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STAGE SETTING: AN EXPEDITION IN SEARCH OF EQUITY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The discrepancy between policy and practice is a recurring theme in education policy studies, especially in developed countries where implementation enjoys considerable attention in the literature (Malen & Knapp, 1997:146; Elmore, 1980:26). Developing countries, given high rates of poverty, inequality and financial constraints, can ill-afford the wasted resources that result from the poor implementation of government policies. There is, therefore, a greater burden on developing countries to ensure that policy implementation achieves its intended goals within education systems or, at the very least, to understand why noble goals are not achieved in practice.

In South Africa¹ much attention has been focused on policy formulation without indicating how to translate such policy into measurable outcomes. All too often policy-makers and politicians are focused on the desired outcomes of educational change but neglect the contextual factors that influence implementation (Rogan & Grayson, 2001:2). Porter (1980:75) argues that the people concerned with creating policy and enacting relevant legislation seldom look down the track to the implementation stage. It has also been observed that very few government initiatives affect mainstream practice in the schools (Joyce, Calhow & Hopkins, 2000:46) as a whole. These observations suggest that in many instances policy failure can be attributed to poor implementation or a lack of insight into policy processes. It could further be argued that reform initiatives in developing countries seem to pay little attention to the complexity of implementing policy under system-wide conditions of disadvantage and underdevelopment (Sayed & Jansen, 2001).

¹ My pursuit of this inquiry was fueled and sustained by Hughes' eye catching statement in the poetry book titled "New selected poems, 1957-1994", Paris, published by DU Tumps, quoted by Zegeye & Maxted (1994:23) in the book called "Our dreams deferred".

Despite scholarly consensus on the existence of a policy-practice gap in education reforms, there have been few attempts in developing countries to actually follow the implementation path travelled by a “policy” in order to explain exactly where, how and why this distancing occurs between ideals and outcomes.

This research, informed by concerns about the policy-practice rupture, traces the path followed by an “equity-driven” school funding policy in a developing country context in an attempt to explain where, how and with what effects the “breakdown” in policy implementation actually occurs in an education system.

In this chapter, I provide an orientation to the overall research plan.

1.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study takes place in the North West Province (NWP), which represents one of the nine provinces in the Republic of South Africa.² The case study traces the implementation of the new “National Norms and Standards for School Funding” policy and its subsequent effects on schools in the Mafikeng Education Region, situated in the capital city of the province, Mafikeng.

My goal is to determine the actual effects of policy, and compare and contrast such outcomes with the policy intentions as set out by policy-makers. The study therefore traces the course and effects of the new National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy (NNSSF) through the key levels of the education system; that is, from the National Department of Education (NDoE) down to the school level via the provincial and regional levels of government.

The intention is to examine how policy is implemented and understood from the stage of policy formulation to the level of education practice. The logic behind this approach is to

² South Africa as a unitary state is made up of nine autonomous provinces: 1. Eastern Cape. 2. Gauteng. 3. Limpopo. 4. Kwa-Zulu Natal. 5. Northern Cape. 6. Free State. 7. North West. 8. Western Cape, and 9. Mpumalanga.

determine the actual effects of the school funding policy against the legislative and policy intentions in the form of policy objectives and key performance indicators.

The design of this study required the selection of a cohort of departmental employees (participants) who were given the responsibility of implementing the NNSSF policy as well as key education stakeholders and policy analysts who were close to the policy. This means that the study paid special attention to the views of the participants in the implementation process with the main objective of determining how the policy was implemented and which factors explain the mismatch between policy intentions and policy outcomes. In essence, this research sets out to show the reasons why policy was not implemented as planned from the perspectives of the policy makers and users. From this articulation of the broad purpose of the study, two prominent research questions emerged:

- 1.3.1 How was the new school funding policy implemented within and through the different levels of the education system?
- 1.3.2 What were the effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) policy on equity at school level?

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In developing states, the financing of education represents a major investment in a country's human resources. The need to create equal opportunities for all children to acquire education of the same quality is a central concern of the modern state. Indeed, the argument has been made elsewhere that "the educational success of poor children should be the business of the state, localities and schools" (Ross, 2001:6). The benefits of investing in disadvantaged populations substantially exceed the costs of not doing so. More importantly, there is a logical force in the argument that says "improving prospects for disadvantaged children is not an expense but an excellent investment, one that may be postponed only at much greater cost to society" (Davies & Ellison, 2000). In this connection, state intervention should not only be seen as necessary but also obligatory. For this reason, school finance equity is often regarded as a mechanism to effect educational reform, which is critical for educational development.

Ladd, Chalk and Hansen (1996:36) argue that an equitable system of education is one that offsets accidents of birth that would otherwise keep some children from having an opportunity to function fully in the economic and political life of the community. In this sense, education is seen as the great equalizer between the “haves” and “have-nots” in a society with diverse socio-economic communities.

In view of the above, the entrenchment of education as a basic right, the importance of adhering to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the necessity to safeguard democracy seem to have occasioned serious attention to public quality education worldwide. The quest to address “educational disadvantage” of marginalized children through the creation of equal educational opportunities appears to have energized states to develop appropriate distributive³ and redistributive⁴ policies.

Further policy attempts at advancing the right to basic education revealed themselves in various ways. For instance, at a World Conference in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, 150 governments adopted a World Declaration on *Education For All* and a *Framework For Action. Commitment to the Education For All (EFA) agenda by the community of nations should be seen as a renewed determination to improve opportunities among disadvantaged populations. But it is also important to realize that policy commitment is not the same as practical achievement.*

Of critical importance is that *Education For All* is an important goal, which is guaranteed in the Constitutions of most countries and central to national development strategies (UNESCO, 2000:2). The declaration *Education For All* (EFA) is comprised of the following key principles: equity, redress, equality, and democracy (UNESCO, 2000:2, DoE, 1995a:46).

In pursuit of this broader education agenda, most of the developing countries realigned their national developmental priorities with EFA goals, including Malawi, Uganda, Namibia and Tanzania (UNESCO, 2000:16; DoE, 1995a). In 1994, South Africa followed suit by

³ Distributive policies-involve using funds to assist particular groups.

⁴ Redistributive policies-involve deliberate efforts by the government to shift the allocation of wealth, income or rights among broad classes or groups of the population such as “haves” to the “have-nots”. The aim is not equal treatment but equal possession.

entrenching some of the key principles like *equity* and *quality* in both the 1996 Constitution and the Education and Training Act of 1995a. South Africa's fundamental principles and approaches seem to provide a perfect fit with the objectives of the Education For All (EFA) as adopted by the community of nations at the Jomtien Conference in Thailand, 1990.

In South Africa, the historical pattern of educational financing under colonialism and apartheid has been characterized by severe racial and regional inequalities (Unterhalter, Wolpe & Botha, 1991:99; Donaldson, 2001:62). This unequal and separate funding of public education created huge disparities between white and black schools that defined political struggles for equal education among black liberation movements like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). In this connection the democratic government was morally obliged to dismantle the system of unequal and unfair funding based on race and ethnicity.

New policies such as School Finance, Curriculum Excellence and Standardisation, particularly in developed countries like the United Kingdom and the United States of America cite principled issues such as equity, adequacy, excellence, quality and efficiency school financing (Jones, 2000:146; Welner, 2001:64) as the basis of their development. In the literature, school finance as well as learner achievement seem to be a cross-cutting theme in educational reforms. The same can be said about the importance of equal educational opportunities at school level, with the view to assisting historically disadvantaged groups.

South Africa, in response to the plight of the disadvantaged, the imperatives of globalisation, and the political necessity of societal transformation, embarked on an inclusive process of policy development. Indeed, since 1994 the Department of Education has been responsible for the rapid proliferation of new education policies (Sayed & Jansen, 2001:12). I view this as a period of "policy mushrooming" since most of the policies seemed unconnected and contradictory. For instance, the policy on post-provisioning argues for the reduction of educator numbers, while the new curriculum described as Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) implied more educators at school level.

The transformation agenda in South Africa produced a single National Department of Education (NDoE), a legislative framework in the form of the Education and Training Act of 1995 (ET, 1995), the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA 1996), the Further Education and Training Act of 1998 (FET), Curriculum 2005, the *National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy* (NNSSF) of 1998, and related pieces of legislation such as the Whole School Evaluation (WSE) policy of 2001 and the Integrated Quality Management System Policy (IQMS) of 2003. The question is whether this impressive policy infrastructure translates downwards into educational practice – in this case, effective service delivery.

In pursuit of the constitutional principle of equity and the political necessity to transform education, the Department of Education (DoE) implemented a policy called the NNSSF. This happened immediately after the implementation of the new post-provisioning model. This funding policy (NNSSF) was viewed as a strategic mechanism to redress the gap between rich and poor schools, with the ultimate goal of providing *quality* education. It was also intended to act as a national instrument to ensure the equitable distribution of financial resources across the nine provinces in the country. At the heart of this funding policy is a strategy for funding that favours *needy* schools and previously disadvantaged children.

In this context, this research aims to trace the course and effects of this new policy on school funding at different levels of the education system with particular reference to the North-West Province (NW) of South Africa. In particular, the research focuses on the effects of equity-driven policies on the quality of education provided by “self-managing schools” which have been allocated extra functions to control their own finances and curriculum (DoE, 1998:14). These types of schools are called “Section 21 schools”. Allocations of functions to self-managing schools seems to be informed by the assumption that school based management is best placed to achieve equity and development.

This assumption of an increased capacity in the school as a result of the direct allocation of financial inputs, is the focus of this study. In other words, the increase in capacity (e.g., capacity to utilize funds, to diversify the curriculum) of the school is viewed as a medium-term outcome while increased student performance is a long-term outcome which lies beyond the scope of this inquiry. It can only be inferred based on the overall capacity of the school.

Despite bold attempts at transforming the education system through equity and quality oriented policies like the NNSSF, little progress seems to have been made. Indeed both the print and electronic media, as well as public debates, draw attention to the failure of resourcing policy and related policies like OBE in South Africa. It has even been argued that current educational policies accentuate inequalities along lines of class rather than race (Sayed & Carrim, 1999:150). Six years down the line, “*Inequality is still writ large in the education system, and too many families are on the receiving end of an unacceptably low standard of education delivery*” (Sayed & Jansen, 2001:25). Such observations seem to have caused despair among ordinary South Africans and necessitated governmental reviews of policies like the NNSSF and Curriculum 2005.

In the light of the above, a critical question is: “why do public policies so often not produce results as planned?” This question draws attention to the dynamics of both policy development and implementation, as well as the capacity of the state to implement such policies.

Regarding the appropriateness of education policies in South Africa, there seems to be agreement among politicians, policymakers and researchers. The Minister of Education, Kader Asmal states that:

I was told by everyone I met that we have created a set of policies and laws in education and training that are at least equal to the best in the World ...yet... the public believes that we have a crisis on our hands...the people are entitled to a better education service and they must have it (DoE, 1999a:14).

South Africa in fact has an impressive compendium of education policies that were widely acclaimed throughout the World (Sayed & Jansen, 2001:40). However, good policies do not automatically result in good results. Managerial capacity on the part of policy implementers and appropriate resources seem to be critical in policy implementation. But much still needs to be done to determine the host of factors associated with effective implementation.

Most of the recent local policy literature seems to locate policy *failure* and the associated crisis within the politics of policy implementation, since this type of literature appears to be very critical about the governments action. At face value, the potential of democratic policies

in advancing the transformation process seems obvious. On the other hand, most of South Africa's policies are the products of the search for consensus among contesting political parties since they emerged from the Government of National Unity (GNU) (Sayed & Jansen 2001:42). The GNU in 1994 placed a high premium on consensus and compromise in the policy-making process. Whether consensus and compromise positions short-changed disadvantaged communities is a point worthy of empirical inquiry.

Implementation challenges of the resourcing policy appear not only confined to the national level. In the North West Provincial Education Department (NWED), the picture looks bleaker when judged against policy intentions i.e., equitable distribution of state funding

For instance, since the implementation of the NNSSF policy, specific implementation challenges have been observed as follows:

An under-spending of R33 million earmarked for distribution; poor spending by schools in Quintile one to three; refusal by school principals to release reports to children who have not paid school fees; excessive fundraising; refusal to pay school fees and the failure by government to more schools forced teachers to erect temporary structures, provincial SADTU and School governing body (SGB) protest on poor implementation of the funding policy (NWED, 2001:16).

This disturbing trend places the implementation of the NNSSF under the spotlight of both media and scholarly inquiry. The matter seems to go beyond the question of financial adequacy. Given the financial constraints experienced by the government in general, and the NWED in particular, the under-spending of R33 million meant for the historically marginalized institutions raises questions about the actual translation of policy into practice, and the commitment and/or capacity of policy makers and implementers.

1.4 RATIONALE

At an academic level, the broader rationale for this study finds its inspiration and grounding in the widely observed discrepancy between a policy's stated aims and its actual effects (Malen & Knapp, 1997:30; Sayed & Jansen, 2001:78; Rein, 1983:16), and the failure to explain this distance in systemic terms. The specific and unique contribution of this research is to examine

how the funding policy “travels” through different levels of the education system and with what effects at the terminal point of delivery i.e., the school.

In the light of research on the complexity of policy implementation, and the difficulty of achieving equity, I became deeply interested in conducting this research not only for academic purposes but also for professional reasons.

Given the fact that at the time of starting this empirical study, I was already employed as one of the managers in the North West Provincial Education Department in charge of policy implementation and co-ordination⁵ (presently I am employed as a Senior Manager for Quality Assurance⁶), the task of pursuing academic studies in this area became even more relevant and appropriate. This was further strengthened by the practical experience I gained as a classroom teacher, secondary school principal and education advisor through in-service training. I therefore had the advantage of examining educational reforms from both the perspective of policy practitioners at the coalface of policy implementation and policy makers at the centre of policy formulation.

Furthermore, my role as the provincial policy co-ordinator allowed me to serve as the main link between the Provincial Education Office (PEO) and the Department of Education. In this regard I got involved in the implementation and co-ordination of various policies such as the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) in 1998, the Admission of Learners policy of 1997, and the Rationalization and Redeployment (R&R) of Educators (post-provisioning model and contribution formulation of the SASA, 1996). These multiple positions offered special insight into the interface between policy and practice; such exposure and interest further fueled my interest in this inquiry.

Part of my motivation to engage in this scholarly study can be ascribed to my conscience which weighed up the costs of developing new policies at the legislative level against the costs of implementing such policies. The costs of reform intrigued me greatly.

⁵ The division or directorate of policy co-ordination in the North West Education Department, which I was heading was, among other things, responsible for the effective and efficient implementation of education policies and district co-ordination in the twelve education districts.

⁶ Quality Assurance in the North West Province (NWD) is made out of Systemic Evaluation (SE), Whole-School Evaluation (WSE) and Quality Management (QM) which has direct link with the schools and other sections of the department.

My concerns about the costs of policy first emerged during my role as a manager in the Ministry of Education. For example, policies such as DAS (1998), the Post Provisioning Model (PPM) of 1998, and the core duties and responsibilities of school-based educators were not only the products of fierce and protracted negotiations between the Department of Education and Educator Unions (EU), but were also financially costly. But of major concern to me is that the initial implementation at provincial level was not funded at all. As a result, provincial officials, especially Heads of Department (HODs) called them unfounded mandates (NWED, 1999:3). Surprisingly enough, such Heads have delegates representing them at the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC).

Perhaps the planning by policy-makers, on the one hand assuming a one-to-one correspondence between policy and practice, and the realities of the policy processing and implementation on the other hand, can be regarded as a contributory factor to the traditional view that regards policy formulation as being distinct and different from implementation. But such an approach required an investigation in order to pinpoint potential tensions between policy-making and implementation, and between policy and practice.

Another factor which really increased my interest in the pursuit of this inquiry into the critical importance of equity in a society in transition, was the adoption of educational decentralization in democratic states like the United Kingdom (1988 Education Act) and the United States of America (The Secondary Education Act of 1965) in the pursuit of the equitable distribution of scarce resources. What further increased my personal interest in attempts to unravel the complexity of policy implementation and the pursuit of equity, in particular, was the fact that the national and international literature placed a lot of emphasis on the policy process which is often seen as a continuum. This interest was further fuelled by empirical evidence that suggested the collapse of equity – or what Berne & Picus (1994:7) refer to as “the rise and fall of equity.”

In this connection, one of the major criticisms leveled against decentralization by several scholars and policy analysts is that “decentralization does not equal democracy. In fact, in many instances decentralization can be used to subvert a democratic agenda” (Odora-Hoppers,

2002:16). In the face of this evidence, critical questions such as the following attracted my attention:

- ◆ What are the implications of decentralizing key functions without ensuring capacity development at the implementation level? and
- ◆ Is equity in an environment of limited resources achievable?

Conventionally speaking, systems are about the accumulation of power or authority. This set of vexing questions, among others, further motivated me to pursue this research in the field of policy implementation and, in particular, the search for equity through policy reform.

The manner in which a single policy gets interpreted and understood by various policy makers, implementers, stakeholders, as well as beneficiaries at the different levels of the education system and the speed at which such policies lose attention of policy makers did not only intrigue me, but also got me more interested to search for more fundamental factors for the existence of such behaviours. A case in point was the way in which free education and the payment of school fees were understood by parents, school managers and parliamentarians. For example, in the North West Provincial Education Department (NWED) certain local councillors were officially warned by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the education portfolio “to refrain from discouraging parents from paying school fees in the name of free education” (NWED, 2001:3). This is an indication of the differences in the understanding and interpretation of policies. What contributes to this state of affairs required further investigation.

Another factor which led me to pursue this study in policy implementation is what I call the “difficulties” of getting the “truth” from the departmental officials at key levels of the education system; Marilyn (1998:46) calls this the logic of “confidence in reporting”. The search for truth was prompted by the manner in which officials report to one another or to the next level. My experience in interacting with all the levels of the education system i.e., from school to head office levels, was the disturbing trend of receiving distorted (e.g., inflated statistics) information about an incident: Principals of schools tend to give “head office” inflated figures when applying for additional teaching posts, head office officials in charge of the NNSF policy also gave the Department of Education (DoE) incorrect information or

statistics about the establishment of Section 21 schools in 2000. This deliberate act of reporting incorrect information to senior levels can be explained in official terms. This implies that the reporter gives the senior officer the type of information he/she wants thus creating a picture that things are running smoothly. In this regard, it became necessary for me to pursue this study in order to seek insight into what I call the politics of information.

Furthermore, the expectation of positive results immediately after the policy has been launched caused me to think deeply. This implies that policy beneficiaries like education stakeholders expect to see positive developments once a policy has been announced or allocated. For example in the NWED some parents refused to pay school fees, once the NNSSF policy became effective, citing fee exemption as reasons for non-payment and free education (NWED, 2000:01).

In the light of these interests, both personal and professional, it became important to engage in this academic multi-case study on policy implementation, especially equity-driven policies, in order to acquire insights into things like theories of change, implementation frameworks, the evolution of policy and appropriate approaches to policy implementation in multi-level organizations.

Finally, given the fact that South Africa has joined the global economy as well as being part of the sub-Saharan communities, it became a matter of necessity for me to take a critical look at how effectively this country has tackled issues of access and equity. This idea was prompted by an indication from the literature surveyed that it is easy to achieve, but very difficult if not impossible, to achieve equity and equality. Monsen (1998:2) argues that “*the goal of education for all is still far from being reached especially for the girl child.*” Implicit in this statement is the high dropout rate of children, especially girls, with pregnancy often cited as a contributory factor to the dropout rates. The trend now emerging is to look at possible factors, at the level of classrooms and schools, which might be contributory factors. The search for such factors prompted me to ask questions pertaining to the environment under which curriculum delivery is done and resourced. For example, are teachers conscious about the importance to adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate learners from different social background? Have teachers moved from a “chalk to talk” method of teaching to participatory

education methods? In line with the new philosophy of “ubuntu”, have teachers transformed themselves from instructors to facilitators of the learning?

Serious attempts to investigate these research questions, together with declining enrolments of learners at both primary and secondary schools, continues to heighten my interest not only in equity in general but equity in the classrooms in particular. This interest was further evoked by the decrease in the enrolment figures of learners in the North West Education Department Province. According to the 2003 statistics, the number of children in the schooling system from 1999 to 2003 dropped by about 60 000 learners (NWED, 2004:14). This continuous decline in learners’ enrolment obviously requires investigation (especially at school level) with the view to determine the actual causes of such high drop-out rates and the implications for funding policy.

Even if this inquiry is not intended to move into the classroom as unit of analysis, the effectiveness of the schools as a result of the resources deployed and used can still be inferred from progress made towards the achievement of equity. It is therefore important not to look at equity from the equitable distribution of resources only but to include other issues such as teacher development and the school environment (infrastructure) which can have telling effects on teaching and learning.

1.5 THE POLICY CONTEXT FOR NNSSF

The classification of schools as Section 21⁷ is intended to enhance equity at school level. These types of schools are called self-managing schools. Self-managing schools are the ones for which there has been sufficient and consistent devolution to the school level authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources like finance (Caldwell & Spinks, 1998:24).

The above quotation is in line with the objective of this equity-driven policy, the NNSSF. Self-managing schools should be understood within the principle of educational accountability. It is important to view self-management of schools as an accountability mechanism necessary to regulate and ensure equity. Self-managing schools approaches call

⁷ Section 21 schools are the type of schools which have been allocated extra functions to control their own finances and extra curriculum functions. The devolvement of functions to schools allow them to become self-managing.

for local ownership of education and make professionals at the school site primarily accountable, based on the belief that better decisions will be made by those who are closest to the situation.

In January 1999, the Minister of Education released a new policy for funding public schools in South Africa. This policy, called the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (hence forth, NNSSF), described its principal purpose as “the re-distribution of public finance in ways that promote equity (ultimate goal quality education) in schools, and especially in those schools disadvantaged under apartheid” (DoE, 1998:16). Naturally, the announcement of the new policy raised expectations, especially among the poorest communities. This new NNSSF policy draws its mandate from the principles of equality and equity as entrenched in the Constitution and the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA, 1996). It is intended to identify schools according to their needs, distribute more funds to the needy ones, measure performance through the development of School Development Plan (SDP), and use performance indicators in order to ensure school improvement and development. The new policy further devolves financial delegation and authority to the School Governing Bodies (SGB) in order to create these self-managing schools.

The prescribed procedure discussed below could be seen as the “theory of action” behind attempts to ensure greater achievement of equity and quality at all schools which received special financial inputs from the state.

The NNSSF policy came into effect at the beginning of 1999 in some provinces and set out the *national norms and minimum standards* for school funding in terms of SASA 1996. The basic principle of the NNSSF policy is derived from the Constitutional guarantee of equality and recognition of the right to redress. Moreover, the South African Schools Act provides that “*The state must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the rights of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities in educational provision*” (Section 34:1).

The NNSSF policy can be regarded as an equity instrument that “*aims at distributing the bulk of recurrent non-personnel expenditure to poorer schools*” (DoE, 1998:14) based on the

assumption that such an approach will lead to improved performance and the provision of quality education. Whether the targeting of the non-personnel budget as the source of funding can be sustainable is an interesting point.

Addressing redress and equity, the NNSSF policy acknowledges that existing funding provisions allow School Governing Bodies (SGBs) to improve the quality of education by raising funds for additional staff and facilities. In this regard the impact of additional funding like school fees indirectly “marketises” education provision and reduces the intervention of the state in ensuring equity.

According to the NNSSF (DoE, 1998:15), each provincial education department is required to produce a “resource targeting list” describing not only the physical conditions and facilities of the schools, but also, over-crowding of the school and the relative poverty of the community around the school. From the resource-targeting list, five categories of schools emerged from the poorest to the least poor schools. The provincial school budget allocation that emerged from the five quintiles favour the poorer segments of the population. Disadvantaged schools were to emerge as priority schools for targeting under the new funding policy. In order to get a better picture of the Constitution of the Resource Targeting list, refer to Table 1.1 below:

TABLE 1.1 RESOURCE TARGETING LIST FOR FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

School quintiles, from poorest to least poor	Expenditure allocation	Cumulative percentage of schools	Cumulative percentage of non-personnel and non-capital recurrent expenditure	Per learner expenditure indexed to average of 100
Poorest 20%	35% of the resources	20%	35%	175
Next 20%	25% of the resources	40%	60%	125
Next 20%	20% of the resources	60%	80%	100
Next 20%	15% of the resources	80%	95%	75
Least poor 20%	5% of the resources	100%	100%	25

Source: *The NNSSF Policy of 1998: Department of Education, Pretoria*

While broad funding policy is determined at national level, the NDoE has no authority to determine provincial allocation to education in terms of the 1996 Constitution. This means that there is currently no mechanism available to bring about greater equity *between* provinces. The constitutional inability of the National Education Ministry (NEM) to intervene in the provincial budget allocations raises key questions around the objectives and usefulness of the NNSSF especially in a unitary state like South Africa. The inter-provincial disparities are considerable (DoE, 2000:19). The role of the central government in ensuring equity, nationally and inter-provincially, in my view becomes indispensable. This point is based on emerging *prima facie* evidence which points to continued disparity. For instance, according to a comparative study done across the provinces, during the year 2000 the average per learner allocation for North West (the lowest per learner funding of all provinces) was R92-00 compared to R275-00 in the Northern Cape (DoE, 2000:15). There are clearly concerns that should be addressed with respect to the adequacy of existing policy instruments to deal with inequalities across provinces.

This broader political and constitutional context raises several questions that challenge the very goal of the NNSSF policy. Between the national and provincial education departments, who is accountable for equity? How will equity be ensured between the rich and poorer provinces? Is equity comparable to quality education? Will the equitable distribution of financial resources result in quality education?¹ In this context, systemic evaluation research done in the year 2001 shows that Gauteng and Western Cape Provinces are better resourced in terms of qualified teachers and other resources than other provinces (DoE, 2002:46). Perhaps their consistently better performance in Grade 12 examinations can be ascribed to their endowment in resources.

At the implementation level, the NNSSF Policy requires the devolution of key functions and responsibilities to the school level, in particular the SGB. These key functions comprise the following strategies: school-based management, self-management, financial delegation and accountability. In this scenario two types of schools exist, based on functions performed, namely Section 21 schools (receiving direct funds) and Section 20 schools (funds managed on their behalf by the province).

The direct allocation of funds to self-managing schools is based on the assumption that all School-Governing Bodies will be able to perform the following functions (capacity of the school is assumed in the NNSSF policy as prescribed):

- ◆ Manage the funds of the school,
- ◆ Improve and maintain the property of the school,
- ◆ Manage the curriculum of the school, and
- ◆ Raise additional funds for the school (*Government Gazette* No. 19347).

In order for schools to have direct access to funding, qualifications for Section 21 status for such schools are clearly prescribed in the policy. The following procedures constitute essential steps towards accessing funds and becoming Section 21 schools (Edusource, 2000:6):

- ◆ The School Governing Body (SGB) applies for Section 21 status in which it indicates whether it applies for individual functions or block functions;
- ◆ The application forms are then submitted to the Circuit Manager (CM) or School Development Officer, who in turn assesses the managerial and governance capacity of the school against prescribed conditions and criteria specified in Section 21 of the South African Schools Act, of 1996, and the formulated checklist;
- ◆ The application forms are then submitted to the National Norms and Standards policy group at Head-Office for final recommendation or rejection;
- ◆ The Chairperson of the Norms and Standards Committee forwards the recommended applications to the Head of Department who has the authority to grant or refuse Section 21 status;
- ◆ Schools are informed about the outcomes of the applications. The Act states that the granting of functions by the head of department may be unconditional or subject to certain conditions, like withdrawal in the event of poor performance;

- ◆ The decision whether a school has been granted functions or not, is conveyed in writing to the governing body concerned and reasons for the decision are furnished. If any person is dissatisfied with the Head of Department's decision not to grant Section 21 status, that person may appeal to the Member of the Executive Council (MEC); and
- ◆ Letters granting Section 21 status to schools usually indicate the following: functions allocated; amounts to be allocated (lump sum per learner); dates on which the allocation will be transferred to the school current account (cost centre). Payments or transfers to Section 21 schools are normally made in four equal portions or branches in January, April, July and October. However, this arrangement varies from province to province. In some cases the transfer of the next portion of the budget is dependent on the audited statements.

In addition to the stated functions, it is assumed that the self-managing schools (Section 21 status) will provide quality education (better student performance) through school developmental planning that is guided by the setting of the Performance Indicators. The school developmental planning is guided by a checklist. This means that in drawing up the school development plan (strategic plan) schools should carry out certain tasks in order to realize the set goals. This should include the vision and mission, priorities, strategic objectives and the integration of school development plan and budget. This study looked at the effects of equity driven policies on the schools' overall performance as a result of financial inputs using performance indicators in monitoring progress.

1.6 APPROACH TO THE STUDY

My point of departure for this inquiry is that the implementation of the NNSSF policy as an intervention mechanism for equity is in part a reaction to rational theory which emphasises objectivity, linearity as well as a top-down approach based on the intention to eliminate inequalities between the rich and poor. In that regard, I argue against complete reliance on the rational approach or the use of a single approach to policy implementation. My stand is strengthened by recent arguments which favour multiple approaches to educational reforms because of the imperatives of postmodern times and the belief that poor implementation can be

ascribed to a host of factors. In this connection, Vinjevold, Muller & Taylor (2003) for example, stress that the institutions of science (objectivity) and notions of “useful knowledge” have left us with little doubt that ideas of absolute certainty, objectivity and neutrality can no longer be supported. Implicit in their argument is the view that a comprehensive and critical approach to implementation is essential.

I have, therefore, adopted a systemic and coherent approach to estimating the school level effects of the new school funding policy on equity and how the NNSSF policy was actually implemented. The logic behind this stance is that a systemic approach to school reform is premised on the need to align and mediate support and accountability measures so as to effect school effectiveness.

The power behind the systemic approach is that it is totally different from the traditional approaches that insist on a clear distinction between accountability measures that often stress expert advice and standard setting from outside and support measures that place emphasis on internal culture, vision and teamwork. In brief, a close look at the systemic approach reveals a combination or realignment of school effectiveness and school improvement approaches to school reform. This is done in order to strengthen the investigative tools for the inquiry. In this study I have decided to adopt a flexible approach which allowed me to combine or use appropriate elements of school effectiveness, school improvement and school development to explain the course and effects of a new policy.

Perhaps this is also informed by the maxim that ‘one fixed approach to changing schools’ may not be successful. For this reason, a broad and comprehensive understanding of various factors that influence schools and policy implementation becomes essential; hence the importance in this inquiry of a systemic approach to educational change in general and school reform in particular.

Furthermore, in pursuit of the realization and non-realization of the intentions/goals of NNSSF policy through a systemic change approach to educational reform, I have decided to employ an interactionist framework to determine factors or behaviours which may in one way or the other contribute to either the match or mismatch between policy intentions and policy outcomes.

This is because policy seems to be changing or interpreted differently as it moves from one level to the other. Cockrell, McKendall, Hall and Placier (2000:259) confirm this point when they argue that

policies convey intentions, and policy-making cannot be understood without understanding actors' intentions. Policy is not a concrete text to be implemented but a transformation of intentions in which content, practices, and consequences are generated in the dynamics."

Implicit in this argument is the critical importance of paying attention to the dynamics that can either enhance policy intentions or not.

Therefore, in pursuit of the policy goals or intentions of the school finance policy, this trajectory study attempts to estimate the effects of the funding policy by investigating its travel course from the centre (policy-makers at national level) to the school system through both the provincial and regional levels. This is done by simplifying the NNSSF policy goals or intentions by looking at the following process indicators in the education system: Has the school developed the capacity to integrate the school development plan with the budget? Is the school able to effectively manage the planned budget? Have both the regions and provincial levels allocated adequate monies to the schools in accordance with the policy directives? What are the nett effects of the policy inputs on the teacher development and the approach to teaching disadvantaged learners?

Researchers in the United Kingdom, United States of America, the Netherlands and other states have examined the question of school effectiveness (Coleman & Bush, 1993:16; Mortimore, 1991:28; Morris & Everard, 1996:46), school improvement (Fullan, 1993, Reynolds, Hopkins & Stoll, 1999), and the reculturing of schools (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 1998). While highlighting the different characteristics of each approach, common themes across these perspectives put emphasis on the factors required for sustainable change. Effective schools have strategies to develop the full potential of children at risk, deal with racial and ethnic bias, and redress learning and linguistic differences as well as special needs. These factors, among others, need to be addressed in order to increase the potential of schools to achieve equity.

Other aspects of the international literature consulted argue for a varied approach to matters of school reforms even if there are differences in emphasis; for example, school effectiveness puts emphasis on *equity* and value added results, school improvements focus on *process* and *planning* while restructuring advocates changing the *structures* of schools (Fink & Stoll, 1998:317). This trajectory study employs a combination of rational and non-rational approaches like reculturing to examine the policy effects against policy intent. This implies that I am avoiding the danger of sticking to a single approach to the transformation of the schools through this study of school finance policy.

It should be noted that this inquiry is not intended to use the test scores or examination results as indication of the success or failures of school-based finance policy. *Secondly*, this is not a perfect longitudinal study where the end-results or effects can be stated with complete confidence. *Thirdly*, the estimation of the school level effects that may emerge due to the equitable and optimum use of the limited resources are investigated through the employment of performance indicators and, in particular, effect indicators.

In addition to the study focus on policy intentions, which pre-suppose the deployment of inputs (resources) into the school system, logic suggests that this research also pays attention to how the resources are translated into expected results. This is done with the purpose of finding a match between what the NNSSF policy espoused and the practical outcomes. For example, are all key priorities and activities of the school development plan linked to the budget? Have the previously disadvantaged schools received and effectively utilized the allocated resources? Has the school made an effort to use materials that are accessible to all? Was there any effort to diversify the repertoire of teaching skills of teachers in order to empower them to effectively address the diverse needs of all children? Careful and balanced attention to these key indicators at the implementation level will give a view of the efficacy of the NNSSF policy in the selected case study schools.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This inquiry is based on a combination of qualitative interviews and a comparative case study design. It attempts to answer fundamental questions common to studies on policy

implementation, namely how, why and with what effects are policies implemented? Accordingly, this inquiry employed qualitative methodologies for data collection. Consistent with the naturalistic orientation of qualitative research, it became appropriate to adjust the design in order to accommodate new and unexpected information that emerged in the course of the data collection processes. For this reason, the adjustment of the inquiry plans and strategies resulted in the development of a questionnaire which was administered to all educators (participants) in the case study schools.

The new and unexpected data which led to the development of the questionnaire instrument was how the policy of NNSSF was communicated at school level by the school principals. In other words, a discrepancy emerged between the claims of the principal and the claims of his Senior Management Team (SMT). For instance, the principals claimed to have held workshops for teachers while teachers, on the other hand, said they were merely told about the policy by the principal in staff meetings. In order to address these contradictions in the course of data collection, the need for a questionnaire became clear. In sum, a questionnaire was used to triangulate data from multiple sources, like the staff at school level; to strengthen the key findings of the research; and to ensure that the results from one data source would help to inform and refine data from other sources.

To some extent, therefore, this inquiry adopted a combination of both qualitative and quantitative (albeit on a small scale) strategies. Scott and Usher (1996:59) maintain that the two research methodologies do not belong to separate research design paradigms; both can be sensibly used within a common investigation. Most importantly, the utility of both qualitative and quantitative strategies in data collection can ensure that research conclusions are more meaningful and fairly balanced.

The unique aspects of the two methodologies also served this study well because of their concurrent (although with differing degrees of use) use in this study. The qualitative focus, based on the use of a semi-structured interview strategy, helped in securing indepth data on the understandings of NNSSF policy and its implementation as seen through the eyes of principals, departmental officials, policy analysts and education stakeholders. In brief, the essence of the semi-structured interview was the construction of the context-rich

understandings of the new funding policy. This also means that the views of the participants were explored inductively. On the other hand, the quantitative focus of the study enabled the production of objective, quantifiable data alongside the data obtained through qualitative interviews.

Even if the intention of this inquiry was not to develop a new theory or test an existing one, it is my considered view that the themes, findings and conclusions drawn from this inquiry are well grounded in the data collected (i.e., they were not imposed) and offer broader theoretical insights for policy research.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The type of research I conducted includes a multicase study of five schools which were allocated specific functions to become Section 21 (self-managing) schools. Although an in-depth study of the five schools was done and certain key elements of the findings could be transferred to similar situations, the major limitation is that the findings from these qualitative case studies cannot be generalized without.

The other limitation of this inquiry relates to my role as a student (researcher) and a senior official in the Department of Education. Serious attempts were made to reduce the degree of subjectivity and bias through the use of questionnaires, document analyses, and peer debriefing. Nevertheless, personal subjectivity in the collection of data cannot be completely ruled out. In dealing with this potential limitation in the study, one has to accept that bias as a concept may cut across all types of research methodologies, but this does not necessarily mean subjectivity as a factor in the research should be allowed to persist. In this regard, everything must be done to minimize subjectivity throughout the key stages of data collection. In this inquiry, sufficient time was spent interacting with the respondents on their lived experiences so as to enhance the authenticity of the data obtained.

Given the fact that this is an exploratory study that deals with the course and the effects of school finance policy on equity, data was collected over a period of two years in the five case study schools. The schools were only granted autonomous status in 2001 i.e., a year after the

full introduction of the policy in all the schools. As a result, only short-term and medium term effects of the policy are captured here; long-term effects were therefore not reported in this qualitative study. This limited focus can further be justified by disruptions in the implementation of the NNSSF policy in the school system, sometimes due to the regular suspension of the education budget (NWED, 2001; 2002). This means that there are instances where data was collected in disruptive contexts.

Finally, the choice of five schools for in-depth case study for a single researcher can be cited as a limitation, given the importance of a prolonged stay at the sites of the implementation. This was further complicated by the distance between the selected schools and the volume of information collected at the other levels of the education system i.e., national, provincial and regional.

1.9 RESEARCH SETTING

A growing consensus exists among scholars, policymakers, policy analysts and education leaders that serious attention to contextual factors enhances the effective implementation of policy. In the light of this statement it has become necessary to look at the implementation of the NNSSF policy beyond the school level as a unit of analysis. In this inquiry, I focused on both the Central Region and the NWED. This approach is informed by the view that both the regional and provincial contexts have the immense potential of directly or indirectly affecting the school context under which policy implementation unfolds. Most importantly, despite the existence of South Africa as a unitary state, which depicts one nation, the reality is that it is comprised of nine autonomous provinces which are unique and each of which is at a different state of readiness and capacity to manage educational change.

The NWED is located in Mafikeng, the capital city of the province. North West Province has Botswana as its northern neighbour and is bordered elsewhere by the Northern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and the Free State provinces. It is one of the smaller provinces in terms of population but very vast in terms of open space. It is completely landlocked with strong functional links to Gauteng.

North West Province is home to 3,6 million people. Of the 3,6 million people, 65% live in the rural areas where the poverty rate is estimated at 57% and skills level is considered low. This is critical to bear in mind when one deals with contextual factors pertinent to the inquiry.

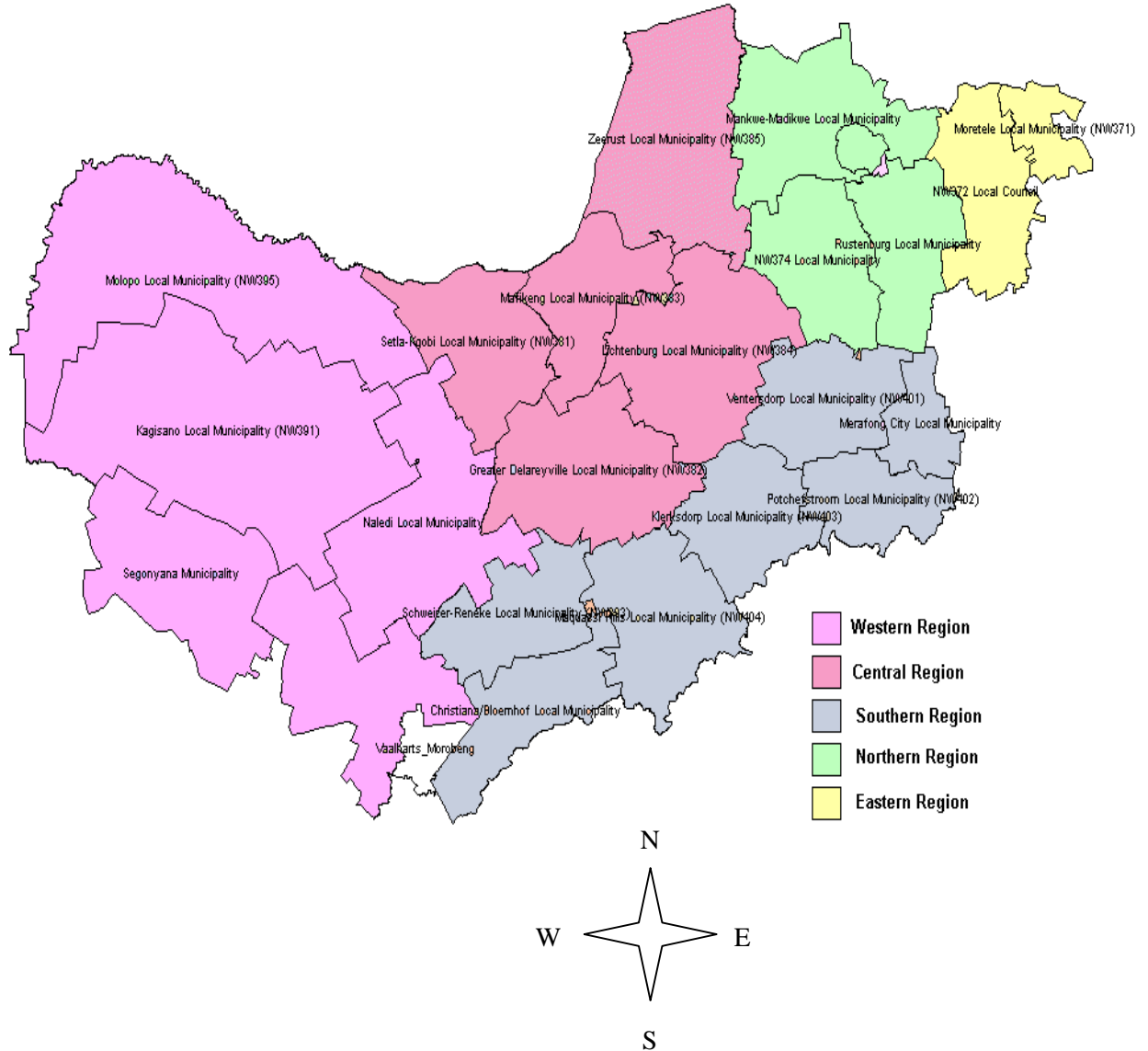
In terms of a new demarcation, the provincial government and the department of education is divided into five magisterial regions, namely: Bophirima, Bojanala West, Bojanala East, Southern and Central (see map3.1)⁸. In this connection, the five selected schools as illustrated in Figure 4.1 are located in the central region. The nomenclature “educational region” (synonymous with the district office) in the South African context is defined as an administrative and professional support unit which is hierarchically closer to schools (NWED, 2002(a)). However, conventionally speaking, an educational region is normally regarded as bigger than an educational district in terms of the number of children, schools and teachers.

What is worth mentioning in this study in particular is the fact that the new educational regions are the product of a long and protracted restructuring which started as early as 1997 (NWED, 2002:4). Given the time taken to complete the restructuring process, it is easy to infer that uncertainty and low morale among the affected parties cannot be ruled out. This is because the restructuring process of both public and private sectors is often associated with redeployment of employees or retrenchment. In this sense it has the potential to affect effective service delivery.

In this regard the “NWED” only began to implement the new organizational structure of the five educational regions as late as the year 2002 (NWED, 2003:14). It took the NWED five years to come up with the new organizational structure. In the light of this development it can easily be concluded that the new NNSSF policy was implemented within a transitional context which was dominated by uncertainty and confusion.

⁸ The following education regions constitute the provincial education departments: Central (Mafikeng, Lichtenburg, Atamelang, Zeerust), Bojanala East (Themba, Mabopane-Brits), Bojanala West (Rustenburg), Southern (Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp), Bophirima (Vryburg, Taung).

MAP 3.1 SHOWS THE MAP OF THE EDUCATIONAL REGIONS IN NORTH WEST PROVINCE



Of key importance is the fact that the North West Provincial Education Department has A high number of unqualified and under-qualified educators in the system. The 1998 statistics put this figure at 38% (NWED, 1999:46) of the teaching force. This includes teachers in pre-primary schools and independent schools.

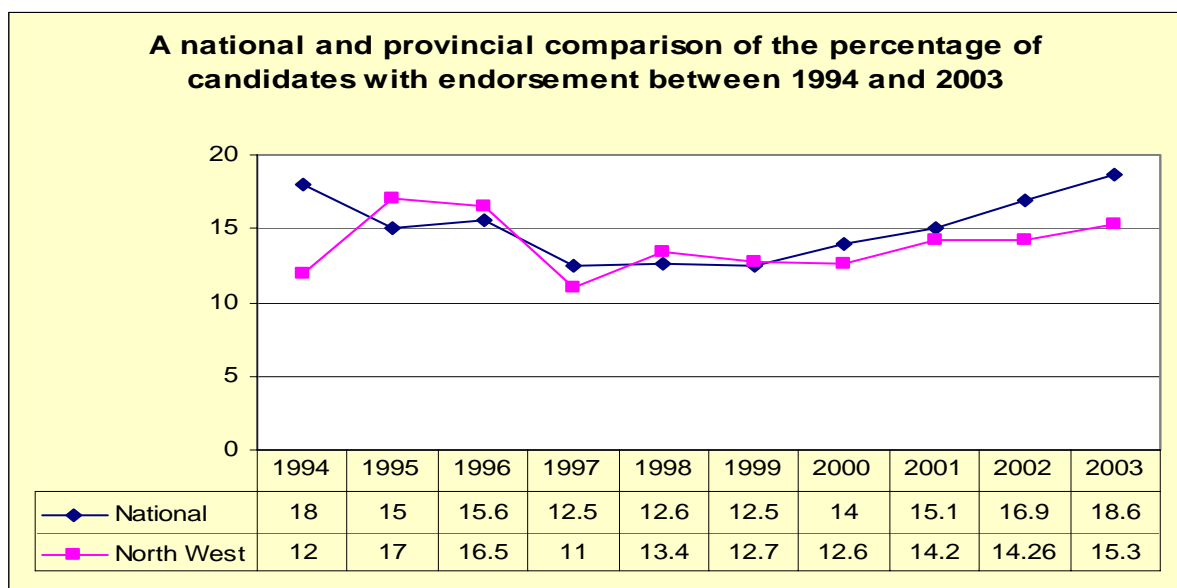
⁹The North West Provincial Education Department has a total of 2 365 schools, 32 468 educators and a total population of 891 957 learners (NWED, 2003:14). Of significant

⁹ The reconstructed statistics from the Department of Education on the Senior Certificate over the last ten years of democracy.

relevance to this inquiry is that this figure (891 957) is less by 60 014 learners from the 1999 learner enrolment which stood at 951 971. This decrease tells many potential stories.

The North West Provincial pass percentage for Grade 12 examinations 2002 and 2003 is ranked fifth and seventh (twice) highest respectively when compared to other provinces. This means that over the last two academic years (2002 and 2003) it only performed better than the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga. A lot can be deduced from this position. There has been a marginal improvement in 2003 when compared to the year 2002. The statistics for 2001 were 62,5% compared to 67,8% in 2002, this shows an increase of 5,3%. And in the year 2003 the results stood at 70,5% showing an increase of 2,7% for 2002 results, a key point in that the NWED always lags behind the national average in terms of performance.

GRAPH 3.1 A NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL COMPARISON OF GRADE 12 RESULTS



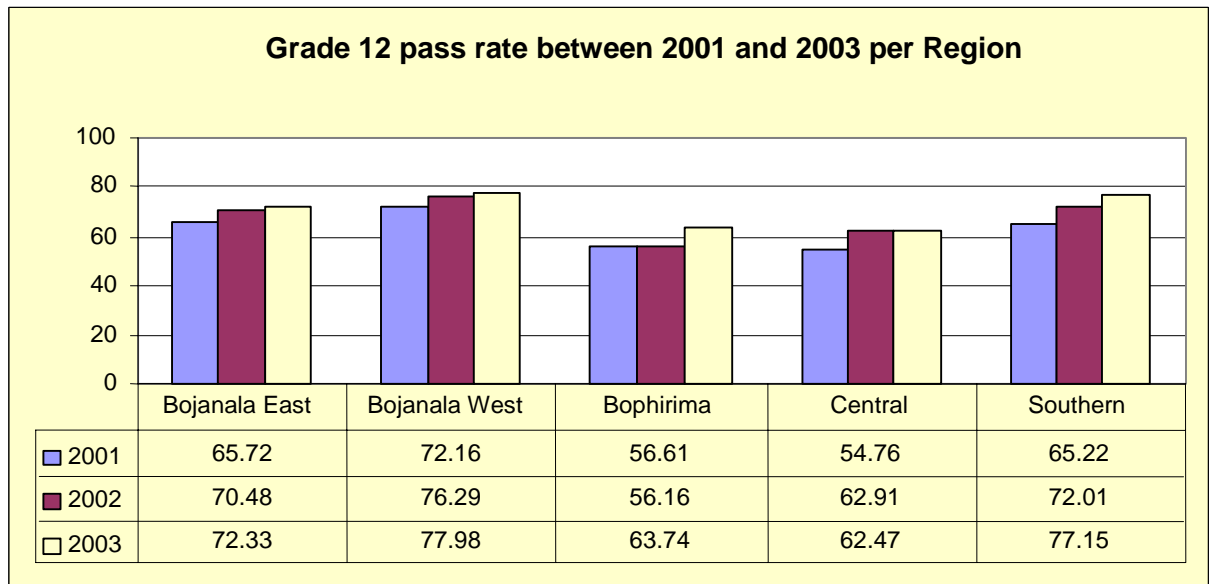
Graph 3.1 – Provincial pass percentages between 1994-2003

The statistics¹⁰ for 2001 and 2002 reflect that the Northern Cape had the highest pass percentage of 84,2% and 89,95% followed by the Western Cape and Gauteng. Of significant importance is that the **three** provinces mentioned did not inherit the homeland system in their new structures as compared to others. Although there have been marginal improvements in

¹⁰ Statistics from Department of Education Report on the Grade 12 Examination Results 28 December 2003 North West Province.

the Grade 12 examination results of the last three years, a national and provincial comparison of the percentage of the candidates with endorsement between 1994 and 2003 shows that the North West Education Department is below the national average at 14.2, 14.26 and 15.3 respectively (that in the last three years). This should be taken as a negative trend given the importance of matric endorsement to both tertiary institutions and employment sectors.

GRAPH 3.2 GRADE 12 PASS RATE BETWEEN 2001 AND 2003 PER REGION



1.10 THE CENTRAL REGION IN CONTEXT

The Central Regional Office is located at the corner of Carney and Nelson Mandela Drive about seven kilometres from Ga-rona building which houses both the Provincial Education Ministry and Education Head Office.

The Central Region, which surrounds the capital city of the North West Province, is divided into five area project offices (normally called educational districts) namely: SetlaKgobi, Delareyville, Lichtenburg, Zeerust and Mafikeng. The new educational region comprises the following towns: Mafikeng, Zeerust, Lichtenburg and Delareyville. The region is predominantly rural with some of the schools separated by a distance of 75km. The region has a total number of 583 schools for 5 140 educators.

Despite being favourably resourced in terms of the number of qualified educators, local and national libraries, Further Education and Training Colleges and the North-West University (Mafikeng and Potchefstroom campuses), the Grade 12 pass rate figures between 2001 and 2003 for the region stand at 62,47%. This is worse than the Bophirima region (63,74) which is very rural, vast and poorly resourced.

As far as training and development is concerned, the Central Region has been the beneficiary of numerous intervention training programmes. These include projects which target schools managers and regional officials, such as the Quality Learning Project, sponsored by the Joint Education Trust and the Danish government (DANIDA) (NWED, 2000:14).

1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTERS

The chapters in this dissertation are organized as follows:

CHAPTER ONE: Setting the Stage, gives analytic and critical commentary on the discrepancy between policy and practice, purpose of the study, the research questions, and the rationale for doing the study. Furthermore, the approach to the study, the policy context, and limitations of the inquiry are presented.

CHAPTER TWO: Policy stumbles on reality: A critical examination of studies on policy implementation, attempts to offer responses to the two critical research questions by exploring both the international and national literature. This is mainly done to see how the NNSSF Policy was implemented and the effects of the implementation of the policy. In the process, gaps in the literature and in approaches to educational change were identified. Finally the use of various implementation strategies in both developed and developing countries were compared and contrasted.

CHAPTER THREE: The Conceptual Framework, examines in detail the complexity of policy implementation and how several attempts to use education policy to win equity gains failed to yield desirable results. The conceptual framework concerns itself with the aggregation of the collected data so as to respond adequately to the two critical questions guiding the research study. In this regard a socio-political conceptual framework and related propositions are

presented. Finally, the context for the research study is presented; this refers to the physical setting of the North West Province and the Central Region.

CHAPTER FOUR: Research Design: How policy travels from the centre to periphery. This chapter explains in detail how I went about selecting the key respondents, the development of the appropriate instruments, data generation and analysis. It concludes by paying special attention to concerns about validity and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: Exploring the different understanding of the education policy among various implementers: generates a narrative analysis of data through the semi-structured interviews, school profiling, document analysis and questionnaires so as to respond to the research question: How was the new school funding policy implemented within and through the different levels of the education system?

CHAPTER SIX: Exploring the policy goals and effects: “Intentions & tensions”. In an approach similar to chapter five, chapter six employs the generated data to address the second research question “What were the effects of the school funding policy on equity at school level? This research question is responded to through statistical as well as narrative data.

CHAPTER SEVEN: The inter-play between policy and practice: theorising on implementation, gives a detailed account of the implications of this study for theory, policy, research and practice.

1.12 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

Chapter one does the stage setting by anchoring this research study in two critical research questions. The two questions set the course of the study by seeking responses on how the NNSF policy was implemented and with what effects I now examine the validity of the research.

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2

Literature ReviewPolicy stumbles on reality: A critical examination of studies on policy implementation¹¹**2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this review of the literature is mainly to establish the state of knowledge on equity-driven reforms in general, and with specific reference to school finance policy as the instrument of choice for achieving equity commitments. This status report on the knowledge base regarding equity-driven reforms, it is hoped, will provide justification for the special contribution of this South African study on equity driven policies and bring to light key questions and methodological tools to shape this inquiry and further research.

In pursuit of the above purpose, and in response to the two critical questions that guide the inquiry, the review focused on how various policy implementers at different levels of the education system have understood the policy and strategised for the implementation of NNSSF policy on one hand, and the effects of the policy implementation on the schools, on the other hand. In *Section One* of this chapter, I present and contextualize related key concepts that constitute the soul of this inquiry. The conceptualization of key terms like implementation, equity, quality, equality is done within the broad framework of educational change. This is done in order to illustrate the gaps between policy and practice. The approach is informed *primarily* by the importance of dealing decisively with contesting controversial and divergent views associated with equity as an emotive concept within the scope of redistributive policies. I confine these divergent views to what I call the politics of meaning on equity and related terms because some critics have even questioned the very existence of equity. For example, Le Grand (1991:7) argues that the search for acceptable definitions of equity is in fact a futile one, that equity has no place on the list of objectives of economic and social organizations. Of fundamental importance to this section is that the conceptualization of

¹¹ Robinson's eye catching statement on how policy stumbles on realities evoked my interest further to examine the policy realities further. The statement is taken from the *Mail & Guardian*, which is a weekly Johannesburg Newspaper of 10-18 October 2003. *Mail & Guardian* is produced every Friday and it has a huge readership, especially from the community of scholars.

equity is done with the objective of developing a *working definition* so as to anchor the study on firm ground.

Section two identifies and examines key strategies employed by the developed countries to pursue the creation of equal opportunities through the instrument of school finance policy. In this regard, I have selected six strategies employed by developed countries like the United States of America, United Kingdom and Australia to pursue the implementation of school-based financing policy. Furthermore, the individual strategies are singled out for focused attention and critical examination, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of such strategies. Central to this point, an indication is given of how far the developed countries have failed and or succeeded in achieving equity. But related to this, I also examine efforts made to review strategies in order to deal with the new and changing contexts of policy implementation. Section two concludes by enumerating possible solutions to the policy implementation problem by drawing heavily from international theoretical perspectives. I do this with the objective of demonstrating that despite the complexity of implementation as a phenomenal problem, informed and appropriate approaches can still yield positive results. In this connection theoretical perspectives from distinguished scholars like Fullan (1998) and Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) are judiciously employed to guide the discussion on implementation.

Section three critically reviews efforts mounted to achieve equity in developing countries like South Africa. This is informed by the importance of evaluating how far the country has gone in healing the nation given the legacy of inequalities between and among different population groups. *Firstly*, in this section, I conduct a content analysis of the NNSSF policy within the scope and spirit of the Constitution of the country and against the feasibility of achieving equity. This critical step is informed by the necessity to locate the implementation of the NNSSF policy in the broader macro-economic policy frameworks such as (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) GEAR and how the changes in the macro-economic policy have contributed to the “abdication” of policies such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which puts a lot of emphasis on social expenditure.

The usefulness of such approach to this inquiry is to identify factors that can either enhance or militate against the success of the NNSSF policy and the realization of equity. Of crucial importance to this kind of an approach is the fact that some policy implementation fails even before the actual implementation starts.

Primarily, I have identified and examined the strategies employed by the National Department of Education to facilitate the implementation of the NNSSF policy up to the school level. In this regard I argue that South Africa should have selected simpler instruments and adopted a centralised approach to the implementation of the school finance policy. This is informed by the success of the initial central role of the National Department of Education in dealing with inter-provincial equity and the failure of the complicated strategies in the developed countries. Furthermore, I draw heavily on both international and national literature, even provincial, to identify factors that have contributed to the little progress made towards the achievement of equity. In this connection, both statistical data and research findings from surveys such as the 2000 and 2001 Systemic Evaluation Report, Conditional Grant, and the Provincial Auditors General's Reports on education are used judiciously to underscore the emerging new inequality between social classes (elites and poor) that is no more between races. I conclude this section by highlighting systemic issues and barriers that can be regarded as factors compromising the legislative intentions of the NNSSF policy in the North West Education Department. Finally, this chapter concludes by identifying gaps from the literature on the policy effects and a summarized favoured position for the systemic schools change approach to the implementation of the NNSSF policy.

In the final section of the chapter, I present a coherent and systemic approach to policy implementation. This approach forms the basis of systemic approach to school review. The section also handles the synthesis of both national and international scholarly review, thereby highlighting the gaps in the literature especially in the developing contexts. The section finally concludes the chapter with a summary and opens a window for the next chapter i.e., conceptual framework.

SECTION ONE

2.2 THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF KEY TERMS CENTRAL TO THE INVESTIGATION

“The purpose of implementing new policies in the education system is often associated with the need to effect new changes. Therefore, there is an assumed direct link between policy implementation and change” (Ball, 1990:14). According to Hargreaves (1998:6) “*policies are useful when they can influence the allocation of resources, the structure of schooling and the content of practice*”. Both authors also assert that the utility of the policy seems to suggest a one to one correspondence between policy and practice. However, recent surveys on policy and practice indicate the opposite. They single out policy implementation as being very difficult to put into practice, for instance, it is argued that:

One of the toughest nuts to crack in educational change is policy itself – not this policy or that policy, but the basic ways in which policy is conceived, developed and put into practice (Darling-Hammond, 1998:642).

Contrary to Darling-Hammond’s (1998) views, recent literature tends to pay much more attention to policy development or formulation. The policy-makers often charged with the responsibility of developing new policies more often than not enjoy support in terms of key resources like money, time, secretariat and even the best technological equipment as well as unhindered access to information (personal experience). But strange enough, after the completion of this process I found out that there is often a ‘sigh of relief’ on the part of the policy-makers. This sigh of relief in one way or the other, may indicate the end of a difficult task, but in a way this suggests that the implementation stage would be much simpler. In contrast to this perception, the opposite seems to hold water i.e., implementation is more complex than policy development. This view is informed by many factors. For example, policy practitioners often find themselves operating in different contexts from the policy-makers. In many instances, I personally discovered that they are under-resourced, poorly skilled and do not share the same meanings with the policy-makers. Therefore, for one to deal successfully with the educational change process a deep and holistic insight of the policy process is of fundamental importance.

Cuban (1990:343) also adds further weight to the complexity of policy implementation:

Most reforms foundered on the rocks of flawed implementation. Many were directed by the quiet but persistent resistance of teachers and administrators who unconvinced by the unvarnished sheer of reforms, saw minimal gain and much loss in embracing second order changes boosted by those who were unfamiliar with the classroom as a work place. Second order changes were either adopted to fit what existed or sloughed off, allowing the system to remain essentially untouched. The ingredients change, the Chinese saying goes but the soup remains the same.

The excerpt above demonstrates the gap between the views of policy-makers and implementers. From Cuban's statement, it is clear that if policy implementers hold views different from those of the policy-makers, this may have an effect on the outcomes of the policy. For example in most cases they pretend to be implementing policy as dictated by the policy makers while in fact they are not. This often leads to what I call tinkering.

2.2.1 WHAT, THEN, IS IMPLEMENTATION?

There are as many varied meanings or definitions of implementation as there are researchers on the subject. The word implementation is often used interchangeably with practice, transfer or installation. Implementation of policies can be viewed as the actual task of putting theory into practice. Grindle (1980:6), for example, views implementation as the task that establishes a link that allows the goals of policies to be realized as outcomes of governmental activity. On the other hand, Honadle (1979:6) observes that in the context of project implementation, implementation refers to the process of converting resources into services, which support behavioural changes. However, it is my considered view that the conversion of resources (allocated) or policy into services pre-supposes the presence of role players or implementers with a battery of skills at operational, tactical and strategic levels.

Researchers in both developed (United States of America & Canada) and developing countries (RSA, Nigeria) almost share common views on the functional definition of the concept 'implementation' (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry, 1997:78; Garn, 1999). They look at implementation as the process of putting policy plans into practice with the purpose of achieving the desired results. The reason why policy implementation has not achieved the

desired results as envisaged belongs to another part of this section. Furthermore, Fullan (1998:217) explains the concept implementation as:

... what was happening (or not) in practice. Implementation focuses on what happens in practice. It is concerned with the nature and extent of actual change, as well as the factors and processes that influence how and what changes are achieved. More broadly, the implementation perspective captures both the content and process of contending with new ideas, programmes, activities, structures, policies, etc. In particular, the implementation process concerns itself with whether any change has actually occurred in oriented practice. It demonstrates a bias for action in attempting to understand and influence improvements at the level of practice.

This means that implementation is action or results-oriented. I have selected for this inquiry the conceptualization that looks at implementation as the process (not task) of putting plans into practice with the purpose of achieving the desired results. My attraction to this definition is mainly influenced by two factors. *Primarily*, reference to the concept “process” is significant in that the word suggests a set of actions connected with a particular matter. In fact, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDCE) defines process as the continuation, development or change of life of a matter. This, in my view, resonates well with the changes initiated by the implementation of policy into practice, which often takes time to yield significant effects. *Furthermore*, I adopted the definition because it makes direct reference to the “putting of plans into practice”. Putting plans into place suggests the availability of plans. Therefore, before the plans can be made available it means that planning must have been done. Finally, the definition is of common use in both developed and developing countries, South Africa in particular.

Educational change and Education System: Other related concepts that warrant explanation or conceptualization are educational change and the education system. Policy implementation does not take place in a vacuum. It is informed by a certain period of time. For example, in the 70s, the concept innovation internationally got a bad name as it became apparent that there was no follow-up through or attention to it. “There was change for the sake of change only at the surface and real educational reform was not happening” (Fullan, 1998:46). And in this case the education system can be viewed as a means of transmission informed by relevant factors. In other words, for one to understand the implementation of policies, it is critical to have an insight into the concepts educational system and educational change.

In this inquiry, educational change as a concept can be defined from many perspectives or theoretical stances. Goodson (2001:45) defines educational change as a process with a number of different segments – the *internal*, the *external* and the *personal* where internal change agents work within the school settings to initiate and promote change, external change agents are mandated in top-oriented manner (I regard the introduction of the NNSSF policy as top-down mandated since it emerged from the National Department of Education); and personal change refers to the personal beliefs and missions that individuals bring to the change process. Oliver (1996:46) also argues that change is an integral part or function of organisational life in general and of education in particular. Educational change can then be viewed as a process that happens within an educational system very much immersed in a society. Change is a way of life, which means that everything must change at one time or another or else there would be stagnation. Change becomes axiomatic to organisational life and any organisation that ceases to respond to it (educational change) is balanced on the edge between stability and stagnation or between order and disorder.

The difficulty of conceptualizing educational change seems to be as complex as the actual process of translating policy theories into practice. Educational change is very unpredictable and much more hazardous in certain instances. The complexity and uncertainty of it have received further attention and explanation in a variety of national and international literature. For example, the point is made that “educational change is not just a technical process of managerial efficiency or a cultural one of understanding and involvement. It is a political and paradoxical process as well” (Handy, 1990:46). In my opinion, educational change process is full of both stability and instability, continuity and discontinuity, contradiction and coherence. What is of critical importance for me is to have a holistic understanding of what educational change is. Such an understanding would add leverage to the best approach of policy implementation.

Goodson’s definition for the purpose is chosen for this inquiry. This does not necessarily mean that I am glued to this definition in the course of the investigation. The main reason for the adoption of Goodson’s (2001) definition is its distinctiveness on the three main segments of educational change as a process. This distinctiveness seems to be commonly used in the process of effecting change. I think the implementation of school finance policy can be

classified in this category because it is input oriented. For example, a policy maker outside the educational institutions often employs the external change process with the intention of initiating changes internally. This is called top-down approach which is often expert-driven. This expert-driven approach often imposes programmes such as: standard setting, curriculum programme or accountability measures.

Since this is an exploratory study that looks at how the NNSSF policy is implemented within and through the education system, I have found it prudent to briefly present what is known about the education system and key elements of the education system. An *education* system is defined as a structure for effective teaching and learning in order to provide for the educational needs of a specific group of people (Steyn, 1997:5). Van Schalkwyk (1988:6) defines an education system as a means created by a community in order to provide education for its members. It is further observed by Steyn (1997) that an education system is logistically arranged into four main components namely: the education system policy e.g., Ministry of Education, the education system administration (National/Provincial), the structure for support (district level) and teaching (school). For this inquiry, the importance of the four identified components are crucial to enable the tracking down of the policy i.e., from the system policy to teaching components i.e., from the National Education Department to the school level. But my considered view is that synergy and continuity are central to the effectiveness of any education system.

Educational equity: In this inquiry, school finance policy was implemented in the developed countries to achieve equity. A clarification of the term “equity” is essential in order to serve as a guide to this research, and more importantly to underscore how equity-driven programmes should be implemented to realize the stated objectives. In addition, *quality* and *equality as* concepts are briefly explained since they are closely related to equity and they cannot be divorced from each other. Equity is a multidimensional concept, which is very elusive to explain in definitive terms since it is deeply steeped in a society’s value system. It can be defined from many perspectives (interpretations) by lawyers, policy analysts and policy makers. This means that there are alternative concepts of equity and no single concept serves the purposes of all users because people have different values and use the concept for different purposes (Berne & Stiefal, 1999:24).

People responsible for the development of equity-driven policies may view equity through a variety of lenses, as revealed by the resource allocated to historically poorer schools, training given to the marginalized groups and as well as affirmative appointments. In this sense, different interpretations of equity emerge in the narrow phrases like “*Now that you have been allocated sufficient resources, produce quality results like ex-model C schools* (NWDE, 2001:4). These interpretations imply that some people may see equity as the allocation of material resources only to historically marginalized groups, and others may see it as more than the mere allocation of resources. These views may be limited in satisfying the equity imperatives but are essential to understand it broadly.

The Oxford Dictionary simplifies “equity” as the application of the principle of justice or fairness to correct or supplement the law. This definition gives recognition to the need to redress the past injustices like discrimination based on race. This implies that equity contains fair discrimination. Equity is further defined as treating individuals with a standard that reflects a basic and fundamental sense of fairness and treating unequals in an unequal manner so as to produce some form of treatment (Wood & Thompson, 1996:1). This means that individuals who experienced injustices in the past must be affirmed or deliberately favoured in one way or another. That is, justice must be seen to be done in order to remedy the past that caused inequality(ies). Such endeavours, it is believed, can go a long way in healing the wounds and nurturing the new democracy.

In grappling with equity, the questions of power, domination and discrimination (like in the old SA) need to be interrogated if equity programmes are to succeed. This also means that such interrogation had to be placed in a critical conceptual framework like the socio-political conceptual framework. For instance, unequal distribution of power and opportunity in a society can limit the realization of equity goals if there is limited commitment. Worldwide and South Africa in particular, women are supposed to have equal access to education, that is, on an assumed basis (more women than men in schools) but they often lack sufficient access to positions of power and decision-making. Presently in the nine provincial education departments there is no department headed by a woman. Perhaps equity achieved through affirmative action programmes should become vital. The conceptualization by the Education

Human Resource is helpful in anchoring equity in the broader policy framework of government.

However, an operational meaning of the concept sees equity as distributing and expending available resources with fairness to schools and students regardless of their location within a state (Burrup, Brimley & Garfield, 1996:471). This explanation which puts emphasis on resource allocation and social justice singles out students and schools. From an educational point of view, a focused attention on students is vital since schools are of children. But the concept also has some limitations since resource alone cannot bring social justice. When children are the subject of equity definitions, differences among them such as language, disabilities, poverty or minority become very important (Ladd, Chalk & Hansen, 1996:10). This suggests treating the unequal unequally, meaning that disabled children should get more resources than normal ones. Within our South African context the explanation of equity, as provided by Ladd *et al.* (1996), will have to cater for majority of children who were deliberately disadvantaged by the previous government. This suggests that only few (whites) were privileged.

The above-given conceptualizations are important but appear limited in relating educational equity to educational achievement, a key concern of the 21st century. Public education, long the vanguard avenues to equal opportunity in our society seems to be failing many children (Berne & Picus, 1994:3). This concern appears to have contributed to a shift away from an input model of equity which is resources-orientated to an input-outcome, thus broadening the traditional outlook of equity so as to put a focus on the effective use or deployment of resources with the aim of producing result. In this connection, it is argued that the true measure of equity is not input but outcomes.

International literature reveals that to ensure equity of results, children with greater needs require greater resources (Anderson, Bush & Wise, 2000:6). To take a further look at the effect of equity driven policies on the school as a whole but in particular, teaching and learning, it is imperative to examine the quality of the teachers expected to create equal opportunities for learners. In this sense equity is a key to quality, efficiency and educational outcomes. Equitable distribution of resources is very important. But adequate resources are

not in themselves sufficient to bring about equity in educational results, they are the necessary means to an end. Implicitly, it is one thing to have adequate resources but another thing to have the capacity and skills to translate such resources (teachers, textbooks etc) into measurable outcomes. The approach of stressing equity in the results, based on the resources deployed, introduces equity in the school and the classroom in particular. It further invokes a sense of accountability from those entrusted with the future and well-being of children. Attention then needs to be focussed on the classroom which is critical for the success of equity, since actual learning takes place in the classroom. It is essential to ensure that the allocated resources are used in a way which will enhance teaching and learning.

In operationalizing equity it is important to avoid the practice of confusing equity with *equality*. Simplistically, equality refers to the state of being equal or evenly balanced in terms of quality, quantity, size or having the same rights. But equality is not necessarily equity. Equality provides the basic criteria according to which people can be treated the same, despite actual differences between them like the colour of the skin, culture, origin, (DoE, 1998:46). Equality is fundamentally based on individual rights, which are indivisible. People are equal simply because they are human beings. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. This is the right entrenched in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the country (Republic of South Africa. 1996:3) and some other democratic countries like the United Kingdom and United States of America.

To promote the achievement of equality, equal treatment, or equal opportunities, measures such as equity driven policies are designed in South Africa to assist the part of the population that has been disadvantaged by unfair discrimination in the past. In this sense, equity has to be seen as a process that seeks to close the gap between the previously advantaged and disadvantaged groups so as to address the injustices of the past. Its ultimate objective should be the attainment of comparable quality achievement by all children irrespective of their social location. The continuing challenge to schools is that of equalizing out-comes for all groups of students independent of the social divisions from which they come (Berne & Picus, 1994:26). In this way equity may be seen as the precondition of equality where the hope for equal opportunities requires unequal inputs.

For the purposes of this study, the conceptualization that views “equity” as the process that *attempts to balance the unequals by ensuring an equitable distribution of resources (both human & material) based on the principle of need with goal of achieving comparable results is employed as a **working definition** comparable results put emphasis on outcome equity.* This does not mean that the coined definition is perfect, it has some limitations. However, the fact that the explanation recognizes not only the fairness of the distribution but also the need to produce the comparable results (not equivalent achievement) between and among children of all races from different socio-economic background is worth a point.

Furthermore, the linking of input to outcome in the exposition of equity attempts to provide a shift in the way resources are used. This shift is being driven by an emerging consensus that high minimum outcomes should be the orienting goal of both policy and finance (Davies, 1994:376). The linking of education policy to economic policy appears appropriate and relevant due to the impact of globalization of the economy and the constraints it puts on the education resources. The appreciation of such a linkage can also give rise to efficient use of resource and accountability on the part of the users and providers.

This working definition, which links input to educational outcomes, views the redress of learning needs (i.e., resource allocation and teacher supply, educator-learner ratios) as insufficient to effect a school reform. It implies that factors like the schools’ capacity to translate the available resources (material and humans) into measurable outcomes equity (educational achievement) can be regarded as central to the realization of equity-driven policy goal which is stated as quality education (DoE, 1998:15). Resource allocation, social justice and improved performance can be viewed as keys in tackling inequality(ies) caused by past discriminatory practices that caused deep division between and among races.

For the purpose of this piece of research, a high premium is placed both on the equitable resource allocation and the effective and efficient deployment and utilization of resources. This means attention is paid to the implementation (black box) like process and effect indicators. One may have the required number of teachers to teach, but they may lack capacity to teach and handle learners from different socio-economic backgrounds. They may lack capacity to diversify the curriculum. This means that the working definition goes beyond the

one employed by the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy. Since the working definition of equity in this case cannot only be seen as holistic but also as systemic, it looks at the effects of inputs from context indicator to outcome indicator. The conceptualization of equity in the NNSF policy is restricted to the equitable distribution of the available state resources so as to close the gap between the previously disadvantaged and advantaged groups by deliberately favouring the historically disadvantaged ones in order to provide quality education to all. This conceptualization assumes that equitable distribution will naturally lead to the provision of quality education. This assumption is not based on rational theory and ignores the fact that change is continuous, unpredictable and ever messy (Fullan; 2001:46) and sometimes paradoxical.

Because equity can be viewed as the means to achieve quality education in the education system, especially for the historically disadvantaged children in South Africa, it is appropriate to provide a brief explanation of “quality” so as to establish a linkage between quality and equity.

“Quality” as a concept has been subjected to various explanations and interpretations. It has been defined “in terms of input factors such as low teacher-pupil ratios and expenditure level of educators (DoE, 2000:4). Such an explanation is problematic since it cannot be easily extended to output indicators. For instance, a highly qualified teacher does not automatically guarantee better quality results than a less qualified one. Very much depends on what happens during the process of teaching and learning.

The National Quality Assurance Framework alludes to three notions of quality as follows: Quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money, and quality as transformation (DoE, 1998:46).

In this study which deals with equity as a transformation agenda, the concept quality as a transformation notion is adopted because it goes beyond the input-processes model since it puts emphasis on qualitative change of an organization. This notion finds strength in the idea that views education as an ongoing process of transforming the individuals (principals, teachers etc.) so as to render quality service. Therefore schools and individuals are required to

undergo a transformative process as a result of the inputs received in the form of money, training and support received.

In this context, the overall effect of school finance equity should result in a qualitative change where professional staff collectively engages in efficient and effective use of financial resources to develop the school as a totality.

The explanations of equity, quality and equality have been given to build a perfect linkage which is very essential for the understanding of this case study. The next section takes the review forward by looking at the mechanisms chosen to advance equity-driven policy.

SECTION TWO

2.3 KEY STRATEGIES USED TO PURSUE EQUITY IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

For almost a century, national governments in developed countries sought to address the gap between the educationally disadvantaged and educationally advantaged children through the pursuit of equity oriented policies like the school-based finance policy. Critical scholarly review indicated that the ultimate aim of these efforts was the creation of equal opportunities for all children to have education of the same quality (Berne & Picus, 1994:4; Goertz & Odden, 1999:46; Ladd *et al.* 1996:46). Of significant importance is the fact that efforts aimed at the creation of equal opportunities were not only based on the democratic ideals of the countries but were also anchored in the right to education enshrined in the Constitution of the land. This is indicative of the essential of educational equity and the prosperity of such nations.

To achieve their goal, school based finance policy appeared to have been singled out as the mechanism to address the gaps between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. To strengthen this main strategy of school finance policy, I argue that related implementation strategies were further developed to facilitate the deployment of resources at school level. The strategies developed can be enumerated as follows: (i) taxation, (ii) formula funding, (iii) open enrolment, (iv)

staffing delegation and (v) performance indicators (Thomas, Kirkpatrick & Nicholson, 1998:36) and (vi) decentralization of authority. For the purpose of this research only three strategies are discussed i.e., taxation, funding formula and performance indicators.

In addition to this set of strategies, countries like the United Kingdom and United States of America review their legislative frameworks by developing pieces of legislation with the intention of effecting fundamental changes at school level. For example, Section 52 to 104 of the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) sought to provide the United Kingdom with a legal basis for a new category of state maintained schools called Grant Maintain Schools (GMS) within the framework of Local Management of Schools (LMS) (Fitz, Halpin & Power *et al*, 1993:3). Similarly, the United States of America developed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) with a view to advance the equity oriented programme, which accounted for what is called charter schools or K12. Australia also decided on the democratization of the schools by delegating power and financial authority to the so-called self-managing (Caldwell, 2000:46) schools, which are called Section 21 schools in South Africa. In this regard a comprehensive review of scholarly literature indicates that developed countries like the United States of America, United Kingdom and Australia pursued the implementation of the school finance policy within the framework of educational decentralization. However, volumes of studies and key research findings favour centralization as against the decentralization of equity-driven policy. Before I grapple with the feasibility and how far the set of strategies have guided the implementation of the NNSSF policy, it is critical for me to fore-ground the set of strategies on generic and essential questions. This critical step is informed by the importance of assessing the suitability of the strategies developed to create equal educational opportunities for all so as to give an informed account on the success or failure of school-based finance policy:

- Did the strategies deal effectively with the core technology of the school, namely the importance to diversify the teaching-learning process in order to deal with equity in the classrooms? Did the school finance policy occasion the allocation of adequate resources?

These sets of critical questions can be viewed as clear signposts that can assist in the synthesis of the literature reviewed and the identification of the gaps for further attention.

In the light of the above, the next part of this section critically examines the individual strategies designed to advance the creation of equal educational opportunities for all in the developed contexts.

2.3.1 TAXATION

The school finance policy automatically gives rise to taxation which often serves as the main source of revenues. Without the clear identification of the main source of revenue to address the inequalities in the school system, efforts to achieve equal educational opportunities may become fruitless. In order to deal with this challenge, some developed countries like the United States of America and United Kingdom have gone to the extent of trying to establish a link between and among “taxation”, school finance reforms and students performance (Clune, 1994:1). Attempts to establish a link seemed to have become necessary in order to ensure equitable and effective utilization of the resources allocated to schools. The approach adopted is in line with the working definition of equity developed to guide this study i.e., equity seen as the process that attempts to balance the unequals by ensuring an equitable distribution of resources based on the principle of need with the goal of achieving comparable results. This working definition views equity as more than mere resource allocation.

Notwithstanding the above arguments, it is vital to indicate that the relationship between and among taxation, school performance (not student) and school finance reform is critical for the advancement of the equity agenda. This is of crucial importance for the purpose of closing the gaps between children of the poor and the rich. The use of this approach can go a long way to advance equity. But the critical question for me is how far taxation as an instrument can facilitate the implementation of school finance policy? What about the sources from national assets like mines and some factories. The argument I am developing is that the country should not rely only on taxation (collected taxes) for funding education. Other sources should also be identified.

The question of taxation as a strategy to advance equity presents itself because historically local control of public education, especially in highly decentralized countries, shows that per

pupil funding (per pupil capital) and school quality are closely related to the wealth of the people in the locality and to the demographic characteristics of the locality. This implies that the financially abled residents are able to raise adequate taxes in order to contribute positively towards quality education. Perhaps this is one of the factors which have added weight to the perception that regards the provision of education in the sub-urban areas or city as of good quality. But the central argument here is that taxation is linked to wealth. Therefore the wealthy people should financially assist the poor.

In seeking ways and means of raising funds for the effective implementation of the school finance policy, Ladd & Hansen (1999:233) cautiously argue that “it is critical to raise revenue *fairly and effectively*”. This cautious approach may be due to many critical factors. For example, the raising of revenues through taxation in a country can give rise to many challenges which may be either political, economic or social. Furthermore, there is a limit to which taxes can be raised for the provision of education, healthcare and security.

Related to the above, it is of critical importance to discuss the implications of taxation in general and various types of taxes at the disposal of the state. This means that there are various types of taxes. Property taxes, income taxes or sales taxes as sources of revenue for the school finance policy require discussion. The level (sphere) selected by government to collect taxes for redress also needs proper interrogation. It is my contention that the set of the identified implications have a direct influence on whether taxation can advance the equity agenda significantly or not.

The question of education finance has led to the identification of how schools were funded. For example, there are two methods of funding schools. Schools are directly funded through legislatively mandated school finance reform policy. In this case, the school finance policy can best serve as an example of a legislative process which carries the mandate of policymakers. Schools can also be indirectly financed through taxation and expenditure limits. The methods of raising revenue for education appear to have been more widely used in the developed countries especially the imposition of taxes, than developing countries.

The question of which levels (sphere) of government are well placed to collect property taxes seems to have resulted in several tensions especially in the so-called democratic governments which give local residents a voice in the governance and management of schools.

Implicit in this observation is that residents at district level are well placed to deal with both the financing and governance of education at district level. This position seems democratic and reasonable enough to be acceptable since it gives recognition to the people closer to the school. However, what seems crucial in this position is whether the local residents at district levels have the ability to pay higher property taxes in order to address the historical inequalities that can engulf the provision of education. This simply suggests that if the local residents cannot afford high taxes due to their level of poverty, either the states or federal government must move in order to satisfy the equity commitments as dictated in both the Constitution and the legislative framework of the said countries.

However, this would also mean that either the states or federal government will have more control over the provision of education at local level. This kind of development can be seen as contradicting the tenets of the democratic order which place a high premium on the will of the people on the ground.

While I do not totally agree with the local property tax as the best mechanisms to address equity driven policies at school levels, it is important to discuss its usefulness because I view equity as an obligation that falls directly within the competence of the national government. This implies that the national government is better located to collect tax (national revenue) than the provincial or even local. In addition to revenue distribution, it is my considered view that the national government is properly located to play an over-arching role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the equity driven policy across the provinces/states. The central government can devise ways and means of ensuring the equitable distribution of scarce resource either through additional grant or deliberately redirecting them to where they are needed most. This argument supports a more central role by the National Department/Government in financing equity-driven policy.

Notwithstanding this, I am in agreement with the evidence which has emerged to substantiate the importance of local property tax in the creation of equal educational opportunities at school levels (because such a more often give the tax payers a voice in the affairs of the school):

In the United States for example, the local property tax remains the best way to raise local revenue for education. That is, provided a decision is made to lodge significant responsibility for raising revenue at the local level, the local property tax is preferred to other local taxes for that purpose (National Research Commission (NRC), 1999:233). However, there is a counter argument in the same body of literature that says in the United States of America, there is “little doubt that many taxpayers view the local property tax as unfair. In 1978, for example, voters in California shocked the nation by supporting Proposition 13, a “*statewide initiative to reduce the level and rate of growth of local property taxes*” (Ladd & Hansen, 1999:235). This counter argument raises other factors which are outside equity but can still influence efforts to achieve equity, especially from the point of adequate resources. This, in a way, pushes the source of funding beyond the local residents back to the policy-makers.

In grappling with “taxation” as the source of revenue for education provision in the state/province or district, the emerged dichotomy between states and districts in the United States of America and between provinces and districts in Canada and Australia (Goertz & Odden, 1999:160) and elsewhere seems to introduce some dilemma and tension which appears to be inherent in the politics of power. The tension seems to be caused by which locus has the power and authority to charge taxes. Is it the state or the local education district? Taxes for what purposes and from which sources? While grappling with the present tension, for the best way of raising revenue for education service, it is critical to appreciate taxation as an emotional aspect. In a decentralized country like the United States of America, another argument is put forward. “*Should a greater share of funding for education come from the federal government?* (NRC, 1999:258) *or not?* These questions are of fundamental importance in realizing educational equity.

The debate between and among which levels of government are best suited to advance the goals of equity seems well grounded, given the importance of equity programmes in healing

the nation. It is my contention that the role of the central government in taxation and provision of education is essential. This view is further supported by practical and ethical arguments from scholars such as Ladd and Hansen (1999:240). They argued that poverty and its associated education characteristics are national problems that deserve national attention. At local or state levels, the wealthier residents are likely to move out from the impoverished district. But much is less common at the federal level given that taxpayers would have (no option) to move out of the nation to avoid the burden of paying higher taxes to support needy students. At any rate it is the central government that often initiate redress policies.

It is my considered view that the importance of ensuring adequate funds from the taxation (Revenue) process should clearly determine which sphere of government is responsible for what. Failure to address this key question has the potential to affect the School Funding Policy negatively. This argument suggests tension between the two spheres of government.

The literature on revenues for taxation reflects huge discrepancy in terms of the amount of the revenues for example. In a case study on the effects of tax on equity in the United States of America, Thompson *et al.* (1994:59) discovered that “*the wealthiest districts spend 36,15% more for instruction (than poorer districts) and the higher a district tax base, the more revenue is available to actually be spent, leaving a prima facie*” assumption of inequity. Implicitly, for the district to increase the source for revenue, tax must be increased. The key question is whether it is possible to raise the taxes of the poor without experiencing resistance given that the poorer communities cannot afford tax equal to the richer communities? In this context, the pursuit of equity becomes suspect since equity tax seems unachievable especially in the disadvantaged communities, unless the richest communities are prepared to dig deeper in their pockets to pay additional tax in order to assist the poorer. Whatever the case, the states or federal government should collect taxes. Perhaps, this may be possible in high income economy in the so-called rich countries, like the United Kingdom, United States of America, France, Canada and Japan, (UNICEF, 1999:14) where the rich can assist the poor.

However, as indicated elsewhere in this inquiry, the achievement of equity seems not to be largely dependent on high taxation only. There seems to be other factors at play which may contribute positively or negatively towards the achievement of equity.

In taking the argument further, Garms, Pierce and Guthrie (1999:130) argue,

to obtain equal education opportunities, one must take into account three separate kinds of inequalities among school districts – differences in wealth, in educational need, and in educational cost. Skillful combination of these three factors appears to be essential in constructing a funding formula that may achieve equity”.

Arguing from the perspective of wealth equalization, Garms *et al.* (1999:131) further confirmed the inadequacy of the poorer property taxes. Throughout the United States of America history, we have relied *heavily on property taxes* to support the public schools. Although this was equitable among local taxpayers (was it an accurate measure of ability to pay taxes), *it was inequitable* among communities. How true is it to state that a *property rich* community with *lower tax* rate could finance a better education than a poorer community with a high tax rate?

The relevance of this argument, that is, the capacity to raise adequate funds from property taxation has to be evaluated in the South African context, given the fact that most Africans in particular do not have properties.

Careful analysis and examination of the above-given exposition seems to paint a bleak picture on the prospect of achieving equity, especially for the poor communities. For instance, heavy reliance on local property tax for public education seems problematic. The absence of other sources of revenue to assist the poor communities is a matter of great concern. To this end, in a decentralized country like the United States of America or Canada, the states or the Federal Government must intervene. Nevertheless, the potential solution can be found in the argument that says:

United States of America Federal role in elementary and secondary education is 35 years old, dating to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The Act provides funds to the nation’s schools that have high concentrations of children from low-income families in order to pay the extra costs of educating educationally disadvantaged students” (United States of America Independent Review Panel, 2001:2).

The drawing of the role of the Federal Government into the equation is informed by the fact that equity is too important to be restricted to the Local Management of Schools or the educational districts, a mistake which seems to have been committed by some countries. The

Federal or Central Government has to play a meaningful role without ignoring the importance of other spheres of governance. This kind of intervention from the Federal Government in the form of additional resources has the capacity to enhance the achievement of equity by narrowing the gap between the haves and have-nots.

The difficulty of achieving equitable distribution of resources to narrow the gap between the rich and poor communities, seems not to be confined only to a decentralized country like the United States of America as stated above. Even in centralized systems of education like the United Kingdom and France, the same challenges seem to be prevalent.

A condensed view of the literature review on the outcry against property taxes seems not to provide long-lasting solution. But it seems difficult to separate the school finance equity, formula funding policy from property tax. This view is supported by the public's reactions to the alternative means of taxation done in Texas. According to the Inter-cultural Development Research Association (United States of America, 1996:1) the Governor of Texas unveiled a proposal to reduce local school property taxes and to replace the lost revenue with an increase in Sales Taxes (ST), motor vehicle fees and new business tax by calling for the following:

- ◆ Increase the homestead exemption (the portion of the value of a home that can be exempted from local school property taxes) from the current level of \$5,000 to \$25,000.
- ◆ Require all school districts to reduce their local property tax rates by 20% (i.e., a district with a tax rate of \$1.20 per \$100 of property value would cut taxes to \$1.00.
- ◆ Increase state taxes to replace property tax cuts.

Interestingly many educator groups expressed serious concerns about the real effects of such tax changes. One major reservation is whether using billions of dollars in new state funding to merely maintain the status quo is the best way to allocate limited state resources. Second concern raised by school groups focuses on the proposal very restrictive limits on future taxes that might prevent individual districts from addressing things like large increases in enrolment or unforeseen future needs.

Of significant importance to this inquiry, is the embedded tension between and among various sources of taxation or revenue, and the capacity of the state district or Federal Government to raise adequate taxes for education. Despite concerted attack on property tax as the source of funding for school finance policy, it is intriguing to note that there was resistance for an alternative form of taxation from educators. Educators argued that before recapture, some property wealthy districts were able to generate thousands of dollars from local property tax bases with a very low tax effort.

2.3.2 A FUNDING FORMULA WHICH PROMISED TOO MUCH BUT DELIVERED LITTLE

This section attempts to establish a logical link between taxation and funding formula with the view to determine whether the two strategies are complementary enough to advance equity. It also describes the composition and the application of the funding formula for school-based finance policy. This is done to determine how far the equity-driven programme (ERD) has been implemented. The section concludes by enumerating factors, which can contribute to the success of the school based finance policy.

Low-wealth districts often had low levels of expenditures even with high tax rates, whereas high-wealth districts often had high levels of per pupil expenditure even with low tax rates. School finance policy and school finance formula were developed to remedy these inequalities (Odden, 1999:155).

Odden's (1999) statement alludes to the gaps between the rich and poor educational districts, and the potential of both school finance policy and funding formula in addressing the said gaps. I have invoked few critical questions to guide the narratives on the implementation of the school finance policy. For example, did the construction of the funding formula take into account new realities at the implementation level e.g., contextual factors?, Was sufficient funds set aside to ensure adequate allocation to schools?, Were there any changes made to the funding formula to accommodate the changing context at the implementation level?, At what change was equity achieved? This set of questions, if positively and adequately addressed, can perhaps significantly advance the realization of the equity-driven agenda.

The body of the literature survey indicates that the goal of school finance is *equity* - which is more commonly expressed as equality of educational opportunity (Garms *et al.*, 1999:130) for

all children. Attempts to achieve this in developed countries like the United Kingdom and United States of America has resulted in what is called a "*Funding Formula*". A funding formula is a rule, or set of rules, which determines how resources are distributed in schools. Probably the best known formula in schools is the money distributed as *capitation*. This is an amount set aside in local authority budget and distributed to each school according to the number of pupils on the roll (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:99; Lee, 1996:2; 1999:130; Goertze & Odden, 1999:156). The funding formula is based on the desire to achieve equity according to need (Lee, 1996:2). Reference to the "need" seems to recognize the fact that it may not be possible to provide all learners with the same amount of resources for they have different backgrounds and differences. Hence the use of the concept equitable. In this regard, instead of giving each child the same amount of money (resources), re-allocation is done equitably. This implies that other children may be allocated more or less depending on their identified needs. In this connection the body of literature on the funding formula cites the "Weighting of children as a factor embedded in the formula (Thomas *et al.*, 1988:99).

A critical examination of the body of literature in developed countries produced the following factors related to the funding formula: age of learners linked to weight; number of children on free meals, salary costs of the staff employed to work in schools, the schools' day to day premised costs, including rates and rent, books, equipment and other goods and services used by the school concerned. It is further indicated that certain items of expenditure called "mandatory" and discretionary may be exempted and they include the following: capital expenditure and debt changes, Local Education Authority Training Grants, Education Support Grants (ESGs), Child Guidance and Education Welfare, structural repairs and maintenance, (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:36; Lee, 1996:5; Goertz & Odden; 1999:162). It is also stated that for nearly 20 years, the province of Alberta in Canada has used a weighted "per pupil" formula to provide lump sum budgets for each of its schools (Goertz & Odden, 1999:158). In completing the picture about the basic elements of the funding formula, the literature review cites different types of the funding formula for different purposes. For instance, pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), which is a device for distributing the money to schools in the form of human resources; and a curriculum driven or *curriculum* led formula, which allocates teachers to service the curriculum (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:14).

In view of the above given explanation, a face value assessment of the individual elements of the funding formula raises possible achievement of equity between schools or educational districts. The funding formula appears comprehensive enough to address the inequalities. It is also advisable to keep in mind that “policy implementation does not happen in a state of vacuum” (Darling-Hammond, 1998:952). It is one thing to have a good instrument but quite a different challenge to score success with the same instrument because contextual factors often play a role in the success or failure of the instrument.

Furthermore, since the funding formula talks about equity according to need, it is critical to fully examine the application of the funding formula in practice. This means taking the formula into the hard realities of implementation. This examination is done against the backdrop that says, Formula funding – displays three key features which Lee, (1996:42) deems conducive to the achievement of “socially just” society or equitable “rationing”. *First*, “rationality” since it distinguishes between allocation which is “automatically incremental ... (involving) the mere rolling forward or backwards of existing patterns of resource allocation and those involving “some conscious choice of alternatives or priorities”. *Second, visibility*, that is, the rationing decisions can be open to public scrutiny arguing that rationing has to be visible (transparent) so that allocators and professionals can be held accountable for the actual priorities revealed in their actions. *Third, consistency and predictability*, Glennerster, according to Lee (1996:41), contends that of equity is to result from an allocation which takes place regularly, then consistency and predictability must be built into the allocation (Lee, 1996:14).

Related to the decision to employ the funding formula in practice, a critical review of the body of literature has pointed to two major mistakes committed by the developed countries in the pursuit of equity. The mistakes concern (i) how to finance the new school finance policy. According to Goertz and Odden (1999:156), the mistakes emerged primarily from the country’s inexperience in financing schools as compared to the districts. This is of vital importance because countries like the United Kingdom and United States of America had a long history of providing education through the Local Education Authorities (LEA) or Local Management Structure. In addition, (ii) many states created cumbersome finance transfer systems as part of the public school choice. The mistakes committed were further

counteracted by a simple argument. In this sense, it was argued that “the most straight forward way to finance such programme was simply to count the student in the school or district attended and use the regular school financing mechanisms (Goertz & Odden, 1999:156; IDAR, 1996:12; Garms *et al.*, 1999:130): The foregone argument attempts to favour a simplified formula for funding.

The two fundamental mistakes cited above have the potential to affect the implementation of school finance equity policy at school level. The *inexperience* of the state in financing schools directly may pose a serious threat given the complexity of a school as a social organization.

Any funding formula should take into account the two mistakes committed by the developed countries in the course of seeking to allocate funds to the schools. Despite the apparent comprehensiveness of the funding formula, and barring the mistakes alluded to, research literature is full of empirical evidence about the failure of the funding formula to ensure adequate equitable allocation of both material and human resources to the historically disadvantaged children. The next part of this section looks at the use of performance indicators.

As far as the *cumbersome financial* system for school finance is concerned, policy analysts have written extensively on the importance of keeping policy formulation simple and clear in order to realize the set intentions. According to Fullan (1992:72), one of the key factors in the implementation process is the *characteristics* of the innovation or change project. And these include among other things: *need, clarity, complexity* and practicality of the policy. In view of the statements from Goertz and Odden (1999:156) the formulation of the funding formula was neither “clear” nor “practical”. This implies that it was complex for the practitioner at the cold face of the implementation to make implementation easier and manageable. This all means that the formula has to be simply.

2.3.3 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The term performance indicators can be defined from various perspectives. Johnstone (1986:3) explains the indicators as: “something giving a broad indication of the state of

the situation being investigated. This means that it does not indicate with a high degree of scientific exactness but it does indicate the general state of what is being examined”.

Firstly a closer investigation of Johnstone’s (1986) definition of an indicator reveals two main points. Reference to statistic as a word, reduced the education indicator to the process of quantification. The point is then about issues of value or quality. ‘Indicators do not tell everything about a system’. This suggests that cautious approach in utilizing information obtainable from the indicator system model is essential. For example, a statistical indicator about the percentage of learners’ absence at school levels does not give a whole picture like the causes of such absence or the context in which such learners find themselves. Perhaps they are traveling a long distance which can be ascribed to their coming late to school.

Performance indicators “have the potential to push the symbolic goal of equality (even equity) of outcome into the tangible reality of targets of achievement by making strong connections between policy goals, resource allocation, monitoring and evaluative procedures” (Riley, 1994:106). This implies that indicators can be used to monitor progress made in implementing a particular policy. In this regard performance indicators can be employed to monitor the implementation of the school finance policy at school level. In fact performance indicators had been used in the United Kingdom to monitor school effectiveness as a result of the implementation of the school finance policy. Related to this aspect, Archer (1995:14) has argued that there are quantitative and qualitative performance indicators that can be employed to measure the performance of the system. This suggests two types of indicators i.e., quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative indicators can be employed to estimate issues of efficiency, equity and quality.

Tuijnman and Postlethwaite (1994) have also argued that educational indicators are policy-relevant statistics designed to give us information about the condition, the stability or change, the functioning or the performance of an education system or any part or sub-system of the system. Implicit in this definition are the following:

- ◆ Education indicators can be used to tell us something about the policy being implemented.

- ◆ Indicators can tell us about the state of the organisation i.e., whether there is movement in the desired direction or not.
- ◆ Indicators can be employed to tell us about the performance of national, provincial, district and school systems, even the classroom.

In brief, a performance indicator can be defined as an item or piece of information collected at regular intervals to track the performance of the system as a result of the input injected on the system like material and human resources.

Having taken a careful review of the four or five definitions of performance indicators, it becomes useful and appropriate for me to select one definition for the purpose of this study. In this regard, Tuijnman and Postlethwaite's (1994) definition easily won my inclination. This definition does not only make clear reference to policy-relevant information, it also makes a direct reference to the performance or functioning of any part of the system or sub-system. This approach fits well with the scope of this inquiry which is system-oriented, because the inquiry examines the course and effects of the school finance policy at key levels of the education system.

Of fundamental importance to this inquiry is the view that the use of the performance indicators is primarily intended to assess the effectiveness of the resources deployed at school levels as a result of the school finance policy, which has equity as its overall objectives. In advancing the importance of the performance indicators as a strategic tool to evaluate progress made, Thomas *et al.* (1988:151) argued:

Assessment of performance is concerned with educational effectiveness and is inescapably linked to the outcomes of educational activity. Only through an evaluation of the extent to which an activity approximates to the achievement of its goals is it possible to judge how effective that activity has been. Effectiveness is the degree to which an organization approximates to achieving its goals. An activity is effective if it achieves its goals.

A proper and incisive analysis of the above gives a clear picture of how the developed countries like the United Kingdom employed performance indicators as strategy to check the effectiveness of the school finance policy at school level.

It is clear that both the financial resources and authority to employ the staff were devolved to the school governance with the intention to attain what is called “achievement of goals”. In this regard, sufficient evidence points to the use of school effectiveness as a theory of educational change that has informed the development of the performance indicators. Furthermore, educational effectiveness which, in this case study, seems to assume a direct link between the input indicators (e.g., learners, resources money, teachers) deployed and outcome indicators (which emerge from the resources deployed) which can in one way or another indicate whether the policy goals have been achieved or not. This assumption seems to reflect the serious shortcomings of the school effectiveness theory on the dynamics of educational change, and policy implementation in particular, because it assumes a direct relationship between policy and practice.

A critical examination of the evaluation of educational performance of the schools which are granted resources and authority raises critical issues which Smith (1993:46) called the “politics of performance”. In my view the politics of performance emerge as a result of the demands for accountability and power embedded at various levels of the education system. Before tackling the debate on the politics of performance relating to the judgment of school effectiveness, I have found it expedient and necessary to look at how various countries attempted to link performance indicators to strategic goals and strategic planning.

A careful review of the body of literature on the use of performance indicators in monitoring the pursuit of organizational goals and the effectiveness of the intervention strategy has revealed the employment of strategic planning as a common approach. Whether the use of a strategic planning is the best approach to advance policy goals in particular school finance policy or not is a matter that warrants attention.

In this regard, the use of performance indicators to judge the effectiveness of the school after the deployment of financial resources is examined through the employment of strategic planning.

Strategic planning is a process that provides direction and meaning to day-to-day activities. It examines an organization’s values, current status, and environment, and relates those factors

to the organization's desired future state, usually expressed in five to ten year time periods. The organization may be a programme, school district, or any other institution that wishes to control its future (Bailey, 1991; Young, 1997:34). A strategic plan can help improve performance and its process involves an orderly sequence of activities such as the following:

- ◆ Assessing the external environment
- ◆ Assessing internal capacity
- ◆ Developing a vision or mission
- ◆ Developing goals and objectives
- ◆ Implementing the plan
- ◆ Measuring progress and revising the plan.

A careful interrogation of the above within the framework of the 1988 Education Reform Act, especially the use of the performance indicators in evaluating the school level effects confirms the importance of strategic planning at organizational level. For example, before the goals of the policy can be assessed, there is an assumption that there must have been a plan that was jointly developed in the first place. This means that strategic planning can facilitate teamwork and collaboration because the staff have the opportunity to interact together on common issues, thus developing a shared vision.

This kind of approach can facilitate the effective implementation of the policy. Other positive benefits of the development of indicators on the progress made towards the achievement of certain goals can be enumerated as follows:

Some performance indicators (proxy measured) can be used to determine how far the implementation has helped in realizing the policy goals (for emphasis).

Notwithstanding the above-indicated scenario, the use of quantitative performance indicators within the school effectiveness theory and strategic planning has some limitations that can affect the equity-driven policies in one way or another. In this regard the literature indicates how some researchers have actually come to challenge both the school effectiveness theory and the use of the performance indicators and as well as the strategic planning.

Research on school effectiveness came about as a response or challenge to the work of Coleman (1966), which concluded that schooling could play only a *minimum* role in countering the influence of social class and family background. As a direct challenge to this assumption, educational researches subsequently conducted sought to disentangle or unpack the effects of what the school attempted to do from the influence of what the pupils brought from the socio-economic or family background into the classroom (Hargreaves *et al.*, 1998:1).

In the light of the above, conclusions drawn from several researchers in this field of school effectiveness were that “schools could make a difference and that it is possible to identify some factors which made that difference possible”. The most important factors which were identified are briefly discussed below.

By focusing on outcomes schools need to demonstrate to themselves and the wider community that they do make a difference to student outcomes (Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis, & Ecob, 1998:64). The emphasis should be on equity and quality. Regardless of socio-economic background, all students can achieve acceptable levels of achievement (Edmonds, 1979:79). This does not necessarily under-value the effects of the socio-economic background. An effective school entails the concept of progress. In effective schools “pupils progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake” (Mortimore, 1991:64). Here reference is made to the ‘value added’ to by the school in terms of boosting students’ achievement over and above what they bring in terms of background, prior learning and other related influences. In this regard high premium is placed on the actual performance of the school.

There should be consistency within the departments of a school. In reality within the schools we find that some departments are more effective for some students than others (Sammons, Thomas & Mortimore, 1996:146).

In addition to the identified factors the concept of effective school and its related key findings were critically and thoroughly examined by Jansen (1995:181-191) in a study that traces the origins and trajectory of Effective Schools Research (ESR) over three decades. This was a major study that went further than other conventional studies conducted. It attempted to do

four (4) important things (a) categorize and make sense of the voluminous literature on ESR, (b) Synthesize and extend the growing critique of ESR in the Anglo-American community, (c) assess the transnational impact of ESR in developing countries. This is of significant importance to this inquiry, and (d) outline an alternative approach to the study of schools which value schools and classroom level processes and interactions as they relate to student achievement.

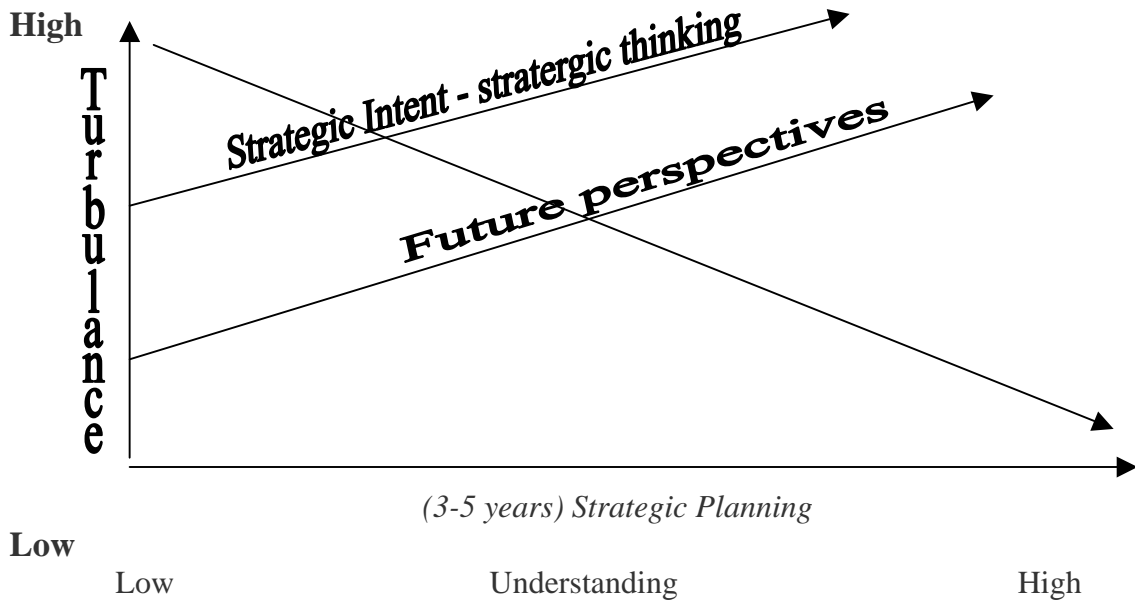
It is my considered view that Jansen's research did not only add weight to research approach to school effectiveness but also assisted in looking at school effectiveness from a different angle altogether. This is because the study applied a critical framework to the assessment of the effective school literature instead of the normative and rational approaches which tend to assume many things without necessarily looking at the other side of the coin.

In the present case study the employment of indicators can become useful in determining how far progress has been made in the implementation of the school finance policy, for instance, within the framework of the indicator system which puts emphasis on context, input, process and output indicators. Process indicators are essential since they relate directly to factors of performance. Some critical questions relating to the school finance policy can be formulated as follows: Can the implementation of the school finance policy ensure adequate resources at school?, Do both the staff and governance use the allocated resource effectively?, Does the school have effective maintenance plan in place?, Does the school have an effective Development Plan to ensure an integrated and coherent approach to learning and teaching?. The positive response to some of these critical questions can, to a larger extent, determine the success of school finance policy.

Despite the importance of the strategic planning in moving an organization from one level to the other by engendering common planning and stakeholder involvement, recent literature on strategic planning singles out the weakness of strategic planning as assuming an orderly environment in the organization. This implies that everything is orderly. I argue that this is seldom the case. In fact, Fullan (1999:62) argues that a vision and strategic planning come later because visions and planning blind reality. The strength of this argument is the emphasis on shared commitment before the development of any vision.

In the light of the above-indicated exposition, alternative arrangement to strategic planning in the form of an implementation framework is presented in Figure 2.1:

FIGURE 2.1 SHOWS AN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE



The implementation framework as presented in the diagram above argues for **three** types of planning for the effective execution of policy in order to have the desired effects. *First*, the future thinking (perspective) identifies longer term fundamental shifts or trends in the educational environment that might have effects on the organization. *Second*, strategic intent is created for less predictable areas of medium term planning (I think this key in managing change which is full of fluidity and uncertainty). *Third*, strategic planning is utilised for definable and predictable areas such as learners' enrolment (Davies & Ellison, 1999:17), thus suggesting order and stability.

The strength of the strategic intent lies in its capacity to handle unpredictable situation by engendering cohesion and common understanding among members of the organization. This also presupposes the presence of an effective visionary leadership at key levels of the organization. It is an alternative to strategic planning which may assume elements of predictability and order. Strategic intent is a process of coping with turbulence through a

direct, intuitive understanding emanating from leadership (Boiston, 1995:36). Strategic intent forces the individual to think logically and in an integrated manner. It requires the organization to be imaginative, inventive in seeking new ways to create capability and to achieve its goals (Davies & Ellison, 1999:54). Implicitly, it is better to build leadership in depth throughout the whole staff during a period of crises than engaging oneself in pursuing the implementation of linear and rational plan like a school development planning alone. In this connection, while the NNSSF policy places an emphasis on school development planning that requires a stable environment, it is critical to recall that schools as social organizations are subjected to rapid environmental changes. In dealing with such sudden developments the utility of both chaos and re-culturing theories may seem useful to guide the leadership.

Finally, given the limitations of school effectiveness theory in ensuring sustainable change processes, I think the issue of large scale educational reform should include a combination of theories or school of thoughts that can cohere together to create a particular ethos on set of behaviours which can ultimately become institutionalized. This argument finds support in Hopkins (2001:3), statement arguing for school improvement that singles out teaching and learning as the heartland of school improvement. But multiple approaches to policy implementation are quite essential.

2.4 THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE EQUITY IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

A critical assessment of the strategies employed to facilitate the implementation of the school finance policy in order to advance equity reveals lack of progress at many levels. In fact, empirical evidence gathered indicates the widening of the gaps between the “haves” and “have-nots” as far as equitable allocation of resources and comparable achievement are concerned. The widening of the gaps (despite the school finance policy) is evident in the following developments: lack of access to the best facilities (by children of the poor); escalating drop-out rates of the disadvantaged children; and poor learner achievement of children with disadvantaged background.

The above developments which can be viewed as policy failures seem to be well represented by Berne and Picus (1994:20) statement: “*Public education, long the vaunted avenues to equal*

opportunities in our societies is failing many children". It is clear from this statement that attempts to equalize educational opportunities of the historically marginalised children in the developed countries (through the set strategies) have not ensured the realization of the policy intentions. This turn of events requires a critical examination of the policy implementation problem so as to establish factors.

The literature is replete with cases which indicate how the developed countries like the United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia have failed to advance equity (school finance policy) through the set of strategies they developed. Considering the fact that the school finance policy and its related strategies are intended to reduce the gaps between the poorer and the rich people, it is very disappointing to discover that the actual implementation has indeed resulted in many negative developments against the poorer children, communities as well as the legislative intention of the policy itself. In grappling with the failure of the school finance policy at school levels, it is essential to note that both the national and the international literature contain examples of policy that have failed to be implemented as planned (Louis & Miles 1991:146; Miles & Huberman, 1984:64; McLaughling, 1998:648).

Some examples of such failures are discussed below:

In the first place, lack of progress made towards the advancement of equity in favour of the poor is found in the insufficient allocation of financial resources to schools. The strategies employed by such developed countries as the United Kingdom and United States of America led to the insufficient fund (money) allocated to the schools especially the historically disadvantaged ones. The question of insufficient funds as a result of the strategies used led to a clear realization of the difficulties of achieving educational equity. A survey of the scholarly review on the strategies employed has singled out the funding formula as part of the reasons for insufficient funds. This observation is underscored by the following case study on input equity in primary and secondary schools in New York, which revealed the complexity and shortcomings of the funding formula.

"New York" system is designed to improve the equity of the distribution of resources to children. The formula attempts to channel more resources to pupils in low wealth – low income by including measures of ability to pay based on income per pupil and full value per pupil in many of the state aid formulas. At the same time the formula

weights pupils according to different factors, such as grade level, handicapping conditions, and the need for compensatory education (Berne & Picus, 1994:7).

An analysis of the above paragraph reveals the state funding formula in keeping with the goals of equity. This expression finds confirmation in the state's attempts to channel more resources to pupils in low wealth / low income districts. The attempt to address the needs of the poor children is in keeping with the objectives of the funding formula which attempts to effect equity through resource distribution.

However, the application of the formula in the actual distribution of the funds causes the opposite i.e., *inequalities*, despite the fact that the high poverty urban areas qualify for more funds in real terms such schools or districts receive less. This is ascribed to the fact that the pupils' measure used in the formula is based on "*average daily attendance*", a measure that does not count all the pupils enrolled who legally need to be served by the education system. Many high poverty urban areas have lower attendance than other parts of the state. The utilization of the funding formula cannot go unchallenged because it appears not to be considering contextual factors. For instance *irregular* attendance of pupils from the disadvantaged background can be ascribed to a variety of socio-economic factors like *hunger* as a result of poverty. This condition forces me to say that there are inherent *tension* and weakness in the actual funding formula. In this case, the use of average attendance in the formula does work against equity since it creates inequities by disadvantaging high-poverty schools. Attendance of learners can be regarded as one of the issue which is context-oriented. There is sufficient evidence showing the shortcomings of employing Funding Formula as a mechanism to achieve equity.

Inadequate financial allocation to the Ministry of Education has also been singled out as another example of the failure of the policy, (Thompson *et al.*, 1994:46; Goertz & Odden, 1999:158; Lee, 1996:6; Ladd & Hansen, 1999:162; Jones, 2000:144). It is safe to state that funding formula intended to achieve the equitable distribution of resources especially among the poor communities did not make significant progress in developed contexts. In fact, there are pieces of evidence which suggest the widening of the gap between the poor and rich communities. The common factor which appears to be a contributory element to lack of success is the "*inadequacy*" of the financial allocation (Clune, 1994:46) and the tax limitation.

Factors outside the education departments but related to education provision also to the failures of the policy. I call this financial squeeze (inadequate funding). The situation arises because the financing of public education is growing more difficult due to the expansion of the enrolment at school level. Around the world, schools in the “public sector encounter the problem of inadequate funding to various degrees” (World Bank, 1995:46). However, it is important to note that inadequate funding does not just happen. One of the key factors identified is the high cost of education provision. While education revenues have remained fairly constant, there has been considerable resentment over the high cost of education and the subsequent need to increase tax (Thompson *et al.*, 1994:43).

Inadequacy of resources appears to be a dominant force in literature study. It is argued that if adequacy is the concept of a fair and just method of distributing resources among those children (Thompson *et al.*, 1994:57), the fair distribution of resources to needy children presupposes the availability of adequate resources. This means that the achievements of equity, from a resources point of view, is very critical for better improvement of students. This implies without adequate funding the achievement of equity is suspect.

It is one thing to make educational resources equitable and available at the learning sites. But quite a different thing to ensure an effective utilization thereof. Common sense dictates that the outcomes are more important than the inputs. Therefore equity utility is implied.

2.4.1 THE ELUSIVENESS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Easier said than done, in spite of the convergence of the powerful for change, schools appear remarkably untouched and exhibit many structures, policies and practices of years gone by maintaining some degree of stability or organizational equilibrium is fundamental unfortunately the quest for stability has become an excuse for mobility. Maintaining some degree of stability or organizational equilibrium is fundamental. Unfortunately the quest for stability has become an excuse for imobility (Fink & Stoll, 1998:298).

A critical examination of Fink and Stoll’s (1998) argument can mean that the more things change, the more they remain the same. It can further be deduced that giving practical

expression to policy decisions is more difficult and elusive than policy rhetoric or pronouncements. A summarized inferential position of Fink and Stoll (1998) statement implies that despite the imperatives for change and efforts mounted through the plethora of policies and strategies to effect fundamental changes, schools almost remain the same.

Since policies more often than not (and rationally speaking) are primarily developed to effect change or improvement at various identified levels, lack of change (improvement) has to be critically examined. This invariably leads to critical questions such as: How policies get implemented? Why are policies not implemented as planned? Why educational institutions, schools in particular do not fully change as a result of the new educational policies? What causes a discrepancy between policy and outcomes? In brief, what causes policy slippage or sometimes non-implementation? A close look at the literature leads one to what is called the “politics of policy implementation (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975:447).

In grappling with the question why implementation of policies had not produced the desired educational change as expected, the literature points to three key factors. *Foremost*, the realities of the implementation or the implementation itself was not taken seriously. This statement is strengthened by Fullan’s (2001:1) assertion that “indeed, the term implementation was not even used in the 1960’s not even contemplated as a problem”. This simply means that implementation was not taken as a problem to be given full attention. *Two*, the approach adopted to implement policies was more rational and inflexible and divorced from the contexts, thus assuming a one on one match between policy theory and practice. Sometimes one dimensional approach or theory was employed to inform the policy translation which Cunningham (1982:64) calls systematic planning for educational change as the one typifies the functionalist approach to planned change which puts emphasis on expert control and technical knowledge. *Lastly*, lack of attention to the human side of implementation is also cited a key factor in implementation. People as human beings will often behave differently and sometimes in an unexpected manner.

The failure of the implementation processes, is also documented by others scholars. For instance, Joseph (2001:23) has identified the history of policy developments as falling into *two* waves of reform, which I choose to call mirage of educational reforms since they seemed to

have quickly disappeared as they have appeared with no traces of significant changes or sustainable one.

The *first wave* of educational reform (policy) aimed at ‘inputs’ such as high standards for teachers, funds for schools, curricula specifications and more course requirements for children attending schools can be viewed as control-oriented. In brief, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the “inputs” movement for reform was not only top-down but was also external to the school system. It aimed at closing the gap between children of the poor and the rich from the point of view of resources. This implies that equity was viewed as a target to be addressed. This point is vividly sent home by the following excerpt:

Reform by fiat or prescription is the essence of top-down mandates, and it is probably the most common means which change is initiated in the schools. One reason for the popularity is it's effectiveness in giving the illusion of responsiveness to calls for systemic change (Kinsler & Gamble, 2001:135).

Contextualizing the above within the framework of failed implementation at school level, it is essential to find out why this approach is preferred. For instance, it makes sense why top officials or politicians prefer this kind of approach to local issues. Perhaps their direct response from the top can be seen as genuine intervention and responsiveness to local issues, thus giving them sufficient political cloud and leverage over and above the locals. However, proper analysis of top-down mandates and actions more often than not become “political symbolism” (Jansen, 2002:274) because schools are loosely coupled to the system and improvement just like change is a process not an event. This simply means that top-down mandates have failed to change schools fundamentally due to the poor “buy-in-process from the teaching staff.

The second wave (mirage) of educational reform underpinned by policy development is enumerated as “bottom-up” reform which sought to restructure the governance of schools with the intention of making schools flexible, effective and change oriented. According to Elmore, (1991:77) and Murphy (1991:12), the restructuring movement put a lot of emphasis on school-based management, enhanced roles for principals and teachers and others. This implies that this wave of reform is based on democratic principles, which seek to give people at the implementation stage a “voice” in the decision-making process.

2.5 STRATEGIES TO PURSUE EQUITY: LESSONS LEARNT

Notwithstanding the above picture, which demonstrates how the developed countries became less successful in their attempts to realize educational equity, it is of crucial importance to state that recent literature survey indicates that significant progress was registered towards the achievement of equity only when fundamental changes were effected both to the funding formula and the school finance policy itself.

Such excellence can be seen in pockets of success in developed countries like the United States of America. The reasons for the success are many and varied. The following factors are central to the success of efforts to achieve equity:

- ◆ Adequate funding; a comprehensive funding formula; effective organization and use of resource; and capacity to implement (Berne & Picus, 1994:36; Thompson *et al.*, 1994:56; Miles, 1998:9; Knight, 1994:46).

This means that in trying to achieve equity through the financing instruments, careful attention should be paid to key factors that will enhance equity. A case study in the United States of America highlights the success of the equity programme. In a case study on the review and utility of the state funding formula on equity, Adams and White (1997:165) examined equity consequences of school financial policy changes in Kentucky Educational District. Their findings indicate that the educational district experienced a *marked* improvement in equity as a result of school finance reform, including a narrow dispersion of pupil's revenue and greater fiscal neutrality.

According to the findings, equity improvements resulted from policy changes that effectively addressed disequalising attributes of the pre-reformed state funding formula. But Adams and White (1997:72) concluded that “*manipulating the funding formula further could produce additional gains in system equity but at a substantial cost*”. This means the budget has to be increased in order to address the improvement better.

Further inferences can be drawn from the conclusion of the above given case study. For instance, it can be argued that the achievement of equity may rest on the changes done on the actual funding formula. It may also mean that the application of the funding formula has to take into account the context of the school. In other words, the implementation of the formula should avoid a practice of a *one size fits all* in favour of a varied intervention that is systemic and integrated.

In the light of the above-given scenario, the success of the Kentucky case and the failure of procedural equity to achieve equalization of the resources in general, it is vital to look at other factors or approaches to policy implementation. Guskey (1989:438) share some light, arguing that individual reform components, although valuable in their own right and perhaps effective, when implemented in isolation can yield unintended negative consequences. But when put together as part of a comprehensive reform “plan” results may be positive. In the light of this statement, it is critical to approach equity-driven policies coherently in order to enhance chances of success.

2.6 HOW TO TACKLE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS: AN INTELLECTUAL EXPOSE

Research on the implementation of policy indicates that state bureaucrats and local policy implementers often undermine or change the legislative intention of policy (Dyer, 1999:46). This kind of behaviour can cause a discrepancy between policy and practice, thus leading to policy slippage or non-implementation.

There are adequate studies on successful implementation of policies. For example when Arizona (in the United States of America) policy-makers approve the Charter School policy, “*they overcame this persistent implementation phenomena. In fact, they succeeded in preserving the legislative intention by attending to four significant features of policy implementation i.e., communication, financial resources, implementers’ attitude and bureaucratic structures*” (Garn, 1999:8). A proper investigation of this success story clearly indicates that there can be solutions to the policy implementation problem.

The key question remains, what was (is) wrong with the implementation process of policies that in one way or the other led to policy failure. The response to this vexing question can be properly located in the excerpt below which attempts to single out the approach used to implement policy as one of the factors that contributed to poor implementation or unintended consequences.

We have been fighting an uphill battle. For the past thirty years we have been trying to up the ante in getting the latest innovations and policies into place. We started naively in the 1960s pouring scads of money into large scale national curriculum efforts, open plan for schools, individualized instruction; and the like. It was assumed, but not planned for; that something was bound to come of it. We have never really recovered from the profound disappointment experienced when or expectations turned out to be so far removed from the realities of the implementation (Fullan, 2001:1).

A deeper and critical interrogation of the above quote paints a clear picture about the failure of the implementation as well as the wrong approach used. It shows that policy implementation is viewed not only as complex but also illusive to realize in practice. This also suggests that the availability of money and national curriculum as inputs cannot be regarded as panacea to the implementation problem let alone quality education.

On the basis of the past failed reforms, it is clear that the solution lies in tackling the realities of policy implementation. This, in one way or other suggests a better approach, a new mind-set or a change of paradigm especially for large-scale educational reform like the school finance policy. The importance of giving recognition to the implementation as a phenomenon that requires sufficient attention cannot be taken lightly. The literature on educational change and policy implementation shows a somehow strange and unusual position of dealing with the realities of policy implementation. This strange and critical position is found in the following statement:

It is no exaggeration to say that dealing with change is endemic to post-modernism society... To manage change, the answer does not lie in designing better reform strategy. No amount of sophistication in strategizing for particular innovation or policies will ever work. It is simply unrealistic to expect that introducing reforms one by one, even major ones in a situation which is basically not organized to engage in change would do anything but give a reform a bad name (Fullan, 1999:17).

In essence, statement suggests the importance of a flexible and intellectual approach to policy implementation. The weight of this argument is that educational change requires a paradigm shift beyond modernity i.e., post modernism approach which gives room to critical appraisal of events and holistic evaluation. This can be viewed as a total departure from the linear approach to policy implementation and management of change which is stressed by the rational theory. Scholars such as Malen (1997:421) call this multiple perspectives approach to public policy which gives recognition to the mysteries of social problems and the intricacies of public policy as well as the complexity of human behaviour. For the purpose of this inquiry, I have chosen the following as potential solutions to adequate implementation:

- ◆ Systemic school change approach
- ◆ A theoretical perspective on policy implementation
- ◆ Flexible approach
- ◆ An insight in to the politics of policy implementation.

The above list of selected approaches or solutions is not exhaustive enough. However, time and space do not allow me to list almost everything as a possible solution to the policy implementation problem.

2.6.1 SYSTEMIC SCHOOL CHANGE

Many attempts to reform the education system especially, the school have led to tinkering, add-on-programmes, marginal improvements and even inequality. A systemic reform is proposed here as an alternative.

The choice of the systemic school change approach to the policy implementation problem in this inquiry is informed by several factors: *Firstly*, this kind of an approach gives both the accountability measures and developmental issues the necessary recognition and values. *Secondly*, the fact that this kind of an approach is viewed more as a philosophy than a prescription to handle change contributed to its selection. This is because systemic school change puts a lot of emphasis on advocating, reflecting, rethinking and restructuring (James, 1994:8). *Thirdly*, there is no conclusive empirical evidence that suggests that the approach

failed dismally where it was used to effect change at organizational level. Although not impressive, initial application of the approach indicates some success.

James (1994:2) argues that systemic reform permeates almost every aspect of schooling. It calls for education to be reconceptualised from the ground-up, beginning with the nature of teaching and learning, educational relationship and school-community relationship. This argument calls for systemic approach to educational equity issues that can be combined to raise learners' performance. Student learning is a hallmark of the systemic reform movement (Hirth, 1996:64). Systemic approach is seen as the appropriate approach of effecting large-scale reform. It calls for equity in the classroom, which presupposes the presence of quality teachers, resources and capacity to perform.

It can be argued that finding effective mechanisms of increasing equitable distribution of resources that may contribute to student improved academic performance requires proposed solutions be critically evaluated according to how they individually and collectively interact with the broad goals of the education system (school) i.e., provision of quality education. Only then is it possible to evaluate the overall effects of a particular policy. This research study argues for a systemic and coherent approach to investigate the school level effects of the implementation of the school finance equity, taking special interests on the context and processes so as to evaluate the effects well.

The decision to employ the systemic approach is also based on the results of the survey conducted sometimes ago in developed (the United Kingdom) and developing (India) countries (Dyer, 1997:56; Elmore, 1980:36). In a study of the co-coordinated implementation of equity policy so as to have clear outcomes, Hirth (1996:36) concluded that "*there is an unquestionable connection between systemic reform, equity and school finance that requires the attention of educators and policymakers at all levels of government.*" This study investigates this connection with the view of finding co-ordination, and coherence of layers of the education system and how the funding policy travels from the national level to the actual implementation stage i.e., the school. In this regard backward mapping is used.

In recognizing the importance of a systemic approach to policy implementation, learning from the recent court cases in favour of the aggrieved parents in developed countries is essential. Ladd *et al.* (1996:149) observed that “*since 1989, courts are more willing to define the remedies and make concrete requirements for a constitutional remedy than they were in the 1970s*” These courts-mandated requirements for change often address finance, curriculum, inputs and students outcomes, and made it clear what qualifies as a “through and efficient” education. The linkage of finance to curriculum matters demonstrates a total view to education provision which is in concert with systemic education reform and with the working definition employed in this case study. This suggests therefore that the implementation of equity policy should also consider other policies; in particular, curriculum, educational leadership and teacher effectiveness as key variables.

The holistic approach to education reform by the courts of law should be seen as a systemic strategy towards creating equal opportunities for all children. The point is brought home more vividly by James (1994:5) in arguing that systemic reform requires change on many levels, but change at the school site is often deemed the most important. However, school-level changes are the most difficult to achieve because they influence what and how subjects are taught as well as how progress is measured and evaluated. The success or failure of reform initiative can be determined at this point. This implies that money from the equity driven policy (NNSSF) should be translated into curriculum improvement and teacher development.

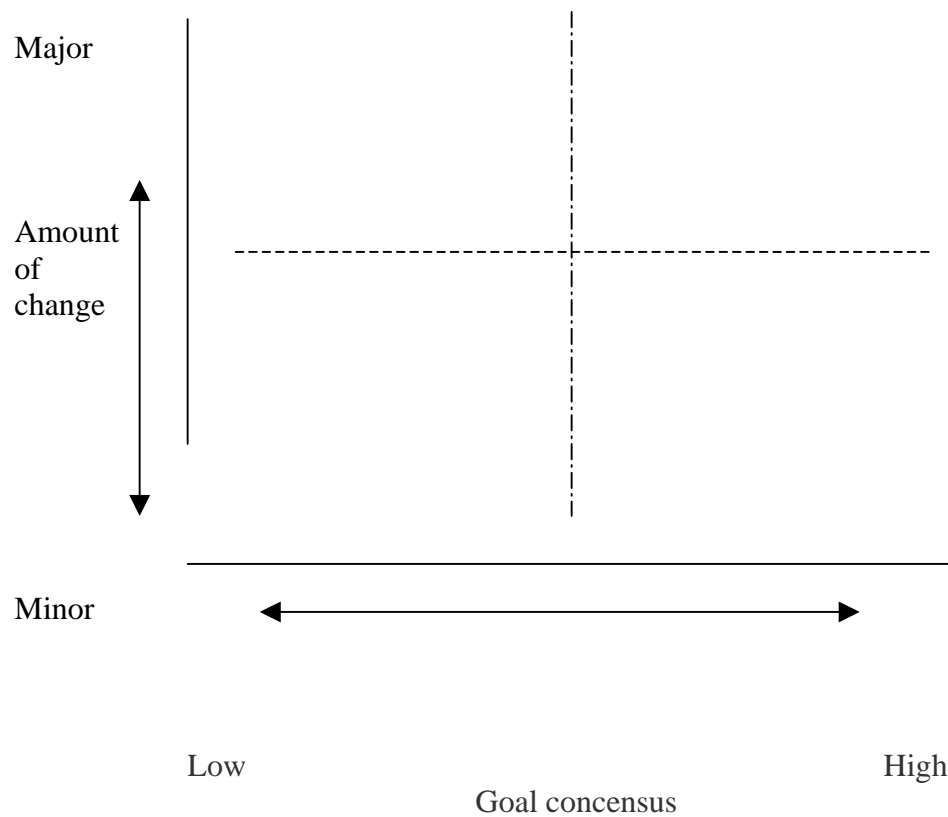
Concerns for the lack of success both in the equitable distribution of resources to needy schools and the continued poor performance of learners have empowered or justified me to argue for a systemic and integrated approach to the implementation of equity policy. This is necessary even if there is little to distribute because the costs of employing quality teachers, have a direct impact on the non-personnel budget that is very central to the NNSSF policy. Given the existing inequalities between schools and the availability of inadequate resources for redress, systemic factors that may contribute to poorer spending, unequal education outcomes of learners in the needy provinces like North West, are worth an examination.

2.6.2 A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Both the national and international investigations on effective policy implementation appear to have advanced the field on policy implementation significantly. But their significant contributions to the politics of policy implementation appeared to have been scaled down by the absence of a theoretical perspective to policy implementation, success or failures. In this part of the section I have chosen a theoretical perspective as one of the mechanisms or model that can go a long way in addressing the policy implementation problem. This approach is informed by the assertion that says “unlike frameworks that organize inquiry, but they cannot in and of themselves provide explanations for, or predictions of behaviour and outcome, theories and models can (Sabatier, 1996:146). This statement is very useful and appropriate to this inquiry because of its distance in offering explanations to the causes or factors, which might shed light on the discrepancy between policy intentions and outcomes, in this case school finance policy.

In the light of the above-stated exposition, I draw on both Van Meter and Van Horn (1975:476) and Fullan’s (1999:126) theoretical perspectives and as well as the theories and principles of change management for policy implementation respectively. In their theoretical perspective for policy implementation, Van Meter and Van Horn (1975:458) give a focused attention to studies on organizational change and control in developing an implementation framework. In this regard, they argue that policies are classified according to two distinguishing characteristics, namely (a) the amount of change involved and b) the extent to which there is goal consensus between the participants in the implementation process. Their model is clearly presented below in Figure 2.2.

FIGURE 2.2: DIMENSION OF POLICY AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION



The literature also indicates that the preponderance of policies is found in the “major change/low consensus” and “minor change/high consensus” categories. The relevance of Figure 2.2. i.e., its dimensions to this inquiry, is that the success of the equity-oriented policies depends on major change/high consensus. But this appears very difficult to achieve given the contested nature of policy, equity policy in particular.

The emphasis (by the model) on the importance of seeking high consensus in the implementation of large-scale change is very useful for the effective implementation of policies. Implicit in this statement is that attention needs to be paid to the amount of change required so as to gauge the degree of consensus necessary. This can go a long way in ensuring the effective implementation of key policies at organizational level.

Van Meter & Van Horn's (1975) model to policy implementation finds sufficient support from the theories and principles of change management. According to Change Management Learning Centre (CMLC, 2003:21) change can be broken-down into two types, type 1 – incremental change and type 2 – radical change. Since school finance policy seeks to transform the school system as a whole I classify it under incremental change. However, to a larger extent, its success or failure depends on the kind of the approach that is adopted (i.e., incremental or radical) by policy implementers. This means that if a wrong approach is employed for a particular policy the likelihood of achieving positive results may be limited.

While the adoption of the Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) is very useful in advancing the effective implementation of policy, it is critical to state that it is not perfect. Its sole use for implementation may not guarantee complete success. The major criticism here is that the model appears to be assuming too much in as far as the dichotomy between major change and high consensus is concerned. The point here is that the presence of high consensus/major change does not automatically lead to the successful implementation of policy. In this regard, the said model can be strengthened by the simultaneous employment of additional models such as the one illustrated in Annexure G.

Therefore, one has to look at various sources of revenues to find a handle on the challenge of adequate funding an aspect very central to the achievement of equity. This implies that Annexure G is essential to determine which government system can act individually or collectively to solve the problem of financial inadequacy. In terms of Annexure G, structures such as Courts of Law, State Legislature or National Government have the potential of tackling the issue of financial inadequacy.

As clearly stated elsewhere in this inquiry especially in the United States of America, collective efforts of various bodies such as professional, business and political organs led to the comprehensive review of the school funding formula. The important thing is that the review was able to address the issue of financial inadequacy and subsequent progress on the achievement of equity. However, this does not necessarily mean that the same thing can happen exactly in the same manner in South Africa given the different contexts. But the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach cannot be over-emphasized.

2.6.3 FLEXIBLE APPROACHES TO POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Flexibility seems to be well anchored in the politics of management of educational change. Fullan (1999:71) points to factors affecting implementation as follows: Effective approaches to managing change call for combining and balancing factors that do not apparently go together e.g., complexity, looseness/tightness, strong leadership participation (or simultaneous bottom-up/top-downness), fidelity/adaptivity, and evaluation.

Implicitly, no single approach may be sufficient to effectively handle the implementation process, hence a combination of several factors. In paying particular attention to a host of factors, it is critical to determine which ones do not support each other. Most importantly a holistic or system approach to a set of variables becomes essential. However, in pursuing this line of action it is vital not to see factors or variables in isolation to each other. This is informed by the argument that a combination of factors interact to determine the success or failure of a project or policy. Therefore a holistic approach to policy implementation is very essential due to the fact that educational change itself is a dynamic process. Elmore (1978:129) once argues that no single model captures the full complexity of the implementation process. This understanding is very essential to the success of policy implementation.

2.6.4 THE POLITICS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

In dealing with change and policy implementation, the knowledge base of the politics of policy implementation cannot be over-emphasized. Some policies fail simply because of attitudinal problems or resistance of the policy implementation.

An effective implementation of policy depends, to a larger extent, on the attention paid to its various variables. This suggests that a lot of intellectual effort has to be spent on the so-called “black-box” implementation.

Getting into grips with the politics of policy implementation may also suggest paying sufficient attention to the micro-politics of educational change, policy development as well as

policy implementation. This approach may empower one to determine the mismatch between policies adopted (espoused) and the services actually delivered (policy in action). Dunsire (1978:1) in his seminal report on the implementation theory and bureaucracy argues that a policy in any field is only good as its implementation process.

In stretching the politics of policy implementation further, research contains evidence of the failures of top-down directed policies resulting from incorrect approaches adopted to handle policy implementers. In this regard, Dolbeare and Hammond (1971:149) argue that very little may really be decided by words or statutes. What will happen to who is essential to a full understanding of politics. Implicit in this argument is that policy implementers or practitioners also have the power to resist or ignore policy directives from the top management. In this regard, the solution does not lie in enforcing compliance and obedience, but in development, commitment and a sense of ownership among the key policy implementers. This state of affairs finds critical support in McLaughlin's (1998:374) powerful statement that "*policy does not mandate what matters.*" What matters most is confined to the nature, amount and pace of change at school level which is a product of local factors that are largely beyond the control of higher-level policy-makers.

SECTION THREE

2.7 A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE EQUITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's possibilities to fully achieve true democracy, especially in education, seems remote unless fundamental issues such as the capacity to implement policies effectively and adequate resourcing are attended to. This argument is supported by literature that captures the sad legacy of the country in most telling and vivid terms. The post-apartheid education in South Africa has emerged out of one of worst systems of inequalities and disparities in the world. As a country it will bear the scars of this legacy for a long time to come (Odora Hoppers, 2000:14). This appears to have permeated almost every layer of the education system i.e., National Department down to the school level.

The new education system, just like in some developing countries like Zimbabwe and Costa-Rica, is based on the constitutional rights to equity and quality principles well entrenched in the Bill of Rights. Rights are important because of the necessity to create equal educational opportunities for all. Therefore, the most important cornerstones of the new school finance policy i.e., National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) have come to be associated with ensuring the equitable distribution of scarce financial resources in order to realize quality education. This inquiry examines the implementation of this equity-driven policy within the framework of educational decentralization and self-managing (Section 21) schools.

In pursuit of the goal of ensuring the equitable distribution of scarce resource, the National Ministry of Education anchored its commitment through the following statement:

To realize the right to basic education, the state must thus do all that is reasonable to ensure that everyone receives basic education. For example, the state must see to it that enough schools are built and maintained, teachers are trained and paid, books and other materials for the schools are purchased and that good standards of education are maintained. The state must thus make enough money available for all this to take place (DoE, 1997:5).

However, an incisive and critical analysis of the excerpt reveals some serious shortcomings and rational assumptions above the implementation of the NNSSF. For instance, the statement that says “*the state must thus make enough money available for all this to take place*” assumes too much about the capacity of the state to provide and implement. It provokes critical and fundamental questions that can either determine the realization of equity or not.

The argument I am developing here is that the capacity of the country to equitably finance the provision of quality education is not only necessary but also of material importance. This is because equity-driven policies are resource-hungry. By implication such policies must be adequately financed in order to contribute to the chances of successful implementation. Therefore, given the fact that the needs will always surpass the resources, i.e., economically speaking, it stands to reason that the feasible implementation of the NNSSF policy in education should be located in a much broader perspective given the pressing needs facing the country. In this sense the next part of this chapter attempts content analysis of the NNSSF policy to make room for proper and broader investigation of the effects of the policy at school level.

2.8 LOCATING SCHOOL FINANCE POLICY IN A MACRO-ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

The issue of funding and free education is probably the most difficult one for the new government to come to terms with, largely because of the difficulty in reconciling the aims of equity and Improved Quality Education within the constraints of state funding (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:157). Indeed the democratic government finds itself in a pre-carious position because it can neither afford to abdicate its obligation to equity nor openly decide to provide education of inferior quality to its citizens since this has negative implications for the economy. But the *inadequacy of the state* financial resource is a *reality that* cannot be ignored at all.

Since inadequacy of finance is a known factor in government, it is appropriate to go beyond inadequacy as a factor and attempt to identify other factors which contribute to the financial squeeze, in a way making the environment for equity realization less conducive. The pursuit

of this line of action, as a matter of fact, links education to other sectors. Education policies are affected by macro-economic policies primarily through budgetary constraints set at the macro-economic level (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:53). In this regard a link between education policy and macro-economic policy(cies) is implied. This suggests that the processes for developing and implementing both policies have to be co-ordinated and re-aligned. It is therefore assumed that a co-ordinated effort will highlight the real source of financial constraints in government. Thus duplication and wastage may be avoided.

The realignment and co-ordination of both the education and economic policies bring to focus the intentions of a policy like the NNSSF policy and the states' strategies for economic growth. The argument is that an equity driven policy like NNSSF will have a fair chance of success in a growing economy. The account for this expression is that the National Norms and Standard For School Funding (NNSSF) policy embraces some of the key objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) policy, which argued for an increase in social expenditure. In essence the RDP tried to promote equity, eradicate poverty and promote the reconstruction and development by increasing expenditure (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:62). Implicit in this statement is that the RDP can succeed in an expansionary fiscal policy environment not financial austerity.

In assessing the causes of financial inadequacy that may serve as obstacles to the successful implementation of the NNSSF policy in the school system, it is essential to note that the policy is being implemented during an economic period that employs Growth Employment & Redistribution (GEAR) and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) as strategies for economic growth. In this regard, careful examination reveals that the present policy environment militates against the desired objectives of the equity-driven policies, which call for increased expenditure. Looking at the feasibility of implementing this social policy with success, there seems to be little hope. Policies like school funding, RDP and curriculum 2005 demand huge investment from the state but this is not forthcoming. What seems clear is argued that the policies were formulated during the period of political symbolism, that is, they were not meant for adequate implementation (Sayed & Jansen, 2001:271). Resources set aside appeared insufficient.

Implicitly, there is tension between the objectives of GEAR as a macro-economic policy and those of the NNSSF policy as instrument towards equity realization. Taking into account that GEAR argues for fiscal discipline and less expenditure, one has to acknowledge its contribution to the reduction of the national debt and the slight economic growth. However its implementation has led to the decline in the education budget (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:56). Considering our obligation for social redress and the importance of providing quality education, the decline in the budget can seriously impede the achievement of equity both from the viewpoints of resource allocation and educational outcomes. In this regard, it seems clear that GEAR as a macro-economic strategy is one of the sources of inadequate funding for educational programme. The message is vividly sent home by fierce resistance against the GEAR strategy by ANC alliance partner Congress of South African Trade Union citing the escalating job losses as the direct results of GEAR strategy (*Sowetan*, 6 Sept. 2001:24).

In tracing the effects of GEAR on the financing of schools, it is also appropriate to note that equity-driven policies like NNSSF are implemented within the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which came into “application in the 1998/99 budget cycle (DOF, 1999:46). While the MTEF has some laudable advantages in the budget process like transparency, future spending plus clarity on priorities, international literature analysis reveals some difficulties with a MTEF revenue plan. Integrated plans (of MTEF) are not obviously feasible in the classic federations such as Australia, Canada, India and the United States in view of the specific constitutional rights of the provinces and states for raising revenue and incurring expenditure (World Bank, 1998:4). The truth is that MTEF can be better applied in Unitary States. In South Africa the successful implementation of the medium term expenditure framework appears to be suspect. This is due to the fact that the provinces have strong constitutional autonomy in their budget expenditure block grants. The provincial allocation of the block grants may depend more on political trade-offs and “personal chemistry” between politicians than on sectoral needs (Anderson, 1999:127). For example, sufficient evidence exists that the North West Education Department is not only under-funded but its allocation has actually gone down from 41% to 34% of the provincial budget (NWED, 2000:16).

The MTEF is even more decentralized than GEAR simply because its processes are predetermined for the next three years (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:156). This suggests that the lack of flexibility of the MTEF may not allow an opportunity for dealing with unforeseen and unpredictable budget needs. Lastly, heavy emphasis on fiscal discipline as the primary objective of the medium term expenditure framework seems not to allow a needs driven approach which forms the central goal of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding. In this regard, it is safe to say that the current macro-economic policy of the state militates against the realization of equity programmes. The policies work towards the process of diminishing resource (fiscal) and reducing state intervention in ensuring equity through the decentralization process.

The process of decentralizing expenditure to the provinces (even to the schools) displaces the state from the center-stage of national intervention, in a way making provincial departments and schools accountable for the achievement of equity. This does not augur well for the enhancement of equity between and among provinces, since the role of the national agency to account is diminished.

In examining the challenge of funding schools adequately within the macro-economic policy, the main sources of inadequate funding are determined. The determination of those factors does not make the NNSSF a bad policy. This suggests that sufficient energies and intellectual capacity must be sought to make the objectives of the policy realizable i.e., quality educational outcomes. There is the need to look at the effective use of the quantitative inputs like the size of the budget, the number of educators, and books to quality enhancement. The fact of the matter is that quantitative expansion of the budget happened over the years without an increase in the students' educational outcomes. In a sense the realization of equity goals should not only be viewed from resource allocation alone but also, effective utilization of such resources critical. In this regard effective and integrated implementation becomes critical especially in post modernism.

2.9 THE STRATEGIES ADOPTED TO FACILITATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NNSF POLICY

The literature review indicates that the DoE adopted the implementation strategies for the NNSF policy almost similar to the ones employed in the developed countries like the United States of America and United Kingdom. These can be enumerated as follows:

- i) Funding formula (non-personnel budget),
- ii) Financial delegation to the school governance,
- iii) Open enrollment (admission) of learners,
- iv) The option of the schools to opt out,
- v) The latitude to charge school fees and,
- vi) The fee exemption of the needy.

The adoption of almost similar strategies like the funding formula to me is not only puzzling, but also interesting in a number of instances given the transitional period of South Africa. Firstly, it is reported that

prior to the consolidation of provinces as autonomous governments in the 1996 Constitution, the National Education Ministry, in conjunction with the Education Finance Committee, could exercise direct influence on budgetary allocations and redress in provincial education departments. This meant that between 1995/96 and 1996/97, the National Ministry of Education was able to redistribute funds from the education budgets of relatively better off provinces such as Gauteng and the Western Cape to poorer ones such as Limpopo (Northern Province) and the Eastern Cape (Wildeman, 2000a:8).

The force and effects of the above-indicated development is that the central role of the National Department in budgetary decisions was contributing to inter-provincial equity. Why was such a successful strategy abandoned? Notwithstanding the autonomy of the provinces due to the final constitution, the key to this argument is whether the provincial autonomy is more important than the attainment of equity. The significant question to this inquiry is what informed the educational decentralization within the framework of self-managing schools. The literature seems to single out centralization as one of the factors that contributed to progress made towards the achievement of equity (Naidoo, 1999:46).

Secondly, the choice of a “complex” and “cumbersome” funding formula by the DoE makes interesting reading, because in the developed countries literature suggests that its use “did not result in the adequate equitable funding to schools (Clune, 1996:146), hence it’s review. It is my considered view that the National Department of Education should have picked up relevant and appropriate experience elsewhere and developed a simpler funding formula for the financial allocation to the needy schools. The argument for simplicity finds support in Lewin and Cailods’s (2001:21) statement that the “*most forward way to finance schools was simply to count the students in the schools or districts they are attending and use that in the regular financing mechanisms.*”

Notwithstanding the powerful argument above for a simple funding formula in the pursuit of equitable distribution of resources, I do believe that the adoption of almost similar strategies to implement the NNSSF policy can still be explained from another perspective. For instance, the pace of developments since 1994, the use of overseas consultant in the name of Dr L. Crouch (DoE, 1999b:2) in the actual formulation of the school funding policy, plus the necessity to democratise the governance of education can be cited as factors. Most importantly the fact that South Africa became independent at the time when some developed and developing countries had seen the necessity to adopt a comprehensive and complex funding formula can also be cited as one of the contributory factors. According to Lewin and Cailods (2001) countries such as Sri Lanka, Malawi and Costa-Rica adopted a complex funding formula in their very recent efforts to achieve equity.

Having argued about the importance of using a simple funding formula, it becomes necessary to look of the extent to which South Africa has moved towards the achievement of equity in the school systems. In this connection the next part of this section deals directly with what I consider contributory factors to the lack of progress made in the attainment of equity.

2.10 IS EQUITY BEING ACHIEVED WHERE IT MATTERS MOST?

It is too early to conclusively prove the failure or success of attempts to achieve equity in the school system, since no longitudinal studies have yet been independently conducted to trace

the course and effects of a distribute policy (School Finance Policy) within and through the education system. Nevertheless comprehensive analysis of uncoordinated pieces of surveys, fiscal analysis, academic assessment (by Wits Education Policy Unit), public comments on both the print and electronic media points to little progress made on the realization of equity. In this regard, given the fact that the implementation of the school finance policy, i.e., NNSSF seeks to overhaul of the school system, i.e., from governance and management up to the improvement of the curriculum delivery at classroom level. It is logical to argue that the success or failure of the NNSSF policy on the attainment of equity can be looked at from different perspectives. However, in this inquiry the success or failure of the policy is restricted to how the policy was implemented in the education system and with what effects at school level.

In the light of the above-mentioned scenario, through the insight gained from international studies on the policy implementation problem, a volume of national and provincial studies consulted (Luiz *et al.* 2002:68; DoE, 2003:3) on how the NNSSF policy in the South African context was approached or implemented enumerate key issues which can be ascribed as the literature reveals the contributory factors to the policy failures or lack of movement towards the achievement of equity in particular as follows:

- ◆ The carry-through effects of an inadequate budget
- ◆ Lack of capacity across the education system.

The collective or single impact of these factors resulted in either little policy effects at school level or an increase in the inequality gaps between the poor and the rich people. The failure of the NNSSF policy is dramatically signified by the following factors: high school fees, public protests by Congress of South African Student¹² (COSAS) and Pan African Student Organisation¹³ (PASO) against the charge of school fees and inadequate allocation of the non-personnel funds to the provinces (NWED, 2001:2; NWED 2002:16; *Sowetan*, June 2000).

¹² COSAS is the Student Organisation close to the A.N.C.

¹³ PASO is also the Student Organisation close to the P.A.C. Both the A.N.C. and P.A.C. are former liberation movements.

These factors in one way or the other, compelled the National Minister of Education, Prof Kader Asmal, to institute what has come to be known as a review of the financing, resourcing and costs of education in public schools (DoE, 2003:4).

Of relevance to this inquiry is the fact that the Ministerial review (DoE, 2003:14) report goes further to support the prevalence of the above-indicated factors in what can be viewed as an “honest” appraisal but at a more superficial level. Therefore the force and effect of the failure of the NNSSF policy is dramatically supported by the following statement:

I commissioned this review (NNSSF) because of my concern at the conditions of degradation at schools, persistent backlogs in infrastructure development and maintenance, inadequate allocations to some schools for teaching and learning. In addition, my colleagues (i.e., provincial members of the executive council) are concerned at the increasing cost of education related to uniforms, textbooks, transport and other related educational materials. It has also become clear that the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms is not a reality for a large number of our people (DoE, 2003:2).

A deeper and critical analysis of the above text indicates how far the Department has moved towards the achievement of equity through the use of various instruments like the NNSSF policy. Mention of various related factors such as transportation, buildings, and inadequate allocation to schools can be interpreted as showing a broader understanding of equity as a concept. However, the late realization pertaining to the understanding that people are not enjoying all the rights and freedoms” as dictated by the Constitution can be explained from many angles such as lack of monitoring and evaluation system on the part of the Department of Education. In fact the issues of infrastructure should have been long dealt with before the implementation of the NNSSF Policy. This I call the leveling of the playing field.

2.11 THE CARRY-THROUGH EFFECTS OF AN INADEQUATE BUDGET

Luiz *et al.* (2002:277) in their longitudinal study title: *Uneducating South Africa*, which mainly employed a variety of inputs and outputs education data collected over a period of time (1910-1993) make a discomfoting argument thus:

The vast majority of South Africa’s population has been, and continues to be subjected to a system with high pupil-teacher ratios, with poorly qualified teachers which is poorly funded and which as a consequence in terms of pass rates which one

might wish for. Once we weight the output measure provided by the pass-rate by the proportion of pupils sitting mathematics exams, even the very best sector of the South African schooling system (that formerly designated as “white”) performs rather poorly The data indicate that from an educational perspective South Africa followed a modernisation trajectory that, although it drew even larger numbers of pupils into the schooling system was partial, distorted and fundamentally dysfunctional.

The argument above points to the continuities of the inequalities in the education system even in the new dispensation. It stands to reason therefore, that a lot of investment and efforts have to be deployed if there is any hope of bridging the gap between the historically disadvantaged and advantaged ones. The point I am developing is that adequate resources (in particular finance) and financial discipline as well as intellectual capacity, are critical to the success of the education system and the NNSSF policy. However, a point needs to be made that equity is more than mere funding of school.

Despite denial by government about the continuity of the previous imbalances, there is further evidence that supports Luiz *et al.* (2002) argument. For instance, Terreblanche (2002:477) in his major study on “*A history of inequality in South Africa (1652-2002)*” argues further

While this country’s transition to democracy is a significant development, a parallel socio-economic transformation has not yet taken place, and that many of the deep-seated inequalities that developed under colonialism, segregation and apartheid are being perpetuated in the new “South Africa”. A major reason for this is the inappropriate social and economic policies adopted by the new government almost half of the South African population, mostly blacks, are living in abject poverty, and their situation has in fact worsened since 1994.

A proper and critical analysis of both Luiz *et al.* (2002) and Terreblanche’s¹¹ (2002) perspectives (even if they seem to represent conservative views) on the continuity of the inequalities in the new South Africa seem to throw light on how certain Provincial Education Departments are being funded. The argument here is that the policy on school finance is inadequately financed. Since the end of apartheid, South Africa as a country undergoing rapid transformation has been confronted by many challenges. Nowhere is this dramatic challenge more evident and distressing than in the financing of the educational programme in particular

¹⁴ Quite intriguing is that Moeletse Mbeki was quoted by both the electronic and print media as sharing the same views with Terreblanche on economic issues and black economic empowerment. In particular Moeletsi, is the younger brother of President Mbeki.

for the educational equity agenda. Even scholars who can be regarded as progressive begin to be skeptical about the approach of government to the transformation programme. For example, soon after the promulgation of the South African Schools Act, Gilmour (1997:73) made the observation that the new government was conflating equality and equity, and in so doing was ceding the ability as Secada (1998:74) observed to consider fundamental issues that should fall under the rubric of educational equity. In support of Gilmour's (1997) and Secada's (1989) statement, I agree with the assertion made since I subscribe to the point that views equity as a means (bridge) to the attainment of equality and true democracy.

Although there has been a significant increase of the budget for education since 1994 (21% of the budget goes to education), the global view is that it is not enough to effectively handle the legacy of apartheid, especially in education. This view is informed by the huge gap between the 'haves' and 'have not' in this country.

This section has identified inadequate budget for the provincial education departments as one of the factors at the heart of the challenge to realize equity at school level. Despite an overall increase in 2001/2002 budgets of 2.5% in the provinces (Wildeman, 2001:13), sufficient evidence suggests that the poorest provinces are under-funded on a per capita basis (Institute of Democracy of South Africa, IDASA, 2001:4). This state of affairs allows little room for the equity and redress needs provincially and at school level.

In stretching the point further at provincial level, it can be argued that the failure to implement the R & R effectively across the provinces can be regarded as one of the greatest challenges against the prospect to achieve equity nationally and provincially. Although some progress has been made as far as the equitable distribution of teachers in concerned, the escalating costs of personnel, the failure to realize 80:20 personnel to non-personnel and the inability to redeploy white teaches to African schools countrywide are indicative of redeployment policy problems (*City Press*, 2002; Pamapallis & Motala, 1997). In the North West Provincial Education Department the situation is worsened by the difficulty to deal with the excess educators who have been on the payroll since the year 1998 (NWED, 1999a:4; NWED, 2002.4). This point is strongly supported by the fact that non-personnel budget has been identified as the redistribute base for addressing equity. Implicitly, the failure to deal with

redeployment, excess educators in particular have direct bearing on the implementation of the NNSSF policy.

TABLE 2.1: PERSONNEL EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EDUCATION BUDGETS PER PROVINCE

PROVINCE	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Eastern Cape	95.1%	90.9%	90.9%	90.9%
Free State	88.0%	86.3%	85.1%	85.6%
Gauteng	85.3%	85.2%	85.1%	84.9%
Kwa-Zulu Natal	89.8%	89.8%	87.3%	86.5%
Mpumalanga	88.0%	91.3%	90.2%	90.1%
Northern Cape	80.3%	81.9%	84.7%	84.8%
Northern Province	95.0%	90.2%	89.9%	90.1%
North West	90.8%	91.4%	90.2%	90.4%
Western Cape	91.0%	89.6%	89.4%	88.9%
National	90.5%	89.1%	88.3%	88.2%

Source: Provincial estimates of expenditure. These figures include estimated improvements in condition of service except for the Northern Cape. Removing the Northern Cape does not change the overall pattern of declining personnel expenditure.

A face value examination of personnel expenditure across the provinces over a period of four years reveals a prima facie evidence of the continuity of inequalities in the education system especially for the poorer ones. This is based on the little amount of money set aside for non-personnel expenditure. The declining budget for non-personnel expenditure should be judged against both the spirit and related strategy of the NNSSF Policy. According to the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy, by 2005 personnel to non-personnel expenditure level should be 80:20. The logic behind this target is to have adequate provision for the non-personnel expenditure so as to release more money(ies) for the equity agenda. Judged against the 2002/03 figures in Eastern Cape (90,9%), Limpopo (90.1%) and North

West (90,4%) possibilities to achieve Inter-Provincial and school level equity appear to be an elusive target, unless a reduction in the personnel budget happens (see Table 2.1).

The NWED is one of the most under-funded departments in the country. Both national and provincial sources as well as the active scrutiny of the financial records make the prospects of equity a difficult task at provincial level, especially in the North West Province.

TABLE 2.2: SHOWS NON-PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE AS A PERCENTAGE IN PED

PROVINCE	1999/90	2000/01
Eastern Cape	3.5%	7.5%
Free State	4.9%	9.5%
Gauteng	11.2%	11.8%
KZN	6.7%	6.2%
Mpumalanga	6.8%	6.0%
Northern Cape	14.4%	14.2%
Northern Province	2.8%	5.8%
North West	8.5%	6.4%
Western Cape	5.4%	6.8%
National	6.4%	7.7%

Source: Provincial estimates of expenditure (own calculations) with figures from the National Treasury

Besides the inadequacy of the provincial budgets, suspensions of the budget have happened with regular monotony since 1996 up to date (2003) (NWED, 1997, 1998b, 1999d, 2001b, 2002d and 2003g) which, more often than not, affects the service delivery at schools negatively. This assertion finds supporting evidence in the quarterly of departmental newsletter NWED¹⁵. It is clearly stated –

that the departmental management committee (DMC) held on the 8th and 9th October 2003, the budget committee recommended that the budget be suspended. Therefore the following operations from the line function should be stopped with the exception of the examinations and conditional grant activities.

¹⁵ EDUNews is a quarterly publication release by the NWED.

- ◆ Workshops and meetings
- ◆ Unnecessary training
- ◆ Equipment like furniture, etc. (NWED, 2003:16).

The financial inadequacy being experienced by the Provincial Education Department played itself out in many facets, in particular, at school level. For example, due to the financial constrains, Section 21 schools are not in the position to acquire sufficient learning materials, attention to small maintenance and the training of teachers. According to the Resource Target Table (RTT), which ranks schools into five quintiles in terms of the poorest 20%, up to the least poor 20%. Per learner amount per school is then worked out.

TABLE 2.3: ALLOCATION PER QUINTILE

Quintile	Number of Learners	Easily separable recurrent costs	Other and small capital costs	Section 117	Maintainance	Total Budget
1	184.633	13.131.281.76	845.560.13	18.463.300.00		32.440.141.88
2	179.742	9.131.020.71	587.972.08	17.974.200.00		27.693.192.79
3	180.485	7.335.012.51	472.322.06	18.048.500.00		25.855.834.57
4	180.375	5.497.906.54	354.025.65	13.476.000.00		19.327.932.18
5	175.960	1.787.778.49	115.120.08			1.902.898.57
Total	901.195	36.883.000.00	2.375.000.00	67.962.000.00		107.220.000.00

Source: Directorate of Finance, North West Education Department: 1999/2000 figures.

According to Table 2.3 above, the total allocation of the NNSSF policy for 2000/01 is R107 220 00 million. This financial figure appears to be adequate to effectively address the equity commitments at schools, because previously disadvantaged schools which fall in quintile one, two and three received the bulk of the allocation which is in keeping with the objective of the

school finance policy, i.e., deliberately favouring the poor schools in order to compensate them.

But the devil is in the details especially when the policy directives hit the school level. This implies that beyond the allocation of the budget to schools, certain things happen. Here the actual unfolding of the policy in practice seems to be working in contradiction with the main goal of the NNSSF policy. In terms of the school finance policy which sets minimum norm and standard to be realized country wide, the national average per learner allocation is R307-00 (based on the review report, the National Minister has recently put it at R450-00 level). While the provincial one is pitched at R217-00 per learner (DoE, 2000:16). But of significance relevance to this inquiry is the revelation that puts the North West average per learner at R118-00 (NWED, 2001). This is a far cry both from the National and provincial averages. Further analysis of the provincial allocation reveals that the actual per learner allocation in the North West Province is actually less than the provincial average at R94-00 (NWED, 2002:14).

In this regard the North West Department of Education has been identified as the only province that allocates such a small amount of money to the schools within the content of the NNSSF for school funding.

The position of the National Education Department as far as resolving the challenge of inadequate funding of the Province was concerned makes the advancement of the equity agenda difficult if not impossible. The point is that both “National Ministries and DoE have, as of 1999, relatively little to do with how much a province spends on education, and perhaps even less with how the province allocates spending within the education sector (Crouch & Lombard, 2002:134). The pursuit of the “Federal” government system (in a unitary state), which gives provinces autonomous power, is often singled out as one of the disempowering factors on the part of the National Ministry to intervene in the effective implementation of the NNSSF policy.

There are several mechanisms, which the DoE can employ to circumvent the constitutional impediment. The national department can decide to negotiate with the National Treasury to

keep certain amounts of money centrally for the NNSSF Policy. In fact available evidence shows the Conditional Grant¹⁶ allocation as a relevant example of taking charge of the actual implementation of policies at provincial level.

2.12 LACK OF CAPACITY ACROSS THE SYSTEM

Judged against the backdrop of inadequate budget, one of the intriguing developments that have come to dominate the implementation of the NNSSF policy is poor expenditure or underspending (Wildeman, 2002d:46). This is puzzling indeed because conventionally speaking, governments through the world are known to be spending monies. In South Africa and the NWED in particular the situation is completely different.

Despite some positive reporting on the level of spending by the Fiscal Review Committee (2000:14), the issue of poor expenditure continues to affect service delivery. The matter is properly captured by the Auditor General (Fakie) in saying that accounting continues to improve, but under-spending has rocketed. Departments which have under spent are: Education by R80,3 million, National Treasury R138,8 million (*Saturday Star*, 2003).

Contrasting the high level of under-spending and financial constraints in government and Education Departments, it is logical to conclude that the challenge of poor expenditure can, to a large extent, be located in the lack of capacity to spend the monies.

In the NWED, lack of capacity to implement programmes or spend the allocation can be explained in different ways. The failure to establish and run appropriate implementation structures, the delay in setting up Section 21 schools, the absence of functional committees like the dispute and appeal committees at school and provincial levels, and the failure to both effective maintenance and exemption programmes on course (NWED, 2002:46).

The poor implementation of the NNSSF Policy is due in part to the absence of appropriate and relevant structures. The implementation was done by *ad hoc* implementation structures (project management committees) since 1999 until recently (NWED, Minutes 8/2002). This

¹⁶ Conditional Grant was established in 1998 by both the DoE and Provinces. Monies from the Grant are centralized in Pretoria. The purpose of the grant was to make the delivery system effective and responsive.

means that the director of the national norms and standard in the school funding policy was only appointed in June 2002.

In addition to this, it is also observed that the North West Education has not been able to appoint the following specialists: Education planner, computer programmer, financial analysts and several statisticians. Further examination of this state of affairs ascribes the non-appointment of these specialists to the ongoing restructuring and inadequate budget.

2.13 EXAMINATION OF “GAPS” IN THE LITERATURE ON POLICY EFFECTS

A deeper analysis of literature in both developed and developing countries reveals a little success in achieving equity. Research points to increased inequities. In developing countries the prospects of achieving equity in all spheres of education provision looks bleak.

In South Africa, the necessity to pursue the effective implementation of all equity-orientated policies cannot be over-emphasized. In this study the literature review has identified “gaps” in policy effects on equity that can be addressed through this particular investigation. In this connection, the following “gaps” have been identified to serve as the main pointers, namely: (i) availability of resources, (ii) funding formula, (iii) contexts, (iv) effective role of the districts, and (v) theory of educational change for large scale reform.

2.14 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

It is clear from the literature search, though most of it comes from the developed countries, that bridging the gap between the rich and poorer schools through equity-driven policies is not only complex, unpredictable but also messy. In many instances attempts to close the gap have led to the increase of inequalities, law suits, the general decline of the educational standards plus marketised approach, which results in high school fees.

Factors impacting negatively on effective implementation of school finance equity range from lack of attention to implementation to lack of skills and capacity in the effective utilization of the available resources. However, what is evident is that equity-driven policies are still

regarded as central to educational reform. It is also clear, from the research point of view that in a modern democracies, the status groups into which persons fall should not be determinants of educational opportunity or outcome (Berne & Picus, 1994:26).

There is, however, a dearth of school-based research on how organs of state departments like education in developing countries implement equity policy as attempts to address the inequalities. In South Africa, changes in the educational landscape resulted in a plethora of policies (NNSSF, OBE, PPM) geared towards the transformation of the school system in particular. Despite this bold attempt, little has been done in guiding schools on effective implementation of educational policies. Given policy overload and the fact that schools do not have the luxury of taking one policy after the other (Hargreaves, 1998:742), there is no empirical evidence to trace the course and effects of the School Funding Policy through the education system down to the school level. This research study intends to investigate the implementation pathway “travel” by the NNSSF and determine its effects on the quality of education provided by the schools.

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3

The Conceptual Framework

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study I use “systems theory” as the conceptual framework to both structure and explain the course of the NNSSF policy from national to local levels of the education “systems”. I choose systems theory because of the following factors:

Systems theory views the organisation both as a whole and part of a larger environment, hence the individual levels of the education system are looked at in the tracing of the NNSSF policy movement from the centre to the school levels, and it stresses the importance of maximum functionality of each level of the system in order to have the desired effects.

System theory further implies that the success of a policy hinges on coherent and systematic linkages between the different elements, levels or components of any education system. In this study, there should be a “tight coupling” of national and provincial to district and to school level components of the system, if there is any hope of achieving success. A school funding policy travels in a decentralized system, through the track of these key components of the education system down to the school where its success or failure can be determined.

System theory can therefore assist to explain the policy breakdown, slippage or failure as a malfunctioning in any of these system components can. Lyell and Leroy (1975:34) support the point further that “major function of system theory is to integrate and explain the relationship that exists in the system”. This resonates well with the facilitative diagram as depicted in Figure 3.1. It also falls properly within the envisaged conceptual framework developed for this study.

FIGURE 3.1: THE RATIONAL PATHWAY IN WHICH POLICY IS ASSUMED TO BE TRAVELLING FROM THE DoE TO THE SCHOOLS

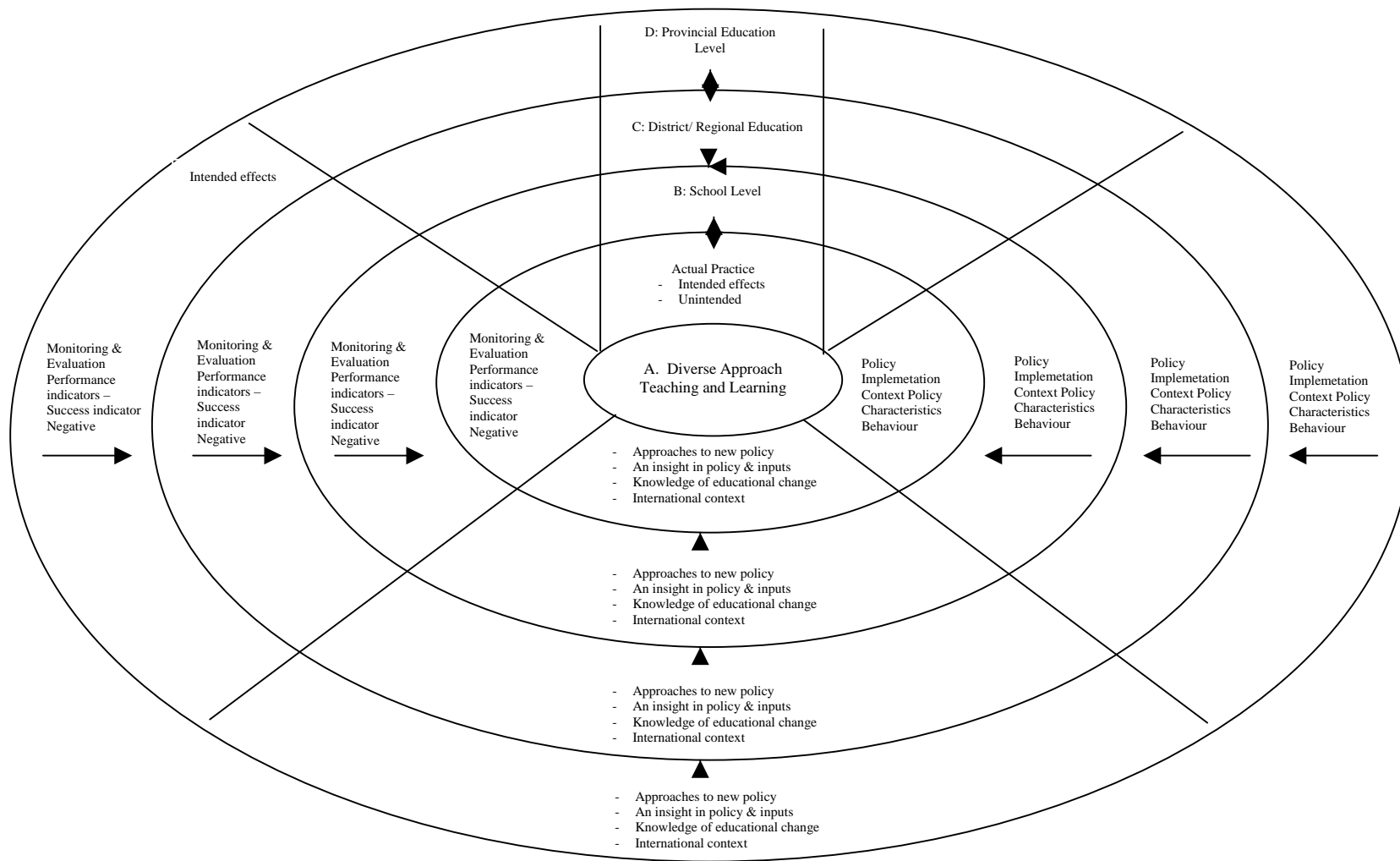


Figure 31. As Policy travels from one level to the other it comes across some factors which cause it to breakdown thus producing unintended effects. To minimise this a holistic and integrated approach is required.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to address the two critical research questions above, it has become absolutely necessary to apply an appropriate conceptual framework to respond fully to four critical tasks, namely: to facilitate a brief synthesis of the review of literature (i.e., chapter two); to give this qualitative inquiry form and shape by guiding the development of data collection instruments as well as the data collection processes in chapter four (research design and methodology); to facilitate the organization and data analysis process (chapter five and six); And finally, the interface between theory and practice in chapter seven i.e., theorising policy implementation.

I have therefore chosen a socio-political framework as a lens for this study because:

Policy is not so much implemented (as planned) as it is re-invented at each level of the system. What ultimately happens in schools and classrooms is less related to the intentions of policy makers than to leadership and motivations that operate in local context (Darling-Hammond, 1998:647-648).

The choice and use of the socio-political conceptual framework is informed by several factors. Four are worth mentioning: *Firstly*, policies in general are not only socially orientated, they are also the products of a political system such as parliament. *Secondly*, redistributive and distributive policies in particular like the NNSSF policy are not confined to the allocation of limited resources only. They also involve a contested field which has power (whether formal or informal) or influence to allocate resources. The argument is that implementation as a process is connected to the literature that concentrates on the expression of power, authority, influence and competition at contextual level (Anderson, 1994:18; Hargreaves, 1998:748). This means that the announcement of a new policy does not immediately result in the disappearance of vested personal interests. Such interests are likely to surface during the implementation. *Thirdly*, the socio-political framework gives a recognition the presence of power and fear in the process of educational change. For example, people often refuse to share resources equitably; even those who claim to be liberal often display this behavioural tendency. This puzzling behaviour easily finds support and explanation in the argument that “*even if the cultural and local contexts have been taken care of, even if teachers were allowed to understand and construct their own meanings*” in the end, educational change also includes emotional, political and social elements (Hargreaves, 1998:282). On the basis of this

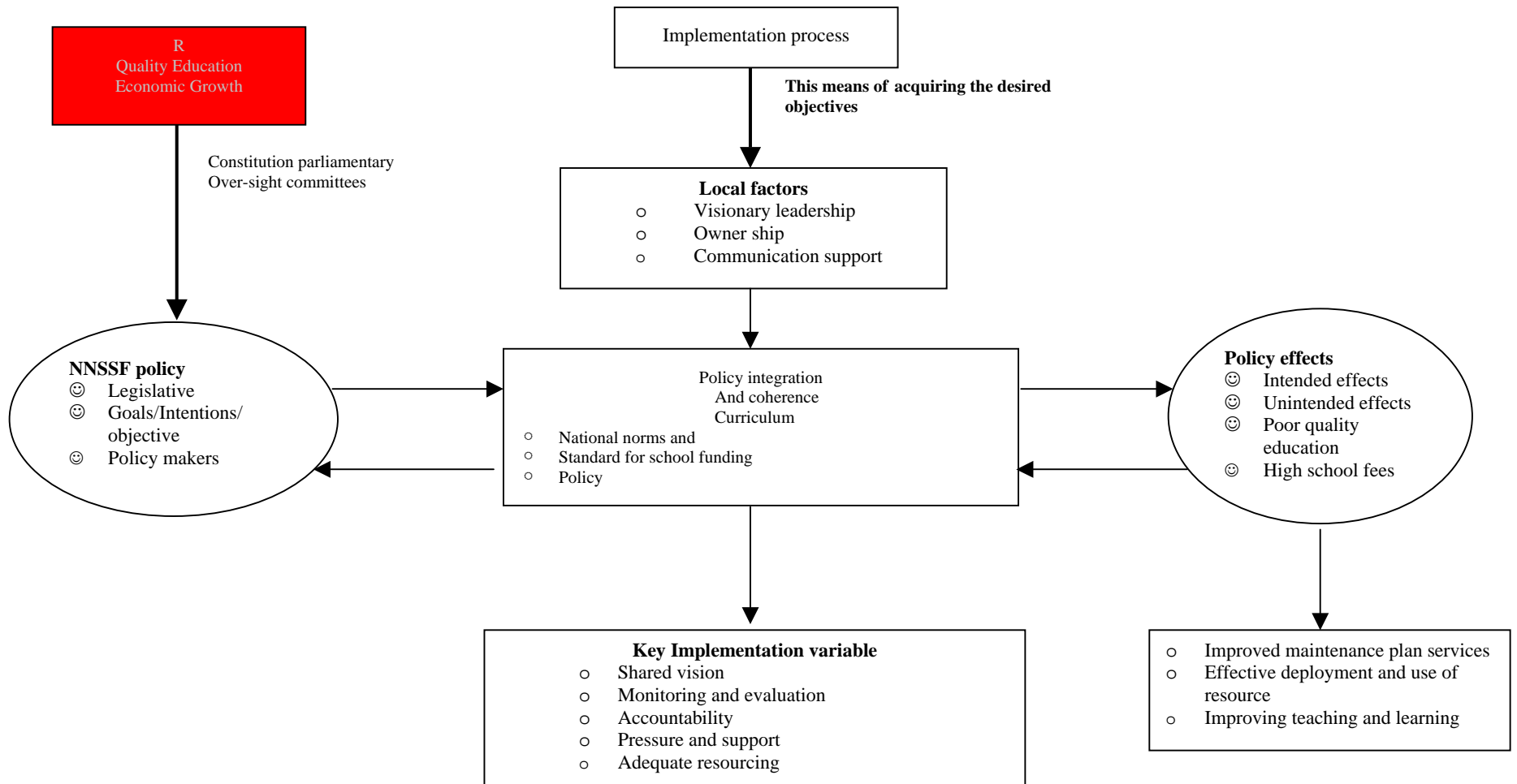
argument, for example, certain groups have used the SASA 1996 to prevent the government from putting a ceiling on the charge of high school fees and denied certain population groups' access to schools. The notorious case of Vryburg High School, where black learners were denied admission by the white school governing body (NWED, 2000a:16) is a case in point. In this regard the powers of schools' governing bodies are cited as issues, which do not allow "interference" of the state in the public school system. Despite this argument, often associated with the conservative white population, the State in South Africa still remains the main employer of teachers who are rendering service in public schools. This goes to show how power politics manifests itself at the implementation level.

The use of the socio-political framework is also meant to explain the realization or non-realization of equity in education in the South African context. Most importantly, that education is not only public news but also political. It is often seen as a gatekeeper of opportunities, values and knowledge if not handled appropriately it can lead to the development of conflict. Therefore, the existence of a conflict or contestation for resources is understandable. The employment of the socio-political conceptual framework also assumes that devolving power to schools under the pretext of self-management and democratic participation is not sufficient to ensure the attainment of equity in diverse forms. The implication is that successful implementation of the equity-driven policies requires a broad and holistic approach, a view which is supported by Nieto (1998:242) who says:

A social-political context takes into account the larger societal and political forces in a particular society and the impact they may have on student learning. A socio-political context consists of issues of power and includes decisions of structure inequality based on stratification due to race, social class, gender, ethical and other differences.

In grappling with the usefulness and relevance of the socio-political conceptual framework for this inquiry, it is important to state up front that the framework is not generic, based on a single, elegant and coherent framework and a well-tested theory. And it is not applied rigidly, hence the use of the "systems" theory which is all embracing. In brief the socio-political conceptual framework guiding this inquiry is a combination of two main perspectives: System dynamic as delineated and used by Morris (1996:427-447), and system discourse as described by Wane & Isseke (2000:3). The socio-political framework construction is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below.

FIGURE 3.2: THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ILLUSTRATION



The implementation of the NNSSF can be viewed as larger scale or “third-order change” because it seeks to alter the basic ways schools as organizations function. This means that it aims at the qualitative change of the school as a whole (Clemente, 1992). Other perspectives which recognize the non-neutrality of policy implementation and the use of power at the zones of implementation are also connected to the socio-political framework.

Welner (2001:234) argues that “*the “zone” framework illustrates the reality that an untold number of forces constantly shape and re-shape a reforms context. When a reform idea first enters a site, it takes its place on top of layers and layers of history.*” This dimension of the zone of mediation at the implementation stage appears to add power to the socio-political framework since the recognition of a myriad of factors is taken into account.

Since the NNSSF policy emerged from the DoE down to the school system through both the provincial and regional levels, (Figure 3.1) that attempts to portray the pathway along which policy is assumed to travel. In this regard, the overall expectation of the equity-driven policy is that its implementation at school level will ultimately lead to the equitable distribution of the limited resources to the needy schools, subsequent improvement and as well as quality provision of education

This line of argument is underpinned by Coleman and Bush’s (1993:2) belief that a “shift is not confined to grant maintained (self-managing) schools. Rather it reflects the belief that organizations are more effective if they are controlled and managed at institutional levels”. This assumption appears to be the driving force behind most of the educational decentralization efforts in the developed and developing democracies. In this connection Figure 3.1 illustrates the educational system as a whole, which is made-up of several levels or sub-systems. Figure 3.1 seeks to demonstrate the linear and top-down orientated policy implementation process within the framework of the decentralization mode of delivering public education.

On the other hand the systemic dynamic perspective is concerned with the understanding that the interconnections, feedback and dynamics of complex systems like schools, educational

districts and regional levels (Morris, 1996:429) are essential for school effectiveness. This suggests how important is the question of feedback in organisations.

However, Morecroft and Sterman (1994:141) recognize that people have great difficulty in dealing effectively with environments of even moderate complexity.

The central concept that system dynamists use to understand the system structure is the idea of a two-way feedback (Meadows & Robinson (1985:34). The idea of a feedback looks useful in tracking down the effects of school finance equity policy up to the school level. Of crucial importance is that system dynamics offer reasons why the feedback loop associated with the rational model of organization has failed (Morris, 1996:429). This implies that system dynamics perspective goes beyond the known limitations of the rational choice theory, which is linear, scientific and objective (Anderson, 1998:14) in nature.

System discourse¹⁷ is a discursive framework that illustrates the functions and relationships of the substances that structure the education system (Wane, 2000:3). It shows the systematic power, imbalances, as well as barriers that are embedded within the various sub-systems of the larger society. My contention is that this model when combined with the system dynamics would pinpoint the impediment and tension within the education system especially at school level.

A system perspective holds that schools and districts use reforms to reinforce their equilibrium as institutionalized organizations. This suggests that the institutions are more comfortable with the status quo. They block formal feedback (distort it) to decision makers in order to perpetuate the *status quo* (Morris, 1996:427). In this perspective, practitioners do not give policy makers and analysts reliable feedback that can assist in the policy design and further refinement of the policy implementation. For example, the failure of redeployment of teachers despite “official” claims of success is a case in point (Pampallis & Motala, 2001:46). This practice seems to happen during the course of external evaluation. Institution may therefore

¹⁷ System discourse (zone of mediation): illustrates the functions and the relationships among key layers of the system discourse.

perceive external evaluation as a threat to their “autonomy” or comfort zones. In this regard systems perspective can go a long way to explain policy constraints and resistance.

This research programme goes beyond the rational model of reform in applying a systems perspective¹⁸ Cuban (1990:5) argues that the rational model has not fared well in practice, and that the realities of the school environment do not conform well to rationalistic assumptions. Since the functional feedback process is crucial to the success of the educational reform, issues of power, inter-connectedness and a working understanding of the dynamics of the organization provided by a systems dynamic perspective within the framework of “systems” theory will assist in determining the actual breakdown of the equity driven policy as it travels from one level to the other.

It can, therefore, be argued that when schools have developed an internal capacity to provide undistorted feedback about the effects of a policy, earlier intervention may lead to systemic reform process or policy review.

The two identified perspectives seem to be well connected to the political bargaining perspective that recognizes policymaking as a pluralistic process that represents the distribution and exercise of power, authority and influence among actors with competing preferences (Welner, 2001:41). It is my considered view that such authority, power and influence often extend to the stage of policy translation, thus diluting the implementation process, in a way producing the unintended consequences or slippage.

This analytic framework has been successfully applied in a previous study research for the linking of school finance reforms and equity.

Hirth (1966:468-479) For example, has discovered that instead of disconnected reform initiatives prevalent in the 1980s, the 1990s is the beginning of a new era of educational reforms that strive for co-ordination, integration, and cohesion around a clear set of outcomes. Within the framework of systemic reform, it is essential that policies leading the efforts be co-

¹⁸ System dynamic: is concerned with understanding the inter-connections, feedback and dynamics of a complex system like school and educational district. It puts emphasis on two-way feedback process.

ordinated with school finance reforms that foster equity. This approach is useful since I view equity policy as more than the mere allocation of resources. It has to be operationalised at all fronts to yield the desired results.

The use of a conceptual framework that combines two perspectives differs from the nominative practices of using a single model to facilitate inquiry. In the sense that it does accommodate a variety of perspectives. Various scholars employed single framework such as managerial efficiency, pragmatism and entrepreneur (Knight, 1994:27; Thompson *et al.*, 1994:148) to facilitate the implementation of school financial management. Although some progress was made through the use of these frameworks, one of the major criticisms against them is their inability to give recognition to contextual realities and too much emphasis on rational planning. The truth is that you can only plan for what you can see (Knight, 1994:29), therefore a contingent, flexible plan that can address unanticipated developments becomes absolute necessity.

In the light of the above argument consideration to use a socio-political conceptual framework that employs two perspectives has been informed by two factors. *Firstly* there is perhaps no single answer to problems. A multiplicity of approaches can be utilized to look at a particular problem. In practice two or more conceptual frameworks can be considered in implementing a programme. *Secondly* the combined use of both system dynamic and system discourse which often entails what is called the zone of mediation complement each other by adding the power of critical examination to the inquiry. This is very important to empirical studies especially in the period of post-modernism. *Thirdly* the use of several models or perspectives in the socio-political conceptual framework has been used with success in developed countries like the United States of America. For example, Geary (1992:5) successfully used the conceptual framework that combines the political system models, designed by Easton (1975:75), and the political bargaining model described by Allison (1971) to guide her research on the policy-making process resulting in the fiscal policy for special education in the State of Utah, the United States of America. Although the conceptual framework for this inquiry slightly differs from the one developed by Geary (1992:142), the cross cutting themes on both models range from the exercise of power, authority and recognition to environmental factors.

Of significant importance to this inquiry is the fact that the framework in use is employed to guide the policy implementation process in a developing country, which has a different context to the ones in developed countries.

3.3 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

Chapter three of this research study mainly describes how the collected data was analysed by developing a new socio-political conceptual framework. The proposed framework is firmly located within the systems theory as the underlying framework. Since this is a qualitative study, it has become absolutely necessary to include an illustration of how the policy is assumed to be travelling from the DoE (i.e., centre) to the school level via both the provincial and regional structures. This is briefly captured in Figure 3.1. Furthermore, Figure 3.2 is an illustration that demonstrate the importance of the policy implementation process by highlighting key variables in the policy process such as: Legislative goals, policy integration and both the intended and the unintended effects of the policy. Finally, the propositions developed are regarded as key in pulling key variable together in order to address the broad goals of policy.

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4

Research Design and Methods: How policy travels from the centre to the periphery

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was earlier described as a comparative study. As a qualitative study, the research plan was based on three broad strategies of data collection i.e., semi-structured interviews, site observations and questionnaires (limited to the schools only). *Firstly*, I used a stream of semi-structured interviews conducted in a step-by-step format at four levels of the education system: national, provincial, regional (district) and school levels. The semi-structured interview has been used as the main instrument for collecting data because its use usually allows open-ended questions and it is flexible enough to permit the noting of unexpected information. In addition, the interview is able to probe further in order to get rich data.

Furthermore, the semi-structured interview helped set out to determine how the NNSSF Policy was implemented at the five identified levels of the education system, with the possibility of capturing the policy breakdown. In addition, the semi-structured interviews sought to determine the policy effects on equity at school level. Based on the experiences of officials and practitioners at each level of the education system estimations were made to give responses to the research questions.

Secondly, I used semi-structured interviews to collect the expert views of the external stakeholders on the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy in South Africa. The inclusion of the stakeholders and experts in the sampling was due to the perceived neutrality and objectivity of these experts since their views might not be clouded by the day-to-day operations of the policy in question.

Thirdly and mostly importantly, I generated five comparative case studies at the fourth level of the (schools as the main unit of analysis) education system, where detailed data was collected using multiple strategies (such as document analysis and face to face interviews and school

profile, in order to understand the complex ways in which the NNSSF policy was understood and how it impacted on equity in each of the five cases selected.

Although this inquiry used backward mapping¹⁹ as a research strategy or methodology for data collection, the actual data collection was done by examining the understanding and effects of the NNSSF policy at school level and then inquiring upwards about why the effects are so experienced. The actual organization and presentation of the research data have been done in descending order i.e., National, Provincial, Regional School levels policy experts.

In this regard the fifth level, i.e., education stakeholders/policy experts can be seen as part of the education system since education as a practice is not confined to the formal environment only. The external factors also have direct influence on the internal system. The details now follow:

SECTION ONE

4.2 NATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

I started firstly by identifying information with respondents at the national departmental level, since this is where the National Norms and Standard for School Funding policy was both conceived and launched for implementation in the nine provinces. Two officials (respondents) who were involved in the conceptualization, formulation and the over-sight of the implementation of the policy were selected (see Figure 4.1). In fact they were the only respondents willing to take part in the inquiry. Furthermore the two respondents involved in the policy had a direct working relationship with the Consortium led by Education Foundation, which was given the task of training provincial officials in the policy. The two respondents have rich experience in education, policy development and legislative policy framework. Both were part of the committee that developed the NNSSF policy. One is an Advocate in law who was charged with the legal aspects of both SASA 1996 and the NNSSF policy of 1998. The

¹⁹ Backward mapping has been successfully used by scholars such as Elmore (1998) and Dyer (1999) in determining both the policy legislative intentions and policy effects by investigating the manipulation of the following variables: communication, commitment, implementation attitudes and contextual factors.

other key respondent had a Doctorate in Education and had served at various levels of the management echelon over the last 20 years (see Annexure E). As part of the process of collecting data, I therefore designed an interview instrument and schedule for the first research questions guiding the inquiry. The set of questions which constitute part of the semi-structured interview protocol were posed to the respondents in order to elicit appropriate information on the meaning and understanding of the School Finance Policy (SFP) as well as the set goals. The questions below serve as illustrations:

- ◆ What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
- ◆ In your view, what was the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- ◆ How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- ◆ What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

4.2.1 PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

At the provincial level (North West), I identified those key respondents who were directly involved in the actual implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy. Of the six members of the Project Management Committee established for the policy only three were available for selection and interview (see Figure 4.1). The other three had resigned from the Department to take up appointments elsewhere.

The three respondents who took part in this inquiry had vast educational and managerial experience at various levels. The first one (with BCom Hons) came from the directorate of policy management and co-ordination and had a total experience of 21 years in education. The said experience included seven years as a teacher, 11 as a school principal and three years as a deputy director at head office level.

The second respondent (with B.A. degree qualification) had a total education experience of 26 years, which can be broken down as follows: 11 years as a teacher, two years as deputy principal, seven years as a principal and six years as district manager of 351 schools.

The third one (with Public Administration degree and Certificates in Financial Management) had a total of 30 years experience in the administration of education, in particular financial management, and had worked both in the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Cape Education Department (CED) as a financial accountant (see Annexure E).

As part of the data collection process, I designed the following set of questions with the view to eliciting appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy as well as the set goals.

- ◆ What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy?
- ◆ In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- ◆ How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- ◆ What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding policy?

4.2.2 REGIONAL EDUCATION LEVEL

At this level I employed purposeful sampling by selecting three respondents who were assigned the tasks of implementing policies, in particular the NNSSF Policy, in the Central Region (Mafikeng). The selected respondents, called circuit managers, now called institutional support co-ordinators of education policies, have as part of their main responsibility the effective management of education policies (see Figure 4.1). But before getting to grips with the individual profiles of the selected groups, it is appropriate for me to justify the selection of Mafikeng as a site for this inquiry. The choice of the Central Education Region (i.e., Mafikeng) for this inquiry was based on the following criteria:

- ◆ It is the region in which I work and where access to schools for purposes of the study was easily obtainable.
- ◆ It is one of the biggest educational regions in terms of the number of schools and educator-learner ratios (see chapter three).
- ◆ It is comprised of various types of schools from erstwhile education departments like House of Delegates (HED), Bophuthatswana (BOP) Education and Training ((DET) and Cape Education Department (CED).
- ◆ It is close to the Head Office of the Education Ministry where the Norms and Standards policy was launched in 1999.
- ◆ The 1996 School Register of Needs singled out Mafikeng as a region with schools which have diverse socio-economic needs (1996:14).
- ◆ Mafikeng and the surrounding areas have been hard hit by serious unemployment as a result of the downsizing of the public service administration and the closure of some key industries which have reduced the capacity of many parents to afford school fees (NWED, 2000a:3).

Bop TV, Radio Mmabatho, Sebowana Employee Benefits Organisation, the Chicken Industry and Sefalana Corporate Centre for maize meal production are some of the industries affected by the closure.

The three respondents selected for this inquiry were all male with almost similar educational background and experience. Besides the difference in actual age, they all have B.A.Ed and B.Ed degrees as their qualifications. Before they became circuit managers for almost seven years, all of them were principals of schools for an average of eleven years. However, only one of them had served as the Co-ordinator of the Primary Education Upgrading Programme in the erstwhile Bophuthatswana for a period of five years. Quite appropriate for this inquiry is the fact that since 1996 all the selected officials or respondents were exposed to various training programmes sponsored by developed countries such as the United States of America (USAID), Denmark (DANIDA) and the Quality Learning Project (QLP) sponsored by Business Trust and Co-ordinated by the Joint Education Trust (JET) (see Annexure E).

As part of the data collection process for this inquiry, I designed an interview instrument and schedule with the view of eliciting appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy as well as the set goals. In this connection, the following illustrative questions are provided:

- ◆ What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
- ◆ In your view, what were the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- ◆ How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- ◆ What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

FIGURE 4.1 FICTITIOUS (PSEUDONYMS) NAMES EMPLOYED TO HIDE THE TRUE IDENTITY OF SCHOOLS

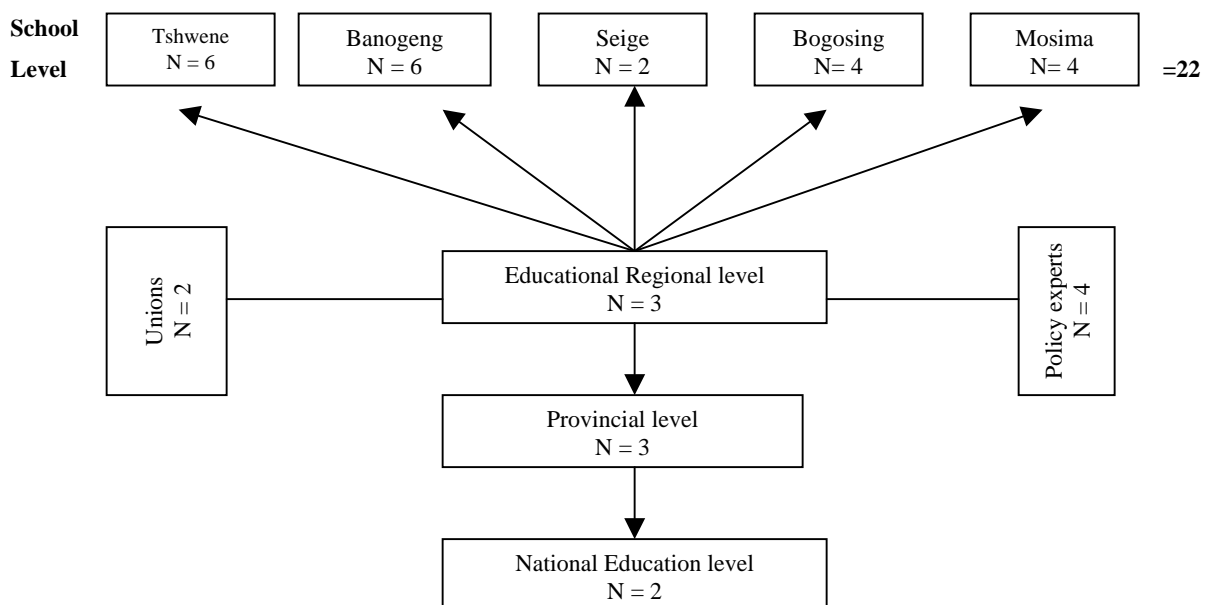


Figure 4.1: Showing a schematic illustration of the research’s participants at various levels of the education system i.e., schools, districts, provincial, national and stakeholders. A total of 46 respondents were interviewed for this research.

4.2.3 THE SCHOOL LEVELS

At this level, I selected five schools based on their socio-economic profiles as determined by the Resource Targeting List (RTL), which gives recognition to both the conditions of the school buildings and the poverty level of the communities surrounding the school. In addition to this, the purposeful sampling was based on the following sampling criteria:

- ◆ All the five schools are located within the Central Education Region.
- ◆ All the five schools qualified for and were granted Section 21 status by the department in the year 2001, i.e., after their applications were subjected to an evaluation.
- ◆ All of them started with the implementation of the NNSSF policy in 2000.
- ◆ They all had been exposed to a capacity building programme before obtaining the Section 21 status.
- ◆ All the five schools had legally constituted School Governing Bodies (SGBs)
- ◆ All the five schools are cost centres after the opening of a current account/cheque account.
- ◆ Finally, all the five schools have learner enrollment that exceeds four hundred (400). For more details of the profiles, see Annexure B1 to B5.

Besides the selection of the five schools for this inquiry, I went further and did further sampling per case study school. As already indicated the five selected schools were assigned fictitious names for the purpose of confidentiality. For recap purposes, the names employed for the selected schools are: Banogeng, Tshwene, Siege (all primary schools) and Bogosing and Mosima Secondary Schools (see Fig 4.1). In each and every school where the case study was conducted, the following key respondents formed part of the purposeful sampling: The school principal, deputy principal (if there was one), departmental head (H.O.D.) and teacher treasurer. This means that only the members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) were exposed to the semi-structured interview process.

PHOTOGRAPH #1: TSHWENE PRIMARY SCHOOL: DEEP RURAL SCHOOL ABOUT 40 KM. FROM THE CITY (FOUNDED IN 1961)



Self produced photograph (28/11/2002) 3 a: shows the front-view of Tshwene Primary School with Grade 4 learners writing tests outside due to the shortage of accommodation.

Case Study 1:

Tshwene Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Tshwene Primary is a former Bophuthatswana school situated in a deep rural and impoverished village called Disaneng about 60 kilometers from the capital city of the province and 67 from the Central Education Region. The school was established in 1960 with funds from the tribal authority, and began operating from 1961 with an enrollment of 150 learners in Grade A.

Tshwene primary school is not only experiencing over-crowding, but the buildings also need some major renovations (see photograph). The school has a total number of twenty-three classrooms which serve 850 learners. Despite the importance of structures like staff-rooms, laboratory, library, school hall, special rooms and separate office for the principal, the only thing available is the principal's office. This dilapidated office (i.e., principal's) is not only small but also over-crowded with all sorts of materials and pieces of equipment. This is because the office also accommodates both library books and laboratory equipment since there is neither a laboratory nor a library. Furthermore, the school does not have any of the following: fax machine, computers, television and tape recording device. But both water and electricity have been recently connected.

In the year 2001 the school was granted Section 21 status, i.e., authority to be self-managing. Such status allowed the school to control its budget and the curriculum of the school.

As far as staffing is concerned, the school has a total number of 23 educators. Included in this number are the principal, deputy principal and senior teachers, (see the profile of all the educators at school level, which gives both the qualifications and experience of the educators in Annexure

Tshwene Primary School charged parents school fees to the tune of R80-00 per child per year. The percentage of parents who paid the said amount for 2002 stood at 45-50 while the 2003 paying percentage stood at 56-60. Despite the provision of the school to press lawsuit against parents for non-payment, the school showed the reluctance to use this mechanism. Firstly, the school cited the inability to pay legal cost as a factor. Secondly, the inability of parents to pay school fee because they happened to be poor was cited as another factors.

PHOTOGRAPH #2: SIEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORMER MODEL C SCHOOL ENDOWED WITH RESOURCES (FOUNDED IN 1895)



Self produced photograph (30/10/2001) 3b: shows magnificent building of a former model c school. More money is needed to maintain this building. But less was given.

Case Study School 2:

Siege Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Siege Primary School is a former Model C school situated in the centre of the town, about eight kilometers from the Central Education Region. The school was established in 1895 by the Afrikaans speaking community originally meant for the Afrikaners. The catchment area of Siege Primary School is largely residential, high-cost housing where most of government civil servants and down-town employees live.

The school is located within a big yard, with a very impressive and attractive landscape which is ever-green. The physical infrastructure is also impressive which, among other things, has the following: 14 classrooms, staff-room, special rooms (sick-room), workshops, library, school hall, separate office for the principal, and a laboratory. In addition essential amenities such as water, electricity, a computer for administration and a fax-machine are available (see photograph 4.2 which shows the school building).

Siege Primary School used to admit only white learners, but has opened its doors to learners of different races or ethnic groups. It has a total of sixteen teachers (for 2003) which includes two privately paid ones (by SGB), while the 2003 learners enrollment stood at 443. Comparison between the 2002 learners' enrollment (which was 445) and the 2003 one reflects a decrease of only two learners.

The school became Section 21 controlled from 2001 and the minimum school fee per child per year is R2 500. The total percentage of parents paying school fees for 2002 stood at 85-98, while the 2003 paying percentage stood at 85-95.

The average age of the 16 teachers at Siege Primary stood at thirty-five years with an average teaching experience of ten years. Finally, most of the teachers at this school have a three-year Diploma and above as qualifications. Annexure gives a summary of the biographical data of the teaching staff at Siege Primary School.

PHOTOGRAPH #3: BANOGENG PRIMARY SCHOOL FOUNDED IN 1990



Self-produced photograph (31/10/2001) 3c: shows moderate building set-up by the tribal authority. The role of the NWED was not significant here.

Case Study School 3:

Banogeng Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Banogeng Primary is a former Bophuthatswana (Bop) school situated in a rural village called Majemantsho just about 10 kilometers from the capital city of the North West Province, i.e., Mafikeng. It was established in 1990 mostly with the building funds from the Paramount Chief (Kgosi) of the Barolong Tribal Authority.

The school has a total number of 20 classrooms and 23 teachers and 855 learners. This refers to the 2003 statistical figures, while the 2001 and 2002 learner enrollment figures stood at 810 and 870 respectively. Despite the shortage of staff, the said school had not been able to employ teachers from the SGB funds. Out of the 23 teachers, six of them are in management positions. This refers to the principal, deputy-principal and four departmental heads who are in charge of the different phases. These teachers are fairly qualified with the average qualifications of REQV 12 and above.

The buildings of Banogeng Primary need urgent renovation given their deteriorating conditions. Besides the presence of both the staff-room and separate office of the principal, essential structures such as library, computer room, school hall, laboratory and special rooms (e.g., Sick rooms) are not available. However, other essential services and amenities such as water, electricity, duplicating machine, fax machine, telephone and computer for administration are available. Some of these were acquired through financial assistance from donors.

Banogeng Primary, which is a quintile three, charge parents average school fees of R100-00 to R200-00 per child per year. But the school records indicate the percentage of parents paying school fees for both 2002 and 2003 as 55-62 and 45-52 respectively, while the 2001 figure stood at 50% for the 1998 academic year the percentage of parents who paid school fees stood at 80%.

PHOTOGRAPH #4: BOGOSING SECONDARY SCHOOL: SEMI-URBAN (FOUNDED IN 1983)



Self produced photograph (31/10/2001) 3d: shows the physical building without key structures like laboratory and library

Case Study School 4:

Bogosing Secondary: Implementing the funding policy

The school was established in 1983 by the Paramount Chief of the Barolong tribe and is situated just about 15 kilometers from the Central Region office in Mafikeng. The village in which the school is situated is comprised of poverty stricken families where the majority of them are either pensioners or unemployed.

Bogosing Secondary has 20 classrooms with the learner enrollment of 1 122 to 32 teachers. This means that the learner-classroom ratio of 2003 academic year stood at 1:53, while the learner-classroom ratio of both 2001 and 2002 stood at 1:49 and 1:52 respectively. Despite the importance of key structures such as library, laboratory, school hall, staff-room and separate offices for both the principal and the senior management teachers, these essentials are conspicuous, by their absence. As a result of this, two classrooms had been turned into both the staff-room and the principal's office. Most importantly, despite the absence of these key structures, the school is grouped in quintile 4 of the Resource Targeting Table (RTL). This suggests that the school is well endowed with resources.

Despite being a rural secondary school, the school has ensured the availability (mostly from donations) of the following: water, electricity, duplicating machine, fax machine, computer for administration (accommodated in a classroom) and some laboratory equipment. Furthermore, as a secondary school, Bogosing happened to fall in the category of schools financially sponsored by the Joint Education Trust (JET) through a training programme called Quality Learning Project (QLP) coordinated by Mazibuko & Associate (MA) as well as the Master of School Training Programme (MSTP). This programme offered training modules in school development planning, financial management and change management.

Bogosing Secondary School, despite experiencing financial constraints, charged parents school fees to the amount of R100-00 per child per year. Despite the charge of this little amount, the 2001, 2002 and 2003 trend indicated a poor response from parents, where paying percentage ranged from 41-46, 40-55 and 35-47 respectively.

Bogosing has a total of 32 educators who are fairly well qualified with average qualifications of REQV²⁰ 13 and above. Furthermore, the average age of teachers ranged between 35 and 45 years with an average teaching experience of 15 years.

²⁰ RQEV: Relevant Qualification Equivalent value used for grading teachers

Mosima Secondary School is grouped under quintile 5 of the Resource Targeting Table as compiled by the North West Education Department. This means that the school is regarded as least poor or fairly well resourced by the Department of Education. As far as private contribution is concerned, the school fees set for parents stood at R120-00 per child, per year. This implies that the school is having a meager income given the state allocation which stood at the following figures: R24 600, R26 168 and R28 900 for 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively. Despite the charge of small fees, the percentage of parents paying school fees is very low. For example, in 2003 only 46% of the parents paid the school fees.

Mosima Secondary School has fairly well qualified educators since the majority of them are REQV 12 and above. But they are more qualified in languages and humanities. The school has a fairly balanced staff with an average age of 10 years teaching experience.

4.2.4 STAKEHOLDERS AND EXPERTS

A total of six key respondents were selected from a variety of stakeholder organizations and independent organizations. Including Institute of Democracy of South Africa (IDASA), Education Policy Unit of the University of Witwatersrand (EPU-WITS) Education Foundation (EDUS); South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), National Association of Professional Teachers Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) and Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) and the Education Right Project (ERP).

The selected individuals as part of the sample of this investigation had vast experience in education and were fairly well qualified. They had certain elements in common:

- ◆ All the key respondents have had exposure to the NNSSF policy through their organizations.
- ◆ All of them were male with experience of more than ten (10) years in education.
- ◆ All of them had Masters Degree in Education or above (e.g., Doctorate).
- ◆ All of them (with the exception of SAOU) had experience in research.
- ◆ All of them (with the exception of SAOU) had made public commentary on the efficacy of the implementation of the NNSSF policy in South Africa. For biographical details see Annexure E.

As part of the data collection process, I designed the following set of questions with the view to elicit appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy, as well as the set goals.

- ◆ Could you explain your role in the development of the government policy on the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in South Africa?
 - ❑ How did you first come to be involved in the National Education Department?
 - ❑ What was your brief (terms of reference) from the Department of Education with regard to the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
 - ❑ In carrying out your brief, how did you go about implementing it?
 - ❑ What timeframe did the Department of Education give you for the formulation of policy document (NNSSF)?
- ◆ What do you understand to have been the key objectives of the policy? (i.e., looking at the policy broadly, what is the main target of the policy?)
- ◆ What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- ◆ What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy on school development with respect to?
- ◆ What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy?
- ◆ In your view, what were the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- ◆ How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- ◆ What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

SECTION TWO

4.3 BASIC APPROACH TO DATA COLLECTION

Although the intention of this research study is not to prove any theory or develop new ones, it is essential to point out that I engaged myself in the process of collecting essential data for the purpose of informing the design of the main instrument i.e. the semi-structured interview. After the selection of the sampled schools and other key respondents across the education system, I decided to visit the identified schools (and after approval of the request to conduct the study (see Annexure A1 – A2) for the following reasons:

Firstly, to introduce myself to the school principal and to explain my position as a research student. This was important because my position as a senior manager in the department needed to be clarified so as to avoid confusion and the distortion of the information. *Secondly*, the purpose of the visit was intended to study the actual location of the schools so as to appreciate the various contexts. At the schools, issues like the physical appearance of the schools, the size of the schools, the actual location of the schools and the surrounding communities (demographics) captured my attention. I then took photos of the buildings. *Thirdly*, to leave the profile forms with the school principals (for filing in) to be collected at a later stage.

My first visits to the selected schools took place during the first week of November 2001, where the profile forms were left and contact established. In the second week of the same month I revisited the said schools for the purpose of collecting the completed school profiles see Annexure B1-B5. The information contained in the school profiles included issues such as staff establishments, biographical details of the staff and information on financial outcomes and expenditures.

On the basis of the key research questions, literature review, logical models illustrating the conceptual framework, i.e., Figure 3.1 and 3.2 in Chapter three, information from the school

profiles and content analysis of the NNSSF policy, I developed an average of 16 questions to constitute the semi-structured interview schedule, see Annexure

Since this is a trajectory study tracing how policy ‘travels’ from national to school level, it became necessary to use open-ended questions which are almost the same across all the levels of the education system. I employed a five-level semi-structured interview strategy to collect data. The approach meant that data generated from practitioners at the same level, e.g., schools, was to be compared and contrasted across the system in order to develop a coherent implementation story. Part of the reason for contrast and comparison across the levels of the education system was to determine the continuities and discontinuities in the flow of the NNSSF policy through various levels of the education system.

As far as the actual contents of the semi-structured interview instruments are concerned, a few questions (see illustrative questions below) have been selected for brief commentary to explain why they were included.

- ◆ What is your understanding of the NNSSF policy?
- ◆ What was the NNSSF policy responding to?
- ◆ What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the NNSSF policy?

The *first* three questions of Part A (Annexure C1) which remained consistent throughout sought to probe the deep understanding of the NNSSF policy from the key respondents. For example, question one of the schedule singled out the understanding of the policy across various levels as critical. The rationale to seek deep meaning of policies among policy-makers and implementers appears to be the key to the success of any policy. In addition, question two sought to determine what actually triggered the policy and the broad goal of the policy’s constitutional principle.

The other set of questions in the instrument sought to determine the effects of the new school funding policy on equity at school level. This was meant to determine the discrepancy

between the policy legislative intention and the actual outcomes of the policy i.e., the school level effects.

In seeking to identify the emerging effects of the SFP on equity, I posed broad-based questions, which mainly focused on key *effect* indicators such as:

- ◆ Does the school have an effective maintenance plan in place?
- ◆ Are the allocated resources effectively utilized?
- ◆ Are the allocated resources directed at improving teaching among teachers?

In the course of the development of the semi-structured interview schedule, I sought for links between the school level performance indicators (school development plan) and aspects of the department's strategic planning. This, among other things, refers to aspects such as strategic goal, vision, mission and the stated performance indicators. This stance was informed by the view that the new departments' performance indicators slanted towards the principles of equity, redress, quality, efficiency and effectiveness. In this regard, the indicators are used because of their centrality and usefulness in measuring the performance of the education system or sub-system (see section 2.3.3 of chapter two on performance indicators). But concentration is restricted to process and effect indicators at school level.

Before the semi-structured interview schedule was used, I involved myself in certain critical processes. *Firstly*, I submitted the initial draft instrument to my promoter in January 2002. He made several critical comments and recommendations, which I accommodated to refine and adjust the instrument; I then validated the contents and the format of the protocol. *Secondly*, I piloted the semi-structured interview instrument by interviewing the few individuals at various levels, i.e., school, regional, provincial and national. I asked the respondents to pay particular attention to the following: complexity or simplicity of the questions and the length of the whole instrument. After this process I felt confident to use the instrument for the actual collection of data. This refers to the five levels of data collection namely: national, provincial, regional levels and the five case study schools plus the external stakeholders. I spent considerable time compiling the interview timetable. In this regard, after

telephonic discussion with the principals', the schools' composite timetable and the estimated time for the semi-structured interview plus the number of days to be spent per school were given first attention.

4.3.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

It is essential to state that throughout the interview process at all the identified levels with key respondents, I adopted three types of interview styles namely, the Free Attitude Interview (FAI) techniques, the Depth Interview (DI) and the Participatory Interview (PI).

The interview types are all non-directive controlled interviews and the respondent and not the interviewer defines the direction of the exchange process – Roberto Assagidi (1982:41) used them successfully.

From the beginning of the inquiry, I planned to visit each school three times over a period of 20 months. However, in real terms, some schools were visited more than three times. From February 2002 to May 2003 I spent 17 months on data collection. At the school levels I spent an average of 52.5 hours on the interviews. This means that a total of 3.5 hours were spent per school per visit for the purpose of the interviews, document analysis, follow ups, close observation and attendance to a parents' meeting.

I started at Tshwene Primary School armed with a tape recorder, extra-batteries, a semi-structured interview instrument and a note pad. The actual commencement of the formal interview at the five schools marked my second visit. The first ones were the administration of the school profiles, which took place in November 2001.

At school level, I started the semi-structured interview with the school principal. Before the commencement of each interview, which lasted for almost 45 minutes, I found it appropriate and ethical to ask permission for the use of the recording device. I also made a commitment to remain confidential and transparent during the course of the data collection at each school. This principle was extended to other interviewees in the whole target population, i.e., key

respondents at regional, provincial, national and education stakeholder levels. Related to this aspect and, given the sensitivity of this research study and the fact that I was conducting it within the workstation, it became extremely critical to be honest with the key respondents, i.e., interviewees. This necessitated the importance of getting what is called *informed consent* before the actual interview process. Annexure A3 shows the consent of the key respondents. As a result of the informed consent letter, I have the privilege and the right to publish parts of the thesis.

In the course of data collection through the semi-structured interview, I managed to note down interesting developments of relevance to the inquiry. Of significant importance, is that by the end of the visits to the third school, I noticed a discrepancy between what the principals said and what other members of the senior management teams, in particular heads of department, were saying. This was particularly striking on the strategies of communicating the policy to the staff and parents. For example, principals spoke about workshops and sufficient explanations in the said workshops. However, other members of the senior management team made regular reference to staff meetings and the telling method of communication.

At the beginning of data collection in the six schools (the 61 was later dropped), i.e., immediately after I had interviewed the school principal, I encountered serious problems, which led to the removal of the sixth school from the purposeful sampling. The principal went away on promotion to another level and the deputy-principal who was chosen to act as a principal indicated to me she had a limited knowledge of the NNSSF policy. Other members of the senior management team indicated the same. On the strength of these factors, I became convinced that it would be pointless to insist on continuing with the interview process. Given the fact that I occupied a senior position in the department of education was another consideration for being sensitive to the participants. This means that I concluded the interview processes at school sites with a reduced number of five schools, after dropping the sixth one, which was a secondary school, located in the township of Mafikeng.

In carrying out the exercise of data collection at school level, (through the recording device, note-taking pad and flexible interview schedule) a serious effort was made not to disrupt

learning and teaching. In this regard, only teachers who were directly serving in the various committees (curriculum, finance, school developmental planning), which have a relation with the NNSSF policy, took part in the interview exercises. In each school therefore, the school timetable was never disrupted.

The final sample of the five schools (two secondary and three primary) resulted in a total number of 22 participants for the semi-structured interview, 12 for the primary and 10 for the two secondary schools (see Figure 4.1 which shows the number and names of schools selected). I made reference to almost 22 as a figure because there were instances where some participants were not available for follow-ups.

However, before I continued with the interview process at another level, I decided to transcribe the recorded interview into textual data. I then took a conscious decision of asking someone to do the transcript for me with the proviso that I could later proof-read and insert key remarks or observations on the actual transcript. In this regard Table 4.1 below shows an example of the completed transcript with the addition of the observation remarks or comments (OC). This I did, and the usefulness of this task was to ensure that I did not lose the context under which the semi-structured interview took place. Table 4.1 shows the transcript with the observation remarks.

This step was necessary because the audio-tape could easily give a decontextualized version of the transaction. Most importantly the recorded transcript does not include the visual aspects of the situation or the bodily expressions of the respondents. Of material importance to the semi-structured interview was my conduct as a researcher to each interviewee. Throughout the face-to-face interview I attempted to be emotionally intelligent through a fine balance between emotions and thinking capacity. I then decided to move to the next level of data collection, namely the district.

As part of the overall planning, it was originally planned to include members of the school governing bodies in the sampling. However, due to the difficulty of tracing the members of

the school governing bodies, their level of understanding of the policy and the few I tried to interview (only two) plus poor literacy, especially in rural schools, the idea was abandoned.

The difficulty of getting SADTU: In spite of all my efforts I was not able to get either the leadership or representative of SADTU for the purpose of the interview. The representative I managed to reach first wanted a mandate from the leadership which appeared difficult to get. At the same time, the leadership cited their tight schedule as a factor for not availing themselves for an interview process.

4.3.2 DATA PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND CODING

In this study, I decided to employ mainly grounded theory for data generation and analysis. This was informed by the importance of answering the research questions. In pursuit of this, data collected through the field notes, recording device and access to school records needed to be put in a particular order for the purpose of data analysis.

In view of my understanding of data analysis as the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field-notes, and other materials that one accumulates to increase his or her understanding of them and to enable him to present what he has discovered to others in a more meaningful manner. I developed five major steps to tackle data processing and analysis. These steps were sequentially applied so as to reach the logical end of the inquiry, i.e., data reduction.

Firstly, a starting point and the most important step was the task of transcribing the recorded interview into written words and making meaning out of the collected documents which included minutes, financial records, communication strategies and departmental circulars. As pointed out I tasked someone to do the transcript for me. Furthermore informed by the quest for objectivity, I decided to compare the write-up with the recorded conversation. This I did and the reason for this step was to guard against the discrepancy between the transcript and the recorded interview.

The reason for producing a typed write-up was based on the understanding that a write-up can be “an intelligible” product for anyone, not just for the fieldworker. It can be easily read, edited for accuracy, commented on, coded and analysed using any methods. Indeed, I experienced the usefulness of this strategy (typed write-ups) after I had done the write-up from the recorded device.

Throughout the proofreading of the transcripts and the listening of the recorded interview, my alertness and attention were directed at getting the message correct, i.e., both in words and meaning. This was done with the intention of not misrepresenting the **voices** of the participants and the meanings attached to the words. Since this is a qualitative research depending to a greater extent on the ‘words’, i.e., textual data rather than numbers, it occurred to me to place special emphasis on the words and sentences in the transcripts.

Once the transcripts were completed, I had the opportunity of finally integrating the transcript with key observations I picked up from the field. This means that I created a column next to the inputs of the respondents and called that observation comments (see Table 4.1 below). The idea of doing this was an attempt to recapture the possible loss of the contextual factors during the transcribing of data from the tape-recorder. This is of fundamental importance to qualitative research since context often informs the participant’s views.

TABLE 4.1: THE INTERVIEWS TRANSCRIPT WITH OBSERVER’S COMMENT

Mosima Secondary School	
◆	It is still with auditors
◆	No response
◆	So far, we are not doing it but we intend doing it this year
◆	Science and technology

O.C ²¹ Despite the importance of the curriculum and teacher development, financial allocation was not done.

²¹ O.C stands for the researcher's observation remarks

TABLE 4.2: THE TRANSCRIPT WITH THE INFERENTIAL CODES

PERI-URBAN SCHOOL SCHOOL A (BANOGENG) #1	DEEP RURAL SCHOOL SCHOOL B (TSHWENE) #2	URBAN SCHOOL SCHOOL C (SIEGE) #3
QUESTION 1 #1	#2	#3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School Improvement: PC – SI (lift the standard) ✓ Context – School Profile: C.S – Sc (disadvantaged schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ School Effectiveness: P.C. – SE (to assist schools to run themselves effectively) ✓ Redress Resource Redistribution: P.C. R/RE (previous imbalances better resourcing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quality Education: P.C Q/EDU (good education) ✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R/IM (redress)
QUESTION 2 #1	#2	#3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resource Provision: P.C. R.P #1 (distribution of resources) ✓ Disadvantaged. Con TI (disadvantaged schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R.IM (the imbalances of the schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R/IM 3 (inequalities which existed in the past)

PLEASE NOTE:

The following segments/themes in bold are the actual texts (voices) of the respondents i.e., the one in brackets:

: The unbolded one refers to the coding categorization (sub-themes)

: Abbreviations refer to the coding system

Secondly, after the short break, the challenge of confronting the data analysis process presented itself. As a novice researcher, I must honestly confess that I was initially overwhelmed by how to tackle the data analysis (i.e., the chunk of transcript) because everything in front of me seemed to matter most. However, going back to the research questions, systems theory, and the devised logical model in the form of a conceptual

framework, I saw a way of tackling the data, i.e., coding data into major categories (themes) and sub-themes. To this end I ended up developing what I called a coding systems which was meant for data retrieval (see Table 4.3). This was further assisted by the realization that I could not do everything due to time constraints.

In pursuit of themes building, I firstly put the transcript in a computer database, i.e., word-processing. This helped visibility a lot. I engaged myself in the inductive analysis of the collected data mechanically; i.e., without using software like ATLAST-I so as to allow the emergence of categories, themes and sub-themes. This means that I paid attention to the whole text, i.e., reading and re-reading. This was done several times to get the holistic view of the embedded messages while key words, phrases or sentences were underlined so as to obtain the descriptive voices (words) of the respondents. Then meanings and interpretations were assigned to words and phrases in a more *inferential* manner, this can be referred to as pattern codes.

In brief, as part of the data processing, initially I developed 18 general coding categories with the associated sub-themes which were assigned retrieval codes. Because data analysis had not yet reached a point of saturation I called this an interim coding system. This was necessitated by the importance of going back to the additional data to check the possibility of the further development of themes.

Finally in order to deal efficiently and effectively with the question of internal reliability it became necessary and advisable to involve persons not directly connected to the inquiry. This was also done to enhance objectivity. The collected data, i.e., transcripts, conceptual framework and the research questions were given to two colleagues in the department of education the division of Quality Assurance with the task of developing initial coding/categorization system independently.

The two colleagues managed to produce their coding system with the difference in the total number of the general categories developed. One had twelve categories and the other fifteen coding categories, while I had already developed eighteen categories. To produce a single

coding system, the three of us sat down to compare and reduce the coding system to only ten as indicated in Table 4.4. In this regard, almost 90% of internal reliability was reached among all of us.

TABLE 4.3: EXAMPLE OF THE CODING SYSTEM FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONS,

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLANATION
Tshwene Primary	Tsh. Pri 1.1	The first three letters represent the schools assumed name, the middle letters Pri represent the principal of case study 1 while 1 represents the question number
	Tsh. DPri.1	Tsh – name of the school, DPRI – Deputy-Principal (rank) and 1 refers to the question number
	Tsh.HOD1.1	Tsh represent the school's name, HOD 1 represents the departmental head no. one while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.HOD2.1	Tsh – name of the school, HOD 2 represents the departmental head no.two while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.HOD3.1	Tsh – name of the school, HOD 3 represents the departmental head no.two while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.ED/TR.2.	Tsh – name of the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer and digit 2 represents question two
Siege Primary	Sie.Pri.2.1	Sie stands for Siege Primary and the abbreviation Pri2 is for the principal of case study #2 school while 1 is for the number of the question
	Sie.HOD1.3	Sie represents the school name, HOD for the Heads of Department, while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Sie.HOD2.4	Sie represents the school name, HOD for the Heads of Department no. two, while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
Banogeng Primary	Ban.Pri3.3	Ban stands for Banogeng Prim stands for the principal of the school, and three stands for the question number.
	Ban.D.Pri3.4	Ban stands for the name of the school, D.Pri for the deputy principal of case study 3
	Ban.HOD1.3	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number one while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.HOD2.4	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number two while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLANATION
	Ban.HOD3.5	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number three while 5 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.HOD4.6	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number four while 6 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.ED/TR.2	Ban – name of the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer and digit 2 represent question two
Bogosing Secondary	Bog.Pri1.4	Bog stands for Bogosing Pri stands for the principal of the school, and four stands for the question number.
	Bog.D.Pri.3	Bog stands for the name of the school, D.Pri for the deputy principal of case study 3
	Bog.HOD1.2	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number one while 2 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.HOD2.3	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number two while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.HOD3.6	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number three while 6 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
Central Region	CR.CM.1	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 1 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
	CR.CM.3	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 3 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
	CR.CM.2	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 2 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
Provincial level: Head Office	Prov.Mr Men	Pro stands for Provincial Dir for Director while 2 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
	Prov.Mr Modi	Pro stands for Provincial D.Dir for Deputy Director while 1 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
	Prov.Mr Radie	Pro stands for Provincial D.Dir for Deputy Director while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
National Level	Bosman	Nat represents the National department, Hof assigned name for respondent at director level and 2 for the question number.
National Department of Educatopm	Fish	Nat represents the National department, Dr V a director at national level and 4 question number.

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLANATION
Education Right Programme	ERP.Mr Vavi	ERP represents the organization, MR SV represents the name of the policy expert interviewed and 4 represents the question number
EPU.WITS University	EPU.WITS.DR.CM.3	EPU-WITS, Education Policy Unit of Wits University, DR CM stands for the policy experts and 3 the question
IDASA	IDASA.MR W.3	Institute of Democracy Association of South Africa while MR W stands for the policy experts
Education Foundation	EDU.MR P:4	EDU.refers to the name of the policy experts and 4 for the question number.
NAPTOSA	Napt: Dr Bush 15	Napt for NAPTOSA, Dr Bos for the name of the policy experts interviewed
SAOU	SAOU. Mr PT.4	Mr PT refers to the union representative interviewed while 4 stands for the question
SADTU		
	The keys to the coding system. the middle tag i.e., the abbreviation with three letters which represent the last digit on the right hand side	

Finally, Table 4.5 below plus Annexure C7 at the end give examples of the final coding system with sub-themes and codes under the major themes or categorization. In this regard, nine major categorizations had been developed with 115 sub-themes.

TABLE 4.4: EXAMPLE OF A CODING SYSTEM WITH MAJOR AND MINOR THEMES

1. Policy Conceptualization/Understanding²²

P.C. School Improvement ²³	P.C. – S I
P.C. Financial Assistance	P.C. – F A
P.C. Resource Redistribution	P.C. R R E
P.C. Resource Provision	P.C. – R P
P.C. Redress Imbalances	P.C. – R I M
P.C. Resourcing Equity	P.C. – R-EQ
P.C. Disadvantaged Schools	P.C. DI-Sch

²² The data analysis indicated above was informed by the principles of grounded theory (or done inductively). According to Whetten (1989:492) three elements of grounded theory are: Concepts, Categories, and propositions. The generation of these in an interactive process, Policy conceptualization is a major category.

²³ School improvement is a minor theme derived from raw data (descriptive).

P.C. Quality Education	P.C. – Q/EDU
P.C. Alleviation of Poverty	P.C. – A/Po
P.C. School Development	P.C. – Sch/Dev
P.C. Policy-Misunderstanding	P.C.-P/MIS
P.C Policy coherence	P.C.P/CO
P.C Policy Integration	P.C.P - Integration

2. Implementation Process

I.P: Clear – guidelines	I.P. - CI/GUI
I.P: Prescribed Conditions	I.P. - P/CON
I.P: Implementation Procedures	I.P. - IM/Pro
I.P: Implementation Structure	I.P. – IM/STR
I.P: Management Plans	I.P. – M/PL
I.P: Implementation Strategies	I.P. – IM/ST
I.P: Qualification Criteria	I.P. – Qu/cri
I.P: Advocacy Campaign	I.P. – AD/CA
I.P: Training/Workshop	I.P. – TRA
I.P: Budget Provision	I.P. – BU/PRO
I.P: Provincial Regulations	I.P. – Pro/RE
I.P: Tracking – System	I.P. – Tra/Sy
I.P: Cost-Saving	I.P.- Cost/S
I.P: Fee-Collection	I.P.- FE/Coll
I.P: Legal-Suit	I.P.- LEG/Sui
I.P: Functional approach	I.P. F-A

Fourthly, before completing the data analysis it became essential to take a final trip to the learning sites in order to make some follow-ups like administering the questionnaire. This was prompted by the realization of getting contradictory views among participants namely: principals, senior management teams (i.e., deputy principals and departmental heads) interviewed, and district officials. The contradictions were particularly noticeable in the following set of question items from the semi-structured interview instruments:

- ◆ How was the policy communicated to you?
- ◆ Why was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding introduced in schools?
- ◆ What are the main challenges being experienced in attempting to implement the NNSSF policy in Section 21 schools?
- ◆ What do you believe are emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development?

4.4 QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

The above-indicated questions were regarded as very central to the inquiry on school finance policy and its subsequent effects on equity. Furthermore, the realization of the policy intentions depends to a certain extent on how the policy is communicated, understood and implemented. On the basis of this development, it became imperative to seek further views. To pursue this I developed a questionnaire for the participants already stated. The decision to conduct this survey also allowed me an opportunity for a big quantitative sample that can serve as a signpost for further study.

Since initial data collected and analysed appeared to point to a discrepancy to what participants at senior level said and what actually happened. It became important to search further for the truth by administering the questionnaire to all the participants at school level, i.e., from the school principal down to the teachers. The questionnaire was administered to a total number of 83 teachers at the five case study schools with a response rate of 90% (see Annexure D). The decision to use the whole population (not the sampling methodology) was based on the (i) size of the population i.e., very small and (ii) easy access to the learning sites. Annexure D shows an example of a questionnaire.

Before getting to grips with the actual development of the questionnaire, **justification** for the use of the questionnaire became appropriate. The following key factors served as justification for the limited employment of the questionnaire in this research study.

In fact, it is critical to state that there is nothing inherently wrong to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches in the research design. The combination of the two can enhance the research studies. For the purpose of this inquiry, the following key factors served as justification for the limited employment of the quantitative approach in this qualitative study:

- ◆ The questionnaire was developed as a means of making follow-ups on the discrepancies observed between what school principals said and what the senior management team (especially departmental head) said about how the NNSSF policy was communicated at schools, e.g., Principal talked about workshops while other members of the team talked about meeting. In this regard, it became essential to include other members of the staff either to confirm the principal's position or that of the senior management team.
- ◆ The development and use of the questionnaire was also intended to do triangulation through obtaining multiple perspectives. Therefore the inclusion of the whole staff at school levels in the sample should be seen within the arena of triangulation and going deeper.
- ◆ The employment of the questionnaire in the late stage of the inquiry is a result of the strength of the quantitative approach, namely an emphasis on objectivity and the analysis of statistical breakdown of variables. In this inquiry, the development of the frequency tables on key variables such as communication and meetings can assist in strengthening the findings reached. The same thing can be said in confirming the propositions/constructs guiding the study.
- ◆ Since qualitative approach involves in-depth study, the additional use of the quantitative approach added a lot of breadth to the whole study especially at school level. This factor can enable the researcher to decide to generalize the findings or recommend further inquiry.
- ◆ Time constraints did not allow me to extend the process of the semi-structured interview to the additional sample.

- ◆ Finally, the usefulness of the quantitative approach in amassing a lot of data in a short space of time also served as the main reason for employing the questionnaires for specific follow-ups.
- **Analysis of the quantitative data**

Fifthly, after getting the responses from the field, i.e., the return of the questionnaires, I did further analysis which had more than 77% return rate where initial data was ordered into a spreadsheet. The results were then taken to the statistician for further computerization. Here, a highly sophisticated computer software called statistical package was used (University of North West). This resulted in the production of various graphs, frequency tables and condensed data that became very essential in the development of the research findings in both Chapters five and six.

4.5 ENSURING VALIDITY

In this qualitative study the issues of validity and reliability concerned me most. In order to ensure that the key findings of the inquiry are not only believable but also trustworthy, I employed several approaches and strategies as follows:

Firstly, my position as a student and an employee within the department that was attempting to implement the NNSSF policy created ethical dilemmas. The fundamental question was to declare or not? But after due consideration of all factors I felt compelled to declare my position as a doctoral student to my employer (see Annexure A.1) throughout the whole research process. The decision to declare my position upfront was not only based on ethical grounds but also on practical factors. For instance, due to this open declaration it became easy to obtain special leave for study purposes plus unrestricted access to information. This means that almost everybody at senior management level was aware of my academic study.

Secondly, for the main purpose of testing evidence and claims collected it became critical for me to engage in what is called “member checking”. In this regard, I subjected the data collected from one group of respondents to the other groups with the view to pick-up gaps or

discrepancy. Furthermore, I became fortunate to have a coterie of colleagues (one, a fellow doctoral student) who were willing to interrogate the type of data I collected. This ensured that personal opinions and subjectivities did not creep in to contaminate the emerged findings.

Thirdly, I employed triangulation as a strategy for dealing with data which was not only confusing, but also at variance with each other, since data collection and analysis within the qualitative design are closely related to each other. In the process of comparing and contrasting the collected data I was able to detect some discrepancy from the data collected. At school level, the information given to me by both the principals and other SMT members, for example, Departmental Heads appeared contradictory. I dealt with this contradiction through the use of triangulation by developing a questionnaire for all teachers at the five selected schools. The results of this qualitative survey managed to deal with the identified contradiction since data was collected from multiple sources. Further discrepancies identified were handled through document analysis, which, among other things, include circulars, minutes of the following meetings: Departmental Management Meetings (DMC), Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) and Council of Education Ministers (CEM)

Fourthly, my prolonged engagement (17 months) or stay in the five identified case study schools contributed immensely to the question of trustworthiness of the key findings as a whole.

Finally, I employed thick description throughout the data collection process by allowing key respondents the freedom to express their emotions and frustrations in context. In the course of this process, I made sure to distance myself emotionally so as to collect data that did not have any “noise” in it. The process of thick description was concluded by going back to the respondents interviewed with the drafts of the reports made with the view to verify key statements collected.

4.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Flyberg (2001:66) states that a case study details examination of a single example of a class of phenomena; a case study cannot provide reliable information about the broader class. Implicit in this statement is the doubt on the generalizability of the findings of the case study in general. While I agree with the lack of the generalizability of the findings of the case study report, I do think that there are ways and means of addressing the challenge of lack of generalizability depending on the nature of the inquiry. The main aim is to confirm or not confirm the truth as carried out by the developed propositions or hypothesis.

In particular, the size of the probability sampling can be regarded as the limitation of this inquiry which has only five case study schools. But in qualitative design 'size' does not matter much what matters most is the depth of the study (not the breadth). And I do believe that the employment of a multi-site case study dealt with the limitations of the study to a certain extent. The said limitation was further addressed by closely and systematically studying the implementation of the funding policy in real life situations, i.e., the schools. This approach allowed me to be deeply aware of the context of reality at school level. This means that the interaction between the subjects and the lone researcher (myself) led to the sharing of concrete experience.

The context experience gained in the real-situation managed to a certain degree to cancel out the identified limitation of the case study methodology. Bias towards verification or falsification is regarded as one of the limitations of the qualitative study. It is assumed that a case study method maintains a bias toward verification, with the view to confirm the researcher's pre-conceived notion. Thus the study is of a doubtful scientific value. In dealing with this apparent limitation of a case study, one has to accept that perfect truth seldom exists, and that subjectivity may cut across all types of research methods because people as human beings are involved. However, for the purpose of this inquiry subjectivity has been minimized through the use of grounded theory which allowed the emerging factual data to talk to the theory or propositions. This means that there was no imposition of the data on the propositions. Furthermore, subjectivity was dealt with by establishing the authenticity of the

data collected with colleagues within the department of education. In this regard, I selected three knowledgeable colleagues at senior management level and tested the data I received with them. This was further enhanced through the involvement of district managers of NNSSF at the regional level.

Another dimension which can be regarded as a limiting factor is “putting up a show” which I call window dressing by the key respondents. Indeed this possibility of window dressing may be more pronounced in qualitative survey than qualitative ones. Being mindful of this possibility as a researcher and employee of the department of education I dealt with window dressing at the level of the interview process by always looking for records or examples as hard evidence. Furthermore, the interview of many participants on the same issue assisted me to minimize the limiting effect of being given the distorted or inflated information.

Given the fact that my purposeful sampling for the semi-structured interview mostly included senior management team, i.e., principal, deputy-principal and departmental heads at school level, not ordinary teachers, the absence of interrogated perspectives (educators) through a face to face interview can be cited as the limiting factor of this qualitative study.

4.7 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

Chapter four is basically about how both qualitative and quantitative data was generated. In this regard a total of forty-six key respondents constitute the main sample for this research study. Such a sample is spread across the five levels of data collection platform. This means that at each and every level of the education system i.e., national, provincial, regional, five case study school and policy experts purposeful sampling was done. Beyond the identification of the sample, data collection strategies such as semi-structured interview, profiles, and questionnaire were developed and piloted and later used to collect raw data. This was done. The accumulated raw data was later transcribed and subjected to further coding, themes-development and analysis.

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**PHOTOGRAPH #5: MOSIMA SECONDARY SCHOOL: DEEP RURAL, 42 KM FROM CITY
(FOUNDED IN 1982)**



Self produced photograph (28/03/2003) 3 (e): shows the new additional administration block built from the infrastructure capital project.

Case Study School 5:

Mosima Secondary: Implementing the funding policy

Mosima Secondary School was established in 1982 firstly as a middle school serving learners mainly between the age of 12 and 15. The school became a secondary in 1992. The school is situated about 42 kilometres from Mafikeng, the capital city of the North West Province, in a village called Mantsa. This is a very impoverished village where the majority of the residents are either cattle stock farmers or unemployed. The school serves as the catchment area of the surrounding primary schools which act as feeder schools.

In addition to the old-buildings which were built by the parent-community, the school has recently been refurbished with some additional structures such as the laboratory, library, staff-room and administration block for senior management (see photograph 4.5 (e) which indicates the newly built physical infrastructure. The additional structure was funded by the Department of Education from the capital projects fund and built by the Department of Public Works. In addition, water and electricity are available at school level.

Mosima has a total enrollment of 710 learners to 22 educators within the classroom accommodation of 16 rooms, i.e., for 2003 academic year. In 2001 2002 academic years both learner-educator ratio stood at 1.32 and 1.31 respectively.

5

EXPLORING UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE
EDUCATION POLICY AT FOUR LEVELS OF
THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to present the empirical data generated on the understanding of the NNSSF policy at each of the four levels of the education system plus the policy expert level on: *How was the new School Funding Policy implemented within and through the different levels of the education system?*

The empirical data was generated using the following data collection strategies with specific reference to how education policy was understood and implemented, semi-structured interview schedule (used with the tape recorder), profiling of the units of analysis i.e., the five case study schools, documents analysis including official records such as minutes of senior management meetings at four identified levels (national, provincial, regional and schools) and financial records of the department. Others include a scrutiny of the previous researches done on equity, especially the one on the Systemic Evaluation (SE) and Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) which were both commissioned by the DoE under the auspices of EFA as well as the Review Report on the Resourcing of Education (DoE, 2003:146) also commissioned by the National Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal.

In this chapter I have tried primarily to link the collected data with the question about how various education stakeholders understood the school finance policy. This presentation, which is mainly about the key research findings, is done according to the five identified levels of the education system (i.e., national, provincial, regional and stakeholders/policy experts and the five case study schools). In *section two* I paid a focused attention to the school level understanding where the key findings were presented and supported with evidence in the form of central themes, sub-themes, graphs, tables and figures. This was done with the main objective of giving force and effects to the claims made.

SECTION ONE

5.2 FINDINGS

5.2.1 NATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

As a result of a constant comparative analysis of the collected data through the face-to-face interview, document analysis and critical comments from the literature review, this section explored the policy understanding, which emerged, from the interpretation of the policy. In this regard, policy understanding has been explored from the following: *What is the understanding of the NNSSF policy (meaning), what was the policy responding to? What is the relationship between the NNSSF and PPM policy (integration question)? How was the policy implementation approached i.e., advocacy (policy coherence)?* These set of questions were meant to cancel out the divide between policy and practice or find the factors causing such divide or gaps between policy and practice.

The data referred to above gave rise to the following finding at the national level. *The National officials showed a fair, legalistic but traditional understanding of the NNSSF policy, but such understanding lacked holistic, coherent and integrated approach to equity. This claim is supported by evidence in the form of the interviewees' voices, emerged themes and documentary proof.*

For example, a senior national official gave his broad but legalistic understanding of the NNSSF policy through the following comment:

My understanding of the policy has two layers to it, (i) National Education Official (Bosman). Section 146 of the constitution provides the National Department to lay down norms for school funding. The legislative directives are applicable to all schools in South Africa. The Schools Act is flowing from the mandate of the minister to make legislation by law. It was stated that norms and standard for school funding must be determined and the provincial authorities when they give allocation must apply these norms when they distribute to the various schools. It is part of a legal framework which gives the provincial authorities the legal status to give funds to schools but within the framework. The funds allocated to various schools are meant to address the imbalances of the past government (Bosman, Nat.18/2002).

A closer look at the information given by the senior official at the national level does not only reflect the clear role of the ministry in laying down both the legal and constitutional imperatives for the policy, it also goes further by highlighting the obligation of the provinces in giving funds to schools but the definition is silent on the source of funding. Further interpretation of the given comments concerning the NNSSF policy draws attention to the different roles expected to be played by both the national and provincial education departments. From the perspective of this senior official it appeared clear that the national ministry is responsible for the legislation of the Acts and the setting up of guidelines for implementation by provinces. Perhaps this line of argument by a senior official at the national level can be ascribed to the normal “divide” between policy-makers and policy implementers. The point I am making here confined this kind of approach to the traditional way of making a clinical distinction between policy and implementation. In this regard, very recent studies and literature on policy implementation and development reject this divide (see section 2.2.1 and 2.4.1 in Chapter two).

At the same level of investigation, another senior official interviewed, saw the NNSSF policy as follows:

It is only intended to address the inequalities of the past governments through the equitable distribution of the financial resources from the state. These financial resources must come from the non-personnel budget of the provincial budget of the provincial education department (Dr Fish, /3/2003).

If one takes a serious look at both Dr Fish and Mr. Bosman’s statements above regarding the meaning of the NNSSF policy, It seems very clear that a lot of implementation issues of the policy were relegated (or delegated) to the provincial level. Perhaps this can be explained from the provisions and spirits of both the NNSSF policy and SASA 1996 as well as various pieces of legislation which all argue for the decentralization of powers and delegation of authority. Looked at from another perspective, perhaps the legalistic mindset of the national officials can also be located into the following legislative framework:

According to Section 8(1) of the National Education Policy Act of 1996, the Minister of education is mandated to direct standards of education provision, delivery, monitor and evaluate performance of the education system throughout the Republic of South Africa (DoE, 1996:26).

In response to the question “what was the NNSSF policy responding to? A numerical account of the themes that emerged from the total number of interviewees (2) at the national level stood at nine. The themes are: need to address the imbalances of the past apartheid government, resource distribution, resource provision, resourcing schools, resourcing equity, address quality education in previously disadvantaged schools, alleviation of poverty, school development, school improvement and disadvantaged schools. These central themes clearly captured the stimulus of the policy, thus determining the scope of what has to be done to realise the policy objectives. Whether this is achievable within the determined scope is another matter.

In addition to the central themes, which emerged from the key respondents, a senior national official further gave the following response as the broad response of the NNSSF policy and the relationship between the NNSSF and the PPM policies:

It is seeking to address the non-personnel costs in public schools within five quintiles, where the poorest quintile gets seven times the richest school equity and equality are implied: equal distribution of resources taking all factors into consideration. Equality means everyone getting the same amount. With equity, those who are rich must get lesser than those who are poor (Mr. Bosman, Nat /10/2002).

The same official further said:

It is the province that allocates money to schools. The national has no role in the provincial budget.

Another official responded in the same interview: “*what is the relationship between the NNSSF and post-provisioning model for educators?*” The response given was not only puzzling but also highlighted the *fragmented* approach by the national department to policy development and implementation. The following statement attests to lack of integration and coherence:

The post-provisioning which is intended to distribute educators across the school system is done by a different legislative framework. The principles involved differ but there is a link in the sense that there is a division of 80:15 between personnel and non-personnel (Dr. Fish, 16/02/2003).

Well, when the policy (i.e., NNSSF was drawn up four years ago (i.e., in 1998) there was no relationship between the two, even up to now there is none, but in the near

future it will be connected. They will use a slope of 1:7 and in that regard poorer schools will get more educators. In a sense there is some relationship (Dr Fish, /10/2002).

Given the fact that both the NNSSF and PPM²⁴ policies were aimed at the qualitative improvement of the schools in particular the historically disadvantaged ones, by ensuring the equitable distribution of both human and financial resources, I think a coherent and integrated approach should have informed the initial development and implementation of both policies. On the contrary, despite having almost the same objectives and goal and sanctioned by one department, the two policies were developed separately until recently. For example the post-provisioning policy which informed the rationalization and redeployment of teachers across the school system was developed by the ELRC in 1998 and became effective in 1999 (DoE, 2002:4). On the other hand, The NNSSF policy which completed the cycle of SASA²⁵ 1996 was developed in 1998 under the auspices of the division of Planning and Financial Management (DoE, 1998:4). The fact that the Department of Education is the one which has legal and constitutional competency of enacting the two policies, would have made integration and coherent implementation much easier.

Finally, informed by the fact that both policies (NNSSF and PPM) were aimed at achieving personnel to educator ratio of 80:15 by 2005 strengthened the argument for integration and coherence further. This is further influenced by the fact that the achievement of the equitable distribution of non-personnel costs, to a large extent, depends on the percentage of the personnel costs (see section 2.10.1 of Chapter two). Besides this point, as late as 2003, the personnel budget was increasing standing at 92% of the North West Education Department (NWED, 2004).

Lack of synergy and integrated approach to policy process, implementation in particular was clearly demonstrated by the views of the two senior officials interviewed on what is your general understanding of the implementation process of the NNSSF policy “i.e., (i) how was the understanding of the policy shared with the provinces?” How was it communicated in this connection? A senior official made the following comments:

²⁴ The PPM was reviewed in 2002 with the addition of the clause, curriculum redress. It is therefore puzzling to discover that as late as October 2002, very senior officials were not yet aware of the integration of the two policies.

²⁵ The first cycle was the type of schools i.e., Public and Independent schools, the second cycle was governance and management of schools and the third and last one was the financing of schools.

In that regard, if we talk about implementation, one must remember what the Constitution is saying. The province is responsible for the schooling system and the national head for higher education. In this case, there was a national guide for the provinces on how to implement the policy. The schools must just be trained on the policy according to the provisions (Dr Fish, 30/10/2002).

Another senior official at the same level commented as follows: There was communication between National and the Provinces, but it was only in the media. The main drive was through the HEDCOM Financial Committee which was facilitated by a consortium led by Education Foundation. Provinces brought their problems to this HEDCOM structures to be addressed (Mr Bosman, 30/10/2002).

A critical analysis of the national officials' attitude towards the implementation of the NNSSF policy provincially appeared not only bureaucratic but also disengaging. Disengaging because the national officials appeared unwilling to interact with the province on the implementation issues. The approach of national officials to the implementation tasks appeared to show all the hall-marks of the "big master" and obedient servants at the implementation level. And such an approach clearly demonstrates the traditional mindset between policy makers and implementations. This point is also strengthened by literature review on section 2.2 of Chapter two. The department's main investigation report (i.e., the review) on the financing, resourcing and costs of education in public schools also gave testimony to the approach to top-down, fragmented approach to the implementation of the NNSSF policy. For example, the following statement argued that "there is a need for the Department of Education to take a more proactive stand" to implementation of the NNSSF policy (DoE, 2003:27). By implication the National Department of Education took a reactive approach before. Furthermore, the fact that in the review report issues which were separately tackled in the past like the National Primary Feeding Scheme, teacher-redeployment, teachers' quality of teaching and efficient use of funding (NNSSF policy) are now being discussed in an integrated manner strengthen the wish to move away from a fragmented approach to a more integrated and coherent one.

Evaluation and monitoring as well as support are an integrated part of effective policy implementation. But data available suggests that the National Department was not going beyond its written directives (prescription) to the provincial education departments to make

sure that things are done according to the set-guidelines so as to realise the policy intentions. This means that beyond notices, and report back from the provinces, the national department has a hands off approach to the issue of equity. For example, on the issue of the appointment of key specialists i.e., financial analysts, education planners, statisticians and computer programmer at provincial level, Mr Bosman commented as follows:

I haven't come across any provinces with these specialists, but provinces must see to it that these people are appointed. The policy also requires that the funding should have been made available for such appointments by the provinces. Our role of the national effort is to verify the authenticity and accuracy of such reports from multiple sources States that: the HEDCOM has a sub-structure committee reporting on the norms and standards policy. If there is any difficulty it would be referred to CEM meeting ... further explains ... I think national is there to support implementation.

Subjecting the above statement to a critical assessment tends to unmask the real approach of the national officials to key essentials that have the potential to ensure the success or failure of policies, namely, structures and skillful people. It therefore becomes intriguing to notice the prescription of rules and personnel without ensuring that such structures exist. What was also interesting was the directive to provinces to appoint key specialists while the national department did not have such specialists and they designed a policy which is complicated to be implemented. In the light of this argument, I think that the DoE should have ensured the presence of such specialists at provincial level before the actual implementation of the policy.

Finally and most importantly, the National Department's recommendation (based on the review report) on the need to "translate inputs to outputs by looking at the current systems to monitor output (in addition to matric) such as Systemic Evaluation (SE), SACMEQ, Whole-School Evaluation (WSE) is sufficient proof that the initial and present approach to implementation was incoherent, reactive and legalistic.

5.2.2 PROVINCIAL LEVEL (OFFICIALS)

The understanding of the NNSSF policy varied among the provincial officials who were given the responsibility of overseeing the translation of policy at the school level via the regional offices. In brief, despite displaying a limited knowledge of the policy, provincial officials

demonstrated a bureaucratic or functionalist-oriented approach to the implementation of the NNSF policy putting a lot of emphasis on line functions and official communication channels. For instance a senior provincial official had this to say:

My understanding is that the policy is aimed at distributing the resources equitably among the schools especially addressing the question of redress, trying to place all the schools on some level that is in terms of resourcing them. But to achieve this systems i.e., by creating system such a financial system, monitoring systems must be put in place (Mr. Men.10/10/2002).

Besides the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), members of the Provincial Project Management committee were never trained by the consortium led by the Education Foundation. This means that they were never part of the groups trained in Rustenburg in 1998 where provincial officials were taken to the workshop (NWED, 1999:11) in preparation for the implementation of the policy.

The above-given explanation appears adequate. However, if one compares the explanation with the ones given by most of the respondents (interviewed) against the broad working definition of educational equity (see section 2.2 in Chapter two), it is easy to conclude that to most of the respondents equity is restricted to the financial inputs. In this regard, there is a trend that attempts to equate the school funding policy to equity as a broad constitutional principle. This trend is problematic since it tends to simplify and narrow the meaning of equity to financial input only. Equity is much broader than this and requires a holistic and integrated approach.

Perhaps the limited understanding of educational equity and its broader goal by senior officials can be ascribed to poor training, insufficient training and development or poor advocacy²⁶. This insertion finds support in the face-to-face interaction between a senior provincial official (at the deputy-director level, Mr. Men) on how was the implementation process actually followed? (i.e., what actually happened). Mr. Men responded as follows:

A lot of quick advocacy has happened at provincial level, but there were no follow-ups. Principals of schools, SGBs and regional officials were informed but implementation was not supported with sufficient training. There was nobody to make

²⁶ Indeed, according to the official records only two advocacy workshops were conducted for the NNSF policy. One was done on 30 November 1999 and the last one was done in March 2000.

follow-ups of the initial training given. In fact, the policy was not placed under a dedicated structure to implement²⁷. To me that is one of the things that made the policy not to function, it did not fall under any directorate. Furthermore, HEDCOM minutes indicated that “It was felt that generally speaking, there was an issue for the Norms and Standards committee. Mr. Patel (national official) gave a brief overview about how non-Section 21 schools were dealt with. Often we treat them as Section 21 schools. The MEC should have announced how budgets at school level should be appropriated, this has not been done.

A critical analysis of data collected including information from interviewees and official records pointed to the lack of ownership of the policy and the lack of the regulatory framework. To this end as late as February 2002, the NWED has not yet formulated the regulations for the management of finances at school level and the establishment of structures. The evidence is right here. In this regard Mr. Modi commented as follows:

... to me, now that the policy is there from national department, it should have been cascaded down to school level. From national up to school there should have been a structure that actually monitor the implementation process, to see whether it is being implemented thoroughly from national up to the school level, the monitoring is not so effective (Mr. Men, 10/10/2002).

In response to the interview question on “How does the PED allow schools to become Section 21 schools”, another senior official said:

The schools apply and applications are checked against the criteria for qualification. Because of lack of dedicated staff, the process of allocating Section 21 status is questionable and no guarantee exists that the schools given the status have the capacity to carry out the given functions. No support can be said to be given to the schools (Mod, 30/10/2002).

Indeed the issue of ownership and capacity were found to be dominant themes at provincial level. According to the official records, the NWED was the last province to determine Section 21 status to some schools by allocating five functions to be delegated to the school level (see section one in Chapter three). Despite this bold move the function for the acquisition of Learner Support Material (LSM) i.e., Section 117 of the NNSF policy places the responsibility of purchasing LSM at school level. However in direct violation of the provision

²⁷ The NWED did not have full time staff to co-ordinate and implement the policy until June 2002 when a director was appointed together with seven contracted clerks. Since November 1999, the Project Management committee had been responsible for the oversight of the policy but members of the committee had their normal activities.

of the policy document, the NWED (2002:14) decided to hold back the functions of the acquisition of the learner support material.

In direct response to whether there is any *relationship* between the NNSSF policy and the PPM (i.e., policy for the rationalization and redeployment of educators) all respondents interviewed at provincial level gave a confident and emphatic response. For example, one senior official (at deputy director level) responded as follows:

There is much relationship in that regard, i.e., between the two policies, because post-provisioning model for educators address the learner-teacher-ratio by aiming at equitable provision and optimal use of the available human resources. On the one hand, the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy attempts to address poverty or usage of material resources at school level by aiming at the equitable distribution of financial resources. The two policies relate because both of them seek to maximise the state resources by addressing the legacy of the apartheid education where white schools e.g., model c schools enjoy abundance of both finance and staff. That is why such schools had (even now) clerks, administrative personnel and gardeners compared to the African schools which are still struggling to survive (Mr Men).

Despite the observation of the sense of confidence in the relationship between NNSSF and PPM policies from the interviewee, maybe the informed position of Mr. Men can be attributed to the fact that he dealt with the two policies at both school and departmental level. I also picked up the feeling of anger/injustice (... Model C schools enjoyed abundance of both finance and staff ... that is why such schools had/even now, clerks, ...) from the respondents. Perhaps the anger is understandable from this male African official who had worked in both the old system and the new one. Probably the feeling of injustice as a sub-theme can be ascribed to his personal experience, the delay or inability of the NWED to allocate administrative/support staff to historically black schools or the observation that the NNSSF policy has not changed anything fundamentally in the disadvantaged school.

What emerged as major themes from the question that dealt with relationship, integration or policy coherence at provincial levels were maximization of state resources, optimal usage, material and human resources. This was a major contrast with the national levels since the national officials did not see direct link between the NNSSF and the PPM policies. Lack of direct relationship ascribed by the national officials was puzzling because the two policies and

many other policies were initiated and developed by the national department. In this connection, the fragmented approach by national officials and a clinical divide between policy and practice can be cited as some of the factors. This is informed, as stated earlier, by the clear cut between the role of policy-maker and policy implementers adopted by the national officials (sometimes using both the Constitution and the organizational structures of the national education system). This approach cannot only be regarded as problematic but also lacks currency of very recent approaches and insight in policy processes, in particular policy implementation (see section 2.2.1).

Even if the provincial officials demonstrated a fair understanding of the policy, in this case the relationship between the NNSSF and PPM policies there was no evidence of integration and coherence in practice beyond the establishment of the co-ordination structures called the Project Management Committee made up of officials from various divisions of the department. In the quest for integration and coherence, at a more practical level one would have thought that the following policies NNSSF, WSE, PPM and Education Management Development as well as the Public Finance Management would be pulled together so as to create synergy and inter-connectedness among them. This argument is informed by the following factors: all these policies are meant for the qualitative improvement of the school system, the aspects of which presuppose related sub-themes such vision, mission, strategic goals and indicators of performance is a cross cutting theme among and between these policies identified.

On the contrary, the implementation of the NNSSF policy within the NWED was not only approached in a fragmented manner by the few individuals but also appeared to ignore what existed before. For instance; according to the NWED organizational structures both the Education Management Development and Governance Unit were responsible for school management, the empowerment of the SGB and the efficient management of school as a whole (NWED, 1996:14). However closer assessment of the role of these structures revealed that they were not centrally involved in the implementation of the NNSSF policy in the school system. This appeared to have happened despite the fact that since 1995 the said divisions had been in charge of the co-ordination and management of the educational districts.

Another point worth mentioning here was the reasons advanced for not putting up dedicated permanent structures for the implementation of the NNSSF policy. In this continued “restructuring and financial constraints” were cited as main reasons. To this end records of management meeting reflected the following statement:

Due to the process of restructuring (often called transformation) new appointments cannot be made. Officials are therefore requested to continue with additional responsibility until the situation becomes manageable (NWED, 2001:14).

Whether the reason advanced are true begs the question, because four years down the line i.e., after the restructuring process, NNSSF policy does not yet have dedicated and permanent structures besides a Director who was only appointed in June 2002. Given the centrality of the NNSSF policy as a constitutional imperative and the importance of addressing the educational needs of the historically disadvantaged schools it becomes morally problematic to accept the position of not putting up structures for the NNSSF policy. In this regard North West Education is regarded as one of the poorest provinces unlikely to improve its position unless enough is done to address both the personnel costs and the declining budget. According to the Third Year Report of Education 2000 plus which is a longitudinal study that monitors education policy implementation and change in South Africa. the Eastern Cape has the largest number of the country’s poor children, followed by Kwazulu Natal, Limpopo and North West (Centre for Education Policy, Development, Evaluation and Management, 2000:94). It is further stated that the three provinces together account for as much as 70% of poor children in the country (*Mail & Guardian*, 26 January 2001).

5.2.3 REGIONAL LEVEL (OFFICIALS)

Officials at the Central Region demonstrated a limited functional understanding (knowledge) of the NNSSF policy, and thus dominated by a disengaging approach and a sense of despair on how the implementation unfolded. In this connection the three officials interviewed gave almost the same responses, which captured the gist of the policy implementation. For instance, one official at the Central Region shared his understanding of the policy as follows:

It is a policy that is trying to assist the schools financially in such a way that the most needy schools should be advantaged and their learners having access to education.

(CEN.CM.2.)²⁸ Another official at the same level said “my understanding is that it is a policy that is intended to correct the injustices of the past. It is trying to put in place the aspects of equity and redress (CEN.CM².1)

Despite this fair but limited understanding of the policy, when probed further on their involvement on the actual development of the policy, all the regional officials claimed that they were never involved in the initial formulation of the policy. One regional official made the following comment:

When the implementation of the policy started, the following did not happen. Structures of delivery were not in place to reach schools. There was no budget provided for the implementation of the policy; paper work was not done. Delivery was done in a poor manner where there was no accountability on the part of officials dealing with the orders.

There was a plan in place but it was not maintained and sustained. Centre like warehouses, were not decentralized and properly staffed. We had some workshops where we were expected to train school principals, but no clear advocacy campaigns were mounted by the officials at Head office level. The whole thing was just rushed. And this created a lot of confusion at school level (CEN.CM³.3).

The issues of absence of dedicated structures for effective implementation of the NNSSF policy seemed to be a matter of great concern especially to the regional officials. Perhaps this concern emanated from the fact that regional officials were directly placed in charge of the policy at school level. They are the ones to guide and motivate the school leadership on how best to approach the implementation.

Giving further weight to the perceived poor advocacy of the policy, another official vividly commented as follows:

There should have been proper advocacy campaigns, putting of provincial and national structures in place and allocation of human and financial resources.

I would say that in the North West we experienced a number of problems. There was not a clear official or dedicated unit to deal with norms and standards policy.

I would say there was no clear plan. There was no financial plan given to districts. This was done at a later stage. And this is poor monitoring and support of the policy

²⁸ CEN.CM.2 Refers to the Circuit Managers at Central Regional Office.

In response to the relationship between NNSSF and PPM policies, regional officials almost gave the same response to the ones given by the provincial official. For example, one regional official commented as follows:

There is a relationship because both policies are aiming at redress as some schools in the past had more educators and others were understaffed, so the way redistribution of human resource is done is similar to funding of schools, which is done equitably (Centre.CM² 31/10/2002).

In addition to the above statement, closer analysis of the responses from the three regional officials to how the policy was implemented interviewed gave rise to the following themes:

Concerning how the policy was shared with the regional officials, most of the officials interviewed demonstrated a sense of lack of confidence in the way provincial officials cascaded policy information to them. For instance one key official commented as follows:

“Head office has the habit of passing many policies to us without sufficient training and additional personnel” (Centra.CM².4)²⁹. Statement like this one appear not only emotional but also contextual because one gets to know how previous and present policies were approached by the same department. In this instance it is clear that despite taking up a new policy (NNSSF) the provincial office did not review the present structures nor put in place new areas. Such practices seemed to be against very recent thinking and development within the area of policy implementation.

Poor planning, financial constraints, poor advocacy plan, insufficient training, absence of implementation structure and poor feedback. On the basis of these themes, which emerged from the voices of the respondents, an indication is made on how poorly the implementation of the NNSSF policy was handled. Tackling such large-scale reforms like the NNSSF policy without proper implementation structures, funding and relevant training can be viewed as neglect of duties. Provincial education departments who appear to have registered progress in this regard adopted a different route. According to HEDCOM minutes, the following provinces, the Western Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Northern Cape have managed to put

²⁹ Centra.CM³.2 refers to the Central region while CM² refers to Circuit Manager number three.

appropriate structures for implementation (DoE, 2002:16) of the NNSSF policy in place. Indeed both confirmed and unconfirmed response placed the Northern Cape Education department in the lead of implementing the policy

SECTION TWO

5.2.4 SCHOOL LEVEL: WHERE POLICY HITS THE GROUND²⁹

5.2.4.1 Tshwene Primary School : Case Study #1

This section of chapter five presents data generated through the semi-structured Interview with the Principals, Deputy Principals, Departmental Heads and Educator Treasurers and the Whole Staff through the Questionnaire at Tshwene Primary School.

◆ Understanding of the Policy

Understanding of the policy at school level varied among teachers in different ranks and responsibilities. In brief there was a slight difference among the school staff interviewed who demonstrated a limited understanding of the NNSSF policy compared to both the provincial and regional officials. To this end the principal of Tshwene Primary School sheds his understanding of the policy as follows:

The National Norms and Standards for the school funding is meant to assist the schools to run themselves effectively, so as to balance the previous imbalance of the old government. To me this refers to the better financial resourcing of our rural schools. So that we can find ourselves in the same position like former Model C schools (Tsh.Pri.1).³⁰

In the same interview and in response to the question, “Is there any relationship between the NNSSF and Post-Provisioning policy for the distribution of resources?” He responded as follows:

³⁰ Quoted from Wolf, Lung, Monit & Van Bell-Prouty (1999:1) a policy implementation book processes in Malawi and Namibia.

Yes, they relate. According to my understanding, they both balance the imbalances of the past governments. In the past, some schools did not have enough staff so the post-provisioning policy tries to balance the teachers. The Norms and Standard policy also tries to do this so as to improve the standard of the school (TSH.PRI.1).³¹

In eliciting the understanding of the NNSSF policy from the deputy-principal in a face-to-face interview, the response obtained was as follows:

My understanding is that it is the provision made by the government to allocate money to schools so that they can improve from their present position of poor quality (TSH.D.Pri.1.2).

Furthermore the interview I conducted with the following SMT members at the first case study school, regarding “what was the policy responding to”, gave rise to the following Central themes: poverty alleviation, Inequalities, redress, school development and quality education and school effectiveness.

Furthermore it is interesting to report that teachers at the same school demonstrated a limited understanding of the NNSSF policy even when they had responded positively to Question one. They still saw equity as equal to financial resources of the school. For example when the principal was asked to explain “what is educational equity?” He responded as follows: My little understanding of educational equity is the provision of equal education through equal allocation of money”. A further probe on how many training workshops on the NNSSF policy he had attended since the implementation of the Intervention programme he responded as follows:

We as school principals, have just been called once to a meeting by the district officials who told us about this funding policy. The meeting was over two days. But ever since becoming Section 21, we did not receive any additional training. The only assistance we received for the past two/three years was the format for the budget³² (Tsh. Pri 9).

As far as the understanding of the NNSSF policy at Tshwene Primary School is concerned and how the teachers first came to know about the new school policy, the table below i.e., Table

³¹ Tsh refers to Tshwene Primary Pri' to the principal of the school in case study two.

³² FORMAT: despite what the principal said regarding the format or guidelines for the budget, in 2002, written records revealed the absence of a format nor financial regulations for the effective management of the school budget. The only thing that was made available to each school is the departmental circular no. 64 on the Control of Funds (NWED, 2000:10).

5.1(a) shows how teachers came to know about the policy for the first time. The table was constructed on the basis of the results of the quantitative survey (i.e., the questionnaire) administered to the whole staff. The table also shows the level of understanding of the policy.

TABLE 5.1(a): THE RESPONSES OF TEACHERS ON WHAT STIMULATED THE NNSSF POLICY

Total No. of teachers	No. of respondents	% of respondents	% of incorrect response
23	19	82,6%	4=17%

Table 5.1(a) shows the level of understanding of the policy i.e., how many teachers understood the policy.

The content of Table 5.1(a) concerning how teachers first became aware of the NNSSF policy at school level, makes interesting reading. Out of 23 members who responded to the questionnaire 82,6% (i.e., 19) claimed to have read the policy and majority of them are post level³³ one teachers (14). This means that out of the 19 respondents, 14 are teachers at post level one rank. This means that 73,6% of the respondents who claimed to have read the policy are teachers. But reading a policy document does not automatically mean that one has understood the said document in full. In addition, only two teachers said that they were told about the policy by the principal of the school and such teachers were operating as ordinary teachers. It is therefore probable that majority of the teachers have actually read the policy. Perhaps without understanding.

5.2.4.2 Siege Primary School: Case Study #2

In this historical former white school, besides the principal, most of the senior management team members interviewed and the educators surveyed through the questionnaire *displayed a*

³³ According to the Public Administration measure, post-level teacher refers to an ordinary teacher still at level one ranking.

very limited understanding of the policy. In response to the question on the meaning of the NNSSF policy, the principal (Sie.Pri³.2)³⁴ commented as follows:

According to the NNSSF policy state funding must be obtained from public revenue to provide a good education system for all schools in the RSA and to redress past inequalities by providing an education system which contains transparency, fairness and equality for all. But the National Ministry does not decide on the amounts to be allocated to the provincial education departments.

A face value look at the principals' response reflects a deep understanding of the policy. However, critical analysis and interpretation of it reveals some shortcomings in the actual internalization of the policy as a whole. However, it was not easy to detect this until the turn for the senior management team came. In this regard the principal showed some uneasiness on the move to interview SMT members. The uneasiness displayed or lack of confidence can perhaps be explained from two angles. Probably the uneasiness was caused by the fact that the researcher was the SMT member from head office or the said principal had not shared the information with teachers. At any rate the interview was ultimately done. At that level of the interview with the head of department (Sieg.H.O.D.¹.2) the following comment was obtained:

Honestly speaking I do not know much about this policy since I am not involved in it. It is the principal and the School Governing Body members especially the chairperson who are knowledgeable about the policy. What I know is that since becoming Section 21 school there is money coming from the department to the school (Sie.H.O.D.2).

A comparison between what a member of the senior management team said and what the principal espoused made interesting development as far as consistency was concerned. The members of the staff were never workshopped or trained on the policy. There was clear line of operation between the role of the principal and other members of the staff (this implies that the issue of financial management was restricted to both the principal and the school governing body), the school as a former Model C had a track record of good financial management. For instance, in the year 2001, both the school management and the school governing body, in conjunction with the parents managed to raise a significant amount of money through fundraising projects. On the basis of this information the management style of the principal and the school culture became apparent. This implies that, given the culture of

³⁴ SIE.Pri³.2 Refers to the principal of Siege Primary School i.e., case study no.3 while 2 the last digit stands for question number two.

the school and the perceived authoritarian approach of the principal, the fear of the staff to approach the principal cannot be ruled out. On the one hand talk of transparency on the part of the principal might be a factor.

In response to a question on policy integration/coherence i.e., what was the relationship between the NNSSF and PPM (post-provisioning model) policies, the principal of Siege (Sie.PRI³.2) commented as follows:

There is a direct link between NNSSF policy and PPM for distribution of educators. The Ministry of Education's personnel policy for schools is threefold, i.e., schools must have an adequate number of educators; that these educators must be equitably distributed according to the teaching needs of the schools by the MEC of the province and that the cost of these post establishments must be carried by the provincial budget.

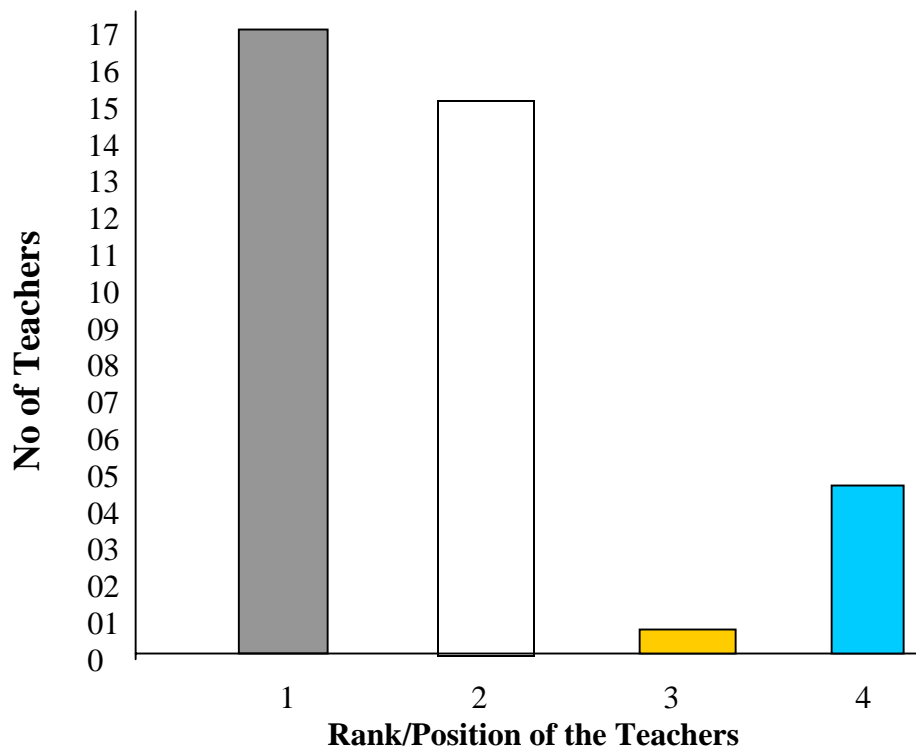
The response given by the principal of Siege, without doubt, delineated clear relationship between the two policies. Such a response appeared to demonstrate an insight into the two policies and can be explained from different perspectives. For instance, the fact that the principal dealt with the implementation of the two policies can be cited as a contributory factor to this fair understanding. This seemed to be the case given the fact that former Model C Schools often employed privately paid teachers from the SGB funds. Implicit in this statement is that the question of dealing with privately employed personnel can enhance somebody's understanding of the policy implications. For example, the state affordability of maintaining personnel costs is often at the heart of the number of educators to be employed. In simple terms if the state can afford an unlimited numbers of teachers at school level, the question of employing additional teachers from the pay roll of the SGB may not arise. The point I am developing here is that the actual task of dealing with these policies at the implementation level can enhance somebody's grasp of the policy.

On other aspects of the NNSSF policy, the principal commented as follows:

The educators and SGB members were informed of the most important stipulations of the policy. Copies of the policy were distributed to all SGB members and members of the staff (Siege.Pri³.2).

However, upon a comparison with the SMT members it turned out that such copies were never distributed to the teaching staff. In fact in one instance I had to postpone the scheduled interview appointment because the acting principal (H.O.D.)³⁵ did not have such a policy document. In order to establish the real situation at this case study school, the reason for the inclusion of the whole staff became imperative. In this connection the results of the administered questionnaire to all teachers including the acting principal on how they first became aware of the policy are reflected below: The bar graph SA shows teachers' response to how they first became aware of the policy.

GRAPH #5: HOW TEACHERS BECAME AWARE OF THE POLICY



Graph SA: Bar Chart showing the response of teachers according to rank

According to the bar graph above which was constructed from the teachers responses to the questionnaire question item that sought to determine how the teachers at Siege Primary School

³⁵ H.O.D at the beginning of the year 2002 the principal was promoted to Head Office and the H.O.D. had to act as a principal.

first became aware of the policy, 17 teachers took part. This number included the acting principal, two heads of department and 14 teachers.

The results obtained from the questionnaire were as follows:

Out of 14 ordinary teachers (post-level ones), 12 (70,5%) said they read the NNSSF policy after it was distributed by the principal, two departmental heads said they read the policy, the acting principal also said she read the policy and two teachers did not respond to the question at all. This means that 70,5% of ordinary teachers first got to know about the policy through reading the available documents. Whether the reading was done with thorough understanding is another matter.

Finally, at the level of this case study school i.e., Siege Primary School (Case Study School #3) the following central themes concerning how the policy was communicated or shared with both the school community and parents dominated the implementation: parents meetings; letters to parents; notices to issued parents.

In fact in one parents' meeting I attended in October 2002, a proposal to increase the school fees in order to employ more privately paid teachers was accepted by the attendees. The reason advanced for the occurrence of this was based on the information that alleged that the NWED is not providing the full complement of the teaching staff to the school due to the policy of rationalization and redeployment. However, evidence at my disposal appeared to destroy such information. According to NWED (2002:46)(d) some former model C schools were reluctant to accept redeployees (i.e., excess teachers) from the excess list, because they preferred to make their own appointments from the SGB funds. This implies that parents are being double taxed.

Firstly for paying income tax to the State so as to the contribute to national revenue. And *secondly* directly to the school in the form of school fees which was used to employ additional teachers and maintain buildings.

5.2.4.3 Banogeng Primary School: Case Study #3

All educators interviewed at the school level i.e., principal, deputy-principal, three departmental heads and educator-treasurer showed a varied but very limited understanding of the NNSSF policy. For instance, the principal commented as follows:

Norms are about the improvement of school facilities with the intention of providing quality education in school (Ban.Pri³:1).³⁶

Despite the limited understanding of the policy displayed by the teaching staff at case study No. 3, the following central themes emerged (with specific reference to policy understanding): school development, school improvement, school infrastructure, school effectiveness, and quality education as well as school size. The themes demonstrate an insight on what is the policy about.

The lack of understanding of the policy can be attributed to many factors. But what seemed obvious was how both the national and provincial education approached the matter of capacity-building for policy implementers and the institutionalization of the NNSSF policy. In this regard the issue of outsourcing both the training and system development to a consortium of consultants led by Education-Foundation can be viewed as an error of judgement on the part of the DoE. This practice was seriously challenged by the policy experts both from IDASA and WITS School of Education, as well as some educator unions like NAPTOSA. For instance Dr C.M. expressed his concern as follows:

I have a serious problem with the fact that the National Department of Education has decided to outsource the capacity building programme to a team of consortium. Such an approach cannot be sustained nor properly monitored (Dr CM. 10/10/2002).³⁷

The outsourcing of the capacity-building programme for both the provincial and regional officials on a cascading model by national officials can be interpreted as either lack of competence or confidence in the departmental employees or a limited understanding of the complexity of training and development. Outsourcing can also be interpreted as the abdication

³⁶ Ban. Stands for Banogeng, Pri³ refers to the principal of the school in case study school no.2 and :1 refers to question one of the interview schedule.

³⁷ Dr CM from WITS School of Education was involved in the research report on the Resourcing and Cost of Education i.e., the 2003 Review Report.

of responsibility by the national officials. If training is not embedded or integrated into other departmental units, how would the department account for the success or failures of such training? In this connection, the absence of internal training teams nationally and provincially easily became one of the contributory factors to the perceived poor training across the system. For example, a principal of Banogeng commented as follows (on how the understanding of policy was shared with the school):

The department is supposed to have come to the people to come and explain the policy in detail. Principals need to be taught how to implement the norms and standard policy at school level. Truly speaking, I can't say whether there was an implementation plan or not, more-so we as principals are not knowledgeable enough about the norms and standard policy. The training given to us was short and inadequate for such a complicated policy like the norms policy (Ban.Pri³.6).

It can be inferred from the above that training for the implementation of the NNSSF policy fell short of the goal of empowering policy implementers with the necessary knowledge and skills. In giving force and effect to the principals' argument, a senior official at the regional level supported the principal with the following remarks:

Workshops were held for school managers and the school treasurers as well as SGB chairpersons. They were not effective at all and no follow up workshops were held. The workshops did not seek to bring clarity to crucial policy issues. When we trained the school some of us were not well informed and well trained. The two advocacy workshops we attended and conducted by the provincial officials were also short and congested (Cent. CM².6).³⁸

In response to the question “what was the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?” The principal in case study #3 commented as follows:

The policy was aimed at ensuring the equal distribution of resources, especially in historically disadvantaged schools (Ban. Pri².6/03/2003).

On the other hand, the deputy-principal at the same school said:

It is trying to equalize schools, to lift the standard of the formerly poorer schools.

³⁸ Cent. CM².6 refers to the Circuit Manager interviewed at the Central Regional Office.

A deeper meaning of both the principal and the deputy-principal pointed out to either misinterpretation or confusion in the usage of the terms “equality” and “equitable”. At school level and in this case study school in particular, respondents appeared to take equality and equity as having the same meaning. Perhaps this confusion in the usage of the terms can be attributed to the lack of proper training and support to schools.

Another key issue which emerged from the data collected concerning the relationship between the NNSSF and PPM policies at school level teachers revealed a fair understanding of the relationship of both policies. For instance a departmental Head at Banogeng Primary School commented as follows:

In my view I think that even if the two policies are different; there is a common relationship since both of them are aiming at erasing the ‘imbalances’ of the apartheid education. For instance under Bantu Education, African children were not given education of quality compared to white children. But now this finance policy tries to do away with all of this (Ban.H.O.D.².2).

A critical reflection of the above remarks made by a senior teacher goes further than depicting the relationship between the two policies. The history of education provision in South African is implied in very vivid terms. This is done by highlighting the context within which both black and white education were provided in the past. Besides showing a limited understanding of the policy *per se*, there is clear indication that educators at this level understood both policies. Perhaps such an understanding of the two policies can be ascribed to the personal involvement of educators in the two policies. For example, according to both the ELRC policy on rationalization and redeployment of classroom based educators and Departmental Circular No. 36 of 1998 (DoE; 1998:16; NWED, 1998:36) educators at school level were involved in the process of identifying teachers in excess so that they can be redeployed where there is a shortage. In this sense the task of identifying fellow colleagues can neither be a forgetful experience nor an easy challenge. Similarly from the year 2000 i.e., upon the implementation of the NNSSF policy, provisions were made for the involvement of school-based teachers in the actual implementation of the NNSSF policy through structures such as the school finance committee, school developmental plan and the strategic planning (NWED, 2002:11). In the light of these developments at school level it is easy to make inference, which suggests the acquisition of practical experience.

A clear understanding of the policy is not restricted only to how the policy was conceived and finally developed. It also includes issues of implementation and implementation strategies such as communication, training and monitoring. In response to the critical research question on how the understanding of the policy was shared with the different stakeholders, respondents at Banogeng Primary School gave varied and contradictory responses. For instance, the principal claimed to have workshopped everybody at school level, while the senior management teams interviewed said they were told in a staff meeting about the NNSSF policy. For the purpose of addressing this apparent contradiction, the results of the questionnaire administered to the whole staff (broad description) put the matter to rest as indicated below:

FIGURE 5.1: SHOWS HOW TEACHERS FIRST

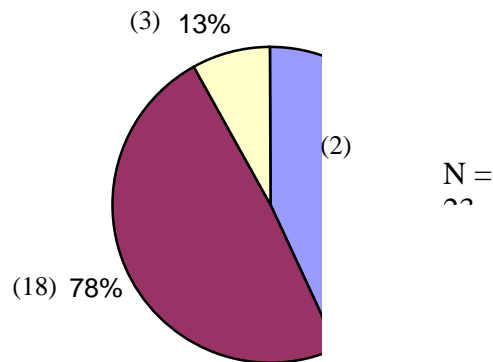


Figure 5.1 above shows the responses of how teachers first became aware of the NNSSF policy at Banogeng Primary School.

Finally, Figure 5.1 above shows the main reasons why the policy of NNSSF was introduced at school level. These quantitative results confirm the consistent pattern established by the results of the qualitative interview, (although some differences were picked up). In this regard 78% (18) of teachers said the principal told them about the policy while 13% (3) claimed to have read the policy document and 0,69% (2) mentioned the district officials. The tendency by principals of schools to tell teachers about a particular policy instead of conducting an intensive workshop can be explained from two angles. Firstly, either the principal was not

properly workshopped or did not fully grasp what was communicated. Secondly, the quality and success of the training done through the cascade model might be suspect.

5.2.4.4 Bogosing Secondary School: Case Study #4

As far as the understanding of the policy is concerned, besides the principal, members of the SMT interviewed showed a reasonable conceptualization and shared meaning of the policy. Of significant note to this investigation in particular is the realization that the principal of the school did not want to be interviewed alone. She preferred the company of one of her deputies who wanted to assist her in the course of the interview. Such reluctance can be regarded as lack of confidence or knowledge of the policy. In response to what the NNSSF policy was responding to, the principal of Bogosing Secondary School commented as follows:

This school finance policy is intended to assist parents from paying the school fees. This means that as a result of this new policy parents are no more expected to pay school fees. This in a way will assist in the increase access of poor children at school level. Presently many children dropout to become “street kids” because of high school fees (Bog.Pri4.1.2).³⁹

A further scrutiny of the principals’ comments revealed that the response is not directly answering the question on the understanding of the policy. But the latter part of the excerpt does make sense since it alluded to the issue of “increase access of the poor children”, and dropout or street kids. This kind of response seemed to respond directly to the question on “what was the policy responding to?” But the fact that the principal of the school was found not to be confident in her responses to the actual object of the policy is very worrying.

Notwithstanding the response to the latter part of the transcribed statement, the apparent lack of understanding of the policy by the executive officer (i.e., principal of the school) required some deeper examination. Perhaps the poor understanding of the policy can be attributed to insufficient training on the part of the regional staff. In another sense it can be ascribed to the lack of support for the policy practitioner by the regional staff or simply poor reading on the part of the staff.

³⁹ Bog.Pri41:2 Refers to Bogosing Secondary School while PRI stand for the school principal and 4 for case study number 4.

5.2.4.5 Mosima Secondary School: Case Study #5

At this deep rural secondary school called Mosima (loosely translated as “hole”) the senior management team interviewed showed a fair but varied understanding of the policy and its main response to educational needs. For instance, the principal, gave his insight of the policy as follows:

My understanding of the policy is that, it is about the equitable and fair allocation of the state financial resources to school especially needy ones. In the past rural schools like ours built by the local chief or communities were not financially assisted by government. Financial assistance was only given to township and city schools. This policy seeks to address this unfairness (Mos:Pri5.1).

A closer analysis and interpretation of the narrative data as generated from the principal of the school revealed an informed explanation. Without necessarily alluding to key words like redress, or disadvantaged, the explanation on its own appeared adequate enough. Such a level of understanding can be ascribed to many factors. For instance, the fact that the principal of the school is fairly qualified (MED degree) and very much involved in the progressive structure such as COSATU, SADTU and other community-based organisations where issues of democracy, equity and poverty featured promptly can be cited as one of the factors. Added to this was the exposure of the principal to two modes of governance i.e., homeland system and the democratic dispensation where he worked and is still working. Implicit in this statement is the view that having served under two different governments might have assisted him to have a better sense of judgment. This might be the case, given the fact that in former Bophuthatswana (Bop), rural schools were neglected since they were not financially assisted by government besides the payment of teachers’ salary.

Another senior official i.e., the deputy principal at Mosima Secondary School, in response to what was the policy responding to broadly speaking, commented as follows:

To bring that equity because people in rural areas are very poor and the parents cannot meet the needs of the schools. Schools in urban areas are generally better off. The policy is trying to achieve quality education by enabling them to have sufficient resources. Briefly it is aimed at helping parents who cannot afford school fees for exemption and to help private schools as well (Mos.D.Pri5.:2).

In the light of the above development it is interesting to note that the collective understanding of the whole SMT members interviewed (six of them) revealed a fair understanding of the policy. This common understanding was more or less dominated by themes such as improvement, financial assistance to schools, redress of the imbalances of the past, alleviation of poverty, school development and school developmental planning.

However, given the fair understanding of the policy by members of the senior management team it became imperative to determine the source of support or capacity building available at school level.

At this point the role of the department, and the regional office became the obvious point of further probing *from the views of the school respondents*. In pursuit of this point it became clear that the school had enjoyed little if not insignificant support and capacity building from the region. The following face to face dialogue (rhetoric) shared light on how far the school was supported by the regional staff.

When the policy reached your school, how did you go about implementing it?

Deputy Principal (D.Pri.³²) response. Let me first indicate that we were never workshopped on this policy by the department. The principal was the only one who attended the workshop.

How then did you become aware of the policy?

Response: The principal shared the information with us in a staff meeting and distributed the policy documents.

What else was done to better inform the staff about the Policy?

The policy documents were made available to us for reading before conducting meetings with the SMT and the whole staff to discuss it before a parents' meeting was conducted. Most importantly our knowledge of both financial management and school development planning assisted us a lot. The capacity building programme obtained from the Quality Learning Project (QLP) was of great assistance.

On the basis of the above information and the role of both QLP⁴⁰ and the regional office. It became easy to infer that schools enjoyed more support from QLP than the regional offices. This observation was further strengthened by the apparent success of the QLP programme mounted on the following areas:

- ◆ Teacher Development
- ◆ Education Management Development (EMD) with emphasis school developmental plan.
- ◆ Curriculum delivery with emphasis on learning outcomes.
- ◆ Monitoring and evaluation, which was integrated with Whole-School Evaluation and
- ◆ District Development with emphasis on educational leadership.

According to the QLP research report discussed at a Provincial Lekgotla held (NWED, 2003:41) on the ability of the secondary schools in drawing the school developmental planning and linking it to the finance was regarded as one of the achievement (NWED, 2003:46).

Perhaps differences in the state of development between the three primary school case studies and the two case secondary studies school can be attributed to the fact the primary schools in the NWED were only exposed to the EMD programme which included school developmental plans as late as the year 2002. On the other hand, both secondary schools and the circuit managers (now called the Institutional Support Co-ordinator) were introduced to the training programme ran and co-ordinated by Denmark (DANIDA) sponsored project from 1997 (NWED, 2000:6(f)).

In the light of the above exposition, the importance of the school development plan (SDP) cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the SDP is a strategic move which is very central to the enhancement of both vision and mission of the organisation as a learning organisation. In this regard SDP as a strategic tool has the potential of ensuring the realization of strategic

⁴⁰ The QLP was a sponsored project financed by the Business Initiative Trust but co-ordinated by Joint Education Trust (JET). The programme was implemented in all the secondary schools in the Central Region. JET was a five year project which started in the year 2000 and comes to an end by the end of 2004. JET contracted service provider such as MSTP, MCPT and Seth Mazibuko & Associates (SMA).

goal if well managed. (See section 2 of Chapter two). The point I am developing here is that a lot of capacity building and monitoring have to be done at all level of the education systems, school level in particular in order to ensure the success of any intervention strategies. This appeared not to have taken place at provincial level. According to one senior official every year the department involved itself in strategic planning⁴¹ which is never cascaded to the district and school level (DoE, 2002:4). Indeed boardroom planning without ensuring the actual translation of such into measurable activities can be regarded as a futile exercise. It is therefore of crucial importance for managers at all levels of the education system to have a deeper understanding of both strategic planning and the actual translation of such plans into action plans.

5.2.5 POLICY EXPERTS/EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS

Policy experts/analysts I interviewed on the NNSSF policy process showed a deep and holistic understanding of what was expected to happen and what actually did happen and did not happen at successive levels of the education system.

Although a limited understanding of the day-to-day operations of the policy was noticeable, especially at school level (understandably so, since they were not directly involved) both the policy experts and education stakeholders' representatives showed a comprehensive and broad understanding of the NNSSF policy. This claim is supported by various evidence, which emerged from the data collection process. For example, a senior policy researcher attached to the Wits University School of Education shared his understanding and broad purpose of the policy as follows:

I have reservations of the government gazette itself. The government gazette of 1997 as it stands has stipulated three key areas: Full exemption and the setting of minimum norms and standards for the country. My understanding of the Policy is that the government has identified rituals to be practiced by the school and the provincial government to deal with non-personnel, new classroom constructions, acquisitions and land improvement. But I think the policy was implemented too early i.e., before the leveling of the playing field. Issues of the Infrastructure supposed to have been given sufficient attention (Dr More, C.M /20/10/2002).

⁴¹ My observation and experience as part of Senior Management Service points to the fact that the strategic planning done every year is never cascaded down to the lower levels in the NWED. In fact there are instances where only top-management is involved in planning.

On “how policy should have been implemented from the National Department to the school system”, Dr C.M from School of Education gave a comprehensive and detailed implementation story on what was supposed to have happened. He commented as follows:

What should have happened in my view first is that there should have been a budget secured for the implementation of the Norms by the National. That did not happen. The provinces were given a mandate to implement the policy without any backup money, as a result that led to different provinces implementing the Norms differently. In the Eastern Cape to a large extent the Norms were not implemented (Dr. C.M 20/10/2002).

The Norms policy is well documented in terms of outlining criteria that should be adhered to. For these criteria to be implemented, funding is required like accounting, data analysis, financial people to be funded by the provinces. Most of these structures are in place in the provinces but the development of modules was outsourced to the Education Foundation. And I have serious problem with that approach. The Department in my view was supposed to have owned the capacity building programme. (Dr. C.M 20/10/2002).

Dr. Bush from NAPTOSA also shared the same comment just like Dr. C.M. from the Wits School of Education. They both expressed serious reservations on the absence of funding for the implementation of the NNSSF.

The fact that policy experts/representatives of stakeholders were more informed than the custodian of the policy itself, is further strengthened by the following informed articulation from Education Foundation Senior Manager (Mr. P. /31/10/2002).

My understanding of the policy is that the policy seeks to address the huge inequalities in the schooling system created by the then apartheid government. It is looking at the issues of access, quality and most importantly equity. And as far as the implementation is concerned the following were put in place:

- ❑ *The Act was published a full year before implementation. A workshop was conducted to address the implementation in Rustenburg.*
- ❑ *Yes the Act itself contains instructions on implementation*
- ❑ *The legal section of the Department explained the contents of the Act.*

The finance director of DoE described the scenario. The Finance Directorate sourced funding from the European Union and engaged the services of a consortium consisting of:

- ❑ *The Education Foundation (Education)*
- ❑ *Gobodo (Financial Experts)*
- ❑ *Sacred Heart RND (Mr P.T 0/2003).*

A look at the implementation of the NNSSF policy in the light of the policy experts/stakeholders' insight shared some light on the apparent failures or shortcoming of the National Department. According to Dr C.M from WITS School of Education funding was not set aside for the effective implementation of the NNSSF policy. This point was further confirmed by both provincial and regional officials. Similarly, the NNSSF policy has some directives to the provinces on the following: employment of Education Planners, Computer Programmer, Statisticians and Financial Analyst (DoE, 1998:17). Of key interest to me was the complete silence on the part of the DoE on the source of funding for the appointment of these experts at provincial level.

Gearing oneself for the implementation of large-scale reform such as the NNSSF policy without earmarked funding, staffing and appropriate structures is a non-starter. The assumption that belief that Provincial Education Department would do everything to secure funding for the NNSSF policy was not only problematic but can also be regarded as short changing the basic aim of the policy and also lacking deep knowledge on the financial constraints experienced by poorer provinces like the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and the North West (Wildeman, 2001:6-46).

The monotonous argument that says DoE does not have the legal competence to meddle in the provincial financial allocation is not sustainable or justifiable, since separate funding can still be obtained and centralized. What informed the theme of my argument is how the same department approached policies differently. To me this is not only puzzling but also interesting as far as policy development and policy implementation is concerned. For instance if the National Department of Education was able to set funding aside from 1998 to 2004 for

the implementation of Quality Assurance policies such as WSE, S.E and related ones such as OBE and Financial Management under funding called Conditional Grant, why was the same thing not applied for the NNSSF policy.

As a policy implementers who interacted in the development and implementation of Whole-School Evaluation and Systemic Evaluation policies and also being the Provincial Quality Assurance Co-ordinator, I am able to state that the North West Education Department became (and remains to date) the national champion of these policies because of some of the following factors: As a result of direct funding from the National Department of Education, which came from the Conditional Grant, the Chief Directorate of Quality Assurance was able to do the following:

- (i) Secure the service of a service provider to recruit the best qualified persons.
- (ii) An intensive training which among other things involved project management, organizational management and computer training for the newly appointed supervisors.
- (iii) Contracted appointments of Clerks and Data Analysts for Systemic Evaluation were done.
- (iv) Acquisition of new and essential equipment such as computers, laptops, digital cameras were acquired.
- (v) Money for the advocacy, training and monitoring of the WSE programme from head office up to the classroom level was set aside and utilized.
- (vi) Regular Quality Assurance Colloquiums were conducted with stakeholders for the purpose of sharing key findings of the WSE and S.E. investigations reports with the affected education stakeholders.
- (vii) Initiate and install a database, which links together the Quality Assurance Office with the National Department of Education and regions.

All these activities were largely funded from the Conditional Grant and provincially the Conditional Grant was exempted from all the red tape and suspension of the budget. The noted successes of the Quality Assurance should be judged against the availability of the

budget from the Conditional Grant. In the light of this argument I think much was not done within the framework of the NNSSF policy as far as funding and training of key policy implementers.

5.3 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

In this chapter the findings discovered about how stakeholders understood the policy are supported with generated data in the form of quotations, and major tables. The findings presented primarily emerged from the collected data. In presenting the appropriated findings careful attention was paid to how different stakeholders understood the NNSSF policy at various levels of the education system.

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6

POLICY GOALS AND SCHOOL LEVEL EFFECTS ON EQUITY: “INTENTIONS AND TENSIONS”

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to present the key findings on the effects of the school funding policy (SFP) on equity at school level? In seeking appropriate answers to the research question, this exploratory study focus was on what happened after the implementation of the SFP as an intervention strategy, which is input oriented. Simply put, questions such as the following ones needed to be responded to:

- ◆ Was there more money after the implementation of NNSSF policy at historically disadvantaged school level?
- ◆ Were the allocated funds equitably distributed to all schools?
- ◆ Did the previously disadvantaged schools receive more money than the historically advantaged schools?

Furthermore, as a result of the financial injection (input indicators) from the State to the schools (Section 21 schools in particular) —

- ◆ Did the said schools develop the necessary capacity to develop and manage the school budgets effectively?
 - ◆ Was the school able to link the budget to the school development plan?
 - ◆ Was the school able to develop the capacity to effectively improve curriculum delivery, maintenance plan and fund-raising projects, and
 - ◆ Finally, was more done to diversify the library resources, target previously neglected subjects like mathematics, arts and science at the previously disadvantaged schools?
- These set of critical questions constitute the main part of this chapter.

In seeking appropriate effects of the funding at school level, data for question two was gathered using the following data collection strategies:

Scrutiny of the institutional and departmental records before and after the adoption of Section 21 status through (i.e., Implementation of the NNSF), semi-structured interviews, school profiling and the use of questionnaires albeit on a limited scale.

In presenting the findings, I have matched the generated data to the critical research question in section one below. In section two of the chapter I paid serious attention to the presentation of data at hand by making cross case analysis, drawing comparisons and drawing conclusions.

Attempts to seek approximations or answers of the school level effects on equity as a result of the implementation of the NNSF policy involved members of the SMT i.e., principals, deputy principals, departmental heads and one educator treasurer from each school.

In the section below responses are given to the research question: What were the effects of the new school funding policy on equity at school levels? The findings are presented in the following categories (since the effect indicators are assumed to be dependent on the Input indicators):

- ◆ Financial Assistance from the department
- ◆ School fees and the utilization of funds

SECTION ONE

6.2 FINDINGS AT FIVE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

6.2.1 TSHWENE PRIMARY SCHOOL: CASE STUDY #1

The effects of the new school Funding policy on equity differed among teachers in accordance with their official position or role at school level. However, a mixed response to the effect indicators of the NNSF policy was noticeable among the majority of the school staff. This

implies that there were both positive and negative effects as a result of the new policy on funding.

Financial assistance from the department: In response to the question “ what do you believe are the emerging effects of the NNSSF policy on equity with respect to state allocation, The principal responded as follows:

Ever since we received money from the Department we are able to do many things in our rural schools which we were not able to do in the past. In the past it was only the town or township schools, which were well looked after by government.

Now in my school since we received money as Section 21 schools we are able to plan our things properly and get the necessary assistance quickly. For example, when we buy goods we no longer wait long time for the warehouse to deliver to us. We buy directly from shopkeepers as we place our own orders.

Upon being probed further on whether the money received is sufficient to cater all the schools needs the said principal responded as follows:

The money is not sufficient (records indicated that only R93 000,00 was allocated for the 2001/2002 Financial year). But if we were workshopped on how to use the money better we could have used the money much more efficiently (TSH. Pri¹.16).⁴²T

The state allocation to the previously disadvantaged school like Tshwene seemed to have added value towards a positive direction of development e.g., school improvement. The interview with the school principals revealed a sense of appreciation as a result of the state of allocation.

Throughout the whole interview at Tshwene Primary school, training was stressed. The cry for training was understandable given the limited workshops given to the school principals. But the question of additional training perhaps required further attention. Presumably one can still inquire upwards at both provincial and national levels about how the capacity building programmes was conducted. Indeed inquiring upwards confirmed the absence of efficient training.

⁴² TSH.PRI¹.16 -

This assertion is informed by the following information gleaned from the Provincial Project Management Committee (PPMC) records charged with the main responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the NNSSF policy across the school system through the educational regions. According to the departmental records of 1999 dated 29 /11/99:

The first advocacy workshop conducted for 110 managers (i.e., chief directors, Directors, District and Circuit Managers) was held at Rustenburg, Safari Hotel with the main aim to create common understanding of key concepts related to NNSSF policy as key instruments of equity.

The departmental records indicated that the workshops “*marked the kickoff of the implementation process that will lead to the logical conclusion where all schools in the province will have qualified as Section 21 schools with all functions allocated*” (NWED, 1999:3) (Internal memo).

The fact that this was the first advocacy workshop held very late in the academic year (i.e., the end of November 1999) in preparation for the kick off of the implementation in the year 2000 does not only raise vexing questions, but also adds a lot of controversy to the whole implementation process of the NNSSF policy. On the basis of the information picked up from the documents pertaining to the workshop, it can be argued with confidence that by the end of November 1999, the NWED did not ready itself properly for the policy. It appeared to be in a state of shambles given the immensity of the Implementation of the NNSSF policy as a whole.

The testimony on the positive effects of the new school funding policy on equity at school level, in particular Tshwene Primary School appeared not only restricted to the opinions of the principal. Other officials interviewed shared some further light on the size of the school budget. Upon my interview with the teacher treasurer who doubled as both the classroom teacher and the financial manager the said educator commented as follows:

The quarterly allocation we received from the department: (records show R23 411-25) we are able to develop the curriculum of our schools, even if our needs are more

*than the funds. But since we have no electricity i.e., our school is not electrified. We have now started tubing the classrooms (TSH EDU. 6).*⁴³

In the light of this development, further effects of the NNSSF policy at school level can further be picked –up from the results of the Questionnaire.

According to the questionnaire on the school levels effects administered to the whole staff at Tshwene Primary School i.e., Case Study #1, the following data in Table 6.1 reflects the opinions of school practitioners as far as effects are concerned.

TABLE 6(a): THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF THE POLICY

	Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)
Financial awareness	15	3	2	3
	65%	13,0%	8,6%	13,0%
Fundraising	18	2	1	2
	78,2%	8,6%	4,3%	8,6%

Table 6(a): Educators at Tshwene Primary School show a clear financial awareness on the NNSSF. The staff also did effective fundraising.

On the basis of the information as reflected in Table 6.1 (a) above, there was a sense of appreciation at case study one i.e., Tshwene Primary School. This simply means that comparison between section 20 (when the department still controls money for the school) and Section 21 (self-managing) school positive effects indicators were realised in the form of positive attitudes from the staff. The positive effect of the School Funding Policy at school level can be explained from different perspectives. *Firstly*, the change of attitude can be attributed to the fact that in the past, rural schools especially were not directly assisted in terms of finance. This point was confirmed by the school principal when he said “in the past it was only the township or town schools which were well looked after” (Tsh.Pri¹.16). The change of

⁴³ TSH. Edu-6 Stands for Tshwene Primary School while Edu stands for the educators treasures and 6 for the number of the Question.

attitude of member of the staff can be explained from the fact that as a result of the state allocation, the school began to look internally i.e., What it can do in the name of self-management (taking charge of its development.)

Since it is one thing to receive money from the state but quite different a task to translate such financial inputs into qualitative improvements, it was really gratifying to see how Tshwene Primary School utilized the state allocation to do things which were difficult to do in the past i.e., before becoming a Section 21 school. In this connection, the following changes or effects can serve as indicators of success:

As a result of the state allocation, which was augmented with a small fee (to a tune of R80.00 per learner) from the parents, the school was able to procure resources (in the form of consumable such as chinks, photocopier papers) faster than placing orders (requisition) through the regions to the Warehouse. This point was further strengthened by the comments from both the deputy principal and the teacher/treasurer (Tsh.Pri¹.16). They positively commented as follows:

We are able to control our own resources. We spend a lot of time on financial management because we must make sure that all the money is spent properly. But the problem we encountered is the absence of clerks at our schools. In most cases I leave the classes unattended so that I can have time to balance the books (Tsh.TRE¹16).

In the past, i.e., before becoming Section 21 school, we used to wait for many months before our orders (requisition) could be attended to. Sometimes our quotation used to be sent back with the reason that the quotations had expired. Ever since we became Section 21 school we are able to buy things timeously i.e., according to our plan. (Tsh.D.PRI¹16).

It is clear from the statements made by the principal, deputy principal and the teacher-treasurer that some significant progress was registered after the school became Section 21. The positive attitudinal effects demonstrating a sense of appreciation to the input done by the state to be looked at contextually. I showed that the different case study schools had experienced the implementation of the NNSSF policy differently. For example, Siege Primary School had a different experience of the policy. But interacting with this point it has to be noted schools

found themselves in different contexts. In this case study research Siege and Tshwene appeared to appreciate the policy differently.

Another equity indicator worth mentioning here was the actual use of the state financial allocation and private tuition (school fees) to address the delegated functions at school level such as the following: maintenance, curriculum development, requisition of both stationery and textbooks as well as fundraising project.

School fees and equity: According to the NNSSF policy, SASA 1996 imposes a responsibility on all public school governing bodies to do their utmost to improve the quality of education in their schools by raising additional resources to supplement those which the state provides from public funds (Section 36).

In the light of the above, sufficient evidence existed which pointed out to the usefulness of the state allocation to the general conditions of the case study school. At the beginning of the implementation of the NNSSF policy, Tshwene's building was deteriorating at an alarming rate. For example, the principal's office which served as their multipurpose centre since it accommodated library books, laboratory equipments, kitchen utensils plus administrative books, was found not only too small but also in dilapidated conditions. It needed some refurbishment. In this regard both the SGB and school management decided to utilize the state funds to renovate the principal's office. The self-produced visual text below captured in the year 2001 shows, how bad the office was.

PHOTOGRAPH 6(a): THE POOR CONDITIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE (TSHWENE PRIMARY SCHOOL)



The principal's poor condition suggests lack of attention to infrastructure, especially rural school.

PHOTOGRAPH 6(b): CLASSROOM-CUM STAFFROOM



The self-produced photograph (2001/11/30) depicts the poor condition of the principal's office at Tshwene Primary School

The conditions of both the principal's office and teachers' staff room should be evaluated against the money set aside for infrastructure development. This raises the question of the difference between rhetoric and hard work, promises and delivery. According to IDASA (2002:16)⁴⁴

South Africa's most vulnerable citizens are still short-changed in education spending. Huge amount of money available for improving the plight of the country's most disadvantaged schools goes remained unspent by the end of the last year i.e., 2001. Whether because of underspending or lack of budgetary provision, the neediest and most vulnerable citizens remains short change. Among the education priorities worse hit by underspending was the Thuba Makote Rural School Project. Only R1,5 million of R48 million allocated was spent.

⁴⁴ Thuba Makote Project was intended to develop rural schools in the province. It falls under what is called Conditional Grant.

If one put the IDASA statement in context and move an inch further by looking at the conditions of Tshwene's buildings, it defies any logic why the NNSSF policy was started without first attending to the infrastructure. But the underspending which appears to have become the government's policy is not only puzzling in my view but also shows lack of capacity across the education system. This mean the incapacity to think, plan, deliver and being sensitive to the plight of the poor children.

Although positive attitudes among the teaching staff of Tshwene Primary School was noticeable, the conditions under which both the principal and staff work do not inspire a sense of comfort and security. In the light of this, it is difficult to expect productivity let alone quality education.

Nevertheless, as a result of the state allocation in the year 2003, the SGB managed to refurbish the principal's office in order to give it a new look. In this regard it was easy to categorically state that in rural schools like Tshwene Primary the effects of the NNSSF policy were found in the capacity of both the school management and the SGB to effectively repair and maintain the school buildings.

In relation to this qualitative improvement of the school's infrastructure the principal of the school commented as follows

Well, even if what we get from head office is not enough to satisfy our needs, at least we can still do something with the little we get. In April 2003 we managed to renovate my office. We are also putting some toilets for the children. We can therefore say that we are better off compared to the past (Tsh.Pri¹.16).

Although it is easy to state that the implementation of the NNSSF policy had positive effects as far as renovation and maintenance were concerned, the issue of the incorrect interpretation of the policy and the inadequacy of the state allocation to the school warrant some brief discussion.

The principal of Tshwene Primary had indicated that they had used the state allocation to 'put additional toilets for children' which was good. But both the spirit and the letter of the

NNSSF policy are very clear on the difference between maintenance, minor repairs and additional structure. The question of additional infrastructure was not catered for in the state allocation, nor the policy directives. This implies that the additional structure is a violation or misinterpretation of the School Funding Policy.

Looked at from another angle the action of the SGB can be justified on two counts. *Firstly*, the implementation of the NNSSF policy without first leveling the playing fields can be cited as one of the weaknesses of the policy. This point draws its strength from the fact that R93 000.00 cannot be enough to attend to all the educational needs of the school. Therefore I think the Department was supposed to have directly intervened by not only renovating the school buildings but also attending to additional infrastructure such as staff room, library and administration office.

Secondly, the use of the ring-fenced⁴⁵ money in the construction of additional toilets for the children can be morally defended. This implies that both the SGB and the school management had no option but to utilize what was available. *Thirdly* and finally, the question of wrong interpretation of the policy by the SMT, perhaps can be attributed to either the poor training by the provincial officials or lack of monitoring and evaluation. This assertion finds support from the following comments from the principal:

The budget given to us is inadequate. But still we need further training on budget development, as well as linking it to the schools.

School fees: The decision to allow the charge of school fees appeared to be at the heart of the challenges facing implementation and the achievement of equity in particular. The charge of the school fees seemed to be more telling at both advantaged and disadvantaged school. For example, at Tshwene Primary School where both the principal and deputy principal responded to the following set of questions, their responses were full of helplessness and despair: Do you charge school fees? And how do you ensure that every parent pays?

⁴⁵ Ring-fenced means money set aside for a particular purpose (earmarked)

Because of our condition we charge school fees which is R80.00 per learner. But ever since the policy was announced in 1999, parents are no more willing to pay school fees. Even those who can afford are reluctant to pay. Since we cannot take them to the lawyers⁴⁶ we take them to the local chiefs (Tsh. Pri¹:10).

The principal, commenting with a tone of despair to the interviewer, highlighted the tension between the charge of school fees and the state of allocation to the needy schools. In this regard, it was never the intention of the NNSSF policy to cancel out school fees. But any rate it happened.

The deputy principal also commented as follows:

Even if they can be taken to the lawyers for not paying schools fees, one has to be aware that they cannot even afford legal costs. And the rate of unemployment in this village is very high. Most of the parents cannot even afford to buy food (Tsh.D.Pri²:10).

The responses from both the principal and the deputy principal locate the implementation of the school funding in a context dominated by poverty, high rate of unemployment and the fear by the school management to press legal charges against parents who are reluctant to pay school fees. In this regard, the fundamental question becomes why school fees are charged? Or why does the department allow the school to charge school fees?

In the light of the problems surrounding school fees charged by the school governing body and the educational needs at Tshwene Primary School such as: library books, laboratory equipment and other essential items, one can say with confidence that R93 000.00 given to the school was insufficient. This argument was further strengthened by two statements from both the school principal and departmental head number three when they commented as follows:

The money allocated to my school for 2001/2002 financial year is R93 000.00 and I think the allocation is not enough:

Learners' Support Material: I do not think it is enough because when we try to allocate it according to different classes it is not enough to cover our needs. But we have a different allocation for Learner Support Material from the Department.

Curriculum Development/OBE: Yes it is not enough, but if we can continue getting what we got this year, it will be enough (TSH.Pri¹:8).

⁴⁶ Lawyers: The reason advanced for not taking parents to the lawyers were based on fear to be rejected by the communities. This implies that it is not easy to pursue legal suit in the village.

*Maintenance: there is enough for maintenance. We can even do some renovations.
Water and electricity: We do not pay water since we have boreholes. The electricity connection is new, we have not yet got an account.
Since it is very difficult to make sure that the parents pay school fees even if we hold the learners report. I can say that the money from the State is not enough. For instance, we need more money to do photocopies and material production for the outcomes-based curriculum (OBE) (Tsh.H.O.D.¹:6).*

A look at the two statements confirms both the inadequacy of the State allocation and the difficulty of collecting school fees. The inadequacy of the State allocation to school in the NWED was further confirmed by both the provincial education office and the regional officials. For instance a senior official at head office commented as follows:

(Mr Conradie 13/10/2002) we are the only province that allocates learners R94-00 for the Norms and Standard Policy. Even that R94.00 sometimes never reaches schools. The reason why we allocated less to learner per capital is based on two factors. Firstly, our personnel budget is growing at an alarming rate, presently we are at 92% of the total budget. Secondly we are being underfunded by the Provincial Government. Since 1994 our budget has been declining from 41% to 34% of the provincial budget.

The issues of the school fees, the inadequacy of the State allocations to schools and lack of attention to the physical infrastructure can be regarded as system barriers to the effective implementation of the NNSSF policy. These appeared to be fundamental issues that cannot be left to either the school or provincial departments to resolve on their own. In this regard, I think the role of the National Government (in reviewing social spending) and National Department of Education (NdoE) in addressing these systemic barriers for the realization of equity is crucial.

Notwithstanding the above painted picture which centres around the inadequacy of the State allocation and the difficulties of handling school fees, some progress was registered at case study number one. The available data in the table below seeks to confirm the school level effects of the NNSSF policy.

6.2.2 SIEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL: CASE STUDY #2

At Siege Primary School which is a historically well established school (former Model C) originally meant for white children until 1994, the NNSSF policy was implemented under a totally different context i.e., a school endowed with essential resources and magnificent buildings see the school profile page 15. In this regard the school level effects of the School Funding Policy are reported in accordance with the following:

The State allocation: Evidence gathered at Siege Primary School intended to address the question “What were the effects of the School Funding on equity at school?” Suggests a negative trend. All the interviewees at the school level pointed out to the negative effects of the NNSSF policy due to the inadequate State allocation. For example, in response to the question on the emerging effects of the School Funding Policy on equity the principal of the school commented as follows:

Let me point out to you that for this financial year (2001/2002) our school as allocated R24 037.00. The amount was based on the perception that we are a historically rich school. I do not agree with this point of view. State allocation should be based on the needs of the schools with regard to the maintenance of the buildings, formulated on the actual floor space of the building as well as the total size of the school grounds and sport facilities. To use a 50:50 norm is to simplify matters. The allocation per learner is not enough especially with expenses of OBE. For example the number of OBE support material per grade (for approximately 120 learners) amounts to more than R9 000 per annum excluding other resources such as non-fiction material, material of arts and crafts as well as technology etc. (Sie.PRI².5).

The eloquent but emotional account of this former Model C school appeared not only to be drawing attention to the negative implications of the NNSSF policy but also laying the firm base and justification for the charge of school fees. Further interpretation of the principal’s emotional account can perhaps suggest the under currents of resistance and the laws of certain privileges. However, on the basis of the letter and spirit of the NNSSF policy, as well as the legislative intentions, the small state allocation (R24 037.00) to the former Model C school can be justified. For instance, it is clearly stated that:

... all parents, but particularly those who are less poor or who have good income, are thereby encouraged to increase their own direct financial and other contributions to

the quality of their children education in public schools. The Act (SASA 1996) does not interfere unreasonably with parents' discretion under their own resources on their children education (DoE, 1998:12).

A close analysis and interpretation of both the principal's statement and the extract from the NNSSF policy highlights not only tension between the policy and practice but goes further in demonstrating the dynamism between what is espoused and done and what is planned and translated and the fact that there is no permanency in the state of richness or poverty. The fact that majority of white people used to be rich during the apartheid era does not necessarily suggest that they would continue with such status even in the new dispensation. This appeared to be one of the elements, which the policy failed to address or foresee.

On the basis of the small state allocation to Siege Primary and the importance of maintaining quality education, schools devised some mechanisms to counter-act the negative implication of the state funding taking full advantage of the provisions of both the Constitution and the NNSSF policy. Ironically it is sad to note that the move to counter-act the legislative intentions of the NNSSF policy ended up causing tensions between the school SGB and the parents, between the school and the departmental officials, between school leadership and student movement and finally between the department and organization for Human Rights such as the following structures: Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR), Education Right Project (ERP) currently led by Salim Vally and teachers' organizations such as SADTU, NAPTOSA and SAOU.

In the light of the above indicated development both SGB and SMT of Siege Primary School engaged in the following activities "to address the problem of inadequate funding i.e., state allocation.

According to the financial records at Siege Primary budget information records, school fees have been on the increase since the year 2000. For example, in the 2002/2003 financial year, school fees per learner rose from R2 000.00 to R2 500.00. This is an increase of 25% which can be out of the reach of many parents. In direct response to the probing question why the school was charging school fees? The headmaster made the following comment:

The amount given to us (R24 037.00) for the financial year does not cover one quarter of the essentialities mentioned earlier (i.e., electricity, water, etc.). The money is not adequate since we have to maintain the existing buildings in order to keep them up to standard. Failure to do this would lead to the deterioration of our beautiful building (Sie.Pri².6).

PHOTOGRAPH 6(c): THE STATE OF ART OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY



6(c) But the library books and material were not diversified to accommodate learners from other race group.

Siege Primary School increased its school fees so as to cope with both electricity and water bills. According to both the principal and his deputy, water and electricity happened to be very expensive to maintain. In the light of the above inside story given by both the principal and deputy, the NNSSF policy had little effect at Siege.

Another factor which contributed to Siege Primary School charging of high school fees has been attributed to the employment of additional teachers at the school's expense. According to the post-provisioning model/policy of the academic year 2002/2003 Siege Primary School qualified for 16 teachers but they ended up paying for four additional teachers.

The fact that schools such as Siege are able to employ additional staff at the cost of parents while there are many teachers in excess can be viewed as a deliberate attempt to slow down transformation at two levels. *Firstly*, despite the push for equity in the redeployment since 1996, and the changes in the profile (demographic) of the learner population (majority of them black) Siege Primary School had not changed the profile of its staff i.e., majority of them remain white. This contradicted the provisions of the PPM policy, which argues for the

equitable distribution of teachers taking into account colour and race. Furthermore, the alarming increase of the school fees almost yearly as a practice works against the fundamental objectives of the NNSSF policy since such a move makes education unaffordable to an ordinary person on the street. This undermines not only the letter and spirit of the country's Constitution (which makes equity and quality education right issues), but also the overall framework of EFA which seeks to extend the provision of quality education from the elites to the masses of the population.

In response to the question that sought to determine the advantages of the NNSSF policy at Siege Primary School, the principal was unable to identify some positive school level effects besides mentioning two. He commented as follows:

At present, there are very limited advantages. The only advantage is that the Provincial Department of Education pays the salaries of educators as well as the learners' stationery. (Much of the latter is inadequate as it cannot be used by schools. We are, e.g., supplied with Irish linear stationery. Our learners don't use this material. Furthermore, the pens and pencils are of poor quality. There is poor control over delivery of expensive textbooks. We have received a surplus and after many telephone calls no one fetches these surplus books). To make SGB responsible for the school's finances is a positive step forward. In our school, the SGB, parents and staff work just as hard as in the past to raise funds so that the BASIC expenses can be met.

A close look at the principal's statement raises many issues not only about the way the policy is being implemented, but also sheds some light on the capacity of the NWED in general. The central themes which dominate the school level effects as perceived by the principal can be indicated as follows: limited advantages (insignificant value), inadequate resourcing; ordering of wrong materials which are of poor quality, poor control of the distribution of learners support materials, poor feedback and wastage of resources. These themes which were directed at the Department of Education and on how far the schools had progressed since attaining Section 21 status draw ones attention to the internal weaknesses of the department and the limitation of the policy. On the basis of the information at hand it appears clear that the head office section in charge of ordering and delivering LSM to schools did not do a good job. In this regard, the materials delivered were not only of poor quality but were also wrong. But why the NWED had ordered materials of poor quality needed to be located at the size of the provincial budget. As indicated earlier, the allocation of R94-00 per learner cannot buy

materials of quality. In this regard see section two of Chapter two, about the carry-through effects of the adequate budget.

At the same school on the same question, the departmental head number one also made similar comment which appeared not to be recognizing the usefulness of NNSSF policy.

Since we became Section 21 school we spend most of our time involved in fundraising projects in order to improve our financial position (Sieg.H.O.D.1:9).

The principal added by stating three intriguing observations as follows (which seemed to be pointing to the limitation of the policy).

- ◆ The perception that a progressing school with resources needs fewer resources than a needy school is wrong.
- ◆ The size of the school buildings as well as the total area of the school grounds is not taken into consideration with regard to the maintenance expenses per annum when allocations are made.
- ◆ To believe that a school in a good residential area has more money through fee payment by parents is simply not true. By the end of August, our school's budget was R143 000.00 in arrears due to parents who refused to contribute to school fees (Sieg.PR².9).⁴⁷

On the basis of the data presented for this case study and the analysis thereof it is easy to conclude this case study with the following observations: The NNSSF policy affected the Siege Primary negatively.

6.2.3 BANOGENG PRIMARY SCHOOL: CASE STUDY #3

In this former Bophuthatswana rural school, besides the principal, deputy principal and the teacher-treasurer, most of the members of the senior management team interviewed and probed further indicated the mixed but varied effects on equity. In direct response to the key

⁴⁷ Sie stands for Siege Primary School, PR² stands for the principal of case study two and 9 represent the question.

question on the advantages of becoming Section 21 school, thus receiving money directly from the education department, both the principal and the teacher-treasurer confirmed the usefulness of such by making the following comments:

Since becoming Section 21 we are able to know what amount of money is due to us from the department. Because we receive money in the form of cheques from the state, we are able to plan our requisition needs well. For instance since we do our own orders, we no more wait for longer periods before the goods can be delivered to schools. In the past we used to wait longer for simple things like chalk to be delivered from the warehouse. Presently we place our own orders (Ban.Pri.8).

The teacher/treasurer also commented as follows:

We are able to do our own planning. This also means that getting resources is easy now. One does not wait longer period for the resources to be delivered.

A closer analysis of the above two statements may shed some light on the effects of the school funding policy on equity. The two respondents managed to draw attention to progress made between Section 21 and non-Section 21 (i.e., Section 20). As a result of becoming Section 21 the school was able to do the following (which can be regarded as effect indicators):

- ◆ The school was able to engage itself in the planning exercise for development.
- ◆ The management of the staff was able to acquire resources quickly since becoming Section 21.
- ◆ The school was able to do effective planning as a result of access to finance.

Further analysis of the two statements made by the principal and teacher-treasurer gave rise to the following central themes: Financial awareness (we are able to know the amount of money) procurement plan/schedule (plan our requisition needs well). In the light of these developments pertaining to the capacity of the school to do planning and procurement plan, I think that one can still say significant progress was registered at their rural school. But such progress needs to be contextualized since such a move has a bearing on the outcome of the policy.

In response to the financial assistance from the department intended to assist the school to engage in qualitative improvement such as school development/improvement or effectiveness. The implementation of the school funding policy yielded positive effects among the members of the staff even if serious reservations were levelled against the inadequacy of the state allocations to the school. Banogeng commented as follows:

The allocation of funds given to us is not enough, but at least we are getting something. The state allocation which is often given to us very late in the year we supplemented with the school fees from the parents. Taken together we are able to do certain things which we were not in the position to attend to in the past. For instance from the state allocation we are able to buy the following: photocopy papers, payment of telephone and the payment of auditors who are auditing our financial books (Ban.Pri).

In addition to what the principal said, two heads of department interviewed also confirmed both the inadequacy of the state allocation and the usefulness of such in assisting the school to attend to basics. For instance, their common input is represented in the following comment:

If the department can increase what it is already allocating to us, we can make a lot of progress as a school (HOD and HOD 31/10/2002).

The continued trend which depicted the inadequacy of the state allocation to the school appeared not only confined to this case study school. Senior officials both at provincial and regional level had also expressed doubt regarding what was allocated to schools in most telling terms. For instance, Mr Menoe, attached to Head Office where the NNSSF policy is being driven from, commented as follows:

In the past most of the schools were supplied with consumables such as chalks, chalkboard dusters, teaching aids and equipment. Presently things are getting worse because the schools do not get these even if they place orders.

Repeated comments on the inadequacy of the state allocation to the schools and the immense task of collecting school fees emerged as common themes which warrant attention as two sides of the same coin. Since one without the presence of the other seemed to be posing a major threat as system barriers. For example the principal of Banogeng commented as follows:

We as school principals, especially in the village, often encounter problems in the collection of school fees. Even if we charge less than R100.00, the parents do not

want to pay school fees because they think we receive a lot of money from the department. The money is so little that it cannot pay for everything. The department must give attention to the maintenance of school fees and how best to collect school fees. Even parents who can afford to pay school fees are reluctant to do so. We often manage by holding children's reports or sending children home to collect the outstanding funds. We do get something when we follow this method, but in most cases the department threatens us with misconduct or dismissal (Ban. Pri.8).

Indeed the issue of school fees i.e., to pay or not to pay has emerged as a topical and controversial issue in the course of the implementation of the NNSSF policy. A sense of frustration displayed by the principal of Banogeng about how the department complicates the untenable situation in which the school leadership found themselves is recounted. According to departmental circular addressed to all schools dated 3rd April 2003 the following instruction was made explicit:

The attention of both school principals and the members of the SGB are drawn to the right of the child to education. In this regard the school has no right to withhold learners reports for the non-payment of the school fees. The school must contact parents first (NWED, 2003.3).

On the basis of the information from above the departmental circular, two issues can be inferred here concerning school fees. *Firstly*, the parents who refuse to pay school fees either confuse the state allocation to school with free education or are against the policy of fee exemption which appears to favour the needy. *Secondly*, the departmental officials including politicians clinically separate the school fees (payable by parents) from lesson attendance, withholding of the learners' reports and the necessity of procuring materials for tuition appeared to lack contextual information. The point I am developing here is that threatening principals especially the ones in villages and township public school with misconduct without giving them alternative mechanisms can be viewed as a dead-end. The issue of school fees and the right to education require a better implementation framework and insight into local contextual factors.

As already pointed out elsewhere, it appeared very easy for the principal of a former Model C school in town to pursue the issue of outstanding school fees through legal means (legal suit against non-payments) than the principal of a rural school located in an illiterate and improvised community. The difficulty of resolving this is based on the fact that the two

schools find themselves operating in two different contexts. For example, a village principal who is pressing legal charges against parents who refuse to pay is likely to be rejected by the school community even if the legal suit succeeds. Furthermore, such unemployed parents may not be in the position to settle the lawyers' fee. In the light of this arrangement, one has to appreciate the politics of the area in which the school is located.

6.2.4 BOGOSING SECONDARY SCHOOL: CASE STUDY #4

Despite some serious reservation against the late release of money and the size of the state allocation to the school, members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) interviewed gave positive policy effects the SFP on equity at the school level. This estimation of the effects was based on what the school was able to do or has done or is doing since becoming a Section 21 school in the year 2001. To amplify the indicated effects, the deputy-principal commented as follows:

Acquisition of materials and resources has been added. The hazards of schools lacking funds is resolved even if it is not enough. How to acquire money to meet the expenses is alleviated. This has impacted positively on the morale of the school community in particular teachers. We are able to acquire services that were not accessible in the past (Bog. D.Pri.416).

At the same school another senior teacher at departmental level commented as follows:

The R78 000,00 given to our school in 2002 was not sufficient. We are sitting with a learner population of over 1000 and our expenditure is above R250 00,00 but we remain grateful since the money did go a long way in addressing essential things, For example as a result of the funding policy we have been able to do the following: pay telephone electricity and water bill, maintenance of our computer laboratory is also done from the norms and standard funding. This refers to repairs. The advantage of being Section 21 is like being independent and we manage our money. We are more in control of our destiny and responsibility as expected. (Bog. HOD³.16).

An incisive examination of the statements both from the deputy-principal and departmental head number two indicated how far progress has been registered, as attempt to put the school on qualitative improvement towards the achievement of equity. It is worth noting that as a result of the NNESSF policy and state allocation to this needy school in particular significant

progress has been made. In this regard the following progress made can be viewed as effects indicator of equity:

- ◆ Bogosing Secondary School was able to use the state allocation to pay the telephone bills. In the past this possibility did not exist. For example only TED, CED and some DET schools received money for telephone bills.
- ◆ The school is able to engage itself in internal planning which was also facilitated by being in charge of the school funds (in the past funds were controlled from head-office)
- ◆ The school was able to acquire essential resources timeously without waiting for longer periods.
- ◆ Since becoming self-managing, the school became actively aware of the importance of paying water and electricity (these basic services were paid for and accounted for by the provincial education head-office)
- ◆ As a result of the state funds the school was able to acquire additional computers and maintain the existing computer laboratory and library. In this regard, the following photographs show the inside views of both the computer laboratory and the school library.

6.2.5 MOSIMA SECONDARY SCHOOL: CASE STUDY #5

In this deep rural school the six members of the senior management team I have interviewed show positive school level effects on equity. However the school level effects indicated were mostly around what was input and to a lesser extent what the school was able to do effectively as a result of the allocation. The deputy principal at Mosima commented as follows:

What we get from the department is too little. This year we got R48 000-00 but this is better than nothing. We are able to do many things from the small amount allocated to us. The only major problem we experience as a school since the allocation of money to us many parents are reluctant to pay school fees. This is creating problem between parents who are not paying. Sometimes the principal is put under pressure by the SGB for not collecting school fees. If he withholds learners' report he is reported to the department (MOSI.D.Pri.5).

The comments by the deputy principal do not only refer to the inadequacy of the state allocation but also juxtaposed the state allocation with the payment of school fees which appeared to be a headache to school management. In this regard it can still be argued that the payment of school fees within the framework of the NNSSF policy has come to be taken as one of the difficult aspects to be resolved. Perhaps the reluctance to pay school fees can be attributed to the poor understanding of the policy or the actual meaning and expectation of “*full and compulsory education as promised*” by the present ruling party, namely, the A.N.C. At another level I think the vagueness in the right of SGB to decide to charge or not to charge the school fees needed to be reviewed. A proper review of the charge of school fees can go a long way in minimizing tension or conflict between the school leadership and the parents.

Another noticeable effect of the school funding policy is the state of the school building, which was taken care of by the putting up of additional physical structure such as the laboratory, library, staff room and the administrative block. To this end Mosima Secondary School falls under quintile three because of the state of its building. To this end the principal of the school made the following appreciative comments:

Even if we didn't get enough money from the department, we are very happy with the construction of the additional buildings i.e., the administrative block, library and laboratory.

According to the NNSSF policy the condition when probed further on how many parents were exempted from paying school fees. The principal of the school argued that they had “not” exempted anyone from paying school fees, but rather most of the parents had long exempted themselves by not paying the fees they had agreed upon in the parents’ meeting.

In line with the working definition of equity i.e., developed on the basis of the review of literature, the following effect indicators of equity emerged:

- ◆ As a result of the NNSSF policy and the allocation of Section 21 status, Mosima Secondary School was able to develop an effective maintenance plan which was actively supported by the local Public Works Department (Ever since the building of

the additional block by the department of Public Works, their employees have been very helpful to us, commented the Principal (MO:Pri⁵ 16).

- ◆ Since becoming Section 21 school, which also allowed the SGB and SMT to devise the school development plan and the possibility of augmenting the state allocation. The school was able to constitute an effective fund-raising committee made up of SGB members, learner representative council (LRC) and teachers. In support of this assertion both the departmental heads and deputy principal commented as follows:

For us, to survive by making ends meet, we have been engaging in fund-raising projects such as collecting coca-cola bottles, raffle papers and selling a variety of food during parents' meetings (MOSI.H.O.D²). The deputy principal added from these fund-raising projects we had managed to raise some money. For instance in March 2002 we managed to raise close to R 30 000.

Although turning schools into business centres in order to generate money is of crucial importance, a careful but balanced approach is essential. Implicit in this argument is that the purpose of the school is the provision of education, too much fundraising can subvert the core business of the school i.e., teaching and learning. This point was further strengthened by the departmental circular dated 30 October 2001 directed to all schools in the province:

In line with the concerns expressed by parents and stakeholders regarding the excessive fund-raising by some schools, which often involve some children, it has become imperative for the Department to ask the school leadership to refrain from such excessive practices. These fund-raising activities do not only take children away from the classrooms, children are also not safe (NWED, 2001.4).

Additional to the above indicated progress, the results of the quantitative data (i.e., Questionnaire) confirm the effects of the school funding policy on equity at school level.

SECTION TWO

6.3 CROSS-CASE COMPARISON

In subjecting the five case study schools to a cross-case comparative analysis, it became clear to me that various schools have experienced the effects of the NNSSF policy differently. In this connection the contexts (location) and history to the schools appeared to have played a

part in a positive or negative direction. For example, Siege Primary School did not see the added value of the NNSSF policy apart from appreciating the authority delegated to the SGB.

The negative attitude towards the policy perhaps can be explained from two angles. *First* the perception or the reality that they are being underfunded because they happened to a former Model C school (i.e., previously advantaged) due to the provisions of the policy can be cited as a factor. But such an approach ignores the fact that in the past they were deliberately favoured. *Secondly* the inadequacy of the state allocation to Siege Primary School may not be justifiable given the fact that in the new dispensation the school had admitted mostly African learners, which rightly deserve better funding. On the one hand, despite complaints leveled against the inadequacy of the state allocation, historically disadvantaged schools appeared to have realised the positive effects of the NNSSF policy as far as the amount was and concerned. This change of attitude perhaps can be explained from two levels. Primarily, three types of the schools were mostly neglected and disadvantaged in the past. Therefore the introduction of the NNSSF policy brought some advantages to such schools, hence an element of appreciation. Furthermore, the sense of being “independent” i.e., self-managing appeared to have added a sense pride and confidence to such schools. To this end, one head of department at Bogosing Secondary School gave weight to this statement with the following comments: We really feel honoured by being in charge of our school (Bog.H.O.D.³.16).

Additional to the above, the issue of school fees has emerged as a cross cutting theme among the five case study schools. However the charge and payment of school fees was found to have had different implications to different schools, sometimes giving rise to intended and unintended effects. For example, in the historically disadvantaged schools, the charge and collection of school fees by whatever means had created unintended tension between the SGB and the school principal on the one hand and the parents and departmental officials on the other. Perhaps what appeared intriguing is the inability of the departmental officials to realise that in some instances some parents simply refused to pay school fees. Perhaps the behaviour of the parents can be attributed either to the misinterpretation of the NNSSF policy or to the blind belief in the governments rhetoric on ten years of true and compulsory education (DoE, 1995(a):14).

On the other hand, former Model C schools' charge of high school fees can be explained from many perspectives. At one level the increase of school fees can be justifiable if one takes into account the rising cost of education, the need to maintain or improve the standard of education delivery and the importance of augmenting the state allocation plus the fact that three types of schools catered for a new population.

Looked at from another perspective, the charging of exorbitant school fees can be viewed as attempts to undermine government's transformation agenda which seeks to open the doors of learning to all. Therefore the charging of high school fees with the pretext of maintaining standards falls flat in the face of evidence such as a creating incentive packages for school principals and some teachers (*Sunday Times*, 28 October 2003).

TABLE 6(b): THE HISTORY OF SCHOOL FEES AND STATE ALLOCATION

Schools (Fictitious name)	Type	Location	2002 State allocation	2003 School fees	Number exempted	2003 state funds
1. Siege	Primary	Urban	R17000-00	R2400-00	4	R 23159-00
2. Tshwene	Primary	Deep rural	R93244-00	R80-00	-	R127719-00
3. Banogeng	Primary	Peri-urban	R33254-00	R100-00	-	R 54805-00
4. Bogosing	Secondary	Rural	R73880-00	R240-00	-	R125392-00
5. Mosima	Secondary	Deep rural	R48250-00	R120-00	-	R 83000-00

On the basis of table 6 it is clear that former model C school like Siege charged parents exorbitant fees compared to the previously disadvantaged schools. However, what appeared to be a serious violation of the policy is that out of five schools only one managed to exempt four parents from paying school fees. In this regard two factors can be cited. One, either the school management did not share the information with the needy parents so as to initiate the application. This point can be based on the fear to exempt learners thus losing the possible income. To exempt learners/(parents) without the department paying can be viewed as a non-starter given the high cost of education.

6.4 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

This chapter went about presenting key findings to the second critical research question on what were the effects of the school funding policy on equity at school level.

In the light of the findings presented, several conclusions and implications can be drawn from the analysis done and evidence presented. For example, on the basis of the evidence presented in this chapter, it can be stated that although progress was registered towards the advance of the policy legislative intentions, significant and fundamental qualitative changes had not been realizing fundamental changes at school level can be traced backwardly and forwardly i.e., from the school to the DoE and *vice versa*. In this instances it can be argued that the process of policy implementation was not a smooth-sailing one when one considers lack of synergy between and among various levels of the education system.

Of significant importance is how the implementation of the NNSSF policy was approached from the DoE up to the school level. In this regard, the approach of keeping the divide between policy formulation and implementation (as emerged from the interviews held with the national officials) whereby all the aspects of implementation were left to the provinces with the assumption that they will do everything within their competence to ensure complete compliance were not necessary.

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7

THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE: THEORISING IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The research presented here should dispel the assumption of policy-makers (politicians in particular) that planned change is a rational-technical process in which the legislative policy intentions are translated exactly into desired effects. Change on its own is not only episodic but also messy. Hence it is appropriate to underline that planned equity (and quality) through the implementation of the NNSSF is not necessarily equity in practice. It may result in unplanned inequalities or no equity at all. The course followed by a national policy is uneven, unpredictable and untidy.

My goal in this research was to address the following; *Firstly*, how was the school funding policy implemented within and through the different levels of the education system? This particularly refers to how stakeholders at each level of the education system understand the policy. *Secondly*, what were the effects of the school funding policy on equity at school level? The main thrust was to trace the flow of the NNSSF policy between two contexts i.e., the developmental stage of the policy through to the implementation stage. In adopting this type of approach it became absolutely necessary to pay attention to process indicators so as to determine the effect indicators. The determination of these broad goals which was informed by the working definition of equity developed for this thesis was to lead to the determination of implementation guidelines for implementing policy in situations where there is lack of coherence and integration given the continued outcry about policy overload and policy slippage. It was further informed by the fact that new policies are not implemented in a vacuum. It is therefore advisable to evaluate which policies can be integrated so as to avoid duplication and tension.

7.2 POLICY, THEORY AND PRACTICE

Through the application of both the conceptual framework and propositions developed in chapter three and the emergent data, I proceeded with data analysis with the view to give weight to the formulated findings. The analysis involved the five case study schools (units of analysis) namely: Tshwene, Siege, Banogeng (primary schools), Bogosing and Mosima (secondary schools). A new picture emerged from this process. Although not clearly obvious, I discovered that policy implementation at the five identified schools could not be confined only to the internal environment of the schools (i.e., influenced by the rational approach of looking only at the positive side). It needed to be taken beyond the boundaries of the five identified schools into the broader context including political, economic and contextual factors.

A few puzzling observations that warrant further explanation also emerged as a result of the detailed analysis of each case as well as the policy itself.

First, and most important, the implementation of the NNSSF policy at the five case study schools did occur in varying degrees but not as originally planned. In all the five cases, the NNSSF policy provision which calls for the allocation and delegation of key functions to these self-managing schools (SMS), and which had been recommended by the SGB on the strength of their capacity and development, was actually carried out. The key question then is: Why did the NNSSF policy get implemented despite the absence of implementation structures and inadequate budget? This question requires some explanation so as to know why certain things happened the way they did.

The implementation of the NNSSF policy in the North-West Education Department followed the following processes: In the first place, both the provincial ministries and the national ministry agreed on the actual development of the policy and the date for its implementation. According to the consultant for Education Foundation, Mr P., the provinces were given a year to ready themselves for implementation of the NNSSF policy in the year 2000 (*Edusource*, 2002). They were further requested to indicate their state of readiness to the DoE. In addition,

through the assistance of a consortium led by Education Foundation, visits were carried out to all the nine provinces to check their state of readiness.

However, it turned out that the implementation of the NNSSF policy happened in the NWED without an adequate budget and the setting up of appropriate structures. The question to ask is: Why did the NNSSF policy implementation go ahead in the face of such overwhelming evidence about the difficulty of resourcing education provincially? To answer this question by just noting the complexity of the policy itself and the history of inadequate attention to policies in general, begs the question. Two reasons may assist in explaining this phenomenon. The first is that the NWED perhaps wanted to be seen as honouring the letter and spirit of the NNSSF policy. The fact is that the NNSSF policy draws its principal mandate from a constitutional principle, namely equity. The second reason may be based on the normal belief that more can be achieved with less financial resources. Perhaps implementation as a process was not costed from the point of the finalisation of the policy to the envisaged points of both implementation and the institutionalisation of the policy. There was no evidence to suggest otherwise. These points could be discerned through the views of the respondents interviewed and through the scrutiny of the official records. Of significance was the observation that viewed the NWED as an organisation that often takes up major policies without adequate budgeting for appropriate implementation. SADTU, in 2001 and 2002 for example, raised serious reservations about the absence of personnel for DAS and adequate funding for the NNSSF policy (SADTU memo, 2001:21).

Second, and most critical, was that the implementation of the NNSSF policy unfolded with different school level effects. In these five schools the policy effects could be categorized into two. In the former Model C school i.e., Siege Primary, the NNSSF policy took place with almost negative effects. Although it was the expressed policy intention to deliberately allocate more money to the historically disadvantaged schools in the state financial allocation, it was never the policy goal to encourage former Model C schools to charge parents exorbitant school fees. This school however, used the inadequate financial resourcing as a rallying point to secure more money from the parents, thus maintaining the status quo.

The implementation at the four remaining schools happened with almost the same effects (albeit to a different degree). In these schools state allocations (although inadequate) were positively received by both the SGB and members of the teaching staff. The negative effects became clear when majority of parents either refused to pay school fees or were not able to pay. These can be interpreted as unintended results of the policy.

The cross-case analysis which gave rise to the two observations already made as to how the policy unfolded, offers new insights into the achievement of equity in the schools, particularly between schools of diverse background and contexts. For instance, the fact that the NNSSF policy occasioned the unintended effects (from the point of school fees) at both the historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools adds new dimensions to the theory of policy change in developing countries (contexts). The added dimensions appear to challenge the basic fundamentals of rational choice theory in a way that draws attention to the notion that “*policy is not so much implemented (as planned) since it is changed at every level of the education system*”. Similarly, it can still be argued that consensus on new policy does not signal the end of contestation beyond the point of development. Such contestations often continue into the actual implementation of the policy. It is therefore understandable to notice that historically advantaged schools were the ones charging more fees.

In the light of the above, and in order to give final weight to the key research findings in both Chapters five and six, the next part of this chapter deals with the set of propositions developed in chapter three.

Proposition 1: *Sudden or premature decentralization of the authority and financial delegation to schools is not likely to succeed if not coupled with centralization, total support from the education stakeholders and a capacity-building programme.*

The data that emerged from the key respondents and documents reviewed shows “disengaging approaches” to the implementation of the NNSSF policy. It is clear that beyond the creation of co-ordinating structures such as the National Steering Committee, and the appointment of consultants e.g., Education Foundation, once a policy was decentralized to the provinces the

DoE saw its role in the actual implementation of the policy as minimal thus choosing to behave as an advisor rather than a keen motivator and evaluator of the unfolding programme. Even seeking compliance in the implementation of the policy can still be cited as the main responsibility of the DoE.

Closer analysis of both national and international approaches to the issues of decentralization and equity in particular highlights the central role of the national department of education (Federal Government) in the realization of equity demands (see section 2.6.2.). Contrary to this point there is evidence of disengagement on the part of the national department officials on issues. As a result of this approach, officials saw their roles as “*one must remember what the constitution says, our role is to provide the guidelines*” (Mr. Bosman).

Furthermore, the viewpoint is snugly captured in the following comments:

There must be systems for evaluation and monitoring. If you look at SASA 1996 Act, there are a number of things which the head of the department and the MEC in the provinces must address. We have written the reports on how policy was to be implemented (Dr Fish at national level).

Looked at from another angle, giving direction for the setting up of structures that cannot be monitored raises a critical question. How can schools in particular be expected to effectively implement policies if there is lack of monitoring and support from the national DoE or lack of commitment and ownership of the policy by the stakeholders or poor capacity-building programme? The following comments from a provincial senior manager tell the story:

The policy was not placed under a dedicated structure to implement. To me that is one of the things that made the policy not to function. It did not fall under any directorate (Mr Men, 101/10/2002).

The above statement goes further than the stakeholders’ ownership. It also shows lack of ownership by senior managers at the provincial head-office. This is indeed intriguing because that was where the NNSSF policy was advocated and launched for implementation by the schools. How the provincial officials were able to neglect such an important policy appears to shed light on the unpredictable behaviour of people. In this regard the themes of personal

background and value system of individual senior managers charged with the implementation can still be cited as possible factors contributing to lack of attention to policy.

Proposition 2: *Nationally developed, directly supported and monitored policies like NNSSF are likely to succeed if there is shared meaning of the policy, coherence and integration with the existing policies.(and the basic functionality of all levels of the education system).*

For policies to succeed at the implementation level, functionality of all levels of the education system is critical. Added to this, the effective role of the DoE in support and monitoring coupled with policy coherence and common understanding are likely to enhance implementation.

Contrary to the above, evidence available shows lack of integration, coherence and the absence of an effective monitoring and evaluation system. The following scenario gives a picture on i) poor monitoring system, ii) lack of shared meaning, iii) and lack of synergy and integration. With reference to lack of (or poor) monitoring and evaluation, the following two comments confirmed such:

National has not been playing a sufficient role. Even in places where there is a fee exemption, learners are still marginalized:. We have been warning national to attend to this and they are starting to do something because there are already some court cases (Wildeman, 3/2003).

Our role has been to deal with it through the provinces. We had few problems where the Minister was approached by parents. But as national we are leaving everything to the provinces (Mr Bosman, 31/03/2003).

The problems about lack of shared meaning or common understanding of the equity-driven policy are clear in the following: At national level a senior official did not see obvious linkage between the NNSSF and post-provisioning model policies. For example,

“For now they don’t really relate” (commented Dr Fish 2002).

Provincially, Mr. Men saw the linkage or integration between the two policies. According to him the two policies are primarily about the equitable distribution of resources to the schools, so they relate. At school level, the principal of Bogosing Secondary School saw the

... main goal of the policy as improvement of the physical building (Bog.Pri⁴.1).⁴⁸

Lack of common understanding of the policy among the key policy implementers at different levels definitely has the potential of affecting implementation negatively. Evidence regarding lack of integration and coherence emerged from the policy development down to policy implementation. Despite the fact that the following policies have more commonalities than differences they have been treated as separate entities from the point of conception (development) up to implementation. The policies in question are: EMD, NNSSF, WSE, PPM and to a lesser extent, the primary feeding scheme. For example, the following commonalities can be cited as vital points for integration and coherence:

- ◆ All of them aimed at school effectiveness as the main goals
- ◆ All of them aimed at effective utilization of resources at organizational levels.
- ◆ All of these give high premium to the strategic planning (school developmental plan) as an instrument to be jointly developed by the affected stakeholders. This, in an implied manner, presupposes attention to vision, mission and the setting of priorities.

In contrast to the above-painted picture, the following picture emerged from a policy researcher based at IDASA:

If the policy is connected to other quality initiative policies, it will be very good. WSE identifies those factors which make the school not to function. The norms and standards could be used to do the improvement in schools.

He further commented as follows:

It is very crucial. If it is properly thought out in relation to WSE and supported by district and using norms and standard to support it, it will work very well. These policies should be linked/integrated. In this regard the realization of the school development must be supported by funds, then we will know what those funds are going to do (Wildeman, 31/03/2003).

However, throughout this research study it has been discovered that little attention has been given to both strategic planning and the importance of linking the budget to planning by the

⁴⁸ Bog. Pri4.1. Refers to the case study school i.e., Bogosing with the principal as the interviewee.

schools and the provincial education department. In fact despite the importance of school development planning in the NNSSF policy, the NWED was found to be lacking in this regard.

Proposition 3: *The intentions are likely to be realized if both policy-makers and implementers argue for the essential features of policy implementation, namely: adequate resourcing, communication, bureaucratic structures and contextual factors. The implementation of this proposition is that attention and control of key variables can reduce policy implementation slippage (what I call the slide and slip of policy implementation).*

Despite the importance of effective communication, adequate resourcing, implementation structure and as well as treating schools differently, the data available points to the following: The NWED started the implementation of the NNSSF without appropriate structures. A provincial official put it bluntly:

To me! NOW the policy is therefore from the national. From national up to school level, there should have been a structure that actually monitors the implementation processes, to see whether they are being implemented thoroughly. But in our case we do not have dedicated structures from the implementation of the norms. Furthermore, R100-00 per learner is not enough. The fact that the DoE put R100-00 per learner at provincial level as the minimum is surprising given the rising costs of education.

The following evidence is supportive of inadequate funding.

According to Luiz, De Kadt and Fedderke (2000:258-260), the vast majority of South Africa's population has been, and continues to be subjected to a system with very high pupil-teacher ratios, with poorly qualified teachers, and poorly funded schools which as a consequence fail to generate the output in terms of pass rates. In addition to this, the Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) report single out the NWED as having the highest number of under qualified teachers (Luiz *et al.*, 2000:36).

The evidence is clear in the statement of the principal of Siege Primary School:

We cannot do much from the R24 000,00 we received from the state last year. That is one of the reasons why we increased the school fees (Sie.Pri.8).

An independent policy analyst from NAPTOSA added:

From the policy point of view it makes sense to take 50% weight of the school community and 50% of the physical infrastructure conditions. But at a more practical level, there are schools which look very beautiful but the areas in which they are located are not good. There is high rate of unemployment. For some extreme cases there are not even communities around those schools. So the 50-50 formula may not result in adequate money for the school. Another factor is that a lot of money in the department is spent on personnel from the national to the province (Dr. Bosch 3.30/10/2003).

Inferences drawn from the three comments confirm the inadequacy of the budget to the department. Furthermore, Dr Bosch's comments question the reliability of the formula.

With regard to communication, a national official commented as follows: "Communication was only in the media and HEDCOM" (Mr Bosman). Provincially, an official commented in these words:

A lot of quick advocacy has happened but there were no follow-ups. Principals of schools, SGB's and learners were informed but implementation was not supported.

A policy expert from Education Right Project added Mr. V:

There is a need for additional budget to communicate the policy. At school level it is even worse because the norms and policy have created a burden to disadvantaged schools. The DoE have not communicated the policy sufficiently especially to the stakeholders.

Finally, although the selection for Section 21 status allowed variation, the implementation of the whole policy was dominated by the "one size fits all" approach. For example, in the North West Province, no school was capacitated after the granting of Section 21 status. The Principal of Banogeng was specific: "We have not yet received any training after becoming Section 21 school". This approach appeared to be based on the assumption that once schools have qualified for Section 21 there is no need for further training.

Proposition 4 (see 3.4.4): *Simple financial resource allocation to the learning sites (i.e., schools) is not likely to lead to the realization of true equity.*

Indeed it is one thing making resources available to schools but quite a task ensuring corresponding results like improved academic performance of learners. Despite the push for allocation of scarce resources to needy schools there is little that suggests general improvements in the quality of schools which have been targeted. For example, despite more funds being channeled to Section 21 schools in quintile one, two and three, quality improvements in the Grade 12 schools have not been a corresponding factor. In fact the historically advantaged schools (like former Model C schools) who mostly fall in quintile 4 and 5 continue to do better than the now better resourced schools which are in quintile one, two and three. Table 7.1 below shows the Grade 12 results:

TABLE 7.1: THE GRADE 12 RESULTS ACCORDING TO QUINTILES

Best school in each quintile according to highest pass rate, highest number wrote and highest aggregate							
Position of each school	School name	Region	quintile	% passed 2003	Learners wrote	Aggregate	Distinctions
Quintile 5							
1	Girls High Potchefstroom	Southern Region	5	100	85	1429	91
2	Wesvalia High School	Southern Region	5	100	195	1402	288
3	High School Rustenburg	Bojanale West	5	100	208	1301	244
4	Stella High School	Bophirima	5	100	21	1266	11
5	P H Moeketsi	Bophirima	5	100	55	1227	28
Quintile 4							
1	Tsogo	Bojanale East	4	99.16	119	1248	63
2	J M Ntsime High School	Bojanale West	4	98.42	190	1066	48
3	Vryburg High School	Bophirima	4	97.73	88	1178	43
4	Poelano High School	Southern Region	4	96.77	31	860	0
5	Galaletsang High	Bophirima	4	94.78	115	1018	12
Quintile 3							
1	Pres. Mangope Technical And Comm	Bojanale West	3	100	137	1124	55
2	Hoërskool Schoonspruit	Southern Region	3	98.23	113	1168	91
3	St. Anne's High School	Bojanale West	3	95.31	64	1214	44
4	Batlang High School	Bojanale West	3	89.86	69	873	10
5	Makgetse High School	Bojanale East	3	89.56	316	916	28
Quintile 2							
1	Phakela Combined School	Southern Region	2	100	9	826	0
2	Ngaka Maseko High School	Bojanale East	2	94.49	272	1001	27
3	Tebogwana High School	Bojanale East	2	92.63	95	979	19
4	Setswakgosing Secondary School	Bophirima	2	87.5	104	914	17
5	Batlokwa Middle School	Central Region	2	87.5	8	615	0
Quintile 1							
1	Sefutswelo Secondary School	Central Region	1	93.94	66	915	5
2	Tshokolo	Bophirima	1	90	20	824	0
3	Kegomoditswe Secondary	Bophirima	1	90	20	775	0
4	Michakgasi High School	Bojanale East	1	88.98	245	909	11
5	Puo-pha Secondary School	Bojanale East	1	87.5	16	758	0

The same thing can be said about PH Mooketsi, Tsogo and J.M Ntsime. According to the NWED annual report (1994:6), the three schools did well under Bop regime.

Proposition 5: *Equitable distribution of adequate financial resources coupled with quality leadership and diverse teaching are likely to have positive effects if effectively deployed and used.*

A look at case study school number five shows the impacts of effective leadership in the deployment and optimal use of the allocated resources. According to one senior teacher at case study 5, ever since they became Section 21 school “*we are able to do effective planning for the acquisition of resources without waiting for head-office*” (Mosi.HOD.16).

Despite being located very far from the city, Mosima Secondary School started to do well in the Grade 12 results. Perhaps this can be attributed to the effective use of the resources as well as effective leadership. It is clear from the data available that the travelling of the NNSSF for school-founding policy from the centre to the periphery did not go as planned. Although historically disadvantaged schools were allocated more funds than the previously advantaged ones, in real terms the inequalities and gaps between the two sets of schools continue to grow. Several factors contribute to the lack of significant effects at school level. Although no level was found to be effective in the discharge of the policy, part of the data available pinpointed to the provincial education as the weakest among the identified levels of the education system. Other obvious factors include absence of implementation structures; inadequate budgeting and lack of ownership. For example, before the granting of Section 21 status (which was also very late compared to other provinces i.e., November 2000), a senior provincial official registered his reservation this way:

I do not have any objection that approval be granted for Section 21 to the schools as submitted for the implementation of the norm policy. However, I am concerned about the capacity of this department to fulfill its obligations in terms of the South African schools Act when the said status is approved. Some of the obligations can be highlighted as follows:

- *Develop accounting, financial transfer, and information systems to allow allocations to be made and tracked down to school level.*

- *Ensure that audited statements are submitted to be checked that it is in line with education policies*

The list clearly indicates that, to attempt to accomplish the new tasks without high-level skills is absolutely unrealistic (NWED, 2001:3).

The identification of the provincial level as the weakest link in the implementation of the policy is further strengthened by the success enjoyed by the Northern Cape Education Department in the implementation of the NNSSF policy. According to the IDASA researcher, Wildemann, *“if you take your neighbouring province like the Northern Cape, they are spending two or three times the amount in the North West per learner”* (Wildemann, 31/03/2003).

Lack of decisiveness in removing what I call systems barriers in the way of the NNSSF policy is one of the issues that result in the maintenance of the status quo. This implies that the historically advantaged schools (which were allocated less money) continued to get more than the historically disadvantaged schools when service providers like Water Boards and “Eskom” cut essential services such as water and electricity or pursue legal means to recover payments. Since there are issues of rights, the NWED was often called upon to meet the former Model C school by taking money away from the disadvantaged schools in order to pay water and electricity.

The fact that the NNSSF policy happened not according to plan and did not produce significant results at school level warrants some explanation. None of the case study schools showed that greater equity was achieved in terms of resource diversification (e.g., improving the school library by introducing books or materials that were not catered for in the past), or the empowerment (staff empowerment) of staff in order to have a holistic and integrated approach to equity. In other words, there was little to ensure that the professional staff acquire a progressive outlook of equity which will allow them to effectively teach learners of diverse cultural and economic backgrounds and also develop the capacity of the schools to self-manage themselves. Additional to this, is the way the school funding policy has evolved over time i.e. from “departmental review” to proposed amendments (DoE, 2004.2).

Attempts to adequately respond to the scenario painted above has implications not only for this policy in particular but also for the manner in which developing countries like South Africa approach the implementation of policies. The failure of policy implementation due to obvious constraints such as fiscal limitations, organizational constraints and the absence of implementation structures should no more be the case. However, besides reference to these factors, in this research study, the main cause of policy failure is attributed to lack of capacity at all levels but especially at the provincial level. Incisive analyses of data point to a state of fundamental incapacity in the North West Education Department. The citing of the “on” and “off” restructuring of the department as the factor for non-appointment of staff appeared unconvincing.

The issue of incapacity to implement government mandates needs to be extended to the lack of public policy dialogue in South Africa and Africa. In this regard, the challenges facing implementation appeared not only confined to the North West Province, but provinces such as Eastern Cape which are known to be struggling.

Since scholarly studies are replete with information pertaining to the lack of attention to policy implementation as a process (section 2.2.1), this research study regards an implementation framework that pays sufficient attention to the following as the gateway solution to the implementation problem in the developing context: deeper communication and dialogue between and among the various policy actors at all levels of policy development and implementation, capacity-building of policy implementers, regular review of policy, regular interaction between policy makers and practitioners as well as accountability across the education system.

7.3 RATIONAL THEORY AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Within the framework of systems theory (as indicated in section 3) this study has examined the rational theory as the basis for investigating the policy breakdown between the goals and effects (terminal effects). Its application, in my view, has facilitated theory-testing with a rich and comprehensive database that has both qualitative and quantitative evidence. Throughout

this inquiry, which adopted an interactionist approach in the examination of rational choice theory used for the pursuit of fiscal equity at school level, *three* main observations emerged.

The *first* observation concerns the findings in respect of the first question which clearly indicated that the understanding of the policy was not only flavoured but varied at each level of the education system. This is because the intended misunderstandings of the fiscal equity policy did not filter down to the school level as planned. There is sufficient evidence that what was produced at the top of the hierarchy did not funnel in effectively as intended. This highlights the elusiveness between policy and practice, between the ideals and outcomes.

Another significant aspect of this case study is the understanding pertains which to policy integration and coherence. The finding is that both provincial and school level implementers have seen obvious integration between the NNSSF and PPM policies. This revealed not only the complexity of the policy but also the mental state and approach of policy makers to policy implementation, thereby highlighting the weaknesses of the rational choice theory in tackling systemic changes. In this connection the failure by the national officials to pinpoint integration and coherence with precision between the NNSSF and PPM policies can be ascribed to the traditional approach to the policy process which makes a clear distinction between the role of policy makers and policy implementers. This is where national officials often see the policymaking process area as their preserve, thus making them too important to handle implementation issues (see section 2.2).

The deep understanding of the policy is not only restricted to the definition of the said policy but also involves key issues such as the goals, the envisaged outcomes and the processes or procedures to realize the stated intentions of the policy. Despite this aspect, it became very clear from both the DoE and NWED officials that the conceptualization of the NNSSF policy or educational equity was not clearly done and put in practice i.e., from the initial stage to the implementation stage of the policy. The absence of implementation structures, adequate training, monitoring mechanisms and integration with existing policies such as the EMD and WSE to service curriculum delivery can be cited as key issues which had devastating effects on the actual outcomes of the fiscal equity policy.

Both the literature review and the interview results jointly pointed to absence of training as a common factor. For example, in the NWED no school received training after the granting of Section 21 status. This cannot only be viewed as a negative attitude to NNSSF policy but also a dereliction of duty by key policy implementers.

Training and development, especially in the 21st century, needs no emphasis, if there are hope of ensuring success. More energy, funding and strategies have to be linked to training. Training and development are in-extricably linked to change, in the sense that one can change through exposure to relevant training.

The point I am developing is that any organisation that initiates or accepts a new policy must invest lots of resources in training in order to facilitate sustainable change. Such training should not only include the transfer of new skills to policy implementers but should also deal with the appropriate approach to policy implementation (integration) as well as factors that either enhance implementation or prevent what I call the “slide” and “slip” of policy implementation. Fullan (2001:46) calls this policy slippage.

The way in which training is carried out or policy is implemented has direct effects on the actual outcomes of the said policy. This point leads me directly to the school level effects of the fiscal equity policy which is the second observation to emerge from the rational choice theory. According to Jansen and Taylor (2003:15):

Since 1994, the South African Government has used a combination of fiscal measures to achieve the goal of equity in education. These measures were intended to redress the considerable gap between rich and poor schools in terms of overall quality of education to improve access to education for more and poorer learners, to promote inter-provincial equity in funding, given the differential tax base and educational infrastructure of the nine provinces, and to achieve performance equity across schools and provinces as a result of the ineffective utilization of funded resources.

Notwithstanding the above bold intentions of the government, which basically aimed at the qualitative improvements of the historically disadvantaged schools. Empirical evidence in this study revealed that ten years into our democracy not only has the gap between the historically disadvantaged schools and former Model C schools (which were advantaged in the past)

increased, but also, the inequality gaps between social classes have increased considerably. This implies that a new trend has developed where upper-middle class blacks can afford high school fees charged by the former Model C schools. This trend which can be attributed to capitalism has not only introduced market forces (in the provision of education such as competition, right to choice) but has also added dimensions which compromise the right to basic education and the main goal of EFA which puts emphasis on the maximization of participation rates especially children from the disadvantaged background.

It is clear from this research study that the policy goals of the NNSSF policy were not realized at school levels. Instead the policy happened with devastating unintended effects in both the historically advantaged and disadvantaged institutions. For example, in case number two i.e., Siege Primary School, the charge of high schools fees (R2 500) per child is not only making education out of reach of the ordinary parent, it also affects financially capable African parents who are known not only to be looking after their own children but also children of distant relatives. Implied in this line of argument is that it is financially costly to keep two to three children in one former Model C school. These unexpected results were never envisaged by the new NNSSF policy. Most importantly, even white parents who used to be well privileged in the past are also being negatively affected.

But the high school fees, poor expenditure of historically disadvantaged schools and the dropout rates clearly highlight the major weaknesses of the rational choice theory employed by DoE in the implementation of the Fiscal Equity Policy. According to Neiman and Stambough (1998:449)⁴⁹ the application of rational choice principles to policy design and delivery might produce results that are in conflict with the objectives of rational choice advocates. Indeed the mismatch between what was planned and what actually happened at the school levels does not only point to but also sends a message in the fallacy of adopting one theory to change.

The third observation about large scale reform and Fiscal Equity revolves around the role of the state, in particular, National Department of Education, in the creation of self-managing

⁴⁹ Both Neiman & Stambough evaluated the rational choice theory in the role of government in the voucher system intended to address inequity.

schools i.e., Section 21 policymakers predicted that once the implementation process of the NNSSF policy had started unfolding from the DoE, the successive levels of the education system would without difficulty take the message to the next until the ultimate target group was reached (i.e., school). The kind of approach is more often than not informed by technical aspects such as planning, forecasting and the setting of performance indicators which are often associated with the rational choice theory. But this rational, linear and top-down oriented approach to policy implementation can be viewed as one of the major weaknesses of the rational choice theory. Firstly, because the approach does not take into account the complex contexts within which educational change takes place. For example, in this case study, the NWED was identified to be the weakest level in the policy process continuum. Secondly, the approach does not take into consideration the recent view that educational change is not just a technical process of management efficiency, or a cultural one of understanding and involvement. It is a political and paradoxical process as well (Hargreaves, 1998). For instance, the development in case study two i.e., Siege Primary School, which points to the charge of high school fees cannot only be explained in economic terms, political and social factors can also be said to be at play. This is because education is not only a public good for almost everybody, but also a contested field. By implication implementers who view the policy as a threat to their well-being would do everything possible of the policy, thus safeguarding their privileged position based on unfair allocation.

The fourth observation concerning the identified weakness of the rational choice approach is the predicted reduced role of the DoE once the self-managing schools (S21) have been identified and granted financial autonomy. In this regard both international and national literature singled out the active role of the national government in the realization of equity. In fact Kinsler and Gamble, (2001:339) argued for sustained support to schools as follows:

If the current reform wave is not to go the way of previous efforts, these groups (key stakeholders) and the larger society need to “scaffold” the schools, i.e., provide the necessary support until the schools are able to function independently. Sacrifices are called for at all levels.

Contrary to the above view, the key findings of this research study revealed the minimal role-played by the DoE officials in the implementation of the NNSSF provincially. The fact that

the DoE allowed the implementation process to start in the provinces (often citing constitutional impediment as a factor) without adequate resourcing, planning, training and system overhaul can be regarded as the abdication of both accountability and responsibility.

7.4 ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF FISCAL EQUITY

At the end of ten years of educational transformation, much has been achieved in terms of creating structures, designing new proposed policies such as the Primary Nutrition Schemes, the PPM and the Quality Assurance. But as this case study research shows, the achievement of educational equity in particular has been limited by various factors. Chief among these factors which limited the net effects of equity at school level are as follows:

Firstly, the lack of both systemic thinking and an integrated approach to policy implementation, resulted in uncoordinated attempts at school level. For instance the intensive nature and the scope of OBE required more teachers at school levels but the PPM policy on rationalisation and redeployment among others dealt with the reaction by identifying teachers in excess. Based on the contradictory goals of the two policies one cannot rule out tension between the two. In the NWED, lack of success in both the restructuring of the public service and the implementation of the PPM can be cited as key factors which limited the school level effects of fiscal equity policy. This is evidenced by lack of progress in reducing the personnel costs (see section 2).

Secondly, despite the attempt to level the playing field across former white and black schools through equitable distribution of scarce resources on the one hand, the uncontrollable capacity and desire of the former Model C schools fees increased the gap between black and white schools on the other. The unpredicted behaviour of both the SGB and management of the former Model C schools in the charge of unreasonable school fees can be explained from two perspectives. First, lack of insight into both policy development and implementation by South Africa led to the absence of strategy to minimize the destructive behaviours of the opponents of the NNESSF policy. The proposal of strategy does not necessarily suggest that a control

oriented approach can completely eliminate the desire to satisfy both group and personal interests.

Since the NNSSF policy is primarily about the educational needs of the previously disadvantaged groups (African in majority), common sense should have predicted the potential manipulation of the fiscal equity policy by the previously advantaged groups. The centre piece of my argument finds support and weight from the literature on the etiology of policy questions on resource allocation. Green (1994:6) eloquently argued:

Policy questions ask how to allocate (distribute) scarce goods. But this allocation is the business of politics. No policy without politics nor politics without policy.

In subjecting Green's (1994) agreement to a critical analysis within the declining economy, a point worth mentioning is that the interest of former white and black schools are incompatible. This means that the government is not in the position to satisfy the interest of both white and black schools simultaneously. But the fiscal equity policy places the obligation on the state to deliberately favour the previously disadvantaged population. Such a move, which manifested itself in the development of the NNSSF policy, automatically gives rise to conflict of interest especially on the part of the previously advantaged group. It is therefore critical to understand the behaviour of both the SGB and management of the former Model C school in this context.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the failure to address serious management and leadership incapacity across all levels of the education system can be cited as another key factor in the limitation of the school level effects on equity. Such incapacity has played itself out in gross under-spending at both school and provincial levels (section 2 and 6). The weakness and incapacity of policy implementers is not only restricted to the provincial level, the DoE is also affected. To this end, the very recent National Review of the Financing, Resourcing, and Costs of Education in public school found that: *"The programme monitoring mechanisms in the South African schooling system are currently inadequate to provide a balanced picture of what the leaner programme trends are at the various points in the schooling system"* (DoE, 2003:102).

In the light of the three identified main factors, which are viewed as contributing factors to the lack of significant progress towards the achievement of equity, I think the decision to create Section 21 (self managing) schools was not only early but also too quick to ensure sustainability. This argument is informed by intensive study on the future of self-managing schools done in Australia and New Zealand. According to Caldwell (1997:357), for self-managing schools to succeed, a policy framework for lasting reform with clear conditions has to be in place. In this regard four conditions which must be addressed were identified as follows:

- ◆ Teachers and teaching: The need for professional development of teachers is identified as critical.
- ◆ Leaders and learning: This implies that the need to ensure that all learners learn well is critical.
- ◆ Relationship between Education and Economy: The convergence between economic theory and education theory is suggested.
- ◆ Finally, Resourcing of schools: This implies that current levels of resources are insufficient to achieve lasting school reform.

7.5 CONCLUSION

If the course and effects of school funding policy on equity are dependent, to a greater extent, on the interplay between and among various forces in the transitional stage of policy from the centre (i.e., developmental stage of the policy) to the implementation of the solid policy, the key question is, what are the implications for educational equity policy and quality in school systems. In the light of the data generated from the five case study schools and the one derived from the four identified levels of the education system I conclude this research study with the following implications:

- ◆ **Contingent funding**

The most critical factor in determining the success or otherwise of the fiscal equity policy is adequate funding. In order to circumvent the problem of the escalating personnel costs (which

have a negative effects on the size of the non-personnel costs) at provincial level, the DoE as both the initiator and custodian of the NNSSF policy should create a centralized contingent funding so as to intervene directly at school level. Given the lack of progress in inter-provincial equity in South Africa, the approach of leaving the financing of the school system to the provinces cannot be regarded as sustainable or well meaning. In this connection the centralized funding is not only the appropriate way of dealing with the constitutional impediments but also the right mechanism of intervening decisively at provincial level. In this regard, the United States of America Federal Government did that with a measure of success through the creation of what is called Additional Educational Needs (AEN) which was intended to augment the money distributed through the funding formula.

◆ **Allocation of 40% of the provincial budget needs to be regulated**

The question of allocating money by the provincial executive council and members of the legislature should be regulated so as to minimize the effects of networking, micro politics and power blocks among the provincial MEC's. This implication is informed by the current practices where the executive council in the NW continues to under-fund the Education Ministry despite the recommendations to allocate at least 40% of the provincial budget to the education portfolio. According to the NWED (2003) since 1994 the provincial government has been under-funding the Department of Education. In the light of this trend, the proposed regulation can go a long way to remove the direct allocation of the budget from what I call "the politics of power".

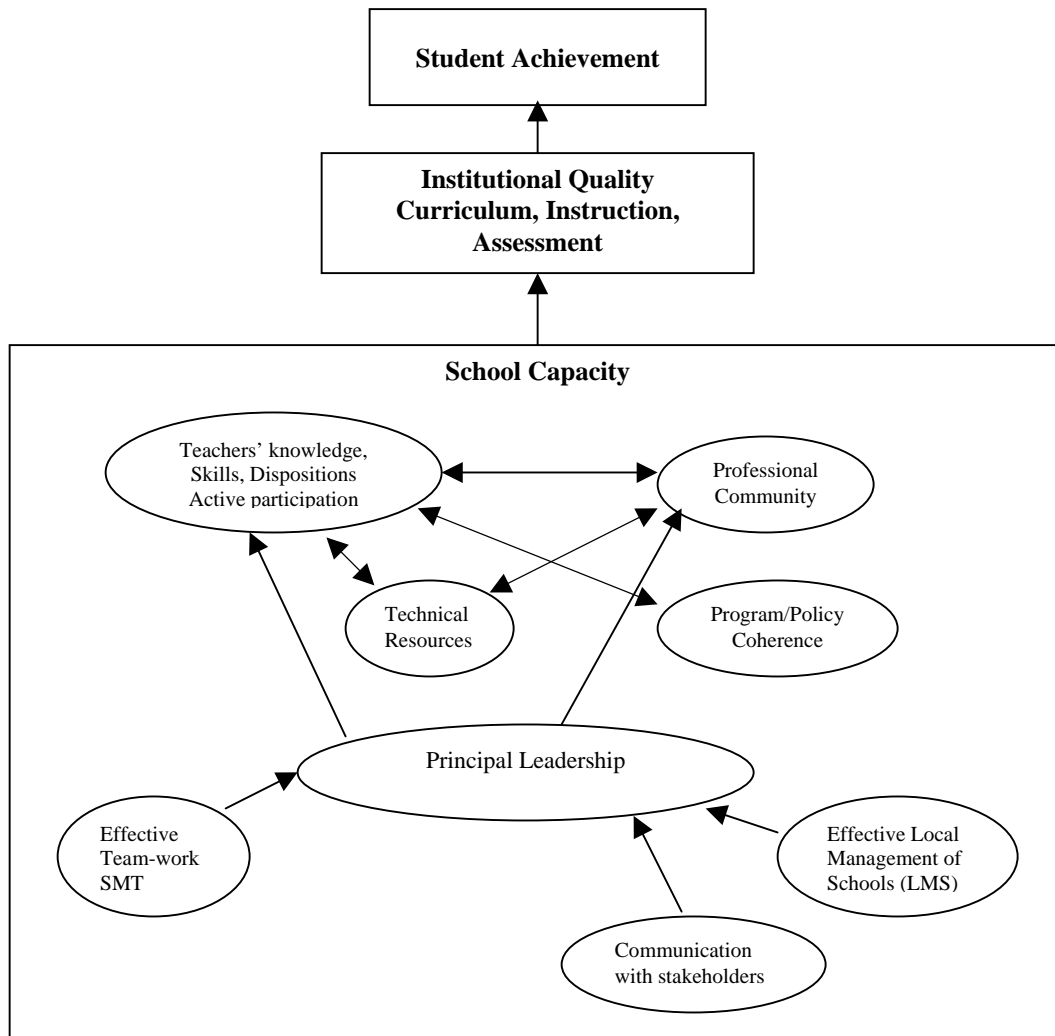
◆ **Well qualified and properly trained teams**

The tendency to rely on service providers to do in-house training for departmental employees is not only costly but also unsustainable to ensure lasting change. Both the DoE and provinces have the moral responsibility of ensuring the establishment of either in-service training or training teams that would conduct training at school level for a considerable time so as to ensure the institutionalisation of the NNSSF policy. In order to obviate the need for further recruitment, the former college lectures in the NWED (even countrywide) who have not been gainfully employed since 1998 due to the down-sizing of the public institutions and the subsequent phasing out of the colleges of education can be identified, oriented and developed

into competent facilitators of knowledge especially in the field of financial management and education policy implementation.

The use of both circuit and district managers in the training of the school leadership cannot be viewed as strategic thinking. This is because the circuit managers in the NWED are known to do everything, therefore over-burdened. According to the NWED organizational structure (1996-2004), the circuit managers are responsible for the efficient co-ordination and management of all educational policies in their jurisdiction. Therefore, removing them from the task of training would allow them time and space to concentrate on the monitoring and support of the school leadership. The creation of professional learning communities, can be represented through Figure 7.2 which points out to the following essential factors: School leadership, effective LMS to support the school leadership, policy coherence as well as teachers' knowledge. The skillful integration and combination of these essential factors can sometimes lead to better student achievement.

FIGURE 7.2: FACTORS INFLUENCING SCHOOL CAPACITY AND STUDENT’S ACHIEVEMENT



◆ **Ensuring accountability across the education system**

Given the fact that South Africa is known to have good policies (see section 1.3) this case study research has also confirmed the lack of attention to implementation as a process. It is therefore important to seek accountability across all levels of the education system for the effective implementation of policies. Such a move would require a mixture of support and pressure on the part of policy implementers

◆ **Appropriate appointment of the school leadership**

Change, educational change in particular, demands men and women who are suitably qualified and properly trained. By implication the “trend” (which started in 1994) of appointing

inexperienced and under-qualified personnel at key levels of the education system, in particular the school level, has to be reviewed as a matter of extreme urgency. The same should be done about the criteria for appointment. This refers to the present criteria for appointment as stipulated in the Public Administrative Measures (PPM) of 1998 (16) which regards an official or teacher with Grade 12 plus three year diploma (i.e., REQV 13) as qualified while the ones with Grade 12 plus two years diploma (REQV 12) are regarded as under-qualified. In the light of the current practices of not selecting and appointing suitably qualified personnel at school level, it becomes difficult to imagine how service delivery and policy implementation can be enhanced.

♦ **Turning the staff room into learning centres**

As this case study has demonstrated, some policies end in the principal's office. In order to address this problem, it is essential to turn the available staff rooms into centres of learning. By centres of learning I mean school leaders (SMT) should be properly trained and developed so as to engage the whole staff in policy discussions. Staff meetings cannot be regarded as the appropriate platform to engage new policies, since meetings more often than not serve as occasions for announcements and incidental matters. The fear or reluctance of the principal in sharing policies with the whole staff in an interactive and intensive manner needs urgent attention. Reluctance to conduct workshops at school level (i.e., learning in context) can be ascribed to the lack of proper training by the regional officials and perhaps lack of self-confidence on the part of the school principals.

♦ **Appropriate approach to self-managing schools (i.e., Section 21)**

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the concept of self-managing schools. The challenge appears to lie in the manner in which self-managing schools are identified and supported. Implicitly, schools cannot be left to their own devices in the name of autonomy, self-governance or democracy. Both the local management of schools and the provinces have to ensure continuous support in the form of training, resourcing and monitoring. In order to achieve this goal, the authority and capacity of the present regions have to be assessed and strengthened.

In the light of the above implications for this research study, which argue for certain things to happen, I have found it appropriate to conclude this case study with Fullan's (1991:4) statement that:

Neglect of the phenomenology of change – that is, how people actually experience change as distinct from it is intended – is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reforms...ultimately the transformation of subjective realities is the essence of change.

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ANNEXURE

- A1: Letter of request
- A2: Letter of Authorisation
- A3: Consent Form
- B1: School Profile; Case Study #1 Tshwene Primary School
- B2: School Profile; Case Study #2 Siege Primary School
- B3: School Profile; Case Study #3 Banogeng Primary School
- B4: School Profile; Case Study #4 Bogosing Secondary School
- B5: School Profile; Case Study #5 Mosima Secondary School
- C1: Interview Schedule 1; Independent Policy Analyst
- C2: Interview Schedule 2; National Departmental Officials
- C3: Interview Schedule 3; Provincial Officials
- C4: Interview Schedule 4; Regional Officials
- C5: Interview Schedule 5; School Management Teams
- C6: A coding System: Accumulated data
- C1-5: Shows a coding system for the identification of institutions, respondents and themes
- C7: Shows an example of a coding system with major category (themes) and sub-themes
- D1: A questionnaire, for the five case study schools
- D2: List of generated data from the questionnaire
- E: Details of the respondents' biographical data: National, Provincial, Regional and Policy Experts
- F: Shows
- G: Shows Policy Linkage Model: Equity, Systemic Reform and School Finance Reform

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**Annexure A1
Letter of Request**

Enq: I.S. Molale
Tel: (018) 3873411/06
Fax: (018) 3874097
Cell: 082 807 1828
E-mail: imolale@nwpg.org.za

P.O. Box 5213
MMABATHO
2735

12 February 2002

Dear Colleague

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The attached school profile form (A) concerned with how policy gets implemented is part of a study carried on for PhD Degree in Education Leadership, Law and Policy.

I am currently undertaking a study on “How Policy Travels” the course and effects of School Funding Policy at different levels of the education system with particular focus to schools which have qualified for section 21 status.

As part of this longitudinal study your school has been selected to serve as one of the cases to be looked at. In this regard, I am particularly desirous in obtaining details related to your school profile, because as a Doctorate student, your contributions will assist in determining the approaches towards effective policy implementation. This information will contribute significantly towards solving some of the challenges experienced by policy implementers.

The average time required to complete the school profile is approximately 20 minutes.

It will be appreciated if you can complete it on or before the 14 February 2002 for collection. In addition to this, kindly note that I will be visiting your school on the 13th of February 2002 for the purpose of appraising myself with the school context.

Lastly, I commit myself for the highest degree of confidentiality throughout my research period at your school. I further commit myself to send you a copy of the research upon the completion of this study.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

I.S. MOLALE

**Annexure A2
Letter of Authorisation**

Enq: I.S. Molale
Tel: (018) 3873411/06
Fax: (018) 3874097
Cell: 082 807 1828
E-mail: imolale@nwpg.org.za

P.O. Box 5213
MMABATHO
2735

26 March 2002

Office of the Chief Executive Officer
Department of Education
Private Bag X2044
MMABATHO
2735

**REQUEST TO OBTAIN PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH IN THE
DEPARTMENT: DOCTORAL STUDIES**

With reference to the above-mentioned matter, this letter seeks to obtain permission to conduct research studies within the North West Education Department. My area of investigation is **“HOW POLICY TRAVELS” THE COURSE AND EFFECT OF FUNDING POLICY AND EQUITY IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

During period of the research, I commit myself to be ethical and professional. I also commit myself to share the findings of the research with the Department by providing a copy of the project.

Yours sincerely

.....
I.S Molale (Mr)

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Permission granted/ not granted

.....
.....
.....

.....
SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL

Annexure A3
A consent form

Semi-Structured Interview Consent Form

Kindly be informed that I have obtained a written permission from Head of Department to conduct a research for my private studies i.e. Doctoral Degree. The study is on the implementation of new school funding policy on equity in the North West Education Department. You are therefore requested to participate in this study of policy implementation. The following details are provided for you to make a decision to participate.

- (a) Should you willingly decide to take part, your involvement will be take part in the semi-structured interview. The interview will approximately take a maximum time of thirty-five (35) minutes, and the location of the interview will be a place of your work. With your agreement, I will use a recording device for the interaction together with a notepad for the purpose of getting accurate information. You will be given a code for the purpose of avoiding revealing identities. Furthermore, sufficient effort will be made to ensure that either your name or information obtained are not disclosed to other participants to the study.
- (b) Please note, your participation in this research is quite voluntary. You may choose to participate or not participate. It is also critical importance to realize that I conduct the investigation as a doctoral student but not as a Senior Manager in the Department of Education, therefore a researcher – employee relationship should serve as the main point of interaction.
- (c) Having read the contents of this communication, you are requested to attach your signature as proof of consent. If you have any other problems or information pertaining to any studies, feel free to contact me at the address or telephone number given below as follows:

Itumeleng Samuel Molale		1689 Makhene Street
P.O. Box 5213	OR	Unit 6
MMABATHO		MMABATHO, 2735

I have gone through the contents of the above-indicated write-ups and have chosen to participate in this study.

**Annexure B1
School Profile; Case Study #1 Tshwene Primary School**

Location		Name of School:	Tshwene Primary		2001	2002	2003
Province	North West	Age of School:		No. of Learners			
Region		School Quintile:		No. of Educators			
Are Project Office							

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Staffing Number of State, SGB and Relief Educators between 2001 and 2003

2001				2002				2003			
State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators

2. EDUCATORS' CHARACTERISTICS

Total No. of Educators	Total No. responded	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Gender	Subjects/ Learning Areas
		REQV 13 and Above			M/ F	Broad Curriculum

3. LEARNER - CLASSROOM RATIO

2001			2002			2003		
Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio

4. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Indicate with an X for Yes and leave a blank for No

Staff Room	Special Rooms, e.g. sick room	Workshops	Library	Computer Room	School Hall	Separate office for Principal	Separate Office for SMT	Laboratory

5. AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Indicate with an X for Yes and a blank for No

Water	Electricity	Duplicating machine	Fax Machine	Computer for Administration	Teaching Computers for Learners	T.V	Tape Recording	Telephone

6. ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE PER PARENT i.e. PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION

Less than R25	R26- R50	R51- R100	R101- R200	R201- R300	R301- R400	R401- R500	R501- R1000	R1001- R1500	R1501- R2000	R2001- R2500	R2500 and more

7. PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS PAYING SCHOOL FEES

Year	2001	2002	2003

Annexure B2
School Profile; Case Study #2 Siege Primary School

Location		Name of School:	Siege Primary		2001	2002	2003
Province	North West	Age of School:	43	No. of Learners	440	445	443
Region	Central	School Quintile:	3	No. of Educators	16	18	16
Are Project Office	Texas						

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Staffing Number of State, SGB and Relief Educators between 2001 and 2003

2001				2002				2003			
State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators
12	4	-	16	14	4	n/a	18	14	2	n/a	16

2. EDUCATORS' CHARACTERISTICS

Total No. of Educators	Total No. responded	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Gender	Subjects/ Learning Areas
16	13	REQV 13 and Above	0 -20	25 - 49	M/ F	Broad Curriculum

3. LEARNER - CLASSROOM RATIO

2001			2002			2003		
Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio
440	13	1 : 34	445	14	1 : 32	400	13	1 : 31

4. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Indicate with an X for Yes and leave n/a for No

Staff Room	Special Rooms, e.g. sick room	Workshops	Library	Computer Room	School Hall	Separate office for Principal	Separate Office for SMT	Laboratory
X	X	X	X	n/a	X	X	X	X

5. AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Indicate with an X for Yes and n/a for No

Water	Electricity	Duplicating machine	Fax Machine	Computer for Administration	Teaching Computers for Learners	T.V	Tape Recording	Telephone
X	X	X	X	X	n/a	X	X	X

6. ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE PER PARENT i.e. PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION

Less than R25	R26- R50	R51- R100	R101- R200	R201- R300	R301- R400	R401- R500	R501- R1000	R1001- R1500	R1501- R2000	R2001- R2500	R2500 and more
							X				

7. PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS PAYING SCHOOL FEES

Year	2001	2002	2003
	80 –100 %	85 - 98 %	85 -95 %

Annexure B3
School Profile; Case Study #3 Banogeng Primary School

Location		Name of School:	Banogeng Primary		2001	2002	2003
Province	North West	Age of School:	7	No. of Learners	810	870	855
Region	Central	School Quintile:	3	No. of Educators	23	23	23
Are Project Office	Boipelo						

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Staffing Number of State, SGB and Relief Educators between 2001 and 2003

2001				2002				2003			
State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators
23	n/a	n/a	23	23	n/a	n/a	23	23	n/a	n/a	23

2. EDUCATORS' CHARACTERISTICS

Total No. of Educators	Total No. responded	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Gender	Subjects/ Learning Areas
23	22	REQV 12 and Above	6 –20	25 - 50	M/ F	Broad Curriculum

3. LEARNER - CLASSROOM RATIO

2001			2002			2003		
Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio
810	20	1: 20	870	20	1: 44	855	20	1: 43

4. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Indicate with an X for Yes and leave a n/a for No

Staff Room	Special Rooms, e.g. sick room	Workshops	Library	Computer Room	School Hall	Separate office for Principal	Separate Office for SMT	Laboratory
X	X	n/a	N/a	n/a	n/a	X	n/a	n/a

5. AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Indicate with an X for Yes and a n/a for No

Water	Electricity	Duplicating machine	Fax Machine	Computer for Administration	Teaching Computers for Learners	T.V	Tape Recording	Telephone
X	X	X	X	X	n/a	n/a	X	X

6. ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE PER PARENT i.e. PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION

Less than R25	R26- R50	R51- R100	R101- R200	R201- R300	R301- R400	R401- R500	R501- R1000	R1001 -R1500	R1501- R2000	R2001- R2500	R2500 and more
				X							

7. PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS PAYING SCHOOL FEES

Year	2001	2002	2003
	61 – 80 %	55 – 62 %	45 – 52 %

Annexure B4
School Profile; Case Study #4 Bogosing Secondary School

Location		Name of School:	Bogosing Secondary		2001	2002	2003
Province	North West	Age of School:	15	No. of Learners	976	1042	1122
Region	Central	School Quintile:	4	No. of Educators	32	32	32
Are Project Office	Magogwe						

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Staffing Number of State, SGB and Relief Educators between 2001 and 2003

2001				2002				2003			
State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators
30	1	1	32	30	1	1	32	30	1	1	32

2. EDUCATORS' CHARACTERISTICS

Total No. of Educators	Total No. responded	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Gender	Subjects/ Learning Areas
32	27	REQV 13 and Above	0 – 20	25 - 58	M/ F	Broad Curriculum

3. LEARNER - CLASSROOM RATIO

2001			2002			2003		
Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio
976	20	1 : 49	1042	20	1 : 52	1065	20	1 : 53

4. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Indicate with an X for Yes and n/a for No

Staff Room	Special Rooms, e.g. sick room	Workshops	Library	Computer Room	School Hall	Separate office for Principal	Separate Office for SMT	Laboratory
N/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	X	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

5. AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Indicate with an X for Yes and n/a for No

Water	Electricity	Duplicating machine	Fax Machine	Computer for Administration	Teaching Computers for Learners	T.V	Tape Recording	Telephone
X	X	X	X	X	X	n/a	X	X

6. ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE PER PARENT i.e. PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION

Less than R25	R26- R50	R51- 100	R101- R200	R201- R300	R301- R400	R401- R500	R501- R1000	R1001- R1500	R1501- R2000	R2001- R2500	R2500 and more

7. PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS PAYING SCHOOL FEES

Year	2001	2002	2003
	41 – 60 %	40 – 55 %	35 – 47 %

Annexure B5
School Profile; Case Study #5 Mosima Secondary School

Location		Name of School:	Mosima Secondary		2001	2002	2003
Province	North West	Age of School:	17	No. of Learners	662	695	717
Region	Central	School Quintile:	5	No. of Educators	21	22	22
Are Project Office	Kgotleng						

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Staffing Number of State, SGB and Relief Educators between 2001 and 2003

2001				2002				2003			
State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators	State Paid	SGB Paid	Relief	Total Educators
21	n/a	n/a	21	21	1	n/a	22	21	1	n/a	22

2. EDUCATORS' CHARACTERISTICS

Total No. of Educators	Total No. responded	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Gender	Subjects/ Learning Areas
22	19	REQV 12 and Above	0 - 20	25 - 49	M/ F	Broad Curriculum

3. LEARNER - CLASSROOM RATIO

2001			2002			2003		
Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio	Learners	Classroom	Learner Classroom Ratio
662	11	1 : 60	695	12	1 : 58	705	12	1 : 59

4. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Indicate with an X for Yes and n/a for No

Staff Room	Special Rooms, e.g. sick room	Workshops	Library	Computer Room	School Hall	Separate office for Principal	Separate Office for SMT	Laboratory
X	X	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	X	n/a	n/a

5. AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Indicate with an X for Yes and n/a for No

Water	Electricity	Duplicating machine	Fax Machine	Computer for Administration	Teaching Computers for Learners	T.V	Tape Recording	Telephone
X	X	X	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

6. ANNUAL SCHOOL FEE PER PARENT i.e. PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION

Less than R25	R26- R50	R51- R100	R101- R200	R201- R300	R301- R400	R401- R500	R501- R1000	R1001- R1500	R1501- R2000	R2001- R2500	R2500 and more
			X								

7. PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS PAYING SCHOOL FEES

Year	2001	2002	2003

Annexure C1
Interview Schedule 1: Independent Local Policy Analyst

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1
INDEPENDENT LOCAL ANALYSTS

This semi-structured interview is specifically designed for the purpose of interviewing local policy analysts who have consistently made critical commentary on the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy (NNSSF).

1. What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
2. In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to? (i.e. broadly speaking)
 - The NNSSF intends to address equity. What is your understanding of educational equity?
 - Is there any relationship between the NNSSF policy and the Post Provisioning Policy which deals with the distribution of educators across the school system? Explain
3. What is your general understanding of the implementation process of NNSSF with regard to:
 - what should have been followed from National up to the school level?
 - how was the implementation process actually followed from National?
 - was there any implementation plan in place?
4. How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
5. The Funding Formula in use for the construction of Resource Targeting Table and financial allocation to schools applies the 50-50 norm (i.e. 50% physical conditions of the school and 50% relative poverty of the school community). Can this Funding Formula result in adequate and fair allocation of funds to all schools? What are the shortcomings of this Funding Formula (if there are any)?
 - Is there any developed country that has applied this funding formula with success?
 - What are your views about this country's capacity to address inequalities in education?
6. The National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy prescribed certain conditions to be met i.e. (employment of Financial Analysts and Computer Programmers and Education Planner) before the actual implementation of the policy.

- What are the advantages of these preconditions and whose is responsible to recruit and pay these specialists (at provincial/district/school level)?
 - Were guidelines and procedures drawn up for the PED, districts and schools for the implementation of the policy?
7. What communication strategy(ies) was/were used to pass the policy and plans for implementation to the provinces, districts, and schools?
8. What capacity building exercises (training programmes) were developed for implementation at provincial, districts and schools levels? Who were the target groups for the training? And when was the training supposed to take place?
9. What evaluation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms did the National Education Department put in place to assess the implementation of the policy at provincial, districts and school levels? Do the said mechanisms check and verify the correctness and accuracy of the feedback from the provinces, districts and schools?
10. What is the National Departments role in ensuring that key stakeholders (in particular SGB) are trained in governance and financial management?
- Are departmental officials (e.g. district, provincial and school) trained in school development planning and financial management?
 - What is the importance of including the NNSSF activities in the strategic plan?
11. To what extent should the National Department involve itself with the implementation of the NNSSF policy provincially?
12. How does the National Department allow schools to qualify for section 21 status?
- Are there specific criteria?
 - Who is assigned to grant section 21 status?
 - Is there any additional support or training meant for section 21 schools to sustain them? And who is supposed to give this support?
13. What is the role played by the NDoE in ensuring that schools implement the fee exemption/policy correctly to the extend that?
- deserving parents are exempted?
 - decision to charge school fees has been made by the majority of parents;
 - there are functional structures for both appeals for quintiles and dispute for fee exemption.
 - That is a contingency fund to assist schools with basic service rights issues like water and electricity.
14. What role is played by the NDoE in ensuring that the government allocates adequate budget to the Education Ministry in the provincial budgets?
- How does the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) affect school expenditure especially new schools?
 - How does the financial year affect the academic year of the school system as far as spending is concern.

- And when are the provinces expected to give the budget for the coming years to schools?
15. What systems are in place to deal with the disbursement process of allocations to section 21 schools?
- How is the transaction monitored?
 - When and how are the allocation made to section 21 schools? And how are section 21 schools expected to raise additional funds?
 - Carry out maintenance function.
16. What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- Adequacy of the state allocation.
 - Capacity to implement i.e. the policy
 - Lack of training of principals to develop the school development plan
 - Difficulty in linking the school development plan to the costed budget
 - Relationship between Education Department and Public Works as far as maintenance is concerned.
 - Lack of competence by both the management and staff to direct the financial resources to the development of the curriculum.
 - Lack of skills in the effective use of the resources to improve curriculum delivery
17. What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development with respect to?
- Access to education especially the children from the disadvantaged background.
 - Influence with regard to better utilization of the resources.
 - Acquisition of additional resources.
 - Teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum improvement)
 - School Development Plan
 - District Development Programme
 - Teacher Development
 - Change of attitudes
 - Learner support materials especially for Outcome Based Education
 - Involvement of parents
 - Curriculum redress e.g. Mathematics, Science and Technology
 - Diversification of the school library
 - The principal as an instructional leader
 - The principal as a financial manager
 - The School Governing Body in determining school priorities
 - The involvement of staffed learners in fundraising projects/activities
 - The charging of school fees by historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools
 - The fee-exemption policy on the total amount of the school budget
18. Do you have any other comment for the researcher?

Annexure C2
Interview Schedule 2: National Departmental Officials

<p>INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1 NATIONAL DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS</p>

This purpose of this interview schedule is to determine both the understanding (insight) and role of the National Education Department officials in the NNSSF policy and to establish how the understanding can facilitate an integrated approach to policy implementation through the education system, so as to have a maximum effect on the core technology of the school i.e. teaching and learning.

National Department of Education Officials (Responsible for the overseeing of the implementation of the funding policy).

1. What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) Policy?
2. In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to? (i.e. broadly speaking). The NNSSF intends to address equity.
 - What is your understanding of educational equity?
 - Is there Post Provisioning Policy which deals with the distribution of educators across the school system? Explain
3. What is your general understanding of the implementation process of NNSSF with regard to:
 - what should have been followed from National up to the school level?
 - how was the implementation process actually followed from National?
 - was there any implementation plan in place?
 - how was the plan developed? And who was involved?
4. How has the National Education Department of shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
5. The Funding Formula in use for the construction of Resource Targetting Table and financial allocation to schools applies the 50-50 norm (i.e 50% physical conditions of the school and 50% relative poverty of the school community). Can this Funding Formula result in adequate and fair allocation of funds to all schools? What are the shortcomings of this Funding Formula (if there are any)?
 - Is the allocation per learner in the North West Education Department adequate?
 - Is a minimum of R100.00 per learner support material adequate?
 - What are your views about this country's capacity to address inequalities in education provision given the backlog?
 - Is there any developed country that has applied this funding formula with some success?
 - Is there any country that has achieved equity in education provision.

6. The National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy prescribed certain conditions to be met i.e. (employment of Financial Analysts and Computer Programmers and Education Planner) before the actual implementation of the policy.
 - What are the advantages of these preconditions and whose is responsible to recruit and pay these specialists?
 - Were implementation guidelines and procedures drawn up for the PED, districts and schools?
 - Are these conditions adequate for meeting the equity demands of the NNSSF policy at district level, at school level?
7. What communication strategy(ies) was/were used to pass the policy and plans for implementation to the provinces, districts, and schools?
8. What capacity building exercises (training programmes) were developed for implementation at provincial, districts and schools levels? Who were the target groups for the training?
9. What evaluation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms did the National Education Department put in place to assess the implementation of the policy at provincial, districts and school levels? Do the said mechanisms check and verify the correctness and accuracy of the feedback from the provinces, districts and schools?
10. What is the National Departments role in ensuring that key stakeholders (in particular SGB) are trained in governance and financial management?
 - Are departmental officials (e.g. district, provincial and school) trained in school development planning and financial management?
 - And what is the importance of including the NNSSF activities in the strategic plan?
 - What is the role of the provinces in the school development plan?
11. To what extent should the National Department involve itself with the implementation of the NNSSF policy provincially?
12. How does the National Department allow schools to qualify for section 21 status?
 - Is there any additional support or training meant for section 21 schools to sustain them? And who is giving this support?
 - Who is assigned to grant section 21 status?
13. What is the role played by the NDoE in ensuring that schools implement the fee exemption/policy correctly to the extend that?
 - the information about qualification for exemption is effectively communicated;
 - deserving parents are exempted?
 - decision to charge school fees has been made by the majority of parents;
 - there are functional structures for both appeals for quintiles and dispute for fee exemption.
 - And when are the Provincial Education Department expected to give the budget for fee exemption.

14. What role is played by the NDoE in ensuring that the government allocates adequate budget to the Education Ministry in the provincial budgets?
 - How does the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) affect school expenditure especially new schools?
 - How does the financial year affect the academic year spending for schools?
15. What systems are put in place to deal with the disbursement process of allocations to section 21 schools?
 - How is the transaction monitored?
 - When and how are the allocation made to section 21 schools? And how are section 21 schools expected to raise additional funds?
 - Carry out maintenance function.
16. What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
 - Adequacy of the state allocation.
 - Capacity to implement i.e. the policy
 - Lack of training of principals to develop the school development plan
 - Difficulty in linking the school development plan to the costed budget
 - Relationship between Education Department and Public Works as far as maintenance is concerned.
 - Lack of skills in the effective use of the resources to improve curriculum delivery.
 - The role of the SGB finance
17. What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development with respect to?
 - Access to education especially the children from the disadvantaged background.
 - Influence with regard to better utilization of the resources.
 - Acquisition of additional resources.
 - Teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum improvement)
 - School Development Plan
 - District Development Programme
 - Teacher Development
 - Change of attitudes
 - Learner support materials especially for Outcome Based Education
 - Involvement of parents
 - Curriculum redress e.g. Mathematics, Science and Technology
 - Diversification of the school library
 - The principal as an instructional leader
 - The principal as a financial manager
 - The School Governing Body in determining school priorities
 - The involvement of staffed learners in fundraising projects/activities
 - The charging of school fees by historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools
 - The fee-exemption policy on the total amount of the school budget
18. Do you have any other comment for the researcher?

Annexure C3
Interview Schedule 3: Provincial Officials

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1
PROVINCIAL MAKERS AND IMPLEMENTERS

This interview schedule is designed with the purpose of eliciting the understanding on the NNSSF policy goals and objectives with the view of determining how the understanding can assist in policy implementation so as to have coherence and integration that can contribute towards maximum effect of the school' overall performance.

Provincial Project Management Team Officials (5 officials) : Overseeing the implementation of the policy provincially

1. What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) Policy?
2. In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to? (i.e. broadly speaking). The NNSSF intends to address equity.
 - What is your understanding of educational equity?
 - Is there Post Provisioning Policy which deals with the distribution of educators across the school system? Explain
3. What is your general understanding of the implementation process of NNSSF with regard to:
 - what should have been followed from National up to the school level?
 - how was the implementation process actually followed?
 - was there any implementation plan in place? e.g. Strategic planning
 - how was the plan developed? And who was involved?
4. How has the Provincial Education Department of shared the understanding of the policy with the districts, and schools?
 - Was there any advocacy for the implementation process?
 - What means of communication strategy were put in place to share the information?
 - Was there any advocacy done by the Provincial Education Department? And when? And who was involved?
5. The Funding Formula in use for the construction of Resource Targetting Table and financial allocation to schools applies the 50-50 norm (i.e 50% physical conditions of the school and 50% relative poverty of the school community). Can this Funding Formula result in adequate and fair allocation of funds to all schools? What are the shortcomings of this Funding Formula (if there are any)?
 - Is the allocation per learner in the North West Education Department adequate?
 - Is a minimum of R100.00 per learner support material adequate? Explain
 - What are your views about this department capacity to address inequalities in education by giving school adequate resources?

- The NNSSF policy has put 2005 as the year set aside to reach 85:15 ratio for personnel and non-personnel expenditure. Is this target (85:15) achievable in the next two years? If yes, how to achieve the target? If no, why and what are the constraints?
6. The National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy prescribed certain conditions to be met i.e. (employment of Financial Analysts and Computer Programmers and Education Planner) before the actual implementation of the project.
 - What are the advantages of these preconditions and whose is responsible to recruit and pay these specialists?
 - Were guidelines and procedures drawn up for the districts and schools for effective implementation of the policy?
 - Are these conditions adequate for meeting the equity demands of the NNSSF policy? – at district level, at school level?
 7. As a department, do you have a dedicated staff implementation of the policy provincially?
 8. What capacity building exercises (training programmes) were developed for implementation at provincial, districts and schools levels? Who were the target groups for the training? And when was the training supposed to take place?
 9. What evaluation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms did the Provincial Education Department put in place to assess the implementation of the policy at provincial, districts and school levels? Do the said mechanisms check and verify the correctness and accuracy of the feedback from the districts and schools e.g. the spending pattern of the school and Resource Targeting Table?
 10. What is the Provincial Departments role in ensuring that key stakeholders (in particular SGB) are trained in governance and financial management?
 - Are departmental officials (e.g. district, provincial and school) trained in school development planning and financial management?
 11. How does the Provincial Department allow schools to qualify for section 21 status? Are there specific criteria?
 - And who is granting section 21 status to schools?
 - Is there any additional support or training meant for section 21 schools to sustain them?
 - And who is responsible for such training
 - It is not too earlier to allocate section 21 functions to school?
 - Which of the five allocated functions difficult to carry out by the schools?
 - Which of the five allocated function difficult to support by the provincial education?
 - Which of the five allocated functions necessitates the collaboration other provincial departments?
 12. What is the role played by the PEE in ensuring that schools implement the fee exemption/policy correctly to the extend that?
 - the information about qualification for exemption is effectively communicated;

- deserving parents are exempted?
 - decision to charge school fees has been made by the majority of parents;
 - there are functional structures for both appeals for quintiles and dispute for fee exemption.
 - How do you monitor the fee-exemption applications from head office level?
13. What role is played by the NDoE in ensuring that the government allocates adequate budget to the Education Ministry in the provincial budgets?
- Does the Provincial Treasury allocate the budget timeously to the department?
 - How does the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) affect school expenditure especially new schools?
 - How does the financial year affect the academic year spending for schools?
14. In 2000/2001 the Provincial Education Department had an expenditure of R33 million for NNSSF policy. What caused this under-expenditure? Which categories (quintile) schools were affected? How is the Department addressing this challenge?
15. What systems are in place to deal with the disbursement process of resources to section 21 schools? Do you have a clear procurement system in place?
- How does the procurement of resources through the Warehouse assist section 21 schools.
 - How far have you gone in training both the districts and schools (i.e. section 21) in tendering procedures?
 - What is the minimum time given for the delivery of ordered goods to schools?
16. What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- Adequacy of the state allocation.
 - Capacity to implement i.e. the policy
 - Lack of training of principals to develop the school development plan
 - Difficulty in linking the school development plan to the costed budget
 - Relationship between Education Department and Public Works as far as maintenance is concerned.
 - Lack of competence by both the management and staff to direct the financial resources to the development of the curriculum.
 - Lack of skills in the effective use of the resources to improve curriculum delivery.
 - Lack of the information system
 - Monitoring the effective use of financial resource.
 - The role of the SGB finance
17. What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development with respect to?
- Access to education especially the children from the disadvantaged background.
 - Influence with regard to better utilization of the resources.
 - Acquisition of additional resources.
 - Teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum improvement)

- School Development Plan
- District Development Programme
- Teacher Development
- Change of attitudes
- Learner support materials especially for Outcome Based Education
- Involvement of parents
- Curriculum redress e.g. Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Diversification of the school library
- The principal as an instructional leader
- The principal as a financial manager
- The School Governing Body in determining school priorities
- The involvement of staffed learners in fundraising projects/activities
- The charging of school fees by historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools
- The fee-exemption policy on the total amount of the school budget

18. Is there any other comment you would like to bring to the attention of the researcher?

Annexure C4
Interview Schedule 4: Regional Officials

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1 REGIONAL OFFICIALS
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This interview schedule is designed with the purpose of eliciting the understanding on the NNSSF policy goals and objectives with the view of determining how the understanding capacity (to empower, support, monitor and evaluate) of the Regional Officials from the case study on the five identified schools for the NNSSF policy. furthermore, to establish how the understanding can facilitate an integrated and coherent approach to policy implementation so as to have maximum effect.

Regional Officials (5 officials): Overseeing the implementation of the policy provincially

1. What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) Policy?
2. In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to? (i.e. broadly speaking). The NNSSF intends to address equity.
 - Is there Post Provisioning Policy which deals with the distribution of educators across the school system? Explain.
3. What is your general understanding of the implementation process of NNSSF with regard to:
 - what should have been followed from National up to the school level?
 - how was the implementation process actually followed? i.e. What actually happened?
 - was there any implementation plan in place?
 - how was the plan developed? And who was involved?
 - Was there any financial resources set aside for the implementation of the policy from the Provincial Department?
4. How has the region shared the understanding of the policy with schools, principals, and general stakeholders (parents) and SGB?
 - What means of communication strategy (e.g. meetings) were used in sharing the policy?
 - Was there any advocacy done by the Regions? And when? And who was involved?
5. The Funding Formula in use for the construction of Resource Targetting Table and financial allocation to schools applies the 50-50 norm (i.e 50% physical conditions of the school and 50% relative poverty of the school community). Can this Funding Formula result in adequate and fair allocation of funds to all schools? What are the shortcomings of this Funding Formula (if there are any)?

- Is the allocation per learner in the North West Education Department adequate?
 - Is a minimum of R100.00 per learner support material adequate? Explain
 - What are your views about this department capacity to address inequalities in historically disadvantaged schools?
6. In 2001/2002 financial year, how much was allocated to your region? Do you find the adequate enough to cover the following essentials (basic)?
- Learner Support Material (LSM)
 - Curriculum Development, especially OBE
 - School maintenance
 - Water and Electricity
 - Payment of telephone line, faxes, and photocopiers
7. As Regional office, do you have a dedicated staff for overseeing the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding?
8. What capacity building exercises (training programmes) were developed for implementation at schools levels? Who were the target groups for the training? And when was the training take place?
- Was there any funding set aside in the region for the implementation of the policy?
9. What evaluation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms did the Regional Education Department put in place to assess the implementation of the policy at districts and school levels? Do the said mechanisms check and verify the correctness and accuracy of the feedback from the districts and schools e.g. the spending pattern of the school and Resource Targeting Table?
10. What role of regions in ensuring that key stakeholders like SGB are trained in governance and financial management?
- Are departmental officials (e.g. district, provincial and school) trained in school development planning and financial management?
 - That every school has a school development plan?
11. How does the schools qualify for section 21 status? Are there specific criteria?
- Is there any additional support or training meant for section 21 schools to sustain them i.e. after qualification?
12. What is the role played by the region in ensuring that schools implement the fee exemption/policy correctly to the extend that?
- that information about qualification for exemption is effectively communicated to parents;
 - that deserving parents are exempted?
 - that decision to charge school fees has been made by the majority of parents;
 - that there are functional structures for both appeals for quintiles and dispute for fee exemption.

- That no learners are dismissed from school as a result of non-payment of school fees.
 - The parents pay the school fees as agreed upon.
13. What role is played by the region in drafting the budget of the school? When are schools supposed to be informed about their state allocation? And how are they informed?
- In 2000/2001, this region has an under-expenditure of for NNSSF policy. What caused this under-expenditure? Which categories of schools (quintile) were affected? And what are the specific reasons?
 - How is the region addressing this challenge properly of under-expenditure? Explain
 - Are section 21 school spending the allocated money appropriately e.g. water and electricity
 - Which grouping of schools i.e. between section 21 and non-section 21 school is spending less
14. What systems are in place to deal with the disbursement process of allocation to section 21 schools? i.e. at regional level/school level.
- Do you have a clear procumbent system in place?
 - How does the procurement of resource through the Warehouse assist section 21 schools in getting orders quickly.
15. What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- Adequacy of the state allocation.
 - Capacity to implement i.e. the policy
 - Lack of training of principals to develop the school development plan
 - Difficulty in linking the school development plan to the costed budget
 - Relationship between Education Department and Public Works as far as maintenance is concerned.
 - Lack of competence by both the management and staff to direct the financial resources to the development of the curriculum.
 - Lack of skills in the effective use of the resources to improve curriculum delivery.
 - Lack of the information system
 - Monitoring the effective use of financial resource.
 - The role of the SGB finance
16. What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development with respect to?
- Access to education especially the children from the disadvantaged background.
 - Influence with regard to better utilization of the resources.
 - Acquisition of additional resources.
 - Teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum improvement)
 - School Development Plan
 - District Development Programme
 - Teacher Development
 - Change of attitudes

- Learner support materials especially for Outcome Based Education
- Involvement of parents
- Curriculum redress e.g. Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Diversification of the school library
- The principal as an instructional leader
- The principal as a financial manager
- The School Governing Body in determining school priorities
- The involvement of staffed learners in fundraising projects/activities
- The charging of school fees by historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools
- The fee-exemption policy on the total amount of the school budget

17.

18. Is there any other comment you would like to bring to the attention of the researcher?

Annexure C5
Interview Instrument 5: School Management Teams

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

This interview schedule is designed with the purpose of eliciting the understanding on the NNSSF policy goals and objectives with the view of determining how the understanding capacity (to empower, support, monitor and evaluate) of the Regional Officials from the case study on the five identified schools for the NNSSF policy. furthermore, to establish how the understanding can facilitate an integrated and coherent approach to policy implementation so as to have maximum effect.

Regional Officials (5 officials): Overseeing the implementation of the policy provincially

1. What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding (NNSSF) Policy?
2. In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to? (i.e. broadly speaking). The NNSSF intends to address equity.
 - Is there Post Provisioning Policy which deals with the distribution of educators across the school system? Explain
3. What is your general understanding of the implementation process of NNSSF with regard to:
 - what should have been followed from National up to the school level?
 - how was the implementation process actually followed? i.e. What actually happened?
 - was there any implementation plan in place?
 - how was the plan developed? And who was involved?
 - Was there any financial resources set aside for the implementation of the policy from the Provincial Department?
4. How has the region shared the understanding of the policy with schools, principals, and general stakeholders (parents) and SGB?
 - What means of communication strategy (e.g. meetings) were used in sharing the policy?
 - Was there any advocacy done by the Regions? And when? And who was involved?
5. The Funding Formula in use for the construction of Resource Targetting Table and financial allocation to schools applies the 50-50 norm (i.e 50% physical conditions of the school and 50% relative poverty of the school community). Can this Funding Formula result in adequate and fair allocation of funds to all schools? What are the shortcomings of this Funding Formula (if there are any)?
 - Is the allocation per learner in the North West Education Department adequate?

- Is a minimum of R100.00 per learner support material adequate? Explain
 - What are your views about this department capacity to address inequalities in historically disadvantaged schools?
6. In 2001/2002 financial year, how much was allocated to your region? Do you find the adequate enough to cover the following essentials (basic)?
- Learner Support Material (LSM)
 - Curriculum Development, especially OBE
 - School maintenance
 - Water and Electricity
 - Payment of telephone line, faxes, and photocopiers
7. As Regional office, do you have a dedicated staff for overseeing the implementation of the Norms and Standard for School Funding?
8. What capacity building exercises (training programmes) were developed for implementation at schools levels? Who were the target groups for the training? And when was the training take place?
- Was there any funding set aside in the region for the implementation of the policy?
9. What evaluation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms did the Regional Education Department put in place to assess the implementation of the policy at districts and school levels? Do the said mechanisms check and verify the correctness and accuracy of the feedback from the districts and schools e.g. the spending pattern of the school and Resource Targeting Table?
10. What role of regions in ensuring that key stakeholders like SGB are trained in governance and financial management?
- Are departmental officials (e.g. district, provincial and school) trained in school development planning and financial management?
 - That every school has a school development plan?
11. How does the schools qualify for section 21 status? Are there specific criteria?
- Is there any additional support or training meant for section 21 schools to sustain them i.e. after qualification?
12. What is the role played by the region in ensuring that schools implement the fee exemption/policy correctly to the extend that?
- that information about qualification for exemption is effectively communicated to parents;
 - that deserving parents are exempted?
 - that decision to charge school fees has been made by the majority of parents;
 - that there are functional structures for both appeals for quintiles and dispute for fee exemption.

- That no learners are dismissed from school as a result of non-payment of school fees.
 - The parents pay the school fees as agreed upon.
13. What role is played by the region in drafting the budget of the school? When are schools supposed to be informed about their state allocation? And how are they informed?
- In 2000/2001, this region has an under-expenditure of for NNSSF policy. What caused this under-expenditure? Which categories of schools (quintile) were affected? And what are the specific reasons?
 - How is the region addressing this challenge properly of under-expenditure? Explain
 - Are section 21 school spending the allocated money appropriately e.g. water and electricity
 - Which grouping of schools i.e. between section 21 and non-section 21 school is spending less
14. What systems are in place to deal with the disbursement process of allocation to section 21 schools? i.e. at regional level/school level.
- Do you have a clear procumbent system in place?
 - How does the procurement of resource through the Warehouse assist section 21 schools in getting orders quickly.
15. What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- Adequacy of the state allocation.
 - Capacity to implement i.e. the policy
 - Lack of training of principals to develop the school development plan
 - Difficulty in linking the school development plan to the costed budget
 - Relationship between Education Department and Public Works as far as maintenance is concerned.
 - Lack of competence by both the management and staff to direct the financial resources to the development of the curriculum.
 - Lack of skills in the effective use of the resources to improve curriculum delivery.
 - Lack of the information system
 - Monitoring the effective use of financial resource.
 - The role of the SGB finance
16. What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development with respect to?
- Access to education especially the children from the disadvantaged background.
 - Influence with regard to better utilization of the resources.
 - Acquisition of additional resources.
 - Teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum improvement)
 - School Development Plan
 - District Development Programme
 - Teacher Development
 - Change of attitudes

- Learner support materials especially for Outcome Based Education
- Involvement of parents
- Curriculum redress e.g. Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Diversification of the school library
- The principal as an instructional leader
- The principal as a financial manager
- The School Governing Body in determining school priorities
- The involvement of staffed learners in fundraising projects/activities
- The charging of school fees by historically advantaged and disadvantaged schools
- The fee-exemption policy on the total amount of the school budget

17.

18. Is there any other comment you would like to bring to the attention of the researcher?

Annexure C6

A Coding System: Accumulated Data. Shows a coding system for the identification of institutions, respondents and themes

School level	Assigned codes	Explanatory note
Tshwene P.	TSH. PRI ¹ .1	The first abbreviation represents the school's assumed name, the middle abbreviation PRI ¹ represents the principal/rank of the case study school no. 1 while the last digit represents the question number.
	TSH. D. PRI.1	The first abbreviation represents the school assumed name, middle abbreviation the rank/deputy principal, while the last digit represents the question number.
	TSH.HOD ¹ .1	The first abbreviation represents the school name, HOD represents the Heads of Department no. one while the last digit is the number of question.
	TSH. HOD ² 1	HOD ² represent departmental head number two while digit one represent question one.
	TSH.HOD ³ .1	HOD ³ represents departmental head number 3 and 1 as a digit represents the question number.
	TSH.ED/TR.2	TSH represents the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer, and digit 2 for the question number.
Siege Primary	SIE.PRI ² .1	SIE stands for Siege primary and the abbreviation Pri ² is for the principal of case study number 2 school while 1 is for the number of the question.
	SIE.HOD ¹ .3	SIE represents the school's name, HOD for the Heads of Department, while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	SIE.HOD ² .4	SIE represents the school's name, HOD ² for the Heads of Department, while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
Banogeng Primary	BAN.PRI ³ .3	BAN represents the school's name, PRI ³ stands for the principal of the school and three stands for the question number
	BAN.D.PRI ³ .4	BAN stands for the name of the school, D.PRI ³ for the Deputy Principal of case study number 3
	BAN.HOD ¹ .3	BAN for Banogeng Primary School, HOD ¹ for the departmental head number one while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	BAN.HOD ² .4	BAN for Banogeng Primary School, HOD ² for the departmental head number two while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.

School level	Assigned codes	Explanatory note
Banogeng Primary	BAN.HOD ³ .5	BAN for Banogeng Primary School, HOD ³ for the departmental head number three while 5 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	BAN.HOD ⁴ .6	BAN for Banogeng Primary School, HOD ³ for the departmental head number four while 5 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	BAN.ED/TR.2	BAN represents the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer, and digit 2 for the question number.
Bogosing Secondary School	Bog.Pri ¹ .4	Bog represents the school's assumed name, Pri stands for principal and the number four for question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.D.Pri.3	Bog for Bogosing Primary, D.Pri for Deputy Principal and 3 for question number
	Bog.HOD ¹ .2	Bog. stands for the name of the school, HOD ¹ for the Head of Department number one. The number two for the number of question in the interview schedule.
	Bog. HOD ² .3	Bog. stands for the name of the school, HOD ² for the Head of Department number two. The number three for the number of question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.HOD ³ .6	Bog. represents the name of the school, HOD ³ for the Head of Department number three. The number six for the number of question in the interview schedule.
Central Region	Cr. Cm.1	Cr. for Central Region, Cm for the Circuit Manager and 1 stands for the number of question in the interview schedule
	Cr.Cm..3	Cr. for Central Region, Cm for the Circuit Manager and 3 stands for the number of question in the interview schedule
	Cr.Cm.2	Cr. for Central Region, Cm for the Circuit Manager and 2 stands for the number of question in the interview schedule
Provincial level Head-Office	Pro.Dir.2	Pro. Represents the provincial level, Dir, director at provincial level and 2 for the question number
	Pro.D.Dir.1	Pro. Represents the provincial level, D.Dir, Deputy director at provincial level and 1 for the question number
	Pro. D.Dir. 3	Pro. Represents the provincial level, D.Dir, Deputy director at provincial level and 3 for the question number

School level	Assigned codes	Explanatory note
Education Right Programme	ERP.MRSV.4	ERP represents the organization, MR SV represents the name of the policy expert interviewed and 4 represents the question number
EPU.WITS University	EPU.WITS.DR.CM.3	EPU-WITS, Education Policy Unit of Wits University, DR CM stands for the policy experts and 3 the question
IDASA	IDASA.MR W.3	Institute of Democracy Association of South Africa while MR W stands for the policy experts
Education Foundation	EDU.MR P:4	EDU.refers to the name of the policy experts and 4 for the question number.
NAPTOSA	Napt: Dr Bos 15	Napt for NAPTOSA, Dr Bos for the name of the policy experts interviewed
SAOU	SAOU. Mr PT.4	Mr PT refers to the union representative interviewed while 4 stands for the question
SADTU		

Annexure C7

Shows an example of a coding system with major category (themes) and sub-themes
(Shows an example of a coding system with 90% internal reliability)

1. Policy Conceptualization/Understanding

P.C. School Improvement	P.C. – S I
P.C. Financial Assistance	P.C. – F A
P.C. Resource Redistribution	P.C. R R E
P.C. Resource Provision	P.C. – R P
P.C. Redress Imbalances	P.C. – R I M
P.C. Resourcing Equity	P.C. – R-EQ
P.C. Disadvantaged Schools	P.C. DI-Sch
P.C. Quality Education	P.C. – Q/EDU
P.C. Alleviation of Poverty	P.C. – A/Po
P.C. School Development	P.C. – Sch/Dev
P.C. Policy-Misunderstanding	P.C.-P/MIS
P.C Policy coherence	P.C.P/CO
P.C Policy Integration	P.C.P – Integration

2. Implementation Process

I.P: Clear – guidelines	I.P. - CI/GUI
I.P: Prescribed Conditions	I.P. - P/CON
I.P: Implementation Procedures	I.P. - IM/Pro
I.P: Implementation Structure	I.P. – IM/STR
I.P: Management Plans	I.P. – M/PL
I.P: Implementation Strategies	I.P. – IM/ST
I.P: Qualification Criteria	I.P. – Qu/cr
I.P: Advocacy Campaign	I.P. – AD/CA
I.P: Training/Workshop	I.P. – TRA
I.P: Budget Provision	I.P. – BU/PRO
I.P: Provincial Regulations	I.P. – Pro/RE
I.P: Tracking – System	I.P. – Tra/Sy
I.P: Cost-Saving	I.P.- Cost/S
I.P: Fee-Collection	I.P.- FE/Coll
I.P: Legal-Suit	I.P.- LEG/Sui
I.P: Functional approach	I.P. F-A

3. Reliability – Funding Formula

R.F: Correct Face Value	R.F – CO/FD
R.F: One Size Fit All	R.F. – One/AL
R.F: Inconsistency Norm	R.F. – INCO/N
R.F: Per learner – Inadequate	R.F. – Ina
R.F: LSM – Inadequate	R.F. – LSM/I
R.F: Provincial – Influence	R.F. – Pro/IN
R.F: Disadvantaged Affluent School	R.F. – DI/AF
R.F: Playing Field – not level	R.F. – PLA/NOT
R.F: Allow – Tuition Fee	R.F. – All/FE
R.F: Holistic – Development lacking	R.F. – HO/DEV
R.F: Needs-Based	R.F.- NEED/Based

4. Assessing Implementation

A.I: National staff	A.I. – Nat/staff
A.I: Provincial staff	A.I. – Pro/staff
A.I: District staff	A.I. – Dis/staff
A.I: School staff	A.I. – Sch/staff
A.I: Impact studies	A.I. – Im/studies
A.I: Monitoring teams	A.I. – Mon/T
A.I: Feedback	A.I.- Fee/BA

5. Relationship Of Policies (Post Provi)

R.P: Equitable distribution	R.P. – EQ/Distri
R.P: Optimal use	R.P. – OP/use
R.P: Efficient use (resources)	R.P. – EFF/RES
R.P: Learner – centred	R.P. – LEA/CEN
R.P: Redress – oriented	R.P. – RED/Ori
R.P: Curriculum focus	R.P. – Cu/Focus
R.P: National Norms & Standard	R.P. – Nat-Norms & Sta

6. Capacity – Building1

C.B: Needs based – training	CB – Need/Tra
C.B: Implementers knowledge	CB – Imp/kn
C.B: Implementers guidelines	CB – Imp/Gu
C.B: Financial Training	CB – Fin/Tra
C.B: Strategic Planning	CB – Stra/Pla
C.B: Functional Skills	CB – Fu/Ski
C.B: Tendering/Procurement training	CB – Ten/tra
C.B: Additional training	CB – Add/tra
C.B: Empowering Functionaries	CB – Emp/Fu
C.B: Consistent Support	CB – Con/Su
C.B: Teacher-Development	CB-TEA/DEV
C.B: Curriculum Development	CB- CUR/DEV

7. Implementation Challenges

I.C: Inadequacy of budget	I.C – Ina/Bu
I.C: Poor training	I.C – Poor/tra
I.C: Lack of communication	I.C – la/com
I.C: No follow-ups	I.C – No/Foll
I.C: LSM Inadequate	I.C – LSM/In
I.C: Poor support	I.C – Poor/su
I.C: Imbalances continue	I.C – Imb/con
I.C: Poor interpretation	I.C – Poor/In
I.C: Absence of dedicated staff (clerks)	I.C – Ab/staff
I.C: Unreliable data	I.C – Un/data
I.C: Procurement Process	I.C – Pro/Proce
I.C: Budget release late	I.C – Bu/late
I.C: Lack of monitoring	I.C – Lac/mo

8. Effect – Indicators

E.I: Holistic Approach	E.I – HO/AP
E.I: Participatory Approach	E.I – PA/AP
E.I: Stakeholders involvement	E.I – Sta/In
E.I: Business awareness	E.I – Bu/Aw
E.I: Financial discipline	E.I – Fin/DI
E.I: Capacity – Draw Budget	E.I – Cap/Bu
E.I: Feel empowered	E.I – Feel/Emp
E.I: Facilitate planning	E.I – Faci/Plan
E.I: Priority Determination	E.I – Pri/Determ
E.I: Self Management	E.I – SELF/Man
E.I: Simplify acquisition	E.I – SI/Acq
E.I: Development of maintenance	E.I – DEV/Mai
E.I: Positive attitudes	E.I – Posi/Atti
E.I: Red tape reduced	E.I – Red/tap

9. Un-Intended Effects/Negative

UN: Poor Payment of school fees	UN – Poor/Pay
UN: High fees (Advantaged sch) model C	UN – Fee/hi
UN: Caused Class division	UN – Cla/DI
UN: Affect quality (model c)	UN – Qu/Aff
UN: Tension (i.e. management and parents)	UN – Ten/ca
UN: Schools left to their own devices	UN -
UN: Disrupt planning	UN – DI/Pla
UN: Infrastructure Deterioration	UN – Infra
UN: Financial Embezzlement	UN – Fin/Em

H.O.D

No:

From: I.S Molale

Site: Ipelegeng Batlharo

Contact No: (018 381 1700-6

Code: Tshwane Primary

Date: 07/05/2003

**A SAMPLE OF QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS, DISTRICT OFFICIALS,
PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS**

PREFACE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect additional information about the principals and educators understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy. The information you supply will be treated with absolute confidentiality and will be used for research purposes only i.e. PhD studies

PART A

EDUCATOR INFORMATION

Please fill or cross (X) the appropriate option.

1. Designation of educator

Educator	Principal	Deputy Principal	Head of Department	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4	5

2. Main teaching subject area / responsibility

Only management	Maths/ Science	Languages	Technical skills	Commerce	Humanities	Other
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Age

Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-40	40-49	50-59	Above 60
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. Teaching experience in years

0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	More than 20
1	2	3	4	5

5. Gender

Male	Female
1	2

6. Formal qualifications (completed)

2 years Diploma only	3 years Diploma only	Degree only	Degree & Diploma	More than one degree	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4	5	6

PART B

The National Norms and Standard for School Funding was introduced into schools in January 2000. And your school became section 21 school (i.e. given the budget) in the year 2002. Many educators became aware of this policy through departmental policy.

Please fill in or cross (X) the appropriate option (box)

1. Are you aware of the policy document on the National Norms and Standard for School funding?

YES	NO
1	2

2. Was the document made available to all educators in your school?

YES	NO
1	2

3. If yes, please state how?

Worskhop	Circular	Conference	Staff meeting	Other (specify)
1	2	3	4	5

4. How did you first become aware of the policy on the National Norms and Standard for School Funding?

I read the policy	1
I was told by the Principal/HOD	2
I was told by the Circuit Manager/Principal	3
I was invited to a workshop at the district	4
It was discussed at a staff meeting	5
Other (specify)	6

SECTION C

What do you think are the main reasons, why the National Norms and Standard for School Funding has been introduced in our schools?

Please write clearly

I think the main reason is to help the infrastructure of the school their will influence some running of the whole schools

.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D

What are the five challenges being experienced in attempting to implement the National Norms and Standard in your section 21 schools?

- Prioritization
- Lack of knowledge as far as section 21 is concern
- How to claim
- Workshop needed

Annexure E
Details of the respondents' biographical data: National,
Provincial, Regional and Policy Experts

Regional Education Office

Sites 1	Total Number	Designation	Qualification	Experience	Gender
	1	PL4	B.A. ED, B	20 years	M
	2	District Manager	BA Ed, B.Ed	30 years	M
	3	Circuit Manager	BA Ed, B.Ed	25 years	M

Provincial Education Level

Sites 1	Total Number	Designation	Qualification	Experience	Gender
	1	PL3	P.T.C, B.com	21 years	M
	2	PL5	B.comm	26 years	M
	1	Director	BA Ed		M
	1	Chief Director		30 years	M

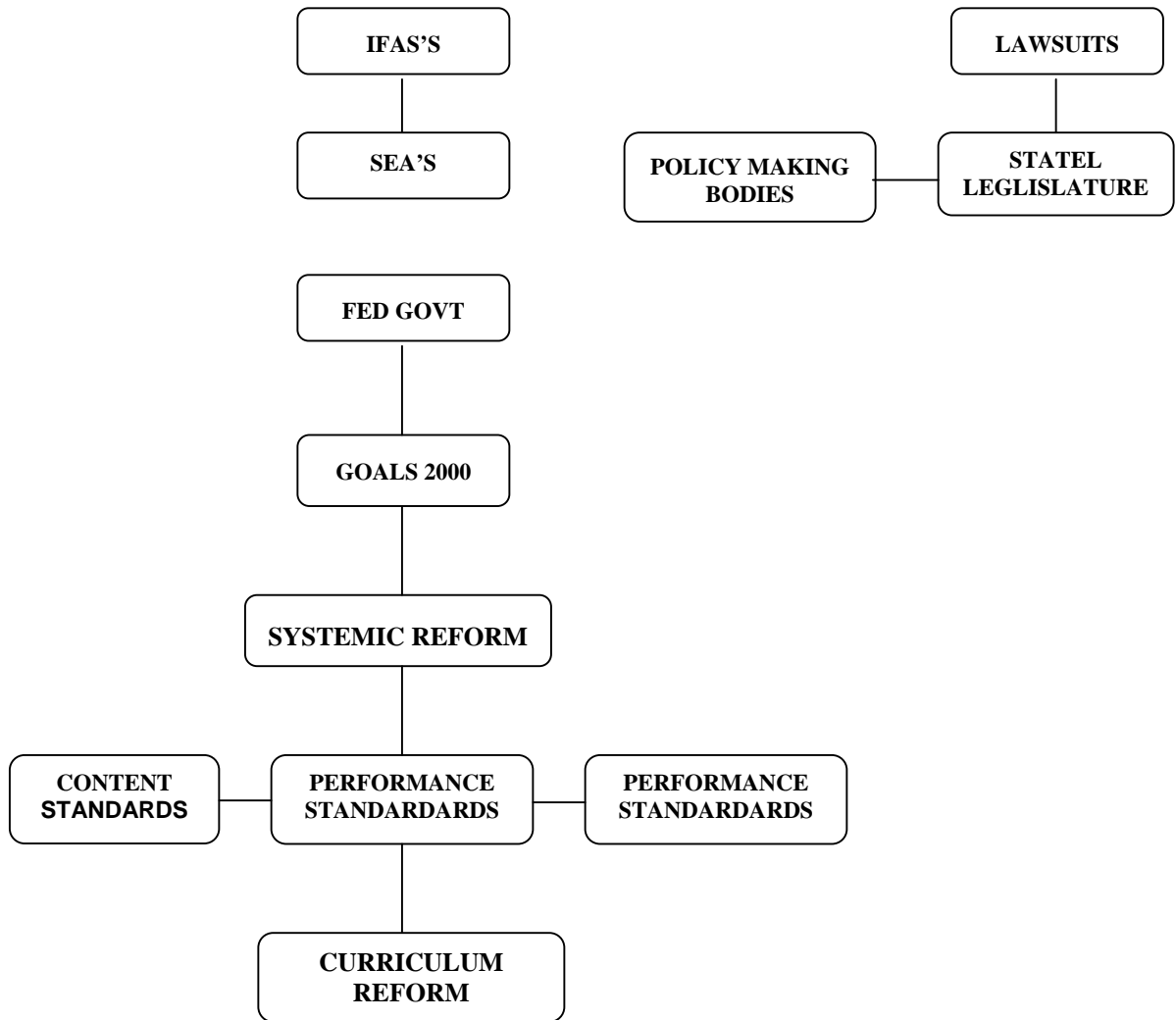
National Education Level

Code	Total Number	Designation	Qualification	Experience	Gender
Dr Fish	1	Director	PhD	32 years	M
Mr Bosman	1	Director	LLB	25 years	M

External: Policy Experts/Stakeholders

Sites 1	Total Number	Designation	Qualification	Experience	Gender
Edu WITS	1	Policy Analyst	B.Sc, M.Sc	years	M
Wits School of Education	1	Policy Analyst	PhD	10 years	M
Education Foundation	1	Consultant	M.Sc		M
IDASA	1	Consultant		years	M
Education Rights	1	Policy Analyst	M.Ed		
NAPTOSA	1	Director	PhD	32 years	M
SAOU	1	Director	M.Ed	28 years	M

**Annexure G:
Shows policy Linkage Model: Equity, Systemic Reform and School Finance Reform**



Source: Marilyn, A, Hirth, 1996:476

FIGURE 2.3: Illustrates the interrelationship between systemic reform and school finance reform by considering several agencies that can be combined to deal with the question of financial adequacy. Woods (1995:32) argues that it is not realistic to assume that existing inadequacies can be solved solely by a school finance formula. Hence a comprehensive approach is needed. Economically speaking, there are more pressing needs than resources.

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