

Ease of verbal expression of such ideas may not hide a reality of immense challenges facing useful investigation of aforementioned mutual educational needs and wants. Limitations of time, funds, human energy and other resources required constrict many possibly interesting, useful and helpful social projects. Thought, however, seems required as a result of the present study, as to how school personnel may at least gain sufficient grasp of parental concepts of their (parents') school-based parental educational responsibilities as a kind of foundation on which appropriately helpful school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel may be designed and implemented.

Helpful links regarding useful educational work for both parents and school personnel involves recognition of value and kinds of values offered by respective educational efforts of parents and school personnel. From mutual value recognition, school personnel may find more focussed parental support for school-based aims, even if much formation and implementation of measures to
achieve such aims rests primarily with organized public education system personnel because of ready presence of pertinent organizational factors.

Knowledge of how stakeholders of a school community perceive school-based parental educational responsibilities may encourage improving helpfulness of what parents educationally strive to achieve and helpful recognition of mutual school personnel and parental needs in taking steps to achieve respective educational aims. School personnel may find out, in particular, what kind of comprehension of school programmes and goals is actually held by school parents, to help measure realistic educational expectations held by stakeholders of a school community. Such knowledge can help greatly in how school personnel and students try to achieve aims of a given school programme. In particular, both parents and school personnel can learn how respective school-based educational efforts may complement each other and kinds of complementary school-based educational responsibility components likely to be experienced in a school community.

With this study in mind, a possible, pertinent hypothesis may be offered. Formation, continuation and evaluation of helpful school policies and practices regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel involve concerted stakeholder consideration of actual conceptions of parents, teachers and administrators of school-based parental educational responsibilities.

Two cautions may be helpfully mentioned. One is an ever-present question of whose children, ultimately, are the students of any school, a research question addressed by Rafferty (1999). Providers of necessities like food, clothing and shelter may become increasingly removed from providers of other life dimensions such as general education, occupational and other skills and others. Implications of this caution lead to consideration of a second one.

A second caution notes uncertainty of clear, widely-held comprehension and, perhaps, fragility of many much-used words and expressions in daily conversation, discussion and argument. Employment of certain words cannot conceal quantities of time often taken to clarify meanings the
same terms may have for pertinent users. In relation to this current research, mention is here made of words like 'parent', 'family', 'household', 'education', 'learning', although one realizes many others could be suggested. Questions of whether or not school-based parental educational responsibilities and related school educational responsibilities should respectively, though mutually, grow or shrink, and in what ways, remain. How much human agony and strife, in a universal sense, may owe their origins and developments to word use? For this reason, among others, consideration of school stakeholder conceptions of school-based parental educational responsibilities is suggested as a useful step for helpfully operating a Québec English-language public secondary school.
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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW FORMAT AND PROTOCOL

CONSENT FORM
Appendix

Interview Format and Protocol

The format strives for utility in helping to comprehend conceptions of parents, teachers and school administrators on the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility. Questions helping to answer the principal research question, **How do parents, teachers and administrators conceive of the phenomenon of school-based parental educational responsibility?**, are designed in a tripartite format with the final question in a concluding-thought manner. The tripartite format for each in-depth interview seeks to achieve a past, present, future pattern, requesting attention to actual personal backgrounds and past experiences, present experiences with reflections thereon and an opportunity for expressing future possibilities. The pattern is inspired by Seidman’s three-interview strategy in which the first interview is described as “Focused Life History” (1991, p. 11), the second, “The Details of Experience” (Ibid., pp. 11-12), and the third, “Reflections on the Meaning” (Ibid., p. 12). Similar questions are employed for each interviewee category.

The interview’s first sub-question division is as follows:

*The subject is ‘school-based parental educational responsibility’. Please relate your remarks to this topic.*

Would you please recount features of your own experience with parents and parenting?

You may wish to begin with the times of your own childhood.

(Not for non-parents) I am particularly interested in your experiences of becoming a parent.

How did you plan for your own parenting responsibilities?

(Not for non-parents) In what ways has your life changed by your becoming a parent? In particular, I am interested in your activities and your responsibilities.

The second sub-question area deals specifically with present-day parental experience related to parent-child/student-school (personnel) interrelationships.

Would you please think about interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel.
What do you understand as being school-based parental educational responsibilities you think parents should try to, or you think parents are expected to fulfill in relation to a child (to children) and the school?

Would you please describe either ideas of or actual instances you know of parental irresponsibility related to this school's daily life?

Would you please tell what school-based parental educational responsibilities concern or involve you? *as a parent *as a teacher *as an administrator

What do you think of your experience(s) of these school-based educational responsibilities?

Would you please tell what school-based parental educational responsibilities involvement makes you uneasy or uncomfortable, and why?

Would you please tell what school-based parental educational responsibility involvement you think is not meaningful, and why?

Would you please tell what school-based parental educational responsibility involvement you try to avoid, and why?

Would you please think about things you have already said and, perhaps, about things not said, about school-based parental educational responsibilities.

What things would you now do differently or better in relation to parenting itself (not for non-parents)?

What things would you now do differently or better in relation to school-based parental educational responsibilities in particular?

Would you please tell me what we should do differently or better in relation to school-based parental educational responsibilities to help parents cope with such responsibilities?

Would you please tell what we should do differently or better regarding interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel?

The third sub-question area deals with possible future implications and developments.

What points would you like to make about possible future interrelationships among parents, children/students and school personnel, focusing in particular upon school-based parental educational responsibilities?

To help organize your reply, please try to make remarks upon:

(a) the school programme (curriculum and/or activities)
(b) school policies, as in communications and other matters
(c) school practices, as in communications and other matters
(d) parenting ideas and practices related to school-based parental educational responsibilities

Do you have any point(s) you would like to make about the topic or any of the questions?

An attempt to permit a fairly full expression of an interviewee’s thoughts relating to school-based parental educational responsibilities is the aim of the protocol format. Recognition of limitations of single interviews of interviewees is made with full realization of problems caused in a school’s daily life with fulfilment of such in-depth interview aims.