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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM FORMULATION, AIM AND RESEARCH DESIGN

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Educational Ministries and Departments around the globe are under immense internal and external pressures to improve on their policy implementation strategies (De Clercq, 2001:37). According to Becher, Eraut, and Knight (1981:153) governments place the responsibility of successful implementation of education policies on the shoulders of educational managers. These managers are the ones who ultimately determine whether a government policy directive is successful in its implementation because it is these managers who translate policy into action. The policy directive for Further Education and Training (FET) in South Africa is to transform FET colleges into responsive and effective institutions (RSA, 1998c:5). If Becher et al.'s assertion above is taken seriously then this implies that the success of the transformation process of FET colleges in South Africa depends to a large extent on managers of these colleges. The critical question is: Do these FET college managers have sufficient power and authority to drive the transformation process at college level? Rondinelli, Middleton, and Verspoor (1990:87) indicate that poor management can also cause serious policy implementation problems.

Transformation of the FET sector in South Africa entails a very broad and complex process; this study will therefore focus on the role of management during the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng. Based on Rondinelli, et al. (1990:87) assertion the study will focus on the perceived power and authority of managers as well as their ability to carry out one of the management functions as identified by various management theories, namely that of effective planning.

Phrased differently, this study sets out to investigate the relationship between government policy and institutional practices with regards to the capacity of management in Further Education and Training colleges to implement policies. To be able to establish this relationship, the study will not interrogate policy as promulgated, but will investigate the conceptualization of policy at its origin.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

In 1996 the Minister of National Education in South Africa appointed a committee that had to start the process of developing policy for the Further Education and Training sector in the new political dispensation (RSA, 1998a:1). This committee was known as the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE). The NCFE presented its final report to the Minister in August 1997. Concurrent to this process the National Business Initiative (NBI) conducted its own investigation and presented its report in October 1998 to the Member of the Executive Committee of Education (MEC) in Gauteng. The NBI was commissioned by the MEC for Education and its brief was to investigate and prepare a report that was going to inform policy decisions around FET colleges in Gauteng. Although a number of reports and research studies have been conducted in the field of FET in South Africa the two aforementioned reports had the greatest impact on policy development within the FET sector and will thus form much of the basis for this study.

The NCFE Report culminated in the Green Paper on Further Education, which in turn led to the Further Education and Training Act, 98 of 1998. The Further Education and Training (FET) Act, 98 of 1998 replaced all previous legislation that regulated institutions that were considered to be included in the further education and training sector in South Africa. The objective of the FET policy and legislation is to transform the further education and training system in South Africa so that the FET sector contributes significantly to the much-needed development of certain categories of human resource.

Both the Education White Paper 4 and Further Education and Training Act (Act 98 of 1998) both the key legislative framework around the transformation of the FET sector. The purpose and intent of the FET policy framework is for the sector to respond better to human resources, economic and development needs of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1998a: 3).

The Green Paper on FET (RSA, 1998a) states that the college sector needs to be developed and expanded to be a vibrant, key component of transformation so that further education and training is available and accessible to learners and everybody else who wishes to utilize this system.

According to the Education White Paper 4 (RSA, 1998b: 6) a transformed high quality, responsive FET system is important for the future development of the country. In summary the FET sector should respond to the needs of the country, the labour market as well as the needs of the communities served by FET colleges (RSA, 1998c: 1). The purpose that the FET sector should serve is articulated in the FET Act (98 of 1998) as the establishment of a nationally co-coordinated further education and training system that promotes cooperative governance and provides for programme-based further education and training (RSA, 1998c: 5).

Another piece of legislation that complements the FET Act, 98 of 1998 is the Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998. The Skills Development Act sets out to promote and ensure human resource development in South Africa. These two acts indicate a major shift in the South African further education and training system. From the previously fragmented separate systems of education and training on one hand and labour on the other. According to the FET Act, 98 of 1998 managers of an FET institution are responsible for the effective management and administration of these institutions and consequently the implementation of the two acts (RSA, 1998c: 18). This scenario posed the challenge to managers of these institutions, and also to the whole transformation process of the old technical colleges, to change into fully-fledged FET institutions as envisaged in the FET policy.

### 1.3 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study intends to investigate the relationship between the intended policy and the implemented policy. The problems that are being encountered in the FET sector in terms of policy implementation at college level need to be investigated and be put in context.

To be able to understand the problem that this study seeks to address, the policy process needs attention. Jansen (2001:271) presents an argument that the gap that exists between policy and practices in South Africa is due to problems with policy development processes.

Many authors in the field of policy analysis do not necessarily disagree with Jansen but their literature points to the fact that South Africa has comparatively produced some of the best policies since 1994. For instances Lungu (2001:92) points to the fact that South Africa has tried to develop the “most elaborate and inclusive public policy processes in Africa”. Soudien, Jacklin and Hoadley (2001:78) also mention that since 1994 landmark laws, that created favourable conditions for policy development, have been passed in South Africa.

If indeed South Africa has developed good policies, why then are there gaps between intended policy and implemented policy as per Jansen’s (2001) argument? Pandor (2001:74; cf. Lungu, 2001:92) says that while it is agreed that South African policies are some of the best globally the processes of policy development has been characterised by numerous challenges. One of the challenges cited by Lungu (2001:92) is that for instance government departments in South Africa use discretion when stakeholders are to participate in the policy development process. In this regard some stakeholders are excluded form the process while the preferred stakeholders are involved (Lungu, 2001:92). In South Africa the green papers, as policy initiating documents, are produced as discussion documents that provide the broad parameters for the intended policy.

Once inputs to the green paper have been received and considered a White Paper is published which serves as the formal policy framework on which legislation will be based (Lungu, 2001:94). This study attempts to look at the policy from the Green Paper phase to the promulgation of the FET Act.

According to Jansen (2001:271) the explanation that is usually given for the gap between intended policy and implemented policy is the lack of resources, the legacy of inequality created by the previous regime and the dearth of human capacity to translate policy into practice. According to the research on which the Green Paper in Further Education and Training was based some of the managers in the former technical colleges lack management skills and knowledge that will enable them to successfully implement the new policy imperatives.

In this regard the Green Paper on FET states: “**An authoritarian management culture** still pervades in many institutions, which accentuates race and gender inequality within the sector” (RSA, 1998a: 13). The Education White Paper 4 (RSA, 1998b: 13) states that managers of FET institutions **lack professional commitment** in managing FET colleges in South Africa.

The above statements indicate that the lack of capacity could be the reason for the non-implementation of policy. Could this be the main and only reason for the non-implementation?

The Green Paper (RSA, 1998a) argues that effective management of further Education and Training (FET) colleges will be of pivotal importance if South Africa is to succeed in establishing and developing a vibrant further education and training sector. Some of the challenges faced by policy implementers in FET colleges according to the Green Paper on FET (RSA, 1998a) include, among others:

- 1 *A lack of coherence and co-ordination:* the FET sector prior to 1998 was fragmented and the delivery of services poorly planned.
- 2 The funding of programmes was uneven across different colleges and created distorted incentives and disincentives.
- 3 Different FET programmes and qualifications were poorly articulated, inhibiting student mobility and leading to high levels of inefficiency.
- 4 Programmes differed widely with respect to quality, standards of provision, outcomes and curriculum.
- 5 FET provision reflected rigid and outmoded distinction between ‘academic’ education and ‘vocational’ training. Consequently, technical and vocational education lacks parity of esteem with traditional schooling.
- 6 New entrants into the labour market generally lacked appropriate knowledge and skills. Opportunities for employment are inadequate, while the needs of those who do not have formal jobs, and those whose main hope of making a living lies in the informal sector and in small and medium enterprises, were largely neglected.
- 7 Employment argued that many programmes offered by technical colleges and regional training centres were irrelevant and outdated. Equipment was antiquated and tuition was of poor overall quality.
- 8 *Organisational ethos and the culture of learning, teaching and service:* Adverse working conditions and a breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning, as well as service delivery were reflected in poor moral, a poor work ethic and low professional self-esteem amongst many educators. Up to 1998, an authoritarian management culture pervaded in many institutions, which accentuates race and gender inequality within the sector.

To help managers to meet these challenges the Green Paper set out broad parameters within which future policy had to be developed. The FET Act, 98 of 1998 stipulates that it will be required of managers of FET in South African institutions to be sufficiently competent in managing issues such as finances, administration and human resources (cf. Gauteng Institute for Curriculum Development, 1999: xix). To be able to carry out these responsibilities, allocated to them by the FET Act, 98 of 1998 it was recommended that institutional capacity building should be one of the focus areas. The success of the envisaged FET colleges will, to a greater extent, be determined by the existence of strong and focused leadership of these colleges. To ensure this, the National Department of Education (DoE) and the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) envisaged devolving increased powers to FET institutions. Accordingly this progressive devolution of power to FET institutions will be on the basis of these institutions demonstrating capacity to exercise such powers effectively and responsibly. This line of reasoning is also enunciated in the NBI report. Table 1.1 reflects the recommendations made by the NBI (1998) that deal with issues of transformation and the key-role-players:

**TABLE 1.1: RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE NBI REPORT (1998)**

**Recommendation 6**

The process of transformation should be lead by the colleges, within a time frame determined by the Department, and on the basis of clear criteria that are published by the GDE in advance....

**Recommendation 19**

To give Gauteng a competitive edge and to better serve the people of the Province, the college should take a positive view of transformation and be prepared to take a lead in this process.

**Recommendation 22**

Colleges should draw up an institutional development plan, to equip themselves for the new functions and responsibilities that increased autonomy will entail, and to meet the strategic planning, information system and financial management requirements outlined in the White Paper on FET.

**Recommendation 29**

Colleges should ensure that the new vision, mission and strategic plans of the institutions and the new FET framework are effectively communicated and shared with all members of the college community.

**Recommendation 35**

The GDE should develop a programme of support for colleges, to promote Outcomes Based Education and Curriculum Development, in accordance with the requirements of SAQA and the NQF.

**Recommendation 47**

Colleges should develop a programme of staff workshops to familiarise staff with the new policies. College task teams should be established, to involve staff in the institutional planning and development.

Two imperatives emerge from the brief outline of the concerns expressed about FET colleges in the Green Paper and the FET Act as well as recommendations of the NBI report. Firstly, the need to strengthen management capacity is clearly indicated and secondly the need to devolve greater power and authority to FET institutional level.



Many years have lapsed since the promulgation of the FET Act. This should have given provincial departments of education ample time to restructure the FET sector, to develop management teams in these institutions and to devolve the envisaged greater power and authority to these institutions. If these imperatives were actively pursued by GDE in terms of their transformation agenda, policy implementation could have had a different understanding of policy development and implementation at institutional level.

Jansen (2001:271) argues that many of the public policies in education in South Africa since 1994, were meant to be political symbols. It is Jansen's assertion that since 1994 the ruling party in South Africa viewed the process for the development of public policy as a struggle for the achievement of political goals (Jansen, 2001:272). This stance by the ruling party was driven by the need to quickly mark a shift from the previous apartheid order to a new democratic order. Therefore political agendas rather than any other reasons that are normally advanced for policy successes have motivated the policy process. It is within this context that Jansen (2001:271) advances the argument that the non-implementation of government policy should be explained within the context of political symbolism.

#### **1.4 THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION DILEMMA**

The intentions of the South African government about various educational policies are to restructure and transform the education system (Sayed, 2001:189). These intentions have been communicated through various sources but according to Sayed (2001:189) there were many frustrations that came with these intentions. Sayed (2001:189) cites the issue of personnel appointed across all levels of government institutions as one obstacle towards the realization of these good intentions.

Jansen (2001:47) puts the failure of government policies squarely on the shoulders of government. Jansen (2001:47; cf. Sayed, 2001:189) argues that while government has good intentions with its policies, these policy intentions do not always address critical issues of educational changes at institutional level.

In May 2003 the Minister of Education announced the appointment of new principals of FET colleges in South Africa. According to Ayyar (1996:348; cf. Jansen, 2001:48) the appointment of new personnel should be welcomed but this does not go far in addressing the issue of successful policy implementation at college level. Jansen (2001:48) indicates that a study by Hess (1997) has established that the lack on non-implementation of government policy is not due to the lack of resources, including human resources. It is primarily due to the fact that reform policies tend to be symbolically attractive but not intended to “improve the costs required by significant change” (Jansen, 2001:49).

Galvin and Fauske (2000:43) introduce a significant concept that tries to explain the non-implementation of educational policy. According to Galvin and Fauske (2000:43) the main reason is the difference in approach to policy development and implementation by both policy makers and policy implementers. On the one hand policy makers are classified as deductive thinkers as they derive policy from existing theories that describe how the policy process works (Galvin & Fauske, 2000:43) and they therefore do not consider the practical conditions in which the policy is to be implemented. On the other hand policy implementers are regarded as inductive thinkers. Inductive thinkers build on operative theory of collaboration from the synthesis of their experience (Galvin & Fauske, 2000:43). The essence of Galvin & Fauske’s argument is that policy makers do not take into account the context of policy implementation. They are guided by theory that might not hold true in certain contexts of implementation and do not take into account the theories behind their practices.

Although Jansen (2001) claims that the idea of policy as a step-by-step process is erroneous and that it is actually a messy process, this study as a point of departure does not involve itself in the policy development process, but looks at the hiatus between policy origination and implementation. The linear model process as outlined by Turner and Hulme (1997:78; cf. Dunn, 1994:16; Lungu, 2001:93) will therefore merely serve as an orientation point to look at the two extreme ends of the process.

According to Lodge (1982:19) the Minister of education is the one who defines objectives, priorities and decisions on government policy. It is Lodge's (1982:19) contention that politicians expect practitioners to concentrate on means where ends have already been defined. Can practitioners take decisions that will enable them to contextualise the means in order to get to the already defined ends? Do managers of education institutions have power and authority to take decisions that impact on a centrally defined policy? Lodge (1982:19) does not think so and says that politicians wield so much power that other levels of decision-making are rendered ineffective. He cited as an illustration of absolute power by politicians, an incident where Thatcher reversed Circular 10/65 on education in the UK that had been issued by the previous Labour Government.

Dunn (1994:24) indicates that the implementation of any policy starts with communicating the policy to stakeholders, more specifically to the practitioners or implementers of the policy. Dunn (1994:24) maintains that communicating the substance of the policy document to the practitioners will enhance the implementation stage, as practitioners will have the policy-relevant knowledge that is important for implementation. According to Van der Walt, Van Niekerk, Doyle, Knipe and Du Toit (2001:185) an important step in policy implementation involves the translation of policy into action by the practitioners. By implication this means that it is the responsibility of FET colleges to translate the FET policy into action. How they interpret policy and the type of college plans they will come up with will directly affect the quality of policy provision (Becher, 1981:153).

After policy has been interpreted, implementation plans need to be drawn. But how far can managers of colleges stretch in their planning? Do they have powers and authority to take decisions that are influenced by the unique contextual factors?

Holt (1987:99) warns that power plays a significant role when it comes to policy implementation. Centrally placed power creates problems for policy implementation. According to Holt (1987:99) power should not be concentrated centrally with politicians, but rather be distributed throughout the whole system, from national through to local agencies and schools. Nieuwenhuis (2004:4) advances this argument and refers to this devolution of power from a central point to other levels as decentralisation. It is Nieuwenhuis' (2004:4) contention that power and authority should be transferred from central government to the lower levels of government. Nieuwenhuis (2004:4) argues that the decentralization of power will not only strengthen the democratic process of governance, but will also ensure that services are provided more **efficiently and effectively** as the point of delivery will be closer to those who need the services.

Rondinelli, et al. (1990:89) further argues that managers of public institutions engage in strategic planning and according to them strategic planning is about taking decisions that impact on the organisation's operation. Developing strategic plans is a process that involves power and strategic planning at college level represents decentralised power or authority. For these plans to be recognised more power needs to be decentralised to colleges and managed by college councils.

Van der Walt, et al. (2002:185) points out that there is a belief in the policy arena that the actual implementation of public policy is the responsibility of public officials within government and that politicians are only held responsible for action or inaction of their departments. However, Hartwell (1994) does not agree with this view. According to Hartwell (1994:29) role-players within educational institutions are the actual implementers of government policy. It can therefore be stated that policy implementation is the responsibility of departmental officials as well as other role-players within the FET sector.

In the light of these conflicting ideas on who is actually responsible for the actual implementation of public policy Hartwell, (1994:29) suggests an encompassing view. According to Hartwell, (1994:29) dialogue is very crucial between and among role-players for change in education to be effective and meaningful. This view is also held by Dunn (1994) and he accentuates the importance of communication between and among role-players for the successful implementation of policy. According to Bowe and Gold (1992:6) the lack of dialogue in policy implementation only complicates this process further. Bowe and Gold (1992:6) argue that it is a fact that the views and opinions of heads of educational institutions, educators or the students remain silent during the process of policy formation and that these views and opinions can corroborate in order to ensure the successful implementation of policy.

Another problem that is prevalent during policy implementation is that of interpretation of the policy. Bowe and Gold (1992:13) point to the fact that policy is represented by text and this introduces another area of policy contestation. For Motala (2001:240), critical discourse analysis is necessary if the limits and possibilities of policies are to be understood. Motala (2001:242) indicates, “often the false assumption is made that because of ostensible agreement in the policy arena and niceties of the consensual statement about the goals to be achieved, there is no likelihood of conflicting interests in regard to the implementation of... policies”. Motala’s argument points to the issue of participation or consensus. Motala (2001:242) argues that consensus on policy statement does not mean there cannot be problems when the same policy is implemented. Every stakeholder during the policy making process has vested interests for his/her constituency. Each of these constituencies participates in the process of policy development in order to serve the interests of their respective constituencies. Lungu (2001:92) indicates that the assumption, that stakeholders who participate in the policy making process have the knowledge and skills about policy development and implementation, is not necessarily correct.

The essence of Motala's argument is that representatives of stakeholders may agree with a policy statement made during policy making, but because the participant has no knowledge and no expertise, problems could arise when implementation has to take place.

According to Bowe and Gold (1992:22) policy is not simply received and implemented by practitioners, they subject the policy text to interpretation and they recreate it. Meyer (1997:161) asserts that government officials in many instances have difficulty in interpreting public policy themselves. Bowe and Gold (1992:21) proves this in stating that the officials towards whom policy is aimed load texts with possibilities of misunderstandings and this is where problems for effective implementation may start. Bowe and Gold (1992:21) attribute this problem to the point that texts themselves can often be contradictory as key terms are sometimes used differently. Therefore the correct interpretation of public policy is of critical importance for effective implementation and this is in line with Motala's (2001) statement that critical discourse analysis is necessary if the limits and possibilities of policies are to be understood.

Literature abound that document the failure of policy implementation. Authors such as Jansen (2001), Manganyi (2001), Kraak (2002) and Young (2002) all claim that numerous studies have been undertaken in various educational contexts to try and determine why policy implementation is not what it ought to be. This study does not attempt to focus on the issue of policy failure, but rather to focus on the relationship between what was intended to be policy and what is in fact being implemented. It takes the debate back to the initial research that led to a policy document by interrogating the intentions and understandings of the "body of specialists" that constituted the appointed task team.

The original intentions and purpose of the policy imperatives will have to be determined. Therefore this study will first determine and analyze the understandings of the FET policy originators' perception and intentions with a policy document. Secondly, the perception and understanding of policy implementation at college level will be analysed in order to establish if the understanding of policy to be implemented are congruent with the intended policy.

Such an analysis must take cognizance of the adds-on that may have been designed at later stages after the initial research was done. Given the fact that the original Task Team members and the NBI researchers were appointed based on their assumed expert knowledge of the system it could be argued that political symbolism should not (or at least to a lesser degree) have played a major influencing role at the source of policy origination. Political symbolism, if it exists in the policies, must then have been brought in through the policy consultation and finalisation process that led to the publication of the White Paper. A distinct difference may therefore exist between the original intended policy and the policy delivered for implementation.

Similarly, a gap may also exist between the policy produced and the policy that is implemented, as implementers, when taking into accounts their own circumstances and context, may interpret the policy differently. This study could therefore reveal an important dimension of the policy development and implementation debate by interrogating the relationship between intended and implemented policy.

## 1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The underlying rationale in the preceding paragraphs is that implemented policy can (and probably will most often) differ from the intended policy. Kelly (2000:71) says that the partial or incorrect implementation of generated policy will always produce instability and wastage of resources. This study therefore asks the question:

What is the relationship between policy conceptualization, as perceived by policy originators and captured in policy origination documents, and the constructed understanding of policy as evidence in institutional management practices when policy is implemented in Further Education and Training colleges?

In order to address the above main question adequately, the following sub-questions need to be answered:

- How did policy originators perceive transformation at FET colleges as policy imperatives as articulated in the Green Paper?
- How did managers of FET institutions interpret the policy statements as expressed in the FET policy documents?

What were the challenges experienced by managers as they attempt to implement policy? It should be noted at this stage that the aim of this study is not to analyze the policy as such or the content of the policy, but to understand the hiatus between that which was perceived as needed to transform the FET sector and that which gets implemented and to understand the challenges faced as college managers implement the received policy.



## **1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY**

### **1.6.1 Research Aim and objectives**

The aim of this study is to understand the conceptualization of the FET policy, establish and then describe the relationship between government policy and management practices at college level in Gauteng. In order to realize the purpose of this study, the following research objectives need to be addressed:

- To reconstruct the original intention of the proposed FET policy from the originators' perspective;
- To construct an understanding of policy implementation from the implementers of policy's perspective; and
- Describe the relationship between conceptualized policy and implemented policy.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7.1 The Research Strategies**

This study looks at the relationship between intended policy and policy implementation. To be able to establish the original understanding and intentions of the intended policy, it will be necessary to trace back the original meanings of policy. These meanings are located within the ideas of the experts who conducted the original research as is captured in policy statements made in the original report. To be able to trace back the original intentions will entail the analysis of these documents and communicating with the expert about their ideas.

This study is qualitative and the research approach that is adopted is inductive. According to Merriam and Simpson (1995:97) qualitative research methods allow researchers to uncover the meaning of phenomena for those involved.

Merriam and Simpson (1995:97) further state that the interaction of individuals in their social settings constructs what they call 'reality'. One of the purposes of qualitative studies is to describe how individuals interpret what they experience (Merriam & Simpson, 1995:98). This implies that researchers use qualitative research methods to delineate the process of making meaning by trying to understand the social context in which the experience takes place.

Merriam and Simpson (1995:99) say that in cases where there is still little knowledge about the problem under investigation an inductive strategy is normally used. The researcher's own perception, interpretations, descriptions and explanation will provide a better understanding of the problem and hence 'reality' or new knowledge around that problem will be constructed. The inductive approach is adopted in this study in order to be able to uncover the meaning the transformation of FET colleges has for the managers of these colleges. Consequently the reality prevalent at FET colleges in Gauteng will be established.

The research strategy that is adopted in this study is ethnographic. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000:95) argue that a study that is set to investigate how research subjects interpret the social world is classified as ethnographic.

The research plan or strategy that will best answer the research question for this study is the survey. Initially an explorative survey will be used and as the study progress a questionnaire (used in the Delphi technique) will be used to further investigate the issues of policy development and implementation.

The foregoing paragraph locates this study within the constructivist paradigm. The thinking in this study is that reality is constructed socially. To understand the issues around policy development and implementation, social players need to be consulted and their discourse analyzed and interpreted. Therefore interpretations of meaning will be based on social discourse.

### 1.7.2 Units of Analysis

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:164) introduce another important element and they argue that besides identifying the unit of analysis, the first step that a researcher needs to take is to identify what is called subjects. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:164) subjects are individuals who take part in the study. Members of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) and managers of FET colleges in Gauteng will constitute the subjects for this study.

Having identified participants, the next aspect to be looked at is the unit of analysis. According to Mouton and Marais (1990:38) unit of analysis refers to objects that are being studied. In this study document content and text will be the units of analysis. Neuman (2003:312) indicates that the unit of analysis in content analysis varies. Therefore content and discourse analysis will inform all interpretations in this study.

The next two paragraphs give a brief description of the unit analysis (i.e. the subjects and the objects).

- **Words/Content**

Examples that Neuman (2003:312) cites cover unit of analysis such as a word, a phrase, and a theme. This study will refer to words, mental pictures or constructs, and symbols as units of analysis.

- **Individuals**

In this study, members of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE), National Institute for Community Education Trust (NICE), and the Reference Group for the Gauteng Situational Analysis study, FET colleges and their management will be a focus.

These members are experts and experts in this study will denote individuals who are knowledgeable about FET and/or work within the environment of FET colleges. Barbie (1992:13) says that experts are key informants in a study. These experts should be people who have engrossed themselves in the field of FET in their daily activities ([www.aaster.it/leonardo](http://www.aaster.it/leonardo)).

### **1.7.3 Data Collection**

#### **1.7.3.1 Collecting qualitative data**

This study will primarily collect qualitative data. In its qualitative approach the inductive theme of enquiry will be applied. Qualitative data will be collected using two different strategies. Official documents will be collected and analysed in order to establish an in-depth understanding of the policy issues raised in the documents (cf. Merriam & Simpson, 1995:100). According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:43) in this type of enquiry the study is immersed in the details and specifics of the data with the purpose of discovering important categories, dimensions and interrelationship of these data. A qualitative document analysis (Mouton, 2001:165; cf. van Dalen, 1979:290) will be used to collect data from the following documents and others that might be published during the course of this study.

- ❖ Green Paper on FET (RSA, 1998a)
- ❖ The report to the Head of Education on “A situational Analysis of FET institutions in the Gauteng Province.

The above-mentioned documents will be used to identify texts in the form of policy statements that address FET college transformation and implementation thereof in FET colleges in particular in Gauteng. This data will cover issues around policy imperatives on implementing policy on transformation of FET colleges. The data will be in the form of policy statements and recommendations from the analysed documents.

The main aim of the inclusion of these documents is to determine the key issues that are directly linked to the management of FET colleges and the recommendations made in policy documents to improve these management challenges. Once these key aspects are identified, the policy intentions underpinning the recommendations can be interrogated.

The semi-structured interview will be used as a research strategy and an interview schedule will be used to collect research data. The interview schedule will cover policy imperatives on management practices in relation to the transformation of FET colleges as identified in policy statement and recommendations in the analysed policy documents on FET colleges. The purpose of the interview schedule will be to establish clarity on central principal of policy statements as perceived by these experts and the implication of these policies on management practices at college level.

The research design of this study will be qualitative. The purpose of the study is to understand and then explain the relationship between policy origination and implementation from the role-players themselves and in their context.

To be able to understand and then describe this relationship the study needs to focus on policy development events (procedures and processes) taking into consideration documents written about FET colleges and then interviewing policy developers on these documented assertions.

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000:382; cf. Merriam & Simpson, 1995:100) qualitative data analysis cannot be standardised. Data will be analysed, as the process of data collection is in progress, in order to allow the researcher to make adjustments along the way. Collected data will be explored to establish which themes or issues to follow up and to focus on. According to Saunders, et al. (2000:392) it is important in this strategy for the researcher to examine data in order to assess which themes are emerging from the data collection process.

In summary the main focus of analysis in this study will be on analysing qualitative data. Discourse analysis will be the primary strategy for data analysis in this study. In trying to define discourse analysis Karasavvidis (2001:1; Lewis, 2002:1) says that this concept means analysing the language beyond the sentence. Discourse analysis involves interpreting a given text corpus taking the context of the text with the aim to reveal hidden motivations behind the texts through interpretation. Discourse analysis will enable the researcher in this study to understand the problems hidden in the policy texts (<http://fiat.gslis.utexas.edu/>).

Using discourse analysis on its own will not eventually assist this study to provide answers to the research question. Hermeneutics is a method that will be coupled with discourse analysis to eventually assist reaching conclusions regarding the research problem. Hermeneutics is knowledge that allows researchers to make sense of data by interpreting the written word (<http://fiat.gslis.utexas.edu/>). Hermeneutics emphasises rules, interpretations and the meaning of people's social lives (<http://www.comp.lancs.ac.uk/sociology>).

Researchers often use hermeneutics to attempt to understand meaning in a given context. This study will use hermeneutics in an attempt to understand the meaning behind policy statements from both the originators and the implementers of policy in the colleges in Gauteng.

## **1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to make sense of how policy originators perceived the policy needed to transform FET colleges as compared to the experiences of managers as they implement received policy. It is accepted that the process from policy origination to policy implementation is not linear, but tends to be a messy to-and-fro process of consultation and negotiation between various stakeholders. That which was perceived as required may not be the same as that which was received and may for this very reason assist us in understanding whether that which gets lost in the process may impact negatively on that which is received. For this reason I will not analyze the policy developed but will simply describe it as part of the context. My analysis is thus limited to that which was perceived as required at the point of origination and that which was received. Even in this regard it must be stressed that the study is limited by the fact that only the views of those committee members who were willing to participate were solicited. Secondly, only managers from colleges in Gauteng were used as part of the sample. The results emanating from this study cannot be generalized to all FET colleges but it does provide us with an understanding of what get lost in the process from policy origination to policy implementation. .

## **1.9 CHAPTER REVIEW**

In this chapter the relationship between government policy and management practices at college level in the transformation of Further Education and Training was introduced. Different concepts that relate to public policy and the research strategies to be used in this study were outlined. Management capacity is important for the successful implementation of government policies within FET colleges in Gauteng. On the other hand the lack of capacity can lead to the non-implementation thereof. Coupled with management capacity is political symbolism that was identified as an important aspect that can also lead to the non-implementation of government policy.

It is the objective of this study to establish what the relationship is between government policy and management practices at college level at FET colleges in Gauteng. Research methods and strategies that will lead this study to the achievement of its aim were identified and outlined in this chapter. Chapter 2 will focus on policy conceptualisation and implementation.

After outlining the problem setting, aim and method of investigation, the rest of the outline is as follows:

- ❖ Chapter 2 will deal with Further Education and Training Policy formulation and how it is communicated to FET colleges;
- ❖ Chapter 3 will focus on the international perspective in further education and training policy
- ❖ Chapter 4 will concentrate on the research design;
- ❖ Chapter 5 will be empirical investigation by means of the Delphi technique;
- ❖ Chapter 6 will be the conclusion and the summary of the study.



## CHAPTER 2

### POLICY CONCEPTUALIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

With the dawn of democracy in South Africa there was a major shift in the approach to policy development. The approach and the policies that were introduced reflected this new dispensation. Jansen (2001:12) points out that policy development in South Africa before 1990 was a relatively simple process. This was evident in the centralised state control of all processes of policy making by using political authority (Jansen, 2001:12). It is Jansen's (2001:14) contention that from the beginning of the 1990s there was a clear indication in the political circles that the policy making process will have to change. Indeed this became reality when after 1994 many players such as labour movements, political parties like the African National Congress (ANC), the business sector, international aid communities, etc came on board (Jansen, 2001:14 – 20). This is a clear indication that things have to be done consistent with the new political order.

Sayed and Jansen (2001:1) indicate that many new policies have been developed in South Africa since 1990. In fact, according to Sayed and Jansen (2001:1) these policies that were developed in South Africa since 1990 are widely accepted by the international community as some of the best in the world. The challenges of policy success have been in the area of development and implementation both locally and internationally. De Clercq (2001:37) argues that the newly developed policies especially education policies, are poorly designed and this could be a contributing factor to some of the challenges facing South Africa. In South Africa for instance, lack of service delivery by government led to the re-thinking and reconstruction of policy-making paradigms (van der Walt, van Niekerk, Doyle, Knipe & du Toit, 2001:164).

This situation was brought about by the fact that policies that were previously formulated did not address real issues that government was mandated to deliver on in a democratic manner. Van der Walt, et al., (2001:164) emphasize that policies that are in place in South Africa and those still to be developed should result in improved public service delivery. Levin (2001:foreword) cautions that however well founded policies may be, they need to be translated into feasible outcomes. It is the translation of policy into outcomes that creates challenges for policy development and implementation internationally. According to Manganyi (2001:27) real democratic societies globally are defined by their abilities to develop and subsequently implement public policy in real terms.

Issues of delivery by government start with the process of policy formulation. It is at the stage of policy initiation that government should clearly and unambiguously outline its intentions to address problems that affect communities. Intentions of government that are captured in policy documents by policy makers and then these intentions need to be implemented in order to serve the purpose for which policy was designed in the first place.

It is therefore important to critically analyse the processes of education policy formulation and implementation broadly but more specifically in the further education and training sector. It is the purpose of this chapter to review literature on policy development and implementation concepts in order to formulate an understanding of these two policy processes.

## **2.2 DEFINING PUBLIC POLICY**

Before delving on understanding the process of policy development and implementation, it is imperative to first try and understand the definition of public policy. Van der Walt, et al, (2001:165) observe that there are numerous definitions of public policy. Blanco (2002:2) is in agreement with van der Walt, et al., and further points out that public policy sometimes mean very different things to different people.

As early as the late nineteen seventies policy writers in South Africa tried to define public policy and up to recently there has not been a conventional definition that is accepted. Anderson can be regarded as the first person in South Africa to try and coin the definition of public policy. In the late eighties Kotze (1989) tried to define public policy by adapting a definition that was coined together by Anderson in the late 1970s and modified in the 1990s. The modified version of Anderson (1997:9) defines policy generally as “a relatively stable, purposive course of action by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern”. According to Kotze (1989:170) policy can be described as the intentional direction of an action undertaken by an actor or set or actors to approach a problem or matter of importance. Van der Walt, et al, (2001:165) define public policy as a “declaration of a course of action that is taken by government to achieve societal aims and objectives”. Bridgman and Davis (1998 as quoted by Blanco (2002:2) define public policy as intentions and deeds of a government and as descriptions of principles governing the way the government make decisions. According to Blanco (2002:2) the long and short of public policy is about achieving objectives.

However Blanco (2002:2) says that there is another view about public policy that places it in an operational context where theory is linked to practice. According to him (i.e. Blanco; cf. Rouc, 2006:5) “policies can be seen as a framework for operation, and as agreed upon set of rules that explain all participants’ roles and responsibilities”. Mavhivha (1998:8) picked up an important definition by Van der Westhuizen (1991:150) that says that policy is “a guideline for decision making to guide those who are involved in the implementation of planning”. Van der Westhuizen’s definition clearly indicates that policy should be directed towards the implementers. Policy should be a method of directing or guiding implementers how to go about with the implementation of public policy.

According to Ball (1994:15) the meaning of policy is taken for granted. Ball’s (1994) definition of policy is more focused towards policy as text and discourse.

According to Ball (1994:16) policies are “representations which are encoded in complex ways (via struggles, compromises, authoritative public interpretations and reinterpretations) and decoded in complex ways (via actors’ interpretations and meanings in relation to their history, experiences, skills, resources and context)”. In other words policy should also be defined in terms of the meaning it carries in terms of text. Manganyi (2001:27) says that public policy can be defined as government’s intentions regarding certain matters that have a bearing on the common good and welfare of its people. According to Manganyi (2001:27) the undiluted purpose of public policy in countries that are in transition like South Africa is to uproot old practices, beliefs and values and replace them with new ways of conducting the national business. More specifically Jansen (2001:272) indicates that governments that come into power spend their first term trying to establish ideological and political credentials for their parties. Nzimande (2005) indicated in his speech at a National Consultative Conference on Education that policies that were developed during the first five years of democracy in South Africa were ‘based on compromises’ so that the country could move peacefully over to democracy. Nzimande implies that policies can be developed in order to serve any purpose government want to achieve. In other words government policy is contextual. Government develop policy to serve a particular need at a particular time. According to Jansen’s (2001:272) argument political parties that assume power at a particular time will as a matter of priority develop policies that should address certain political agenda.

In South Africa policies that were developed during the first five years of the democratic order were used to stabilize the country politically. It follows then that the government of the day can use public policy for various reasons including just serving the interests of a particular political party at the expense of the majority of the people or for the purpose of undoing old practices.

The Further Education and Training Act (98 of 1998) is one of the acts promulgated within the first five years of democracy in South Africa. Therefore it will be interesting to establish the intentions of the government by the FET Act.

Van der Walt, et al, (2001:165) say that policy is goal oriented. This means that policy should always have a goal to be realized. According to Anderson (1997:9) policy focuses on “what is actually done instead of what is only proposed or intended, and it differentiates a decision from a policy, which is essentially a choice among competing alternatives”. What this suggests is that policy is not just proposals or the intentions of government to solve a problem or address an issue of importance, but policy is what is actually implemented. In other words policy should move beyond intentions. Policy should have a goal towards which it is directed. In addition, there are no alternative choices to implement the adopted policy. Policy is not a choice, but chosen decisions are based on policy. In other words decisions that are taken in order to facilitate policy implementation must stem from policy itself.

Policies are also known by various names or categories and this normally stems from the context from which the policy originates. The name given to the policy or the classification of policy defines it. According to van der Walt et al., (2001:166) there are political policies which according to them are party political and are normally promoted by a specific political party. Government policy is referred to as national policy and this is the policy of the political party in power (van der Walt, et al, 2001:166). The government or national policy is formulated by government of the day and tries to interpret the ideology of the political party in power into practical objectives (van der Walt, et al, 2001:166). This means that the national policy is to a large extent an extension of the ruling political party policy.

Van der Walt, et al., (2001:166) also mention that there is also an executive policy. An executive policy originates from political and government policy and is decided upon by political office-bearers who work with senior ranking public officials or what Lungu (2001) refers to as bureaucrats (van der Walt, et al, 2001:166).

Another important type of policy is what is referred to as operational policy (van der Walt, et al, 2001:166; cf. Anderson, 1997:9). According to van der Walt (2001:166) an operational policy is sometimes referred to as administrative policy and this is the most specific policy and is meant to achieve departmental objectives. In other words this policy is at the level of implementation and can therefore be called the ‘implementation policy’.

For the purpose of this study public policy is defined as “an adopted course of action by which government declares its intentions to achieve national educational goals and how it intends to achieve them”. Therefore public policy is a clearly defined and an agreed upon agenda by policy makers which should culminate into a viable/feasible implementation plan and this plan should be implemented in accordance with the original agenda.

### **2.3 THE PROCESS OF POLICY-MAKING**

One of the functions of a government is to make policy (Kotze, 1989:170). The process of policy making is defined by Kotze (1989:170) as ‘whatever government chooses to do or not to do’. It is the prerogative of government to initiate policy. A policy process starts when a problem is identified and policy makers are expected to formulate a policy that will solve or address the problem (Van der Walt, et al, (2001:179). Research is one approach that is used by policy developers to identify problems to be addressed by policy during the process of making public policy (Van der Walt, et al, (2001:179).

Therefore critical to the process of public policy-making is the identification of the problem or problems the government intends to address. The problem identification stage commonly kick starts the policy development process.

There are various approaches to making policy. The following sections will attempt to describe public policy making approaches.

### **2.3.1 The democratic process**

According to Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:242) South Africa's transition to democracy saw clearly recognisable shifts towards procedurally more open and inclusive policy-making processes. According to Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:242) the first official democratic policy of the new government in the post-apartheid South Africa is the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Burger (1997:64 & 65) point out that the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (1994) prescribed unambiguously that the new approach to policy-making by the new democratic government should be a bottom-up process. It is also stated in the RDP White Paper document that communities and beneficiaries of public policy must be consulted and their wishes turned into realities during policy development and implementation processes. Manganyi (2001:29) observed that indeed the South African government implements the prescriptions of the RDP. Manganyi (2001:29) further observes out that educational policies of the first democratic government in South Africa were developed through what he calls "structured public participation opportunities" which involved members of the public, the Cabinet, education experts, teacher organizations as well as the Education Portfolio Committee.

Lewis and Naidoo (2004:3) further indicate that the new South African Constitution that was introduced in 1996 commits the country to critical elements of democracy and more particularly to the principle of public involvement. According to Nieuwenhuis (2005) democracy is based on the notion of decentralizing power and authority to the local community. It is the strong opinion of Lewis and Naidoo (2004:3) that the general public and local

communities should not only participate in the general elections but should be able to shape their destiny at all levels that impact on their social well-being as well. In short in a democratic setting the public has the right to influence decisions that impacts on their livelihood.

Whilst the RDP was the founding policy document for the democratic government after 1994, the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) (NEPA) (RSA, 1996) is the principal policy document for education in South Africa. Manganyi (2001:31) points out that the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) prescribes that all education policies that affect the school and college sector in South Africa should first go through democratic structures such as the National Education and Training Council, the Heads of Education Committee (HEDCOM) and Council for Education Ministers (CEM). In other words NEPA like the RDP White Paper emphasises the inclusive approach to policy-making in the South African education fraternity. In terms of NEPA educational policymaking is a key task of the Minister of Education. What this suggests is that the Minister of Education initiates and approves education policy in South Africa but in consultation with other role players to ensure that the spirit of democracy is observed.

### **2.3.2 Centralization versus Decentralization policy development processes**

According to the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) (1992:9) the process of policy-making in South Africa previously was closed and top-down. The process of policy making was both centralized and decentralized. It is the opinion of NEPI that this approach to policy making was problematic. Decentralization was used for political reasons and not for better and effective policies. Decentralization was used to fragment the system into ethnic and racial groups (NEPI, 1992:11). The major disadvantage for this kind of system is that it created a situation where policy formulation was fragmented into different departments of education. This approach that was used before 1994 in South Africa implies that policy should be developed in a uniform manner.



While decentralization is advantageous in some other areas, it is also important to have a central point of authority and control for the purpose of uniformity when it comes to policy development, communication and implementation.

Carrim (2001:98) observes that decentralization is the key characteristic of processes of educational reform in the post apartheid South Africa. National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) further sanctions the decentralisation of powers from centralised national ministry of education to provincial ministries (Carrim, 2001:101). Abrams (1993:7) indicates that there are two power influences in any organization and refers these as the internal and external. There is an obvious shift towards decentralisation because as Carrim (2001:98) puts it decentralisation is more consistent with the development of democracy. According to Carrim (2001:98) policies become more effective when they allow for maximum participation by all stakeholders. Decentralisation is seen as a mechanism to democratise policy formulation and implementation (Carrim, 2001:98).

However Lodge (1999:38) observed some misdemeanours in the process of democratisation in South Africa. According to Lodge (1999:38) the state's commitment to people-driven development seems to have been fluctuating and ambivalent and not in accordance with NEPA and the RDP. In many areas the trend has run against popular participation (Lodge, 1999:38 – 39). According to Ball (1994:16) most governments recognize only certain influences and agendas as legitimate by government and only certain voices are heard at any point in time. “Quibbling and dissensus still occur with the babble of ‘legitimate’ voices and sometimes the effects of quibbling and dissensus result in a blurring of meanings within texts” (Ball, 1994:16). In other words the government usually selects stakeholders it wants to participate in policy making so as to get support in pushing a policy through to its finality at the expense of views from the majority of stakeholders who enjoys popular support.

There seem to be agreement that centralization and decentralization play a pivotal role in policy development. However in South Africa before 1994 this approach was used to preserve political power. Contrary to this centralization and decentralization that was used before 1994 the new purpose of centralization and decentralization is to democratise the process of policy-making.

Power plays a central role in both the centralized and decentralized form of policy making. Abrams (1993:7) says that central power will always dominate all other levels of power. He classifies power into internal and external and says that central power is regarded as external while decentralized power is referred to as internal. According to Abrams (1993:7) the power relations between the external and internal influences should always be considered. It is Abrams contention that the external influences usually dominate the internal one. It is the external influences that make strategic decisions and goal formation as a whole (Abrams, 1993:7).

Over and above the above-mentioned approaches to policy making, there are two types of processes that usually shape policies. According to Kotze (1989:193) there are two types of process applicable in public policy-making in South Africa. Kotze calls these the legislative and bureaucratic processes (Kotze, 1989:193). In many ways Lungu (2001:95) agrees with Kotze's view on the two processes however he gives the two processes different labels. According to Lungu (2001:95) the two public policy-making processes that are common in the South African context are called the White Paper and the legislative processes. This study will adopt Kotze's designation of the processes of public policy making. The White Paper process is viewed as the same as the legislative process and therefore reference will be made about the legislative and bureaucratic processes of policy making.

### 2.3.3 Legislative Process

Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:243) point out that after 1994 the legislative /White Paper process in South Africa emerged with two sets of rules. The first set of rules is derived from the new institutions of democratic governance, including the formal responsibilities of the Constitutional Court and the judges, the Attorney General and the Public Protector. The second set of rules evolved from the 'forum movement' and reflected the expectation that public policy should bear the stamp of community actors for approval.

However, this democratic practice still had to become entrenched, as Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:243) note that by the late 1990s this practice had receded in the face of communities awaiting the implementation of policy based on national consensus.

The White Paper policy-making process is a public process in which state organs, individual members of the public and interest groups can influence the direction of public policy (Kotze, 1989:193). According to Kotze (1989:193) the White Paper process of policy-making represents a broad consultative process. Individuals, executive state organs, interest groups and other political parties, official or unofficial can participate in the policy-making process to either oppose certain policies or contribute positively towards the refinement of policy. This policy making process characterises the second set of rules as indicated by Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:243) that public policy must have the support of the communities for which the policy is intended. According to Lungu (2001:95) the white paper is an extensive and broad consultative process as quite a number of role-players and stakeholders get involved in this process and hence the conclusion by (Lungu, 2001:95) that the white paper process in South African is regarded as the popular policy-making process. However Lewis and Naidoo (2004:2) are critical of this process. According to them (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:2) the extensive consultation process may sometimes be used merely to exclude and exploit local role-players.

Therefore while the legislative process is regarded as a process that is inclusive and maintains the spirit of the constitution and the RDP document, sometimes it can be used to defeat the very same spirit.

Although inclusiveness, participation and transparency are well-entrenched ideals in the white paper process, but experience in South Africa has shown that it is the less needy who make best use of participation, for instance in presentations to parliamentary committees (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:243). Nelson Mandela in his preface of the RDP document (ANC, 1994) succinctly indicates how inclusiveness, participation and transparency can enhance the legitimacy of the public policy-making process as he said: “The RDP document represents a framework that is coherent, viable and has widespread support. Experts did not draw up the RDP although many, many experts have participated in the process – but by the very people that will be part of its implementation (African National Congress, 1994: – Preface of the RDP document). Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:234) support Nelson Mandela and further indicate that participation and consultation in policy-making are the basis for creating legitimacy for the process of policy making. Blanco (2002:2) indicates that consultation during policy-making results in ownership of that policy by those who are engaged in all its phases, from development to implementation. It is during this process of consultation that stakeholders attach meaning to the policy, which in turn is a key factor for its success.

However, Carrim (2001:98) is cautious about this approach and says that attempts to democratize education in South Africa are fraught with tensions. These tensions that characterize education have the effect of silencing significant forces in the policy-making process and therefore run the risk of hampering the implementation of policies in practice. In conservative cultures, citizen participation in government activities and policy-making are essentially non-existent (Van der Walt, et al, (2001:171).

People should be involved in decision-making and implementation processes (Liebenberg & Stewart, 1997:169). More specifically parents and communities have the right to take decisions that pertains to the education of their children (Rapport, 2005:17). Figure 2.1 gives a broad outline of the policy-making process in South Africa.

#### **2.3.4 Bureaucratic process**

The second process of public policy-making is the bureaucratic process. Lungu (2001:95) points out that this process in education in South Africa is located within the National Department of Education where bureaucrats run with the process of policy-making. Lungu (2001:95) further indicates that these bureaucrats work closely with politicians in Cabinet and the National Assembly or the National Council of Provinces when making public policy. Kotze (1989:193) concludes that because the bureaucratic policy-making process takes place within executive institutions of government there are tendencies that this process is a secret process as certain responsibilities can be evaded.

#### **2.3.5 Executive process**

Although the two processes outlined above are regarded as common practice in policy-making in South Africa, Lungu (2001:96-97) brings to the fore a rather unusual third process. Lungu (2001:96) refers to this process as the executive process as this process result in executive policies. The process of developing executive policies deviates from the formal policy processes applicable to South Africa but is still located with the bureaucracy. Lungu (2001:96) cites Curriculum 2005 an example of a policy that was formulated through the executive route. He indicates that in 1997 the Minister of Education announced Curriculum 2005 as policy without having followed the white paper route nor the bureaucratic route.

Having outlined the two types of policies and the processes that produce these policies, now the stages or phases of policy making are now identified and briefly elaborated on in the next section.

### **2.3.6 Role players in the process of policy-making**

Kotze (1989:174 – 191) observes that policymakers can be classified either as official or unofficial. Official policy makers develop official policy while unofficial policy makers develop unofficial policy. Roux (2006:8) advises that although it is important to classify policy makers into the above categories, domestic or local role players should always form the nucleus of policy making.

#### **2.3.6.1 Official policy makers**

The first type of policy-makers is what Kotze (1989:174; cf. Roux, 2006:8) refer to as official policymakers and this type is located within government executive structures. According to Roux (2006:8) these are people with legal power to formulate public policy and include both legislative and executive authority. (Kotze, 1989:178 – 193). Kotze (1989:183) indicates that while presidents and individual ministers play a critical part in policy-making, the Cabinet and Cabinet committees are the most important executive structures of government when it comes to policy-making.

Government and bureaucrats as official policy makers play a critical role in trying to address the needs of communities through the policies it develops. According to Kotze (1989:191) the bureaucracy within government was Over and above the above-mentioned approaches to policy making, there are two types of processes that usually shape policies. According to Kotze (1989:193) there are two types of process applicable in public policy-making in South Africa. Kotze calls these the legislative and bureaucratic processes (Kotze, 1989:193). In many ways Lungu (2001:95) agrees with Kotze's view on the two processes however he gives the two processes different labels.

According to Lungu (2001:95) the two public policy-making processes that are common in the South African context are called the White Paper and the legislative processes. This study will adopt Kotze's designation of the processes of public policy making. The White Paper process is viewed as the same as the legislative process and therefore reference will be made about the legislative and bureaucratic processes of policy making.

#### **2.3.6.2 Unofficial policy makers**

Unofficial policy-makers will include political parties that are not in power as government and interest groups (Kotze, 1989:174 & 176). Roux (2006:8) adds interest groups, stakeholders and individuals to a list of unofficial policy makers According to Kotze (1989:174) unofficial policy makers may have positions of influence but they do not possess any legal authority to make binding policy decisions. Political parties are classified as unofficial policy-makers and are the most important vehicles through which individual members of the general public demands on government can be articulated (Kotze, 1989:174). "What political parties do as one of their most important functions is to aggregate the demands of individual members of the public and transmit them to decision-makers via policy" (Kotze, 1989:174). As noted by Kotze (1989:174) the ruling political party has the most influence in a political system.

Interest groups are another important unofficial players in the process of making public policy (Kotze, 1989:176). According to Carrim (2001:103) interest groups are a legitimate mode of representation that is recognized in policy circles in most countries including South Africa as a way to ensure inclusivity during policy-making processes. Interest groups seek to influence decision-makers during the policy-making process on matters that they have common purposes and attitudes (Kotze, 1989:174). In policy-making matters interests groups will represent the interests and wishes of their particular groups that have the same interests on the issues that policy should address.

Although considered unofficial policy makers, opposition political parties and interest groups play a critical role in the process of policy-making. They are in a position to influence the direction of new policy in terms of development and implementation. It is these unofficial policy makers who can constantly remind politicians and bureaucrats about the needs of the communities.

#### **2.3.4 Stages of policy making**

According to Lungu (2001:93; cf. Kotze, 1989:193) there is no a generally accepted model of policy-making for both the White Paper and bureaucratic processes, but at least there is consensus that the process of policy-making includes all of the following five phases.

- ◆ Identification of the goal or problem
- ◆ Authorization to develop proposed course of action
- ◆ Adaptation of course of action and public statement of intention
- ◆ Implementation
- ◆ Evaluation of policy once it has taken effect



Fowler (2000:15; cf. Van der Walt, et al., 2001:179; cf. Dunn, 1994:15; Nieuwenhuis, 2006) agrees with Lungu on these stages but Fowler identifies them differently as follows (for the purpose of simplicity):

- agenda setting
- formulation of policy proposals
- adoption of the policy
- implementation of the policy
- evaluation of the policy

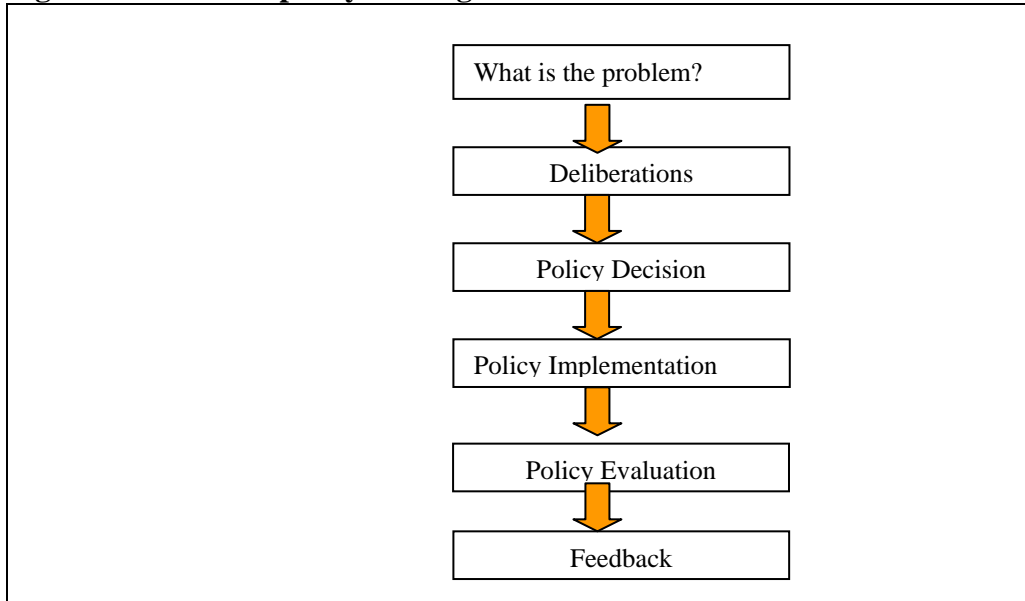
Table 2.1 below lists steps that a common model of the policy making process would follow. According to Nieuwenhuis (2006) this is the linear-type model of policy making as these steps follow each other in the listed sequence.

**Table 2.2 Steps in the common model of policy making process (Nieuwenhuis, 2006)**

- |  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identification of policy problems; setting the policy agenda</li><li>2. Formulation and assessment of policy options</li><li>3. Adoption of a particular policy option</li><li>4. Implementation of policy/policies</li><li>5. Evaluation of policy impact</li><li>6. Adjustment and beginning a new policy cycle</li></ol> |
|--|

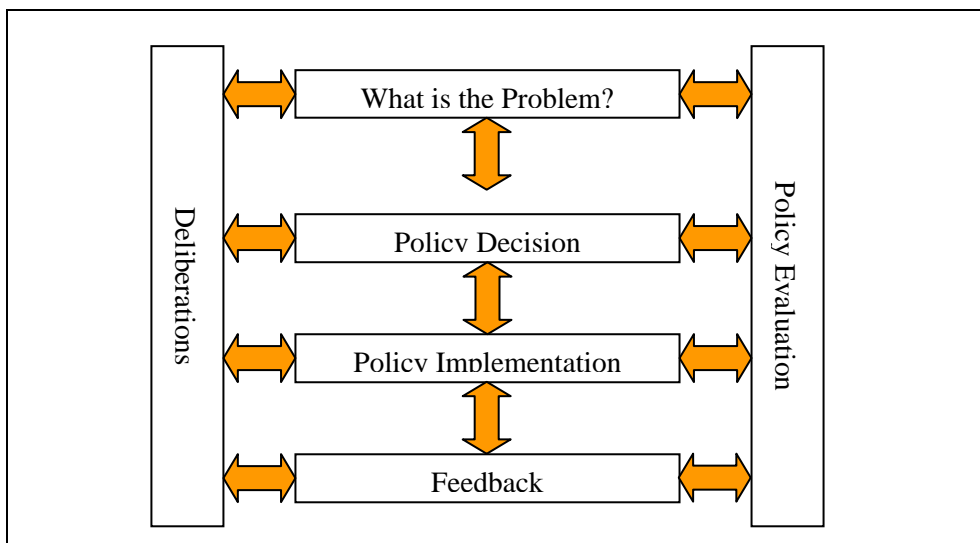
Depicted diagrammatically the steps in Table 2.1 are shown as follows:

**Figure 2.1 Common policy making model**



The five phases as identified by Lungu (2001) and Van der Walt, et al., (2001) and supported by many other policy writers indicate that the policy-making process involves a number of consecutive, interconnected steps. Although these stages can be regarded as consecutive, the policy making process should not be regarded as linear. Figure 2.2 below shows a policy making model that is less linear but not as ‘messy’ as Jansen (2001) puts it.

**Figure 2.2 Steps in the less linear policy making model**



The first step involves deciding what, if anything is to be done about a problem (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:233). Fowler (2000:16) says that agenda setting involves going through a list of subjects or problems' to which government officials must address. Fowler (2000:16) further indicates that sometimes community organization can influence the agenda of politicians on policy issues. Fowler cites as an example The Million Man March of October 1995 where African-Americans in Denver influenced the district decisions about the changes that were proposed for magnet schools. According to Fowler (2000:16) with this march the decisions that were taken about the magnet schools were consulted upon. Responses to this first step are regarded as general statements or principles (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:233). Once the questions in step one has been resolved, step two is to draft legislation and administrative rules. When adopted, these rules and regulations will put the agreed principles and statements into effect (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:234). According to Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:234) step one and step 2 are commonly known as policy formulation and policy adoption respectively. Therefore the process of policy-making starts in earnest with the draft legislation and administrative rules on the problem or issue to be addressed.

Step three in the policy process involves the implementation of adopted policy (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:234). Booyesen and Erasmus (2001:234) use the government levels in order to try to differentiate policy formulation from policy implementation. They say policy making is done at the level of the national government while implementation is the responsibility of provincial and local governments.

## **2.4 THE PROCESS OF POLICY COMMUNICATION**

Communication is supposed to be the first step in implementing policy but Wolf, Bekett and VanBelle-Proud (1999:57) note that attention tends to be on the policy itself rather than on mechanisms for communicating the policy.

Policy is about decisions and according to the Burnett Shire Council (2005:1) communicating policy to communities is key as these decisions affect communities. Communicating policy should occur directly after the process of policy making is complete. This means that for public policy to be effective, communication and mediation thereof should be vigorous. According to Dunn (1994:20) the process of policy communication is quite an involved one since it incorporates 'policy analysis, materials development, interactive communication and knowledge utilization'. Dunn (1994:20) calls this process 'the process of communicating policy relevant knowledge'. While it is accepted that policy is usually communicated through the various methods that Dunn (1994:20) outlines Wolf, et al. (1999:57) focus on the communication of policy through the various levels of the education ministry. According to Wolf, et al. (1999:57) policy is officially communicated through written circulars from the ministry level to all other levels below the ministry, down to the classroom and community level. Wolf, et al. (1999:57) further point out that this kind of communication is hierarchal and is the most followed one. According to Dunn (1994:20) this implies that it is not only the finalized policy document that needs to be made available to the general public, but also all any other information that might impact on the outcome of the policy.

Wolf, et al. (1999:57-58) say that the process of communicating policy differs from country to country. The density of the population of a country, the resources and the infrastructure within the country determines how new public policy will be communicated to the general public and all other the role-players. A study conducted by Nwakoby in Nigeria found that inadequate implementation of policy in that country was as a result of lack of systematic procedures to communicate newly developed policy.

After the policy has been developed, whether public or private, policy needs to be communicated to those who will be affected by that policy. To communicate policy-relevant knowledge policy analysts should develop multiple policy-relevant documents- policy memoranda, policy issue papers, executive summaries, appendices, and new releases (Dunn, 1994:20). Some of these documents are presented in Figure 2.1.

These are what Dunn (1994:20) refer to as policy-relevant documents. These policy-relevant documents in turn serve as a basis for multiple strategies of interactive communications in conversations, conferences, meetings, briefings, formal hearings, and other kinds of oral presentations (Dunn, 1994:20). The purpose of developing policy-relevant documents and making oral presentations is to enhance prospects for the utilization of policy-relevant knowledge and open-ended debates among stakeholders situated within the process of policy-making (Dunn, 1994:20).

Policy-relevant knowledge should be communicated to stakeholders to advise them of the policy-making process (Pergler, 2005; cf. Dunn, 1994:20). This kind of communication usually takes the form of policy presentations and consultations through workshops and conferences. Communicating public policy to stakeholders is very important as this can enhance better understanding and interpretation of the policy that in turn can lead to enhanced policy implementation. It is therefore critical that policy makers should interact and communicate with the communities or stakeholders that will be affected either directly or indirectly by forthcoming policies (Van der Walt, et al, (2001:187). Usually the government does the announcement of the newly developed policy by promulgation in the Government Gazette thus giving it a formal status.

Wolf, et al. (1999:63) say that the type of communication is also important. The choice of how the policy will be communicated is also influenced by who is to be reached out and the type of communication to be used (Wolf, et al., 1999:63). Pergler (2005) indicates that it is important to choose a specific method that will be used to communicate the designed policy effectively. Pergler (2005) further indicates that when a communication method is not chosen this usually leads to compromises in policy. For instance they indicate that policy can be communicated using the written word, the spoken word or the media. All these types of communication can impact either positively or negatively to policy implementation.

### 2.4.1 The written word

Wolf, et al. (1999:63) say that the written form of communication provides a set standard. After all (Fowler, 2000:17) official policy is expressed in written form (Fowler, 2000:17). A written word in a form of the official circular provides an authority against which different interpretations of policy can be tested (Wolf, et al., 1999:64). It is important to communicate the content of policy through the written form (Wolf, et al., 1999:73). Content according to Wolf, et al (1999:73) refers to definition of terms and concepts. It is the understanding of these terms and concepts of policy that is critically important for the eventual success of policy implementation. According to Wolf, et al. (1999:75) a new policy will not be successfully implemented if practitioners fail to understand the concepts of the policy. Ball (1994:16) asserts that those who are tasked to communicate or mediate policy should note that for any text a plurality of readers must necessarily produce a plurality of readings. This implies that those who receive finalized policy will read and interpret it in different ways. Ball (1994:16) further indicates that although authors of policy do make concerted efforts to control meanings of their policy texts by the means at their disposal to achieve a 'correct' reading, it is rather impossible to totally control the meanings of these texts. Policy texts are not necessarily clear or closed or complete. According to Ball (1994:16) policy texts are the product of compromises at various stages during policy development and are typically the "cannibalized product of multiple influences and agendas".

Another important aspect to be noted about the written form of policy is that policies are most commonly seen as something that is issued once and can be used to provide new employees the opportunity to learn about the policies that were issued before their arrival (Wolf, et al., 1999:64). Therefore it is important that the written form of communication be used when new a public policy is to be disseminated to lower levels for implementation.

### **2.4.2 The spoken word**

Sometimes it is necessary to use the word of mouth to relay policy to the general public and role-players. According to Wolf, et al. (1999:68) oral communication provides valuable opportunities for the discussion of the policy. An added advantage with this method is that discussions about the policy can be in the language of the local people (Wolf, et al., 1999:64). Most countries use English as an official language but Wolf, et al. (1999:78) caution that not all communities, more particularly in Africa, fully understand English. Consequently the use of the local language will make the new policy clearer for the local community. Wolf, et al. (1999:78) further points out that even when the language that is selected for communication is not a problem, the vocabulary used and the manner in which the policy is stated can create obstacles to policy implementation. It follows then that the spoken word can be used effectively to reach implementers of policy using local language and understandable vocabulary.

While Wolf, et al. (1999:68) regard oral communication as important to communicate policy, they further caution about the disadvantages of this method. According to them the degree of policy discussions varies and therefore different messages can be conveyed to different audience about the same policy. According to Wolf, et al. (1999:68) transformations of the true meaning of the policy occur every time the policy is repeated. Consequently this can lead to different understanding and interpretation of policy.

### **2.4.3 The media**

The media can also play an important role in communicating public policy. According to Pergler (2005) this kind of method is the most effective method of communicating policy. Wolf, et al. (1999:71) indicates that radio reaches beyond the education boundaries and can therefore be used to communicate with communities directly.

For an example in Malawi the policy that allowed girls to return to school after falling pregnant was communicated through radio as well as circulars and meetings and this policy was very popular in communities (Wolf, et al., 1999:71).

## **2.5 THE PROCESS OF PUBLIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

Although South African policies are well designed as indicated by Manganyi (2001:28), van der Walt, et al. (2001:185; cf. De Clercq, 2001:37) has a contrary view and indicate that problems usually arise in the implementation phase. It is van der Walt's assertion that policy implementation in South Africa is rigged with many problems (van der Walt, et al. 2001:185). Many reasons are normally cited as the cause of the non-implementation of public policy (Levin, 2001:143).

According to the Southern African Journal of Environmental Education (2003:2) policy development has always received the biggest support. International donors have dedicated more resources for the purpose of policy development whilst paying less attention on policy implementation. Government policies are usually developed close to the top of the political system and put into practice close to the grass roots (Fowler, 2000:12). This implies that there is a communication gap between the top echelons of government and the practitioners on the ground and this consequently can result into implementation problems. When policy is developed somewhere by a selected group of few people but implemented somewhere else by public servants who had no part during the development of that policy there is bound to be problems.

Constraints brought about by democracy in SA during the first period of transition (i.e. between 1994 – 1997) created problems for government on issues of policy renewal and accelerated policy implementation.



Some of these constraints included among others and on occasions, the reluctance on the part of civil servants to implement new policies (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:242). Van der Walt, et al., (2001:185) say maybe this is because government does not offer incentives for public managers to correctly implement policies and that the various levels of government at which policy implementation occurs can sometimes complicate the implementation process. Civil servants who are supposed to implement public policy should be motivated to implement policy.

From the late 1990s policy implementation in South Africa encountered serious new challenges. According to De Clercq (2001:36) these challenges included primarily problems of capacity and resources, both structurally and in skills, but also mismanagement and corruption (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:242). Continuous restructuring of line function departments and the lines of responsibility between the national and provincial government (intergovernmental relations) combined with tensions between political appointees and conventional civil servants to stall a range of policy initiatives (GDE, 1999:37 – 39; DPLG, 1999) quoted by (Booyesen & Erasmus, 2001:242 – 243) further complicates policy implementation.

According to Maluleke (2000:51) policy implementation in South Africa is facilitated by the White Papers or Green Papers. White or Green Papers are government guidelines and they articulate the intentions of government in terms of policy implementation. According to Maluleke (2000:51) once policy documents are in place, a plan of action must be developed to ensure that the objectives as stipulated in policy are pursued. In order to implement policy certain critical aspects are at play and they need to be given consideration. Paragraphs that follow underneath attempt to explicate these aspects

### 2.5.1. Resources

Resources allocation is sometimes one of the first reasons that is cited as the cause for non-implementation of public policy. Manganyi (2001:32) affirms this point and say that one reason for non-implementation of policy by public servants is as a result of “under-resourcing both in human resource and budgetary terms”.

The capacity of the state as coordinator of policy implementation has been weak. Governments usually implement policies through provincial governments and Lodge (1999:38) indicates that the political complexity and bureaucratic shortcomings of provincial governments make the implementation of policies very difficult sometimes. Rensburg (2002:125-126) takes this point further and he says that in South Africa the education authority is comprised of one national department and nine provincial departments and this structures have created a lot of policy implementation problems. It is Rensburg’s (2002:126) contention that these ten departments have wide-ranging competencies and capacities to implement education policies. According to Rensburg (2002:126) during the first five years of democracy in South Africa (i.e. 1994 – 1999) what was evident were inadequacies of human capacity on policy interpretation. Rensburg (2002:126) observes that during the first five years of developing democratic policies senior managers at both national and provincial levels had varied interpretations of policy.

Therefore the lack of human capacity in senior management in the education ministry both at provincial and national level to interpret policy correctly may lead to deviation from the actual intentions of the policy-maker. The lack of ability to interpret policy by practitioners is also critical. For instance various stakeholders interpreted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the government differently.

The labour movement had its own meaning of the RDP, the business sector also had its own understanding of the programme and the government itself had a total different meaning from both the labour and business (Lodge, 1999:30).

### **2.5.2. Policy interpretation and translation**

Policy discourses are about what can be said and thought about policy (Ball, 1994:21). According to Ball (1994:21) discourses “embody the meaning and use of propositions and words”. In other words the intentions of policy are presented by discourse and implementers have to discover these intentions by reading through the policy text. They need to understand the policy discourse. Manganyi (2001:28) argues that public policy is largely prescriptive in the sense of telling people what to do, how certain things are to be handled in the public domain, the circumstances under which certain practices are unacceptable. What Manganyi is arguing is that while policy is clear on what needs to be done and by whom, on most occasions implementers still encounter difficulties in determining the intentions policy makers. Lewis and Naidoo(2004:3) also argue that public policies in South Africa since 1996 have focussed on the “formal articulation of rules, roles and responsibilities”. According to Lewis and Naidoo (2004:4) these prescriptions in policy documents convey a narrow meaning on how policy should be implemented.

In other words policy-makers give a “one-sided” view or a single “right practice” of how public policy should be implemented at all levels. This creates problems for the implementation of that policy (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:4).

Policy implementation also mean translating decisions into action (Van der Walt, et al., (2001:185). The theme of the Eastrand Region of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) for their 2005 Regional Conference read as “From intentions to action”.

This phrase as put forward by SADTU indicates that the South African government has good intentions with its policies, but what is lacking is to move beyond intentions towards the actual implementation of these policies. Liebenberg and Stewart (1997:158) suggest that for policy implementation to be effective, white papers, policy briefs and budget speeches must be translated into action. It is Lewis and Naidoo (2004:4) contention that for the implementation of policy to be effective it is important to translate policy statements into local meanings and process. This approach gives consideration to the practice of the policy across diverse and historically situated contexts (Lewis & Naidoo, 2004:4). Van der Walt, et al., (2001:188) say that the policy to be implemented should first be translated so that it is understood correctly.

The translation of policy implies that the implementers should first determine the objectives of the policy, the definition of the policy issue to be addressed or solved by the policy, and any unintended conflicts or new problems arising from the policy (van der Walt, et al, 2001: 188). Van der Walt, et al. (2001:171) argue that policy makers and implementers should first and foremost determine what the intentions of government are before they can talk about implementation. However Lewis and Naidoo (2004:2) argue that policy intentions may sometimes ignore the realities of activities in practice. Thus considering intentions of policy without the practical realities may not bear positive results for the policy. Furthermore Van der Walt, et al., (2001:188) indicates that when implementing policy, the intentions of the policy makers should be considered and the views and biases of public officials should be disregarded. This is because sometimes public officials who could have contributed towards the initiation of the policy are expected to implement their own policies and this can have negative effects as Van der Walt, et al., (2001:188) point that these officials could be biased towards their own policies. More specifically these officials can try to push their own personal agendas during implementation, disregarding the broad intentions of the policy and the reasons for the development of that particular policy in the first place.

According to Abrams (1993:5) the principal of an educational institution is at the helm and is confronted with a situation of making decisions that have to satisfy both the external and internal influences of the institution. It is the decisions and actions of the principal together with the senior management team that runs the organization and therefore their abilities to translate and adapt policy in their institutions is vital. The translation of the crude, abstract simplicities of policy texts into interactive and sustainable practices of some sort involves productive thought, invention and adaptation by the head of the institution (Ball, 1994:19).

### **2.5.3 The context**

The context in which the policy will be implemented also play a crucial role in ensuring successful implementation. Fowler (2000:11) argues that all policies are mediated through the context in which they are implemented and yet according to Wolf, et al. (1999:450) many policymakers ignore how the context of the policy can impact on this implementation. According to Levin (2001:143) the context of the policy will include aspects such as where policy is to be implemented (i.e. the local educational institution), the actors (i.e. principals and educators) who have to implement the policy, and the language of the local community. Levin (2001:143) says that the educational institution is regarded as an organization and this context presents serious challenges for successful policy implementation. According to Levin (2001:143) aspects such as the level of commitment within the organization, the skills of the actors and the resources available within that organization play a critical part in this regard. Ball (1994:19) indicates that the problem is that when we implement policy we tend to begin by assuming the adjustment of teachers and context to policy but not of policy to context. Policies do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed, or particular goals or outcomes are set (Ball, 1994:19). Policy developers and implementers should attempt to adjust policy to context and not context to policy.

Wolf, Bekett and VanBelle-Proud (1999) wrote a lot about policy and the context. It is their contention (i.e. Wolf, Bekett and VanBelle-Proud, 1999:41) that the variations in cultural, social, demographic and geographic play a major role in the success of policy implementation. According to Wolf, et al., (1999:41) no single policy will be effectively applicable to fit all circumstances. Urban and rural variations are some of the examples that can be cited in order to indicate that the context in which the policy will be implemented is of critical importance.

According to Wolf, et al., (1999:41&42) educational institutions in urban areas have easy access to information while those in rural areas they are so remotely removed from the latest communication technologies that it is even difficult to communicate with the department of education using telephone. This implies therefore that policy makers should try not to remove themselves from the contexts within which their policies will be implemented. Wolf, et al., (1999:45) further point out that policy workers most of the time work from urban locations and this make them “tend to forget or ignore how the other contexts in their countries may or may not be able to respond to specific policy reforms”.

Wolf, et al. (1999:56) do not believe ‘one-size-fits-all’ policies. Policymakers also know this assertion and yet it is not uncommon to find policies tailored to fit the urban context in which policymakers live (Wolf, et al., 1999:56). Furthermore Wolf, et al. (1999:56) indicates that it is also not “unusual for the announcement of policy not to have been preceded by an examination of how various contexts of the society will affect the policy implementation”. According to Wolf, et al. (1999:56) it is only after problems have surfaced during implementation and reported to policymakers that attempts are made to collect information about the context. What Wolf and his colleagues are pointing out is that the local context of policy needs to be assessed before the development of policy so as to gather relevant information that should be considered in order to aid implementation in that particular context.

#### **2.5.4 Educational managers and policy**

Power and policy cannot be separated because according to Fowler (2000:26) ‘the play of power’ shapes the outcome of the policy process. According to Fowler (2000:26) power relations are institutionalized in the school systems and this confer power to educational managers at institutional level in order to implement government policy as it relates to their institutions. According to Ball (1994:84) educational policy, political and economic contexts most of the time determine the success of managers in educational institutions. The policy framework always articulates particular leadership roles and responsibilities and excludes others to the detriments of effective policy implementation. Ball (1994:84) further indicates that policies affect and constrain the relationships within which leadership is realized. In other words educational policies do not create favorable conditions for managers to carry out their responsibilities and if this happens, those who have good relations with the manager will implement the policy. Those who are against the policy will implement the policy half-heartedly.

Ball (1994:86 & 89) cautions that while formal powers of governance in schools rest with the elected/appointed governing body, the senior manager or what in other countries refer to as head teacher is a key figure in the process of reform. According to Ball (1994:86) senior managers have the ability to sift and understand complex papers on policy matters (Ball, 1994:86). Therefore taking from Ball’s assertions the responsibility of implementing education policy at an institutional level rests with the senior manager of that institution. Fowler (2000:17) indicates that district administrators, school principals, and classroom teachers must implement education policies at grass-roots level.

Administrators at a level of an educational institution whether school or college, play a major role in terms of implementing the new policies (Fowler, 2000:21). By virtue of their position as the accounting officers, managers of educational institutions are expected to develop a plan on how they intent to carry out the implementation of the new policy (Fowler, 2000:21).

Fowler (2000:21) indicates that some of the policies that the managers have to implement are unpopular among their staff and this result in them making many mistakes due to pressures from within the organization.

## **2.6 CHAPTER REVIEW**

The processes of policymaking and implementation were outlined in this chapter and concluded that these processes are complex. The complexity of each of these processes is further exacerbated by the influence of politics.

The process of policy making was outlined. Firstly it was indicated that policymaking involves a number of consecutive interconnected steps that should not be regarded as linear but messy (Van der Walt, et al., 2001:179). Secondly the roles that various role-players have in policymaking were unpacked and it was clear that policymakers have a great influence on the success of the policy.

It was established in this chapter that although ostentatious policies are initiated and developed by many governments, the problem lies with implementation (Levin, 2001:143). Many factors contribute towards the non-implementation of education policy, and each of these factors present challenges of varying degrees to the implementation of policy (Lodge, 1999:38; cf. Rensburg, 2002:125-126).

The next chapter will focus on how the international perspective on further education and training policy.



<b>Policy Phase</b>	<b>Problem-identification</b>	<b>Agenda-Setting</b>	<b>Policy Deliberation</b>	<b>Policy Adoption</b>	<b>Policy implementation</b>
<b>Policy Actors</b>	Community leaders, MPs, Political parties leaders	Political partners, interests groups, Cabinet, Cabinet Committees, PCAs	Cabinet members' Cabinet committees	MPs, Cabinet, Provincial governments	Public servants, government Ministers
<b>Participating Influences</b>	Communities speaking –out;social movement actions; government awareness	Party conferences; delegations to government	Public hearings; Community forums; Commissions		Feedback from communities
<b>Policy clearing Houses</b>		Departmental task groups	Parliament, Parliamentary Committees; Minmec	Cabinet; National Assembly; NCOP; Constitutional Court	State departments; Provincial & Local governments
<b>Documentation</b>	Memoranda; internal communications	Petitions; Commissioned research reports	Green Papers	White Papers; Bills; Legislation	Secondary legislation; Departmental Directives

**Table 2.1 The 'stream' approach to policy-making in South Africa**

(Adapted from Booysen & Erasmus, 2001:246)

## CHAPTER 3

### THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Vocational Education and Training (VET) has become the term that is often associated with economic development. Various international organizations such as United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) have always associated VET with economic development. During its 2002 General Conference UNESCO recommended that VET “should be a vital aspect of the education process in all countries, and in particular should ...contribute to cultural and economic development”. Vocational Education and Training is used somehow as an umbrella term that includes various derivatives such as Vocational Education, Technical Education, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Further Education and Training (FET) in the South African context. In this chapter the term VET will be used to encompass all these terms.

The global community is increasingly depended on VET for economic development and growth (Keating, Medrich, Volkoff & Perry, 2002). After all VET is the only system of education that can meet the continuous changing needs of learners, employers and national economies (McGrath, 2005). Concerns from various stakeholders attest to this. National governments are concerned about the performance of VET institutions and employers are concerned about labor productivity and both these are linked to VET. Keating, et al., (2002:16) cites Australia as a country that now and then uses VET to intervene in their economy when it is not doing well. Wolfe (1998) indicates that this tendency is also evident in the UK.

Most of the countries associate VET with skills development for economic growth and labour productivity (Keating, et al., 2003:13). VET is also associated with labour productivity. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the structure that advocates this notion at all its platforms (ILO, 1989). Skills development is one critical aspect that is always attached to VET in order to increase productivity in workplace. In addition VET is seen as a vehicle to address issues such as youth unemployment and poverty. Countries in Africa have used VET mostly to fight the scotch of poverty in the continent and to some extend have succeeded. According to Atchoarena & Delluc, 2001:185 those countries in Sub-Saharan Africa like Botswana have developed VET policies that drive skills development. People who have skills are in the first instance employable and can therefore compete in the job for employment.

The biggest challenge for governments in VET is the development of policies in order for counties to benefit from VET provision (Worldwide Voice of Vocational Training, 2006:11). Whilst many countries especially in Africa are battling with the development of policies that will address economic development and growth, poverty and skills development Blanco (2002) indicates that this should not be the case. Blanco (2002: 5) refers to a term 'policy migration' as a solution to developing sound VET policies. According to Blanco (2002: 5) countries can now learn from each other on areas of excellence and be able to influence growth and development. Those countries that are battling with policy can import VET policies from countries that have developed good policies in the areas in which they are battling. However care should be taken that contexts of countries will differ and modifications will be required by the importing country.

### 3.2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY DEVELOPMENT: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Various organizations have been in the forefront of the development of VET at an international level. The World Bank is one such organization and has developed significant policy for VET as early as the 1970s. Subsequently a number of studies have been conducted and commissioned by the World Bank (Talik, 2002:14; cf.: Grerson, 2001:22; Gray, Fletcher, Foster, & King, 2004:8). International conferences and seminars have been held on the subject VET policy. For instance in 1989 the International Labour Organization (ILO) hosted a major international seminar titled '*Training for work in the informal sector*' (McGrath, 2005:2). The objectives of the seminar were firstly, to raise the profile of training in the informal sector and secondly to take formal, public VET providers and making them more responsive to the preparation for (self) employment in the informal sector (McGrath, 2005:2). It is McGrath's (2005:2) assertion that contributions at this seminar paved the way for many interventions that were emerging around the area of articulation at an international level between formal training systems and the informal sector.

Another important development in VET policy debate was the World Bank policy document. In 1991 the World Bank published a new policy paper on *vocational education and training* (World Bank, 1991). This was a new strategy for the World Bank on vocational education. While in 1989 the ILO seminar focused on making public VET provision responsive to the needs of the informal sector and self-employment, the World Bank in its 1991 strategy focused mainly on the role of private provision. McGrath (2005:3) indicates that in this policy the World Bank assumed that private provision was always likely to be more efficient than public and that training should always be left in the hands of employers. Atchoarena (2001:18) indicates that indeed policy for public provision has not been able to drive skills development as effectively as private providers.

Issues such as lack of relevance, lack of attention and support to change attitudes of public providers and the reluctance to pay sufficient attention to globalization, has caused public provision to lack behind.

It is in this light that the World Bank policy is now placing a strong emphasis on the reform of public providers. McGrath (2005:3) indicates that the World Bank strategy enjoined colleges to become more responsive to the labor market while also making a strong call that more control to be given to employers during the design and development of training (Atchoarena, 2001:18). In short the 1991 World Bank policy made a call that training for skills should be *demand-led*. Employers should take the lead in terms of the design and development of training materials and public colleges were expected to train people based on the needs as identified by employers.

Another key player in the area of VET is UNESCO. This organization has played a critical role in VET policy development internationally. . According to Tilak (2002:5) UNESCO started contributing to the development of VET as early as 1974. Tilak (2002:5) indicates that in 1974 UNESCO adopted an all important recommendations concerning VET. This recommendation argued that VET should be an integral part of general education as a means of preparing people for an occupational field. Secondly in 2000 it was UNESCO that suggested that Bangladesh prepare its overcrowded population for the labor market. This suggestion was further emphasised by the World Bank in 2002. Lastly to show its commitment to VET UNESCO has established a division within itself that deals directly with issues of VET and this is called 'Division for Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education (STV). This STV division is based at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. According to Rwambula (2003:183) the STV division is responsible for standards setting in VET globally. It can therefore be argued that VET has and is receiving international attention because of its potential to development human capital.

There are also other internationally acclaimed organizations that have contributed to the development of VET and such includes the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA) and Danish Aid Agency (Danida). According to Atchoarena and Delluc (2001:67) Danida is dispensing money to various countries including South Africa for the development of VET policies. Therefore the status and importance of VET globally cannot be overemphasized if organizations such as the UNESCO, IVETA, the Commonwealth and many others find themselves still allocating resources to advance and promote it. For instance the European Union (EU) has a strongly supported VET policy throughout Europe (Donor Policies, 2001:28). It is argued that the main focus of the EU policies has been on industrialization, regional cooperation and international trade, poverty alleviation and employment (Donor Policies, 2001:28). Most global regions are actively involved although this area is not their priority, in the promotion and support for VET and these include America, Africa, East Asia; Europe; and Latin America and the Caribbean, among others

### **3.3 THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

In September 2001 a declaration called “Declaration on skills development” was formulated and developed during the Interlaken conference on ‘Linking work, skills and knowledge’ from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2001 (Rwambulla, 2003:180). According to Rwambulla (2003:180) the purpose of the declaration was twofold. Firstly it was to send a strong signal to all stakeholders that skills development was an important development issue and secondly to also serve as a reconfirmation by the global community of the need to improve linkages between education and training, knowledge and skills.

There is sufficient evidence that indicates that there are many countries that have developed VET to levels of effectiveness. Keating, et al. (2002:12) indicates that indeed many countries have developed VET policies to enhance skills development. Atchoarena and Delluc (2001:185 – 199) show that Botswana, Ghana and Mauritius have succeeded in their attempts to develop VET. In Botswana for an example Atchoarena and Delluc (2001:185) argue that because of having developed VET policies, Botswana is on its way to using VET to eradicate many of the ills associated with unemployment, poverty, and HIV/AIDS. However, it cannot be argued that VET has reached a satisfactory level in terms of its value. Many countries are battling to adopt international trends in their efforts to train people in skills necessary for livelihood.

### **3.3.1 Vocational Education and Training policy development and globalization**

Keating, et al. (2002:16) argues that the global economic change has been the main driver of the increased policy activity within VET in recent decades. They (Keating, et al., 2002:16) argue that governments and industry worldwide see VET as a major factor in the drive to be internationally competitive, through its contribution to labour productivity. Talik (2002:3) says that if well developed, VET can contribute to the progress of a country by reducing unemployment. Therefore government policy should open opportunities for VET to be able to influence the skills training of people who will enhance productivity in the labour market and consequently enhance the economy. VET is a global phenomenon and therefore a country that needs to understand, develop and implement policies that will address its economic problems need to adapt to international trends in VET.

Blanco (2002:5) says that the effects of globalization have resulted in what is termed ‘policy migration’. Blanco (2002:5) says that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century VET policies and practices are no longer constrained by national boundaries. Technological advances allow countries to learn from one another and choose to adopt, and frequently adapt, the knowledge and practice of others.

Technology is a vehicle through which sustainable development and economic growth can be achieved (Rwambulla, 2003:178 – 179). Keating et al., (2002:13) points out that some of the leading economies in East Asia have used VET to their benefit. According to Keating et al., (2002:13) the past two decades has been characterized by aggressive growth in the economy of most East Asian countries. Japan for instance is one of the leading economies in East Asia although Keating et al (2002:13) say that there are questions being raised about the flexibility of the training system and its graduates. Australia is another acknowledged leading country most notably in VET reforms and many countries have looked up to it in this area (Blanco, 2002:5). In other words it is the flexibility of the education system to respond to the needs of the country and the quality of graduates who are produced by this system and join the labor industry that are responsible for this rapid economic performance.

According to Keating, et al. (2002:16) governments internationally have shown a willingness to adopt and adapt VET programmes and innovations from other countries. Atchoarena and Delluc (2001:57) cite as an example the German Dual System of Apprenticeships. The apprenticeship system has been the subject of many studies and has been used to inform innovations such as apprenticeships in France and the Youth Training Scheme in the UK. Also China is looking towards Germany, the UK, Canada and Australia for its reforms of VET (Keating, et al., 2002:16). Thus the use of globalisation by many countries to their advantages so that they can be able to participate and learn from each other on issues that can improve the quality of lives in their respective countries. Therefore governments are under intense pressure to develop VET policies that will enable their countries to participate meaningfully in the global community on issues of global interest more particularly in VET.

Global trends can impact upon policy and practice in a particular country and developments of VET in a particular country can have value for other countries (Blanco, 2002:5).



Although it is important to note how VET policy processes and practices emerge from other countries and Blanco (2002:5) says that ultimately it is the government of a particular country that must develop policy taking into account the circumstances of the home country. Technological advances result in ever-increasing potential for countries to learn from each other and implement broad global policies and practices capable of adaptation to meet local requirements (Blanco, 2002:5). This implies that contexts and the purposes of VET have an effect on the type of policies that should be developed. For instances, there are views that developed countries will develop policies that are different both in purpose and magnitude than the developing countries. In its strategic plan for VET 2005 – 2008 Australia has emphasized that VET should be developed to the level where it should support business competitiveness, innovation and growth (Board of Vocational Education and Training, 2005:6). Developing countries will also have differing agendas for their countries to address different issues.

### **3.3.2 Skills development approaches**

Internationally the apprenticeship system has been used as a strategy to develop trade skills. Many countries view the apprenticeship system as an important component of VET with Australia and Germany leading in this regard (Keating, et al., 2002:13; cf. Board of Vocational Education and Training, 2005:12). With the apprenticeship system an apprentice works for an employer and attends a training institution over a period of three to four years (Marks, McMillan & Ailnley, 2004:9). In Australia research was conducted to establish the effectiveness of their apprenticeship system as a strategy for skills development. Marks, et al. (2004:9) indicates that although apprenticeships have been used for skills development, the research established that there have been limitations in using them. Marks et al., (2004:9) says that these limitations include such things as inflexibility, a limited range of occupations, old technology, lack of access for women and declining numbers and according to Marks, et al., (2004:9) these are not in line with international expectations.

The Board on Vocational Education and Training (BVET) contradicts this view in the New South Wales strategic plan that it developed in 2005. According to BVET (2005:12) apprenticeships in New South Wales had growth significantly in the period 2000 to 2004. According to BVET (2005:12) participation in apprenticeships will have to be maintained as it was established that it is an effective approach to skills development. It follows then from the research findings that the approach of the apprenticeship system is inadequate in certain areas. New South Wales is located within Australia and has shown the popularity and effectiveness of the apprenticeship system of skills development.

After identifying the limitations of the apprenticeship system through research Australia abandoned the apprenticeship approach and introduced another approach known as 'traineeships' as a new approach to skills development. Traineeships involve a one-year programme with an employer incorporating on-the-job and off-the-job training, mostly in office-based or retail industries (Marks, et al., 2004:9). According to Marks et al (2004:9) the apprenticeship system took a much longer period to produce skilled workers than the traineeship. However Marks, et al. (2004:9) further indicate that more recently Australia has changed its approach again. According to Marks, et al. (2004:9) apprenticeships and traineeships have been integrated as part of a more unified entry-level training system. Apprenticeships are associated more with lower rates of unemployment in youth cohorts and substantially higher levels of full-time work whilst traineeships are also beneficial but to a lesser extent (Marks, et al., 2004:9). It follows then that the Australian model of skills development for the trades was adapted from time to time to meet skills development requirements. At one stage apprenticeships were used and at another the traineeships were used. If the assertion by the BVET (2005) is anything to go by, then the apprenticeships and traineeships are still being used in Australia for skills development.

The findings in this research is that apprenticeships improves employment prospects but that vocational education, in general, does not substantially improve labour market outcomes and this is in stark contrast to views held by many. Many reasons are cited for this phenomenon but Atchoarena & Delluc (2001:234) associate this lack of improving labour market outcomes to the notion that apprenticeship programmes do not emphasis the skills know-how. But Mishra (1993:58) disputes this and argues that in India the apprenticeship system has been used to meet the requirements of skilled workers in industries. Mishra (1993) attests the point that participation in apprenticeship programmes can equip the already skilled workers with new practical knowledge or skills. Anderson (2003:3) says that it is a self-evident truth that the purpose of VET is to promote economic growth through the development of human resources which directly enhances productivity and profits for industry. Mishra's argument is that improved skills result in improved performance on the job. Marks, et al., (2004:9) argue against this popular view and say that this finding that VET does not improve the labour market productivity is consistent with other work in Australia and similar to findings in other countries internationally. According to Mishra (1993:59; cf. Rwambulla, 2003:187) in spite of this view many countries and organization still believe that VET is fundamental to skill development and increases chances for employment.

The process of globalization and rapid technological changes point to the emergence of more knowledge-intensive work that point to a new approach to skills development. According to Rwambulla (200:187) globalization and technology highlight the need to link education and training better. For instance China has recently experienced rapid economic growth and Keating et al., (2002:13) points out that the former system of state-owned enterprises and company-based training is being dismantled and new approaches to VET and its relationship to the mainstream education system are being sought. What this point suggests is that skills development is complex and no one approach will be adequate in any particular.

The case of Australia comes to the fore in this instance. Australia uses a variation of skills development approaches in order to meet the needs of its citizens (BVET, 2005:12). Integrating education and training is another attempt to improve on skills development.

Another important concept in skills development is life-long learning. According to Blanco (2002:6) life-long learning takes place throughout all phases of life, work-related and non work-related and refers to this as the emergence of the concept 'knowledge society'. According to UNESCO and ILO (2002:2) as economic, social and technological changes continues people in the global community need to develop their knowledge and skills to be able live and work meaningfully in the knowledge village. In the same light VET systems will have to develop policies and training programmes that will develop the knowledge and skills that will help the workforce to become more flexible and respond to the needs of the workplace (UNESCO & ILO, 2002:2). According to Blanco (2002:6) sustainable economies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will have to embrace sustainable education, that is, knowledge that is continuously updated. In this times where change is a constant, skills and knowledge become obsolete faster. Therefore VET systems will have to respond accordingly to ensure that skills always match the needs of the industry. The learning needs of individuals and societies will have to be met in new ways to further the idea of the knowledge society through investing in people and skills, at both national and global levels (Blanco, 2002:6).

### **3.4 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY AND THE INFORMAL ECONOMY**

Enterprises of the formal sector of most developing countries are by no means in a position to absorb the increasing demand for employment. The majority of people will have to make a living in the informal sector.

According to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Germany (2001:8; cf. Grierson, 2001: 22) VET systems must react to this situation in a more positive way. In fact according to Rwambulla (2003: 179) more initiatives are required for existing training institutions especially VET colleges to address a greater variety of target groups, particularly the more disadvantaged. Integrated approaches and programmes in VET are necessary to prepare individuals for employment or self-employment in the informal sector as well as participate meaningfully in economic development of the country (Grierson, 2001: 22).

Tilak (2002:3) indicates that because of the limitations of the formal sector in absorbing skilled workers into formal jobs, the informal sector need to be developed as it has been established that the sector has the potential to serve the majority of the people. A typical example in this regard is Bangladesh. When it was established that Bangladesh could not offer job opportunities to its masses, UNESCO (2002) suggested that the government in that country shift its VET training focus to the informal sector. Courses that are oriented towards self employment were used to prepare people for the purpose of creating their own ventures. In spite of the shortcomings of the apprenticeship system as depicted by the findings of several studies Fluitman and Haan (2001:24) argue that apprenticeships will be more relevant if their attention was focused equipping people in the informal sector. In short governments should develop policies that will promote self employment.

McGrath (2005:148) indicates that Africa has had less focus on the informal economy than other countries of the world. McGrath (2005:148) further indicates that this lack of focus on the informal economy in Africa could be caused by among others lack of understanding of the type of skills required in the informal economy and a lack of systematically addressing skills needs of both those already in the informal economy and those likely to enter it. The informal economy is the likely destination for many VET graduates as it also creates self-employment.

In South Africa, those in informal work are estimated to be as many as four million, or approximately one-third of the total labor force (McGrath, 2005:149). The European Union is also increasingly emphasising training for the informal sector (self-employment) (Donor Policies, 2001:28). In Sweden for example job creation in both public and private enterprises does not match the number of graduates from the school system. For these graduates an alternative would be self-employment (Donor Policies, 2001:14). This notion is coupled by a growing shift away from a focus on the employment of graduates to the notion of employability (McGrath, 2005:3).

Ways of preparing these graduates for self-employment is by including a certain range of skills in their preparation at college. Therefore it is important that TVET policy becomes explicit when it comes to self-employment. Policy should afford learners opportunities for self-employment. Programmes should have some elements of entrepreneurship that can prepare these learners for self-employment. As an example someone who studies to be a Motor Mechanic must be taught all the competencies and the theory he/she need to qualify as a Motor Mechanic. A further component of how to start a business, how to manage a business, etc should be incorporated into his/her training.

### **3.5 A VISION FOR VET**

The vision for VET will have to be located within the international perspective because it is an international phenomenon. This vision for VET can be clearly articulated through the World Bank as an organization that has led the development of VET for a long time. In both its policy papers of 1970 and 1991 the World Bank advocates diversified skills development for economic development (World Bank, 2002:11). McGrath (2005:140) indicates that VET systems internationally base their vision on two main elements. The first element is the problem of youth unemployment and the concept of self-employment within the informal economic sector which has been seen as a

solution to this problem (Tilak, 2002:3; cf. Atchoarena & Delluc, 2001:35; Fluitman & Haan, 2001:24).

The second element pertains to “skills development geared to current and projected economic opportunities and challenges” (McGrath, 2005:140). This element is tied to the issue of a globalized knowledge economy that requires the integration of education and training (Anderson 2003:1). McGrath (2005:140) cites the election campaign speech of the United States of America President Bush in which he mentioned that the re-skilling of people should be seen as an investment for the new knowledge economy. Therefore it is important that VET systems address the elements of unemployment, skilling and re-skilling of people. High levels of unskilled people result in high levels of unemployment and this makes people to be inactive in the development of the economy. Thus national VET policies should address unemployment and skills development as their vision.

In addition to McGrath’s two elements on the vision for VET various other authors have suggested other elements that are key to the vision of VET globally. These elements are outlined in the following paragraphs:

### **3.5.1 Poverty**

Poverty is an important key element that must be addressed through VET. According to UNESCO and ILO (2002:3) education and training is a tool through which people can escape poverty. When people are provided with skills and knowledge they are able to raise their output and generate income for themselves. McGrath (2005:4) indicates that lack of skill at an individual level is widely seen as a major cause of poverty.

McGrath (2005:4) argues that individuals without skills to sell on the market, or to make a viable living in subsistence or self-employment activities, are far more likely to be in poverty. Rwambulla (2003:179) argues that VET can assist in poverty alleviation and sustainable development. In short developing skills at an individual level will assist individuals find employment for them or create their own employment, hence push back the frontiers of poverty.

### **3.5.2 Youth Unemployment**

VET is linked to the growing problem of youth unemployment. According to McGrath (2005:4 & 5) the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have expected that VET systems could solve mounting youth unemployment. The Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (2005:10) indicates that VET is used by developing countries to reduce high rates of unemployment. According to ACFID (2005:11) appropriately targeted VET could help reduce burgeoning/escalating youth unemployment (ACFID, 2005:11). Rwambulla (2003:179) argues strongly on self-employment. According to him (i.e. Rwambulla) the only sure way for employment of the youth is through self-employment. Opportunities should be created for self-employment of young people. This implies that VET could be used to fight unemployment especially among young people.

### **3.5.3 Accessibility**

Public VET systems are widely seen as having a duty to provide access to all citizens especially girls (International Institute for Educational Planning for the World Bank, 2001:40; cf. McGrath, 2005:48). For example racial barriers in Namibia and South Africa, spatial inequalities in access in Mozambique, gender biases in access to VET and gender stereotyping in enrolment in particular courses need to be dealt with by policy (International Institute for Educational Planning for the World Bank, 2001:40; cf. McGrath, 2005:148) are some of the barriers that inhibit the expansion of VET. Access by all is important and VET should facilitate this.



### 3.5.4 Flexibility

Flexible learning is another concept that is fast gaining momentum in VET. Blanco (2002:2) indicates that flexible learning forms an integral part of vocational education and training because "... it allows for the adoption of a range of learning strategies in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests and needs, and variations in learning opportunities (including on-line)". The British Council (1998:1) indicates that flexibility in VET is critical as this allows constant revision in order to develop policies and programmes that should meet the needs of various stakeholders. Further Blanco (2002:3; cf. McGrath, 2005:148) indicates that flexible learning enables clients to access the training they want 'where, when and how' they want it. Blanco's arguments present two new policy concepts in VET i.e. flexible learning and accessibility. While it is important to emphasize the needs of the learners in VET, the needs of the country are important. How well the economy of the country is doing should be a cause for concern for the nation therefore the education system especially VET should also be used as a vehicle to address issues of national interest.

It is increasingly evident that flexible learning is not a separate entity but an integral part of the VET mainstream (Blanco, 2002:7). This point is evident in a study report by Mr Rolf Nordanskog in Australia (former manager of education and training at Volvo, appointed by the government) that proposed that vocational education and training should be based on the principle of flexibility (Lindell, 2004:264). The report focused on the lack of tertiary vocational education emphasizing workplace-based learning, which resulted in a short supply of specialists in several sectors of the Sweden labour market (Lindell, 2004:264). In this regard VET should be based on flexible learning.

### **3.5.5 HIV/AIDS**

Most recently, VET systems have been called upon to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Southern Africa. According to McGrath (2005:5) HIV/AIDS was found by international agencies to be more prevalent amongst skilled workers. Public providers are viewed as important social institutions and are therefore expected to the responsibility to seek to address the issues of HIV/AIDS education and prevention (International Institute for Educational Planning, 2001:40; cf. McGrath, 2005:5).

Therefore VET policy should articulate statements that workers need to be educated on HIV/AIDS matters.

### **3.6 ARTICULATION BETWEEN VET AND THE BROADER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Keating, et al. (2002:14) indicate that there should be a direct relationship between education and training but they cite as an example the opposite of this relationship in the American system. They (Keating, et al. (2002:14) point out that the enormous strength of the US economy is in stark contrast of the overall performance of its education system, which has very high levels of educational failures and dropouts associated with economic exclusions. Furthermore Keating, et al. (2002:14) point out that the capacity of the US industry to generate the necessary skills for a highly advanced economy has been impressive. In South Africa the purpose of the FETC is to help participants 'acquire practical skills, applied competence and an understanding necessary for employment in a specific occupation (RSA, 2005:6). This qualification is intended to empower participants not only to acquire certain skills but also understand principles underpinning those skills.

The emergence of National Qualification Frameworks especially in Africa seem to be the answer to many questions asked around issues such as appropriate education levels at which VET should be offered, the appropriate configuration of entry and exit points between VET and general education,

and many other issues (McGrath, 2005:143). McGrath (2005:143) argues that the development of NQF's should be in line with international standards in order for a country to compete globally in terms of education, skills and economy. In South Africa for instance the NQF was developed for the purpose of holding together education and training (integration of education and training) in other words building the 'bridge' between education and training (Akoojee, et al. 2005:112).

In 2001 the DoE and DoL initiated a study to review the performance of the South African NQF. The report of this review was released in April 2002 and it clearly indicated that the NQF was not serving the intended purpose satisfactorily (Akoojee, et al. 2005:112) in terms of quality and efficiency. This implies that the integration of education and training is not always easy to achieve as South Africa is still battling to resolve the NQF issue and South Africa is viewed by the international community as a leader in the NQF is the region (IVETA, 2005:4).

### **3.7 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

Whilst there are a number of international organizations and agencies on VET, Africa as well has organizations and agencies such as the Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA) that deal with VET policy issues. Rwambulla (2003:178) indicates that CAPA was established in 1978 by the Commonwealth to advance and promote VET in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Rwambulla (2003:178) after independence from colonialism most of the African governments realised that VET can play a significant role in producing proficient workers for industrial development and to make education more responsive to both social and economic requirements of individual nations. Furthermore these African governments saw VET as a source of national development and an engine for economic growth (Rwambulla, 2003:178). Quoting Dr Omoloyole one of the Education Ministers in Commonwealth Africa, Rwambulla (2003:178) indicates that

most developed nations of the world are those that use their human resources most efficiently and give most financial support to vocationally oriented education. It follows that governments can use VET policy to promote education and training that produces proficient workers for economic development.

According to the Worldwide Voice of Vocational Training (2006:11) VET has served to focus the attention of African governments on the urgent need to improve the productivity of labour as well as the economic competitiveness of the region. Therefore like other international countries such as Australia one of the leading in VET, countries of the African region have always put at the forefront the importance of VET in the development of the workforce and economic competitiveness. However these African countries have been faced with challenges to establish and develop responsive training and qualification systems (Worldwide Voice of Vocational Training, 2006:12).

Lindell (2004:257) argues that effective provision of VET through skills development is commonly regarded as highly significant in the context of globalisation and the need to maintain international competitiveness in order to maintain and enhance the skills and competencies of the country's workforce, enabling national competitiveness and economic growth. Equally an effective provision of VET is perceived necessary, supporting many different people in their everyday struggle to find an appropriate work/life balance by providing both education packages for those already working, to basic skill courses for less advantageous groups, preventing social exclusion. In short VET creates an enabling environment for African countries to address skills development and the social upliftment of a country's citizens. Effective VET programmes in Africa should be able to address both skills development and skills enhancement

McGrath (2005:1) says that two main suggestions for VET reform in Africa in the 1990s came from two of the multilateral agencies. These agencies are the ILO and the World Bank. These two organizations or agencies approached VET reform policy from two different angles. On one hand the ILO focused on training for the informal economy while the World Bank focused on the role of private providers in VET.

Akoojee (2005:9) cites Botswana as one of the economic success stories in Africa and suggests that this could be attributed to a unified VET in that country. Gewer (2005:55) supports this view and further points to the fact that the Botswana's Vision 2016 underpins the national policy context in Botswana. This vision sets out to improve the relevance, quality and accessibility of education and highlights the need to 'empower citizens to become the best producers of goods and services' and to 'produce entrepreneurs who will create employment through establishment of new enterprises' (Presidential Task Group 1997:5).

Another African country that is regarded as a success story is Mauritius. The World Bank classifies Mauritius as an 'upper-middle income country' in Africa. Gewer (2005:47) indicates that from 1990 to 2001 its average GDP growth was 5.6 per cent and GDP per capita growth of 4.4 per cent annually. The Ministry of Training, Skills Development, Productivity and External Communications in Mauritius oversee the development and implementation of the VET system. This Ministry was introduced in 2000 and according to Gewer (2005:47) this reflects the emphasis of the government on the development of human capital to drive productivity and economic growth.

### **3.7.1 National governments and FET policy development**

Johanson and Adams (2004:na) indicate that the development of workers in Africa has never been so critical. Johanson and Adams (2004:na) emphasize the point that Vocational Education and Training policies should embrace skills development through education and training in order to grow the economic as this will help create jobs and reduce unemployment especially among the youth. It is Johanson and Adams's (2004:na) contention that if the workforce is developed on skills the impact of social problems such as unemployment and the impact of HIV/AIDS can be minimized.

McGrath (2005:4) takes the debate on the development of VET policies a little further and says the VET is seen as a crucial tool for economic development. According to McGrath (2005:4) policy-makers internationally have seen the development of better technical skills as a key element of improving economic performance for countries. McGrath (2005:142) points out that these economies are affected by unemployment and the lack of skill exacerbate unemployment. The difference between Mauritius and South Africa can be attributed to their difference in unemployment rates. According to McGrath (2005:142) unemployment in Mauritius stands at 10 percent whilst in South Africa these rates are as high as 30 percent.

VET should prepare people; especially young people should be prepared for employment in both the formal and informal sectors argues McGrath (2005:142). This implies that the economy can grow if people, especially young people can be able to participate meaningfully as employees in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

The impact of HIV/AIDS on the human resources is taxing on the economy and this has resulted in the decline of “Human Development Indices in several countries” (McGrath, 2005:142). It is McGrath (2005:143) assertion that national VET systems should reflect such challenges and opportunities that are presented by these types of economic responses.

### **3.8 FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The whole process of transforming the FET system (formerly known as technical education) was informed by the work of the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE) appointed by the Minister of Education in 1996 (Akoojee, et al., 2005:107). The report of the NCFE was based on research it conducted based on its mandate and this report informed the Green Paper on Further Education (RSA, 1998), the Education White Paper 4 (RSA, 1998a) and eventually the Further Education and Training Act (1998b) (Akoojee, et al., 2005:107).

In August 2001 a process of addressing the transformation of technical colleges started with the release of ‘A new institutional landscape for public further education and training colleges’ (Akoojee, et al., 2005:107). The result of this process was the merger of the previous 152 technical colleges into 50 multi-site ‘mega’ Further Education and Training colleges. According to Akoojee, et al. (2005:107) this process was aimed at better utilization of resources. VET systems globally are designed to meet the ‘shifting’ needs of learners, employers and the national economy (McGrath, 2005:140). The General Secretary of the SACP Blade Nzimande acknowledges that the South African FET policy makes provision for skills development to meet the needs of learners and the country although these policies are not being religiously implemented at colleges (Rademeyer, 2005:11). Nzimande argues that FET colleges in South African should emphasize skills that are necessary to equip young people to find a place in society (Rademeyer, 2005:11). What this implies is that the relationship between VET institutions and the industry can improve the quality of **programmes offered by** colleges to future employees.

Employers will be able to inform the design of programs as they are in a better position to know what industry want at that particular time. Glen Fischer (2005) indicates that even with the management of colleges, industry has better experience than people from the education system. He further indicates that South Africa has missed the opportunity of strengthening colleges by failing to appoint as principals of FET colleges people from industry.

In South Africa skill development has been placed under the Department of Labor through the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) (RSA, 1998c:7). There is a perceptions or opinions that skills provisioning through the (SETAs) in South Africa has fallen short of its intended purpose. The Minister of Trade and Industry in South Africa is echoing these sentiments also in support of Mr Blade Nzimande. According the Minister, Mandisi Mpahlwa what South Africa needs is to revive the apprentice system of training in order to be able to provide skills necessary to fight the high levels of unemployment (Sunday Times, 2006: 1).

The Minister indicates that the apprenticeship system was scrapped in favour of learnerships that are less effective (Sunday Times, 2006:1). Mr Mpahlwa argues that apprenticeships should be revived in order for the country to curb skills shortages.

McGrath (2005:142) argues that the core business of VET internationally is to prepare young people for the world of work. Various initiatives are implemented to meet this goal but McGrath (2005:142) argues that the biggest challenge for VET policies is to prepare someone for the world of work (skills development (McGrath, 2005:142). In South Africa for instance the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) was designed to lead learners to ‘acquire practical skills, applied competence and an understanding necessary for employment in a specific occupation [integration of education and training as well) (RSA, 2005:6).



Furthermore the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA, 2005:1) emphasizes this point and says that the FETC is primarily meant to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and values that are necessary for them to participate meaningfully in and offer benefits for the society as well as providing the basis for further learning in higher education, and enable learners to be productive in the workplace.

According to figures released by the Director General of Local and Provincial Government, Ms Lindiwe Msengana-Ndlela (Rademeyer, 2005:11) in South Africa there is a shortage of skills such as engineers, surveyors, economists, accountants, to name but a few. According to Rademeyer (2005:11) the Director General says that FET policies should address the dwindling number of artisans in South Africa. Msengana-Ndlela further pointed out that maybe this situation has been created by the notion that government is responsible for skills development of its people. Msengana-Ndlela argues that skills development couldn't be the responsibility of the government alone, other role-players need to come to the party (Rademeyer, 2005:11). Employers for example can bring quality into the training and development of skills if they choose to participate in skills development. The implication of the above statements is that South African FET policies are falling short of realizing the vision of skills training and development.

One of the major goals of the Ministry of Education after 1994 was to establish a new FET system that will be responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa (RSA, 1998b:8). This is evident in the Department of Education publications and slogans. For instance the title of the Education White Paper 4 reads as: 'A programme for the transformation of FET'. This caption communicates the intentions of the department and implies that one of the purposes of Further Education and Training is to transform the sector into a responsive, effective and efficient sector that meets the needs of the country.

According to the Education White Paper 4 (RSA, 1998b:8) the FET system that was envisaged by the Ministry of Education was to be efficient, effective and accountable to its clients and stakeholders in the sector. It is further stated in the Education White Paper 4 (RSA, 1998b:8) that the Ministry of Education wanted to create an FET system that should contribute to a better life for all in South Africa.

Besides the Ministry of Education seeking to review and change the further education and training system, there were other key players who also wanted to see this sector changing. The business sector in South Africa together with other partners established a fund that was to be known as the College Collaborative Fund (CCF) and the purpose of this fund was to undertake research in FET in order to inform policy makers on issues that needed their attention. Consequently the National Business Trust was tasked to undertake studies commissioned by the CCF.

Indeed the NBI undertook several studies but the one significant for this study was commissioned in Gauteng. The National Business Initiative reports (1998) sought to inform policy decisions around FET in South Africa. This was the main purpose of the research that was conducted by the NBI in 1998.

Several recommendations that had far reaching implications for the FET system were made to various provinces. Most of the recommendations did influence policy imperatives as reflected in the Education White Paper 4.

### **3.8.1 Further Education and Training policy process in South Africa**

The FET policy process in South Africa started to take shape in solemnly in May 1996 when the Minister of Education announced through a Government Notice that a National Task Team on Further Education had been established (National Committee on Further Education, 1997:(i)).

The brief of the NCFE was to investigate and make recommendations to the Minister of Education on FET matters. The National Task Team on Further Education (NTTFE) was later in November 1996 changed to the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE, 1997:i) and submitted its final report to the Minister of Education in August 1997.

The process of the NCFE culminated in the publication of the report that informed the Green Paper on Further Education and Training in April 1998 (RSA, 1998a: 1). The Minister of Education indicated when he released the Green Paper that this process was the first step in the formulation of policy for FET. Therefore it can be concluded that the Green Paper on Further Education and Training that was released in April 1998 set the wheels towards the development of a new policy framework for the FET sector in the new democratic South Africa.

It was within the boundaries of the above listed terms of reference that the initiation of policy for FET was set in motion. After “wide-ranging and extensive processes of investigation and consultation” the NCFE made recommendations that were later used to inform the FET policy (RSA, 1998b: 8; cf. RSA, 1998a: 1).

The Green Paper on Further Education and Training and the Education White Paper 4 released on 15 April 1998 and 25 September 1998 respectively were informed by the investigations and recommendations made by the NCFE (RSA, 1998a: 1; cf. RSA, 1998b:8).

Another important structure that played a key role in the initiation of the FET policy is the National Business Initiative (NBI). This structure represented the business sector. The NBI managed a fund that was established in 1999 and known as the Colleges Collaboration Fund (CCF) and this was a product of the public-private partnership between the national Department of Education and the Business Trust (NBI, 2004:2).

Through the CCF the NBI was able to conduct in-depth research into various issues on FET and this assisted the national Department of Education to make certain decisions that spelled out policy directions (NBI, 2004:3).

It follows then that the period between 1996 and 1998 was the three important years in the development of policy for the FET sector in South Africa. The establishment of the National Committee on Further Education, the release of the NCFE report in 1997 and the release of the Green and White Papers on Further Education in 1998 and the NBI report of the same are significant instances in the recent history of FET in South Africa. This process represented a critical period in the FET policy development in South Africa. The consultation and collaboration of the education and business sectors means that FET policy in South Africa takes the shape of the international trends. Consultation, communication and collaboration are means by which shared ownership can become a reality (Blanco, 2002:7). The collaboration of the two sectors also meant the strengthening of policy development and practices that are relevant to the needs of the country.

South Africa is following international trends with regards to vocational education and training policy debates. According to Akoojee, et al. (2005:107) international VET debates centres on transformation of colleges into autonomous, efficient and market-led (demand-led) institutions serving the needs of industry and emphasises learning, personal development and citizenship (of education and training) (quoting McGrath, 2004c). Akoojee et al. (2005:107) indicate that although policy talks about autonomy of public colleges, officials at both Provincial and National levels still insist on colleges accounting to them. If this is not addressed, the FET sector will only serve the aims of officials and leaving out employers who has knowledge of the needs of industry.

VET policy in South Africa aims at building responsive public colleges that should address education and skills development for both the industry and individuals (Akoojee, et al., 2005:110). According to Akoojee, et al. (2005:110) the FET policy sees FET colleges as the mechanism to deliver on these goals. It is clear from these policy goals that the government is serious about moving forward the FET sector in its delivery of quality and relevant education and training (Akoojee, et al., 2005:110).

Both the DoE and DoL in South Africa are in support of skills development for the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) that is in essence the informal sector. Furthermore Akoojee, et al., (2005:114) indicates that the Human Resource Development Strategy of the government of South Africa chose skills development for the SMMEs as one of its objectives and one of its seven priorities (Akoojee, et al. 2005:114). Through the transformation of FET colleges both the DoE and DoL envisaged ensuring that skills for SMMEs are developed. Both these departments argue that it is time that FET colleges becomes responsive to these needs and that these colleges are in a much better position to deliver on these skills (Akoojee, et al. 2005:114).

Therefore the informal sector presents an opportunity for VET colleges to develop skills programmes that will cater for the informal sector.

### **3.8.2 Building the new VET system**

The Apprenticeship Act of 1922 made provision for colleges to provide theoretical training for those already engaged in practical, on-the-job learning in apprenticeships and this indicates that colleges were tightly aligned with the needs of industry (Akoojee, et al., 2005:106). Before 1994 in South Africa there was a formal provision for whites alongside the importation of skilled labour from Europe. It is also important to note that according to Akoojee, et al. (2005:106) before the Advanced Technical Education Act of 1967, blacks were excluded from apprenticeships. Akoojee, et al. (2005:106) say this was an attempt to manage a growing problem of white poverty and unemployment.

The de-linking of colleges from apprenticeships just after 1994 resulted in the decline of articulation with employers and the number of apprenticeships began to fall in the second half of the 1980s (Akoojee, et al., 2005:106 & 107;cf. Sunday Times, 2006:1).

Since the 2004 national elections in South Africa and the announcement of the recapitalisation process colleges were promised more attention (Akoojee, et al., 2005:110). Internationally in recent years there has been an increasing emphasis on the development of institutions to strengthen market linkages and to improve the quality, efficiency and relevance of training provided (Donor Policies, 2001:28). The introduction of SETAs indicates this approach. SETAs emphasize the integration of learning with competency-based training in the workplace (RSA, 1998c: 1). This approach is in line with international standards as indicated by Donor Policies (2001:28).

### **3.8.3 Skills Development Policies in South Africa**

Since 1994 South Africa has achieved much in a way of transformation (Akoojee, et al., 2005:99). The government has identified skills development as crucial for accelerating social and economic challenges (Akoojee, et al., 2005:99).

The International Investment Council (IIC), a body that advises the President of South Africa on economic matters, recently emphasized this point at a briefing meeting. The IIC recommended to the President that South Africa need to ‘develop the ability to attract critical skills’ in order to boost the economy (Business Report, May 15, 2006:1). At this meeting the Minister of Trade and Industry also called for the private sector to start playing an increasing role in skills development. Minister Mpahlwa indicated that skills shortages in South Africa are hampering attempts to grow the economy of the country (Business Report, May 15, 2006:1). As noted from the IIC and Minister Mpahlwa assertions, it becomes increasingly important that FET policies are used as a vehicle to address skills shortages in South Africa.

### **3.8.4 The national development vision to 2014**

In 2004 during the opening of parliament President Thabo Mbeki outlined a vision of four key areas of delivery up to 2014:

1. Halving unemployment
2. halving poverty
3. improving employment equity; and
4. accelerating broad-based black economic empowerment

The Department of Labour had already started with vision 2014 earlier. A Green Paper on skills development in South Africa was released as early as 1997 by the Department of Labour which subsequently informed the Skills Development Strategy of government (Akoojee, et al., 2005:111) which culminated in the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS). The spirit of this Green Paper was echoed by the Minister of Education Ms Naledi Pandor at the National Consultative Conference in Durban in May 2005 (4) (Beeld, 2005/05/31). The Minister indicated that “there needs to be a more profound examination of policy and the impact it has regarding the economy and the current direction it is taking’.

She emphasized that perhaps South Africa “needs to take a look at a more flexible system and approach to skills development”. By such an account the Minister is emphasizing the importance of skills development in order to address poverty, youth unemployment and many other issues that are pertinent to the South African economy and social order.

### **3.8.5 Sector Education and Training Authorities and Learnerships**

The Green Paper of the DoL called for new Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and the introduction of Learnerships. Learnerships were a model to succeed and extend the apprenticeships (Akoojee, et al. 2005:111). The whole process culminated in a Skills Development Act (RSA, 1998c).

South Africa has adopted the learnership approach as an alternative to the apprentice system. According to the Sunday Times (April 30, 2006) the Minister of Trade and Industry in South Africa indicates that the apprenticeship system in South Africa was scrapped in favour of the learnership system. With the learnership contract the employer has an obligation to commit to a period of employment for the entire duration of the learnership for the learner (Akoojee, et al. 2005:112), but not to subsequent employment.

In many ways the learnership contract implies that the employer will create opportunities for the participating learner to acquire certain skills during the contract period. Akoojee, et al., (2005:111 –112) indicates that whilst there are challenges with the apprenticeship system as indicated by Marks, et al., 2004 the learnership system as well has its challenges. They (i.e Akoojee, et al., 2005) indicate that in South Africa learnerships should be accessible to the previously disadvantaged and should be responsive to the identified needs and they should as well be able to equip participants with skills for self-employment.

The Skills Development Act in South Africa also makes provision for short skills programmes as a strategy for skills development. Short skills programmes do not constitute a full qualification but comprise of credits that if the learner accumulates a required number of credits, eventually lead to a full qualification (Akoojee, et al. 2005:112). This is in line with international trends where VET programmes should be flexible and should allow upward mobility for the learners.



The role of the SETAs included the evaluation of workplace skills plans and the development of sector skills plans, developing and registering Learnerships, quality-assuring training provision, and managing and administering the grants received through the training levy (Akoojee, et al. 2005:111). The Green Paper of the DoL introduced a levy-grant as a means to encourage employers to be involved and invest in the training of their workers (Akoojee, et al. 2005:111).

Learnerships are the core programme or curriculum for training in skills development located within SETAs (RSA, 1998c:7). Learnerships operates along the same lines as an apprenticeship system and it involves a contractual agreement for a fixed period between the employer, the learner and in a learnership system the provider is involved as well (Akoojee, et al. 2005:111).

According to Akoojee, Gewer and McGrath (2005:112) learnerships should not only serve the employed, but also the pre-employed and the unemployed people. According to Akoojee (2005:111) learnerships are located at the core of the Department of Labor (DoL) macro-strategy for skills development. In other words the learnership system is an integrated approach through which the government of South Africa wants to address the shortage of skills in the country.

The preceding paragraphs were outlining the development of VET policies both from an international and South African perspective. The essence of the paragraphs is that VET is meant to play a critical role in the life of any nation. From well-developed nations to under-developed VET will always be important. In America for instance President Bush has identified VET as a vehicle through which the knowledge economy could be developed. The following paragraphs now try to indicate the new direction that VET should take in this millennium.

### 3.9 THE FUTURE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

#### 3.9.1 Challenges for VET

The needs of governments, employers, workers and learners are dynamic. They will always be shifting and therefore this will require that the type of VET that is on offer should be dynamic. The following are the critical challenges for VET in this millennium (Atchorena, 2001:2; cf.: Blanco, 2002:6; Rambulla, 2003:179):

- ◆ economic: meeting the needs of globalization and preventing marginalization, particularly the developing countries;
- ◆ educational: increase the capacity but also the diversity of education and training pathways. In other words policy should encourage access to TVET of disadvantaged groups like women and also create more opportunities for individuals who follow the TVET stream. Policy should for example allow people to exit the system at any particular level with credits or should create a pathway to join the industry or pursue further studies at Higher Education Institutions;
- ◆ political: youth unemployment and also provide responses to the growing number of out-of-school, out-of-work youth;
- ◆ knowledge: increased recognition of the role of knowledge in economic development;
- ◆ sufficient funding;
- ◆ institutional/college management autonomy and initiatives;
- ◆ colleges encouraged to set annual performance goals and to publicly announce their achievements. In South Africa the Minister of Education started announcing the results of College results in 2005;
- ◆ VET programmes should be of an internationally accepted quality and relevant to the development of the state;
- ◆ all concerned should recognize TVET as an important development investment;
- ◆ In the context of the emerging market economy, the strengthening of the demand side is arguably the major challenge (Keating, et al., 2002:13).

In addition to the above challenges for VET the ILO (unknown) suggests that there is a need for governments to continually notice changes and trends in the provision of VET. Old methods and outdated policies that used to work might not hold true now or in the future. Therefore new challenges and trends that are becoming common in this sector need to be acknowledged and practiced. In this regard the ILO (unknown) provides an overview of the differences between the old and new paradigms.

**Table 3.1 The New Paradigm: Emerging Challenges for VET**

Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
Supply-driven approach	Search for demand-driven approaches
Training for employment	Learning for employability
In-service training	Concept of continuing life-long learning
Training and focus of the teacher/trainer	Self-learning and focus on the learner
One-time learning	Continuing recurrent life-long learning
Education and training separated	Education and training integrated (a sound general education and broad based initial training are essential bases for life-long continuing learning)
Specialization in one skill	A search for multiskilling
Skill recognition based on training period and examination	Recognition based on competency and prior learning
Rigid and fixed entry and exit	Flexible and multiple entry and exit
Focus on formal sector	Recognition of the need to focus on both formal and informal sectors
Training for wage employment	Training for wage and self-employment
Centralized system	Decentralized system requiring both strong national and decentralized institutions
Policy and delivery dominated by state	Policy and delivery separate, market-driven
Governance dominated by the state	Participatory governance, recognition of multiple actors, social dialogue

In short the above challenges call for future VET policy to address flexibility of provision, diversity (different programmes), and employment (as well as self-employment).

### **3.9.2 Emerging Policy and research agenda for TVET**

The following aspects are that are emerging as agenda for research in VET policy Atchoarena (2001:2):

- ◆ transition from school to work including the need to make TVET institutions more responsive to the needs of the labour market. This motivates the global interest for apprenticeship schemes and work experiences programmes;
- ◆ responsiveness, forming partnerships are key to TVET policy
- ◆ shifting the policy focus from inputs to outputs (through financing and certification mechanisms);
- ◆ involving social partners primarily employers in the governance of the TVET system;
- ◆ granting more autonomy to TVET institutions; and
- ◆ promoting private provision and competency-based training (like SETAs in South Africa) (Atchoarena, 2001:3).

The above-mentioned aspects indicate the direction of VET policies internationally. These should be addressed by policy if the purpose and intentions of VET of growing the economy, skilling workers and meeting diverse needs of society are to be realised (Keating, et al., 2002; cf. McGrath, 2005).

### **3.9.3 VET as a demand-lead approach**

Active participation of employers in the planning and the delivery of TVET is sought to secure that training programmes correspond to the demand of the private sector (Donor Policies, 2001:8). For instance Danida considers the following elements important for an effective functioning TVET sector:

- training is organized according to needs (in other words – demand-led)
- stakeholders, including employees and employers' organization, are involved in the management of the sector,

- training can be shown to cater for both the formal and informal sectors (Donor Policies, 2001:5-6). This approach was tested in Tanzania by the government and results are encouraging (Donor Policies, 2001:6).

The expansion of demand and the linking of supply to demand are amongst major challenges for VET globally (Keating, et al., 2002:14). Keating, et al. (2002:14) say that interventions that have developed in Mexico for instance have been designed to increase supply with little attention being given to the demand side. According to Lindell (2004:257) Sweden VET has already undergone a transformation process moving towards a more demand-led mode of function. However Germany presents a scenario that is in contrast to that of Mexico and Sweden. In the 1980s the GTZ supported cooperation that was sought by the German government with future employers during training. The purpose of this cooperation was to ensure that training was oriented more explicitly towards the demand of the industry (Donor Policies, 2001:7). It follows that VET policies that creates opportunities for the linkage between training providers and employers are critical as this ensures the relevance of the training programmes.

#### **3.9.4 Key issues for the future in VET**

Key issues and discernible trends in VET include:

1. relating VET to the other sectors of education;
2. its relationship to the state and other elements of civil society;
3. the demand-side issues;
4. its mutability/uncertainty in the face of the new challenges of this century.

(Keating, et al., 2002:14)

### 3.10 CHAPTER REVIEW

Critical aspects that should not be ignored by those who intend to see the development of their countries globally juxtapose the development of Vocational Education and Training policy. The development of policies for VET should take into account the important role that VET can play in supporting social and economic development goals. Through VET countries are able to develop skills for labour productivity and also to create self-employment. When people are skilled they can participate meaningfully in either the formal or informal economy and the enabling environment can be created through clear VET policies.

VET is recognized by the global village as an important phenomenon towards the development of communities. The Commonwealth, UNESCO, ILO, CAPA, GTZ are some of the international organizations and agencies that recognize the importance of developing enabling VET policies for the economic development of individual and collective countries and regions. For instance the ILO advocates the notion of developing VET policies that will raise the profile of training in and for the informal sector (McGrath, 2005:2). In Africa VET reforms are ‘young’ and evolving and this has placed the informal sector on the back foot of development.

This chapter has outlined what should policies that enhance VET involve. It was indicated that there are many challenges faced by countries when developing VET policies. Aspects such as youth unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS cannot be ignored when developing policies. These aspects affect the performance of the economy of any country. Another important component of VET is skills development and the role that employers or industry should play during policy development was emphasised. It was indicated that VET policies should respond to the needs of employers while also not neglecting the needs for participants who might want to create their own employment.

Another issue raised in this chapter is articulation between VET and the broader education and training system. This chapter has indicated that this century will rely more on the 'knowledge economy' than anything else. The knowledge society is growing and therefore VET will have to respond positively to this economy in order to enable nations to be competitive in terms of both the knowledge and economy. This can be achieved if skills development is integrated with education and training. Skills development and education and training cannot continue to be treated as separate entities by national systems of education. The confusion in the apprenticeship system in some countries could be addressed by integrating VET with education and training.

Finally one issue that VET policy development should pay attention are the issues of accessibility, equity, lifelong learning and flexibility. Authors like Blanco (2002), Atchoarena (2001) and Donor Policies (2001) indicate that to combat the lack of skills development, poverty, and unemployment these values and principles will have to be incorporated in VET policies. Lifelong learning for instance is a global policy priority that should be incorporated in all education systems as indicated by Security 4 Women (na: 1). According to Security for Women (na: 1) lifelong learning is particularly important as the nature of work and technological advances keeping on shifting. Therefore it is important that policy development needs to take into account these important global policy imperatives.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

It was indicated in Chapter One of this study that a qualitative approach of research will be assumed. This study deviates from a quantitative approach to research where researchers normally focus on measuring the degree to which certain policies have been implemented or verify certain claims in research. This decision to a different approach is informed by the fact that quantitative studies often measure technical compliance of policy implementation without grappling with the issues of why implementation is the way it is. Therefore a qualitative approach is more appropriate in order to be able to understand why policy implementation is the way it is. Smit (2001) says that qualitative research requires the researchers to understand and critically reflect on ideological dimensions. The aim of the study is to understand these very issues of why policy implementation is the way it is and further describe the relationship between policy origination and management practices in FET colleges in Gauteng. In this regard the study is qualitative and located within the interpretive paradigm. According to Smit (2001) to understand policy implementation issues the study will need to understand them through the meanings that policy developers and implementers assign to them. Therefore the interpretive approach will best suite this study.

An understanding of these policy issues on policy implementation makes a qualitative research design apposite. In this chapter I will elaborate on my research design and its epistemological underpinning and discuss the data gathering techniques used to explore the reasons why policy is implemented in colleges the way it is done.



## 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research designs are used by researchers to answer the research question or questions and according to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:162) a research design refers to a plan and structure of the investigation that is used to obtain evidence in order to answer the research question or questions. Following on McMillan and Schumacher, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:29) indicates that a research design guides “the arrangement of condition for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure”. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:29) tries to further simplify this and says that a research design is simply a bridge between research questions and the implementation of the research. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000:89) also define a research design as a complete and accurate configuration of a piece of research. According to Saunders, et al. (2000:89; cf. Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:30) a research design describes the kind of evidence to be collected by the research and also state where this evidence will be collected from and how such evidence will be interpreted in order to present good answers to the pre-determined research question. In addition Saunders, et al. (2000:92) indicates that it is important therefore that the researcher outlines a clear strategy on how he/she will go about answering the research question or questions.

The research participants, methods of collecting and analyzing data form the nucleus of the research design. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:33) argue that a good research design or strategy indicates what happens to the participants during research and what methods of collecting data will used. Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999:29) argues that a clear design strategy and nature of the plan of the strategy is the one that usually distinguishes research from other forms of investigations or studies. Consequently a research design should be able to fulfill the aims of the research.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997:39) argue that qualitative research designs are less structured than quantitative designs. They (McMillan & Schumacher) say that in qualitative designs it is difficult for specific research procedures to be determined in advance but are identified during evolution of the research. Babbie and Mouton (2004:53) state that in this regard qualitative research designs take the insider perspective on social action as its point of departure and build on this. Babbie and Mouton (2004:278) have identified three main types of research designs used in qualitative studies and these are the ethnographic studies, case studies and life histories. In other words qualitative researchers use these research designs to answer their research question in the most relevant and economical way (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:29).

In brief the research design adopted in this study is qualitative and is summarised in Figure 1 as follows:

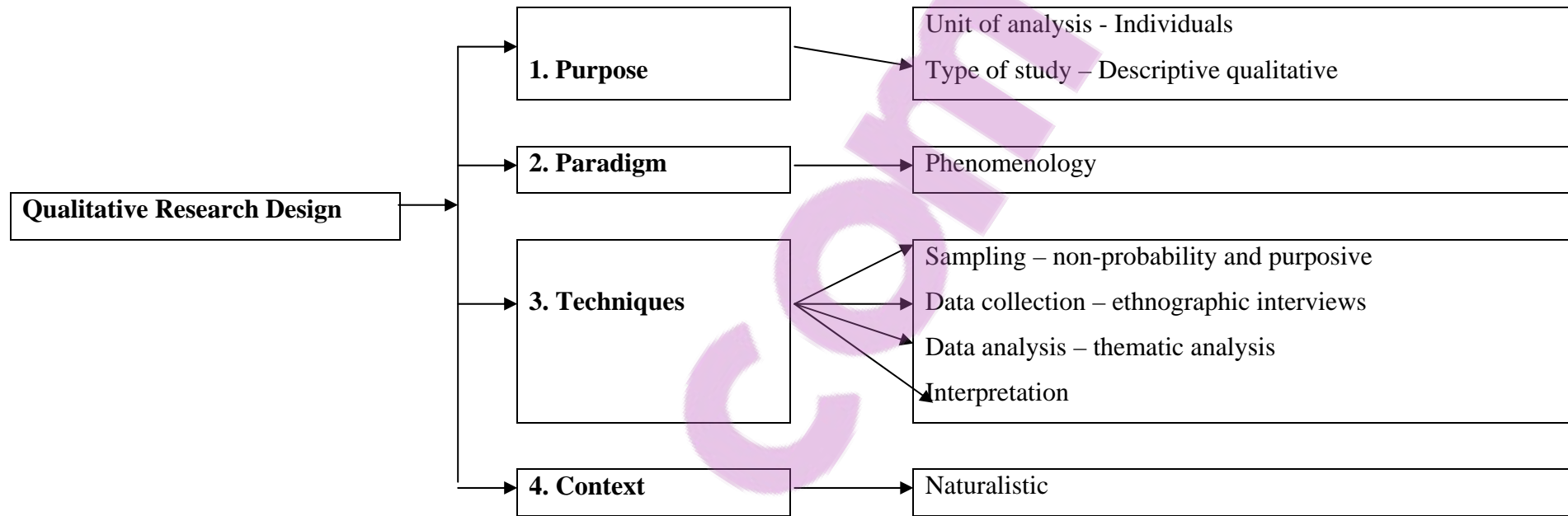


Figure 4.1 Research Design (Adapted from TerreBlanche & Durrheim, 1999)

#### 4.2.1 Qualitative Research

The definition of qualitative research is usually approached from many different angles. Some authors try to define it using data collecting strategies as the basis for their definitions whilst others base theirs solely by contrasting it with quantitative research. Golafshani (2003) is one proponent who defines qualitative research in stark contrast to quantitative research. According to Golafshani (2003:560) qualitative research is “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification”. Quantitative researchers use statistics to interpret and make sense of research data. It follows then that qualitative researchers do not employ numerical measurements to interpret research data in order to arrive at their conclusions

Whilst many authors differ on the definition of qualitative research, in many ways they agree on the purpose of qualitative research. Babbie and Mouton (2004:278) state that qualitative research focuses on studying human action in its natural context and through the perspective of the actors themselves. Babbie and Mouton (2004:270) emphasize the point that the primary purpose of qualitative research is to describe and understand. Smit (2001) agrees with Babbie and Mouton further say that the primary purpose of qualitative research is to firstly try and understand thereafter describe the social phenomenon from the respondents’ perspectives. Babbie and Mouton (2004:271) further argue that to best understand human attitudes, behaviour and culture the research need to be set in the “*natural setting*” instead of artificial settings of experiments and surveys as applied by quantitative researchers. Gall, Gall and Borg (1996:767) essentially agrees with the above sentiments but further indicate that qualitative research is an enquiry that is grounded in the assumption that individuals construct social reality in the form of meanings and interpretations, and that this constructs tend to be in a state of transition and context bound. What this suggests is that qualitative research is fluid, in other words it is in a state of change all the time.

Thorne (2000:1) is of the opinion that qualitative researchers accept that the goal of science is to discover the truths that exist in the world and to use the scientific method as a way to build a more complete understanding of reality. According to Babbie and Mouton (2004: 272) this method of understanding concepts and events from the actors' point of view help qualitative researchers stay as close and true as possible to the meanings of the actors themselves. Thorne (2000:1) says that qualitative researchers are often more concerned about uncovering knowledge about how the actors think and feel about the circumstances in which they find themselves. This implies that qualitative research allows the researcher to understand concepts and events from the actors' point of view.

In short qualitative researchers agree that the purpose of qualitative research is to explore, understand, explain and describe social phenomena from the participants' perspectives as indicated by Ploeg (1999:2; cf. Key, 1997:1).

As indicated in paragraph 4.3 above ethnographic studies is one type of the research designs used in qualitative studies. The following sections will now focus on ethnography as a qualitative research design.

## **4.2.2 Characteristics of Qualitative Research**

### **4.2.2.1 Qualitative method of data collection**

This study is interested in the manner in which policy developers and implementers perceive policy development at national level as well as policy implementation at college level. The researcher was able to visit these policy developers and implementers at their place of work. Prior to the visit the researcher sent e-mails to participants outlining the purpose of the study as well as a set of pre-determined questions. The purpose of the visits was restated on the day of the interview. This was one of the most suitable ways of gathering data which was carried out through in-depth interviews.

#### **4.2.2.2 Human as instrument**

In qualitative research the researcher is considered as a research instrument. In this regard the researcher and the research subjects becomes the focus when using the human as a research instrument.

##### **The researcher**

In qualitative research the researcher is seen as accomplishing the roles of data collector and culler of relevant information (PeNMJ: etd.uj.ac.za, 2006:3). The researcher is further seen as a facilitator during data collection as he/she partakes in actions that promote the flow of information. The researcher will therefore collected research data by means of qualitative interviews and then analyze and interpret the outcomes..

##### **The research participants**

In this study the research participants are FET policy developers as well as principals of FET colleges in Gauteng. These will be participating in the qualitative research process.

#### **4.2.2.3 Data collection in the natural setting**

Maykut and Morehouse (1994:45) define the natural setting as “a place where the researcher is most likely to discover, or uncover, what is known about the incident of interest”. In other words qualitative researchers should conduct their research in places where they are most likely to investigate the subjects in the context of the problem.

In this study the researcher will in the first instance interview policy developers who work in the environment of policy development. Secondly the researcher will visit principals of FET colleges in Gauteng in their colleges as places where FET policy is being implemented. The study includes investigating the perceptions of principals on the policy development and implementation.

#### **4.2.2.4 An exploratory and descriptive focus**

According to PeNMJ: etd.uj.ac.za (2006:3) the enquiry of qualitative researchers focuses their enquiry on finding out about social events. The outcomes of this study will provide an understanding of power relations from the perspectives of policy developers and implementers

#### **4.2.2.5 Early and ongoing inductive data analysis**

An analysis begins as soon as the researcher has accumulated a subset of data that provides an opportunity for important initial leads to be followed in illuminating the phenomenon under study. The qualitative data analysis is regarded as important and according to PeNMJ: etd.uj.ac.za (2006:4) this kind of analysis is regarded as inductive.

#### **4.2.2.6 Purposive sampling**

The researcher has conveniently selected participants in this study as policy developers and implementers because they have specialized knowledge and experience on the processes of policy development and policy implementation. Policy developers are the actual people who worked on the FET policy and therefore possess a special understanding of this process. Principals who in this case are regarded as implementers are at the forefront of the implementation process of the FET policy. They are in the context and they experience issues around implementation at a practical level.

#### 4.2.2.7 Ethical measures

Neuman (2003:116) indicates that ethics in research denotes the type of research procedures that are morally acceptable or put differently ethics simply refers to ‘what is or is not legitimate to do’. Neuman (2003:110) says that ethics begin and end with the researcher himself or herself. His or her conduct before the research, during the research and after conducting the research is of critical importance to the credibility of the study.

Research should not in any way harm the people being studied. Researchers should always guard against causing embarrassment or danger to participants’ home lives, friendships, jobs, etc (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:522).

Researchers who have access to participants’ identifications should be trained on their ethical responsibilities (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:523). Babbie and Mouton (2004: 523) cautions that names and addresses should not be reflected on documents that are accessible to other people as this can be regarded as bridge of confidentiality.

During data collection, qualitative researchers come into contact with participants who share information and their knowledge on the subject for study. Neuman (2003: 397) indicates that during this period the researcher learns intimate knowledge that the participant or participants give in confidentiality. Neuman (2003: 397) argues therefore that the researcher has a moral obligation towards the participant with regard to information given. Informants in this were assured confidentiality and anonymity. The information they supplied was used for the sole purpose of the study and no other people who are not associated with this study had access to the raw data as supplied by informants.



Secondly, which was indicated to the informants before the start of the interview, anonymity was guaranteed. No specific names that might reveal the identity of the informants was used in this study and the identity will only be known to the researcher.

Having outlined the research design and the important characteristics thereof, the next section will focus on the importance of the research methodology.

### **4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.3.1 Literature review**

It is important to contextualize the phenomenon under study within a particular theoretical foundation (Vockel & Asher, 1995:435). According to De Vos (1998:64) the aim of literature review is to paint a picture of the nature and the meaning of the problem that the researcher has identified. In addition Creswell (1994:20) says that the purposes of literature review are firstly to expose the researcher to other closely related studies that have been undertaken before. Secondly the purpose is to provide the framework within which the importance of the study being undertaken is formed.

#### **4.3.2 Target population**

Policy developers and implementers are targeted for this study. A number of members of the NCFE who work in Gauteng and the NBI in Gauteng and principals of FET colleges in Gauteng will be targeted. It will be costly to visit members outside Gauteng as the researcher resides in Gauteng.

The informants of this study are policy developers and policy implementers. Policy developers are regarded as a community in the public policy domain and these are the people who participated in the origination of the Further Education and Training policy. These policy developers were selected to participate in the study because they are regarded as having an understanding of the activities of the public FET policy community in South Africa.

While the first group of informants in this study represented a broad community of FET policy developers, each member further represented a sectoral community. These sectors are the National Committee on Further Education (NCFE), the national Department of Education (DoE) and the National Business Initiative (NBI). The purpose of selecting this type of informants was to reveal common understandings related to policy origination as a phenomenon under study.

Policy implementers were selected from a community of managers at FET college level. The decision to select these informants was based on the historical background as well as the size of their colleges.

### **4.3.3 Sampling**

Ploeg (1999:2) says that sampling refers to the process of selecting what to study and focusing on a portion of a population. According to Ploeg (1999:2) researchers make sampling decisions for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research question. In qualitative research sampling is generally based on a non-probability and purposive sampling or convenient sampling rather than on probability or random sampling (Ploeg, 1999:2).

This study used what Kelly (1999:380) refers to as opportunistic or convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is used when investigating a rare phenomenon and this study regards the concept of trying to understand and describe the origination and implementation of further education and training in South Africa especially in Gauteng colleges as rare. Furthermore the area of public policy development for the FET college sector is relatively new. In addition there is no history in South Africa around this area and the committees that were involved in the origination of this FET policy were the first in the country and the managers are also the first to implement policy developed in the manner in which the FET policy was developed.

In this study purposeful sampling was used. According to Babbie (1992:167) purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select the sample on the bases of his/her own judgment and knowledge of the population. The researcher in this study believes that the selected sample will provide the information required to answer the research question.

The following criteria were used to select the sample:

- Participants who were involved in the development of the FET policy who were members of either the NCFE or the NBI and being available for interviews
- Participants who are currently holding a principalship's position at an FET college in Gauteng and being available for the interview.

Unfortunately the nature of work of these people does not make them readily accessible. These individuals hold senior positions within different organizations. For an example three of the people interviewed are Chief Executive Officers in their respective organizations. People at this level are engaged with their own organization's responsibilities.

The non-availability of members of these different committees was evident when invitations were sent out to about ninety percent of them and the majority of them indicated their non-availability at the time.

Eventually a small number of informants were available for the study to continue. This is not a rare case in qualitative research. In fact Ploeg (1999:2) indicates that qualitative research normally involves smaller sample sizes and that sampling is normally flexible. Seven cases were taken and participated in the study. Kelly (1999:381) says that experience has shown that between six and eight sources of data are acceptable as they normally yield desired results.

Furthermore the number of the sample was determined by constraints of budgets and time. Members of the National Committee of Further Education (NCFE) are scattered all over the country. For instance one member was stationed in the Western Cape most of the time and another in North West. There was no budget to cover the distances to reach some of the members. Some members indicated that their availability could be well into the following year which by that time this study should have been completed and final submission made. Therefore because of time constraints the researcher had to take the seven available cases and use them to accomplish the set purpose.

#### **4.3.4 Gaining access**

This study visited one individual only in each organization and in this regard there was going to be minimum disruption within these respective organizations. Nonetheless permission was sought from the individual participants to visit them at their place of work. All participants were found to be the ultimate decision maker in their respective sections in their organization. In this regard there were no problems in accessing the informants.

The researcher introduced himself to the participant during each interview and further tried to create a friendly atmosphere during the introductions between the participant and the researcher.

Some of the participants were not available for the interviews but a significant number indicated their availability and granted permission to be visited at their place of work.

#### **4.3.5 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is defined as the believability of the researcher's findings, i.e. all that the researcher has done in designing, carrying out and reporting the research to make the results credible. Smit (2001) says that there are competing claims as to what constitutes a good quality research in social science. According to her (i.e. Smit, 2001) validity and reliability used to be regarded as measures for quality for this type of research but she also indicates that these two terms seem not to be enjoying popularity anymore in terms of defining good and quality research.

Smit (2001) argues that there are modern terms and new terminology with regard to constituting quality research and trustworthiness is one such term. Sandelowski and Barroso (2002:1) indicate that 'scholars across the practice and social science disciplines have sought to define what a good, valid, trustworthy qualitative study is, to chart the history of and to categorize efforts to accomplish such a definition, and to describe and codify techniques for both ensuring and recognizing good studies'. They (i.e. Sandelowski & Barroso, 2002:2) further indicate that after all these efforts, these scholars seem to be no closer to establishing a consensus on quality criteria.

Validity is defined as the degree to which outcomes are accurate and grounded in data (Sowell, 2001: 5). McMillan and Schumacher (1997:404) say that in qualitative research validity addresses two main questions: Firstly do researchers actually observe what they think they observe? Secondly do researchers actually hear the meanings that they think they hear? Geel (2004:111) says that validity is usually the result of truthful answers stemming from correct selection and application of procedures. In other words validity in empirical research is achieved through proper selection and application of procedures that produce the intended outcomes of the research in a systematic manner.

In qualitative studies validity is enhanced through triangulation and triangulation is a method that compels researchers to rise above their personal biases that stem from the use of a single methodology (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:275). Various strategies are used by qualitative researchers to enhance validity but Babbie and Mouton mention triangulation, writing extensive notes, member checking, peer review, reasoned consensus, and audit trial as the most common strategies used for this purpose. This study focussed its attention writing extensive notes during the interviews, as well as member checking for the purpose of enhancing the validity of the results.

With regards to reliability Neuman (2003:184; cf. Smit, 2001) says that reliability in qualitative research means dependability or consistency. Smit (2001) indicates that reliability is viewed as “the fit between what is recorded as data and what has actually occurred in the setting under study”. Smit (2001) further elaborate on reliability and say reliability refers to stability of research over time, the consistency through repetition and the extent to which the research findings can be replicated by another researcher. Neuman (2003:185) contrasts the view of replicating qualitative research. Neuman (2003:185) argues that qualitative researchers using alternative measures will yield distinctive results.

Data collecting in qualitative research is seen as an interactive process and the research setting is always evolving and therefore the replication of results cannot be achieved (Neuman, 2003:185). This point is further confirmed by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000:251) and they say the findings from using non-standardised research methods such as interviews are not intended to be repeated as they reflect reality at the time they were collected. Therefore it is not the intention of this study to produce results that can be replicated at some other time in future.

Rolfe (2004:2) is of the opinion that any attempt to establish consensus on quality criteria for qualitative research is unlikely to succeed for the simple reason that there is no unified body of theory, methodology or method that can collectively be described as qualitative research; indeed, that the very idea of qualitative research is open to question. According to Golafshani (2003:561) credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness are terms that encompasses reliability and validity in qualitative research. Each of these terms has come to denote validity and reliability of a qualitative study. The concepts reliability and validity are problematic in qualitative research. Lincoln and Cuba (1985:991; cf. Rolfe, 2004:2) include credibility, applicability, dependability and conformability as key criteria of trustworthiness and these are constructed to parallel the conventional criteria of enquiry of internal and external validity, reliability and neutrality, respectively. According to Golfshani (2003:560) the ability and effort of the researcher also renders a qualitative study credible.

Another strategy used in this study to enhance trustworthiness is what is termed transferability. Transferability refers to dense descriptions of processes and procedures used in the study to try and answer the research question (Key, 1997:6). In addition Key (1997:7) defines dependability as dense descriptions of research methods, triangulation, coding and re-coding procedures.

Rolfe (2004:2) states that a study is trustworthy if and only if the reader of the research report judges it to be so. Thorne (2000:5) encourages researchers in qualitative research to ‘articulate their findings in such a manner that the logical process by which they were developed are accessible to a critical reader, the relationship between the actual data and the conclusions about data is explicit, and the claims made in relation to the data set are rendered credible and believable’.

This implies that if processes and procedures of the study are sequentially and logically presented trustworthiness will be ensured. The categorical outline of the research design and the research methods of this study showed the plan that was followed to achieve the aim stipulated in this study. The design and methods as well as procedures used during data collection and analysis were richly described in order to enhance credibility.

This study has attempted to rigorously create trustworthiness so that the results can be credible. Corroboration, openness, member checking and thick descriptions of methodologies of data collection and analysis were used for this purpose. Policy originators’ views and meanings of policy statements were corroborated with policy implementers to check common understanding. Openness was a basic principle in this study. Firstly through openness the researcher wanted to create a free and relaxing environment with the informants. This was firstly done through e-mails that were sent to individual informants. The purpose was to soften any hostilities that could have cropped during the interview process. When informants have developed trust with the interviewer they also give reliable and valid information. Secondly openness is a pre-requisite for research ethics. Therefore this value could not be bridged.

Research techniques are presented in detail in chapter one and also in paragraphs that follows in this chapter. The purpose is to show convincingly how the study unfolded and to indicate that results and conclusions reached are trustworthiness and in line with practice in qualitative research.



This refers to the process of verifying with the informants certain aspects of phenomenon that is under investigation. In this study probing during the initial interviews was used to clarify and verify certain information as supplied by the informants. In addition principals of FET colleges were used to check if the information supplied by policy developers was congruent to their understanding. Member checking was used to ensure that if the researcher has misinterpreted some of the information during the data analysis it could be rectified and then the correct version of events incorporated in the data.

#### **4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Data collection in ethnographic studies concurs with data analysis (Thorne, 2000:2). This means data analysis does not commence only after the process of data collection has been finalized. Although this assertion is taken to be true, this study will try to delineate these two concepts separately for the purpose of clarity and to enhance trustworthiness of the study. This section details the data gathering procedure for the research. Interviews were used as a technique to gather research data.

##### **4.4.1 Individual interviews**

Cohen and Manion (1989: 307) says that the interview is “a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information, and focused by him on content, specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation”. Quoting Maykut and Morehouse PeNMJ (2006:9) states that an interview is the result of a joint effort between the interviewer and the interviewee and is about what they talk together and how they talk with each other. In other words an interview is a planned and structured conversation with specific objectives that must be achieved by the end of the interview.

This study employed the ethnographic interview as a data collection technique and Cohen and Manion (1989:312) observed that this technique is the most common method of collecting data in qualitative studies. In other words the structured interview or what McMillan and Schumacher (1997:447) call standardized open-ended interview was employed. Cohen and Manion (1989:309) indicate that in a structured interview the content and procedures are organized in advance. In this regard a pre-determined interview schedule was prepared and was used to solicit data from the informants. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:447) call this schedule the interview guide. They (i.e. McMillan & Schumacher) say that in this interview guide questions are selected in advance. The interview schedule was constituted by questions extracted directly from the Green Paper on Further Education and Training and 'A situational analysis of FET institutions in the Gauteng Province: Report to the Head of Education'. All questions in the schedules were direct quotations from the two documents and these were addressing policy issues for which informants were directly involved in the origination or implementation (Ploeg, 1999:36; cf. Aronson, 1994:1). Probing was also used during interview to clarify certain responses. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:450) probing is a characteristic of in-depth interviews. Babbie and Mouton (2004:289) indicate that using probes during an interview is a useful way to get answers in more depth and without biasing later answers. The type of data that was collected was in the form of interview transcripts collected through open-ended but structured interviews.

Three interview schedules were prepared, each for a specific research community (See annexure 1). One schedule was for informants from the NCFE, the other one for informants from NBI, and the final one was for managers of FET colleges in Gauteng. Informants were interviewed at a place of their convenience (i.e. their place of work) using the interview schedule. Firstly a portable audio recorder was used to record the conversation especially the responses of the informants. Every bit of conversation was recorded.

Secondly provision was made in each interview schedule for interviewer comments. This space could be used during interviews and or after the interview for the interviewer to scribble some comments about the interview. Thirdly the researcher used probes now and then to clarify certain responses.

#### **4.5 DATA PROCESING AND ANALYSIS**

It was alluded to in the previous paragraph that qualitative data collection and analysis are not easily distinguishable from each other as indicated by Thorne (2000:2). In spite of this assertion, this section will try to describe the process of data analysis as applied in this study.

Researchers usually use computer programmes to organize and manage large quantities of data. According to Thorne (2000:2) there are many computer programs that are used to analyze qualitative data. However these programs are essentially meant as aids to help sort and organize sets of qualitative data (Thorne, 1999:2). It is Thorne's (1992:2) assertion that qualitative data analysis requires the intellectual and conceptualizing processes that are essential to transform raw data into meaningful findings. The following paragraphs will focus on these intellectual and conceptualization processes in qualitative data analysis.

This study used a combination of several strategies to analyze data. The purpose of using this approach was to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (cf. Nieuwenhuis, 2006).

#### 4.5.1 Preparation for data analysis

The following stages as shown in Table 4.1 below were followed in the analysis of data:

**Table 4.1 Qualitative data analysis stages (Adapted from Rickard, 2004 & Aronson, 1994)**

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Making notes immediately after the ethnographic interview</li><li>➤ Transcribed the recorded tapes</li><li>➤ Organized and indexed the data</li><li>➤ Coding</li><li>➤ Developed provisional themes</li><li>➤ Explored the relationship between the themes</li></ul> |
|--|

#### 4.5.2 Analyzing qualitative data

Analyzing qualitative data is considered an important activity in the research process in order to be able to make sense of, interpret and theorize the collected data (Smit, 2001). According to Smit (2001) data analysis is a crucial process that precedes data interpretation in research. It is in this regard that this study had to undertake data analysis. According to Nieuwenhuis (2006) qualitative data analysis is “usually based on an interpretive philosophy”. This implies that researchers analyze collected data in order to interpret it following a particular philosophy. Interpretation in qualitative research aims to establish how informants/actors attach meaning to a particular social phenomenon.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2006) understanding meaning is achieved when the researcher analyses informants' perceptions about the phenomenon, attitudes, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences.

There are various modes of analyzing qualitative data. This study will use a combination of three of these modes.

#### **4.5.2.1 Hermeneutics analysis**

Hermeneutics as a data analysis mode presents a way of making meaning of textual data. This approach is premised on the “dialectic between the understanding of the text as a whole and the interpretation of its parts”. Understanding the transcribed interview texts was important but also to get a clearer or better understanding of the informants' meaning of the phenomenon under investigation it was more important to break the whole text into smaller pieces and try to understand the meaning from that level by interpreting these smaller parts. Therefore hermeneutics will aid this study to achieve its aim by understanding the meaning of the whole transcribed texts.

Hermeneutics analysis began as soon as the interviews started. The researcher made reflective notes during the interviews. This was an attempt to break the whole interview into small understandable units and to begin to interpret the whole. Shortly after the interviews the researcher also summarized the proceedings so that important interview data can be noted and should not get lost with time.

#### 4.5.2.2 Content analysis

Nieuwenhuis (2006) defines content analysis as a “systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarizes message content”. Babbie and Mouton (2004:491) quoting Palmquist (1993) define content analysis as a method used to examine words or phrases within texts which may be obtained in books or interviews. Babbie and Mouton (2004:491) indicate that content analysis employs checking the presence or repetition of certain words or phrases in texts in order to make inferences about the author of the text. In short content analysis is a qualitative data analysis technique that is used to make inferences from the text in an objective and systematic manner in order to identify specified characteristics of a message (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:492).

One of the characteristics of content analysis is coding. According to Ploeg (1999:37) qualitative data analysis focuses on the analysis of codes, themes, and patterns in the collected data. Nieuwenhuis (2006) says that coding involves “reading carefully through the transcribed data then dividing the data into meaningful analytical units”. In addition Nieuwenhuis (2006) says that many researchers use inductive coding as this involves developing codes as the process of coding data continues. In addition Babbie and Mouton (2004:492) say that coding involves choosing whether to code for existence or coding for frequency. This study used the former as well as inductive coding. Analysis focused on the existence of certain phrases and concepts as identified during literature review in the first three chapters of this study. The coding process was employed after the data has been organized into transcripts. The coding involved identifying content from transcripts. The content was either a word or a phrase or a paragraph that was used by the informants (Rickard, 2004:1). In addition analysis also included all meaningful instances generalized around the content of the code of data.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2006) content analysis helps the researcher to look at data from different angles in order to be able to identify keys in the text that will aid in understanding and interpreting the raw data. This mode of data analysis will be used to identify similarities and differences in the transcribed text in order to be able to corroborate or refute theory.

It is worth noting at this point that there is a thin line that divides hermeneutics and content analysis. Hermeneutics involves breaking the whole into smaller units for interpretation purposes whilst content analysis entails dividing data into meaningful units. The difference between the two is the purpose for the analysis.

Aronson (1994:1) says there are many ways to analyze informants' talk about their experiences and further identified thematic analysis as one strategy to do exactly that.

This means that the process of coding data culminates in the emergent of themes. According to Aronson (1994:1) thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of behaviour of informants. Building themes from the data simply means organizing related codes into themes. A theme will constitute a group or a number of codes which relate or give a particular meaning to it. It is important to note that themes emerged from the analyzed data (cf. Nieuwenhuis, 2006). In this study each theme was assigned an identifying name using descriptive phrases. The process of building themes continued until there was no more possibility of new themes or categories emerging from the data.

#### **4.5.2.3 Discourse analysis**

Nieuwenhuis (2006) says that discourse analysis focuses on studying and analyzing written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias. Thorne (2000:4) argues that discourse analysis recognizes speech as an 'explicit linguistic tool constructed and shaped

by various social or ideological influences'. Discourse analysis aid in trying to understand the power relations in education policy (as a social setting) as well as understand what policy makers regard as reality in further education and training from the perspective of informants. Consequently this study had to resort to discourse analysis to establish how government influences the provision of further education and training in Gauteng.

With this technique all data that related to the already classified themes in content analysis were then identified and explained in detail. At this stage of the analysis process the researcher tried to establish the meanings of these themes or patterns from the informants' point of view. In other words the researcher went beyond the superficial meanings of what emerged as themes to establish the untold meanings, feelings and actions.

This is the stage that Aronson (1994:3) refers to as the stage of building an argument for the chosen themes. The study critically looked at the language that was used by the informants and the way it was used in order to try and uncover societal influences underlying the experiences, behaviour, thoughts, and feelings of policy originators and implementers.

The above strategies of qualitative data analysis are all regarded as ethnographic methods of data analysis and Thorne (2000:4) says that all these methods are concerned with interpreting the processes and products of cultural behaviour. These methods of analysis involve 'sifting and sorting through pieces of data to detect and interpret thematic categorization, search for inconsistencies and contradictions, and generate conclusions about what is happening and why.

In summary this study has to analyze collected data in the form of transcribed audio interviews to firstly select bits of pieces of data and secondly to assign these pieces of data to categories or themes. This process was carried out in order to aid the interpretation of data which is addressed in the next section.



### 4.5.3 Data interpretation

By this far the study had coded data and established themes as well as looked at the language usage by informants. According to Nieuwenhuis (2006) codes and themes are summarized versions of what informants have said about the research topic. The next step was to interpret these themes and codes in order to begin to understand why policy development and implementation are the way they are at the moment. Neuman (2003:148) indicates that it is the responsibility of the researcher to interpret data by finding out how the informants see their world, how they describe their situation or what it means for them. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:533) say that this is the stage where themes simply provide an explanation of the situation.

Nieuwenhuis (2006) states that themes as analyzed data must be “brought into context with existing theory to reveal how it corroborate already existing knowledge or bring new understanding to the body of knowledge”. In other words the data should present an explanation for interpretation and intellectual understanding of the phenomenon under study.

A number of activities are normally involved in the actual interpretation of inductively derived data analysis. Nieuwenhuis (2006) says interpreting this kind of data involve searching for emerging patterns, associations, concepts and explanations in data. The product of this process will culminate in a framework through which the researcher will construct new meaning and understanding of what emerged from the data.

This study adopted the discourse analysis as both a data analysis strategy as well as a strategy to interpret collected data. Discourse analysis assisted the study to understand policy origination and implementation from the informants’ point of view. Analyzing their responses from the transcripts to determine what meanings they attach to their actions, feelings and behaviour during the time they were developing policy helped the researcher to be able to interpret data better.

Both the first- and second-order interpretation approaches were used. According to Neuman (2003:148) first-order interpretation is the interpretation attached to an event, behaviour or action by the informant. In other words this is how the informants see the event, or behaviour or action. First-order interpretations are meanings attached by the informant or informants.

The second-order interpretation was carried by the researcher after the first-order interpretation. At this stage of interpretation the researcher tried to understand the interpretations as presented by the informants and attach his meanings to them.

The method of comparative analysis was used for this purpose. Interpretations of individual informant were compared with interpretations of other informants' and then finally the researcher reconstructed the interpretations of the first order. These interpretations helped the study to make conclusions about the research topic.

## **4.6 CHAPTER REVIEW**

This chapter outlined the research design followed in this study. It was indicated that a research design is simply a map showing how the research will unfold as the researcher tries to answer the research question. This study has adopted the qualitative research design and ethnography was used as a strategy to answer the question.

Ethnographic studies were outlined in detail including methods used for data collection, analysis and interpretation. This chapter further outlined the study's approach to trustworthiness in order to render the results acceptable to other researchers and readers.

## CHAPTER 5

### PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH DATA

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Dunn (1994:68) indicates that policy relevant information is subject to interpretation and this interpretation may be in different ways, depending on the frame of reference, ideology, or worldview of different groups. He (Dunn, 1994:86) states that this is due to the fact that a policy outcome is an observed consequence of policy actions. The consequences of policy actions cannot be fully stated or known in advance of action and hence sometimes there are unintended consequences of policy, attests Manganyi (2001:27). It is in this sense that policy is regarded as both destination and road map to other, yet undetermined destinations.

Policy enables the party in power to place distinctive political identity on the national agenda. Policy decisions are thus made by the real holders of power (Dunn, 1994:59).

The national department of Education sought to transform the college sector in South Africa to address the two key principles which is relevance and responsiveness. It was envisaged that transforming the college sector would help the sector break away from a system inherited from a multi-problem environment. This study is concerned with policy initiation and policy implementation as part of the transformation process in order to address relevance and responsiveness by the FET system, more specifically the college sector.

The effectiveness of policy initiation and implementation is not exonerated from misinterpretation by actors in the field of policy development and implementation. The following paragraphs try to present research data, which is the perspective of participants with regards transformation of the college sector and the researcher's interpretation of the perceptions of the participants.

## **5.2 DATA PRESENTATION**

The first section of this chapter deals with the analysis and presentation of data from interviews. The second presents the summary of the findings.

### **5.2.1 Major themes**

After involved analysis of the interviews data, the following six major themes emerged:

- Theme 1: Centralization and decentralization
- Theme 2: Management of resources
- Theme 3: Structures
- Theme 4: Managing curriculum design
- Theme 5: Managing governance
- Theme 6: Planning

## **5.3 VIEWS OF PARTICIPANTS**

The aim of the study is to understand and describe the relationship between policy origination and policy implementation at FET colleges in Gauteng. Therefore the qualitative study in this study tried to investigate how policy is initiated and implemented from the perspectives of:

- individual FET policy originators on the process of policy development; and
- individual FET college managers in Gauteng

This section presents the perceptions of the above-mentioned research participants with regards the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng with particular reference to public policy initiation and management practices at college level.

The 1998 Green Paper on Further Education and Training (FET) is the vehicle through which the government of South Africa started the process of policy development for further education. Although the Green Paper was preceded by the Report of the National Committee on Further Education, the Green Paper on FET is the official document that is regarded as the first step towards the development of policy for this sector.

Policy originators were tasked by government in the period between 1997 and 1998 to look at issues that were going to assist in the transformation of the FET sector more particularly FET colleges. The purpose of government was to develop a new vision and goals for the FET sector in order to address previous problems within the FET college sector and policy originators were therefore given the responsibility to lead this process and advise government in this regard.

There were many issues that needed to be addressed by the new government that was elected in 1994 in South Africa and policy originators were to take these into considerations as they deliberated on the new FET policy direction. These issues covered relevant and responsive provision by the FET system. Policy originators therefore had to shape and direct FET policy in this regard and these policy originators were individuals from various formations and have grounded knowledge about FET issues.

In other words these individuals were experts in various aspects of FET and each brought valuable knowledge and skills to the team. Each member within the process of policy origination had a particular view about the issues that the government needed to address and these had influenced government policy in this regard.

Policy originators therefore conceptualized the college sector as a vehicle through which government would achieve its goals and serve various purposes. Policy originators made several recommendations that ranged from the vision through to the mission for the sector and they envisaged that these were going to enable government to achieve its goals in the FET sector. Therefore in the Green Paper for Further Education and Training policy originators presented the intentions of government with regards the transformation of further education and training in South Africa and how these intentions should be realized. Transformation was key throughout the process of policy development. Various aspects within the FET sector that needed to be transformed were identified and recommendations were made. The themes that emerged in this study indicate how government through policy originators intended to transform FET colleges in Gauteng.

The success of any policy is judged after evaluating its implementation (Dunn, 1994: 180). For the purpose of this study implementation of the new FET policy is located within FET colleges in Gauteng and is initiated and guided by managers of these colleges. A coherent understanding of the intended policy by the managers of FET colleges therefore plays a critical role in ensuring effective implementation. The themes that will be outlined below indicate how these managers received, understand and implement the new policy.

Therefore the relationship between government policy and management practices can be explained using the views of policy originators and the views of policy implementers. The following sections of this chapter outlines how policy originators, as representing government policy and college managers (i.e. policy implementers) as representing management practices at FET colleges' level in Gauteng relate.

### **5.3.1 Theme 1: Centralization & Decentralization**

#### **5.3.1.1 Centralization**

The amount of authority and autonomy given to a manager is the reflection of the relative centralization or decentralization of the organization (Stoner; Freeman; & Gilbert, 2001: 360). According to Schermerhorn (1999:215) centralization is the concentration of authority at the top level of an organization to take most decisions. In education central power and control are vested in the Minister of Education (as is the case in South Africa). In other countries like Britain central power is vested in the hands of the Secretary of Education (Marishane, 1999:22). Karlsson, McPherson and Pampallis (2002) indicate that centralized control should be maintained in order to ensure equal distribution of resources. One of the advantages of centralized control is that it helps organizations to efficiently integrate subunits for the pursuit of organizational goals through the strategic plan. A policy originator indicated that it is important that the purpose and goal of the FET sector be derived centrally by the national Department of Education (DoE). A nationally developed purpose for FET colleges will enable relevance and responsiveness to national goals at an implementation level. The vision of the department which is quality skills development can be realized when a clear national purpose is defined at the top level and effectively implemented at college level.

Both policy originators and college managers expressed feelings that centralization is necessary at national level in order to ensure some measure of control. One policy originator says “*we need to create an environment where on one hand you do not want people to create chaos but also on the other hand you allow for creativity for people to do things and really be responsive. A clear national framework decided at the highest level should be in place to ensure that national needs are addressed but at the same time that framework should encourage entrepreneurialship*”. Entrepreneurship is defined as the process of creating or seizing an opportunity and pursuing it regardless of the resources currently controlled” (Nieuwehuizen, Le Roux, & Jacobs, 1998:2). In this sense centralization should define a broad operating framework within which managers of Further Education and Training colleges in Gauteng can operate in an innovative and creative manner. This framework should allow managers to create new opportunities for their colleges without transgressing national guidelines.

Another policy originator indicated that it is through centralization that mechanisms can be put in place to ensure that the work is done at college level. The Department of Labor is concerned with skills development and to ensure that this become a reality there should be a plan developed centrally by the department. Accountability is realized when there is some form of control or authority that makes decisions at a higher level. College managers need to account to another level of authority in terms of what they are doing or plan to do. Both the Ministries of Education and Labor need to be clear at their highest levels of decision making of their plans and how they will ensure that managers of FET colleges in Gauteng will account on their actions. Therefore a mandate that is nationally determined is important in order to hold managers accountable. Centralized control is therefore a necessary measure to ensure that work is done at college level. A policy originator said “*Give greater autonomy to management and council, but also put in place new forms of accountability*”. Accountability then acts as a form of control to ensure that things are done according to the predetermined requirements that are developed centrally.



There is a need that the national Department of Education, as the ministry responsible for education in South Africa, develops a plan that outlines broad national goals for the FET college sector that are act as a guide for colleges. This centrally developed plan will ensure coherence of the sector but also ensure that national needs and demands are addressed in a coordinated and accountable way at implementation levels.

### **5.3.1.2 Decentralization**

Schermerhorn (1999:215) defines decentralization as the act of dispersing authority to make decisions throughout all levels of the organization. In addition Schermerhorn (1999:215) says that decentralization is a characteristic of newer structures and is a trend in many recent organizations. Stoner, et al. (2001: 359; cf. Karlsson, et al., 2002:143) is of the opinion that decentralization allows for better decisions to be made because those who should take decisions are close to the customer. Decentralization is important because it enable decision making to take place at appropriate levels in the organization. In essence decentralization helps Gauteng FET college principals achieve their goals by taking college-bound decisions. According to Stoner, et al. (2001: 359) decentralization promotes flexibility and faster decision making and this allows organizations to be able to respond favorably to the needs of their customers.

A policy originator felt that the national Department of Education has not decentralized functions that should be decentralized as captured in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training. The functions include the autonomy to make decisions on matters that impact on individual colleges. This policy originator cited that principals of Further Education colleges in Britain call the shots as they operate as autonomous as universities. One college manager indicated that both the DoE and Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) still drives colleges when it comes to planning.

Some policy originators and a college manager indicated that planning for FET colleges in Gauteng is still centralized at the level of both the DoE and GDE. Both policy originators and college managers agree that coordination and leadership from the top is needed to take national strategic decisions but decentralize decision-making for implementation to colleges as sites of policy implementation. A college manager indicated that “*We get guidelines, we get the plans and we are to mirror our plans on those plans*”. Just to mirror college plans to national plans without any contextualization is problematic and therefore colleges should be able to use the national plan as guidelines to assist them to develop college plans that addresses the objectives of the college while not deviating from the broad national goals of the government.

Decentralization means autonomy and autonomy helps facilitate the development of college-bound implementation strategies to implement national policy. Autonomy is important for colleges to be able to respond and be relevant to local needs but effective coordination is necessary to ensure that the intended policy is not lost during context-bound planning at the lower levels. Effective communication channels are required in this regard to ensure that information flow from national to the province and then to colleges is quick and effective.

Decentralization in organizations contributes to empowerment (Schermerhorn, 1999:215). Managers make decisions continually (Stoner, et al. 359). One policy originator says that managers of colleges in Gauteng are “*given discretion to make decisions*” within their colleges, but in the words of another policy developer college managers should be empowered to take college-bound strategic decisions in order to be able to “*move away from waiting for things to happen*”. According to this policy developer “*it is annoying to wait for decisions to be taken somewhere*” before you can start with your own planning. Another policy developer felt that “*if colleges’ decisions are decided up there, a manager can do all the planning he or she wants*” the college goals will never be implemented as planned by the college.

If colleges do not have the ability to make those key decisions for implementation, it becomes difficult for them to serve local needs that change according to the continuously changing environment.

Decentralization is the best way to develop and retain a close relationship with the customer/community (Stoner, et al., 2001:360). Decentralization to FET colleges in Gauteng will enable these colleges to be able to provide communities with more personalized level of service defined by local needs and demands. Managers will be able to better understand community' needs due to local trends and make decisions and plan accordingly.

### **5.3.2 Theme 2: Managing Resources**

Successful implementation of policy requires adequate resources. According to Parker and Kirsten (1995:1) the lack of adequate resources by educational institutions is the most single aspect that undermines successful policy implementation. Therefore the availability of resources such as funding, materials and physical should be available if the intentions of policy are to be realized in earnest. The availability of resources for an example aid policy developers to communicate policy intentions but also implementers are able to use the resources to ensure that implementation is not impeded by lack of resources. One of the policy originators indicated that a right resource mix is needed to be able to deliver on the needs of customers and according this participant that resource mix is everything from the right lecturers to the right curriculum to the right material courseware to the right learning process. Resources such as staff and curriculum are currently the responsibility of government and therefore it is government that must make these resources available. The college is responsible for availing resources at college level to ensure that the implementation of the college plans is successfully realized.

Another policy originator mentioned that to be able to deliver the learning process successfully the mix of internal and external resources should be readily available. Therefore whilst it is the responsibility of government to avail resources to FET colleges, colleges should also develop strategies to acquire additional resources.

### **5.3.2.1 Acquisition and utilization – being entrepreneurial**

As mentioned in the preceding paragraph resources (human, financial and material) are needed when an organization has to carry out its plans to reach its goals (Department of Education, 2000:27). One policy developer said that managers should be entrepreneurial in their approach because being entrepreneurial means that the manager is able to access resources for the benefit of the college. Being entrepreneurial simply means that management at college level should be able to access other resources other than those provided for by the DoE. “*A college will need that and that*” and therefore the ability to acquire resources by managers is important. According to DoE (2000:27) one of the functions expected from college management is to make sure that the college acquires these additional resources for themselves.

Provision of resources to colleges, particularly in terms of budgets, is limited. Government allocates limited and one college manager indicated that because “*there is no unlimited flow of financial resources coming our way, the element and principle of cost-effectiveness becomes critical*”. A college manager accentuates this point and says that “*we have to be accountable in ensuring value for money in terms of our resources, but above that, cost-effectiveness for the sake of cost effectiveness will not assist us*”. In addition this college manager said “*if we are worried about cost-effectiveness for the sake of cost effectiveness, what purpose we are serving*”? It is important that managers of FET colleges utilize state resources in a cost-effective manner but cost-effectiveness should not compromise the effective delivery of the curriculum which is the goal of the colleges.

According to the Department of Education (2000:27) educational institutions should be education driven and not resource driven. In other words managers of FET colleges should strive towards the achievement of the college objectives without sparing resources.

A clear understanding of the budgetary process by managers is critical in order to be able to manage budgets. Managers should understand that budgets are not just about spending money but they are about a large number of management processes and functions that help relate educational needs to resources. A college manager warns that it is not only college management that must be resourceful. Both the DoE and GDE need to manage resources in an economical manner. This participant says that there are various activities or functions that require large volumes of resources and sometimes these activities might be regarded as a waste of resources. Communicating policy is one such activity that requires financial resources. Organizing workshops and conferences at both national and provincial levels dictates that enough funding should be made available for this purpose. Government should invest in education by availing resources to effectively communicate its policy intentions to as wide a range of the general public but more particularly to the end-users. Therefore the effective and efficient management of financial resources at these levels becomes of critical importance because as expressed by some participants state resources are limited.

Because of the scarcity of resources at colleges managers of FET colleges in Gauteng should have knowledge and skills to raise additional funds. One policy originator is of the perception that acquiring resources such as finance from the external environment is one of the functions of college management. However there are arguments that with the type of management at provincial and national level this is not possible. Policy does not confer authority to college managers to make decisions that pertains to issues of forming external relations in order for the college to raise additional funds.

An example cited by a college manager is the issue of entering into contract with external players, especially business in order to offer learnerships. A learnership is a training programme that is managed by the provider, supported by the employer for the benefit of the learner. One college manager indicated that revenue generated through learnership programs is far greater than revenue generated through government programmes and this can help colleges acquire much needed additional funds.

For a learnership program to be offered a tripartite contract between an employer, training provider, and the learner is a prerequisite for the provision of learnerships. Presently policy does not make provision for colleges to enter into contracts with employers for the purpose of offering learnerships. According to one manager colleges cannot enter into direct partnerships with prospective employers in order to offer learnerships. According to one college manager the present provision is that GDE will have to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) that is responsible for the learnership at hand before a college can offer that learnership. GDE therefore needs to sanction any provision of learnerships at FET colleges in Gauteng and this is considered a hindrance by participants. *“There must be a clear framework and that framework should encourage people to be entrepreneurial – we need to build into policy the kinds of rewards that will encourage people”* were sentiments echoed by one policy developer. Colleges are not able to autonomously take decisions to develop strategies to raise additional funds and this is creating problems for college management. In other words colleges should be able to develop income generating activities to compensate for the insufficient operating budget supplied by government.

One policy developer indicated that colleges in Gauteng need to be managed differently from the way schools are managed because *“they need to have a much more of a business orientation than a normal school”*.

The environment in which colleges operate changes so rapidly and therefore managers need to be able to constantly adjust resources in order to suite the changing environment. To be able to adjust resources implies making decisions at the level of changes. This cannot be possible if managers do not have levers to make decisions in order to respond to the needs of the local community. If college managers are not given the ability to make decisions it becomes difficult for them to adjust to the environment. Some policy originators felt that policy should create an enabling environment for colleges to make decisions and plan without fear of reproach. Some of the rules used in public colleges “*militates against business principles*” and prevent managers from acting in a business-like manner.

One college manager indicated that whilst colleges need autonomy, they do not want total independence. College managers do not want to manage colleges chaotically but they need to be able to come up with initiatives that hey believe will benefit them and the college. The participant indicated that colleges expect the DoE and GDE to provide guidelines in terms of this function of resources acquisition and the accompanying autonomy. Policy should set boundaries in terms of the extend college managers can be autonomous with regard to establishing relationships and acquiring additional resources from external sources. The manager indicated that if there are no guidelines to this effect, there could be chaos at colleges. They might act as independent and focus on activities that are not in the interest of government but more specifically not in the interest of the general public. One manager indicated that because of the revenue generated by the provision of learnerships, colleges might be tempted to offer only learnerships as a form of creating wealth for the college. Therefore whilst it is important that managers are given the autonomy to make decisions with regards the acquisition of additional resources for the benefit of the college, this should be done within the confines of policy.

### 5.3.2.2 Cost-effectiveness and efficiency

Resources that are provided for by GDE are of a limited scope and therefore they should be used in the most cost effective way. One participant said that managers should ensure value for money. The utilization of resources at all the three levels (i.e. national, provincial and college) should make every attempt to ensure value for money.

One policy developer indicated that government at national level tried to address cost-effectiveness through the process of transforming the college landscape in terms of the utilization of resources. Merging colleges by the Department of Education was meant to deal with fragmentation and duplication of programmes. Different colleges were offering the same learning programmes within the same proximity and therefore concentrating resources was seen as a measure of ensuring cost-effectiveness for the DOE. Physical and human resources were not used effectively and therefore this could not be allowed to continue. Therefore the merging of multiple sites into mega colleges and concentrating resources at colleges in terms of needs was meant in the final analysis to enhance performance of colleges.

Expenditure should always be balanced with quality work at any level. One policy developer did not support the merging of colleges and expressed the feeling that most of the time both the province expense resources on things that in the long run colleges do not benefit. An example cited by a college manager pertains to the expense on mergers of colleges. The manager indicated that spending money on a national program to merge colleges was a necessary exercise but was not a priority. This college manager feels that this expense should have been used to develop a national curriculum first as education is about the curriculum. Utilizing state resources in a cost effective manner can in the long-term benefit the quality of provision at college which is the core function of the national department.



Another view from policy developers is that the involvement of stakeholders is one strategy that can be used to ensure cost-effectiveness. The involvement of local employers is viewed as a key requirement for cost-effectiveness in Gauteng colleges. One policy developer said that Gauteng is seen as the hub for economic development for South Africa and therefore the business sector should be involved in offering financial support to FET colleges in Gauteng.

### **5.3.2.3 Human resources - capacity building**

Both policy developers and college managers expressed a serious need for building management capacity at FET colleges in Gauteng as well as for officials of both the national and provincial Departments of Education. Managers and officials need to be skilled in various areas of their job and as one college manager put it *“definitely we can benefit from capacity building initiatives, starting from the highest level”*. One area indicated by a policy developer is on managing human relations within colleges. The participant indicated that dealing with past attitudes has proven to be a challenge for managers of colleges in Gauteng. Both the national and provincial Departments of Education should dedicate resources on building capacity of policy implementers to ensure that knowledge and skills necessary for the purpose of implementing policy are available.

Another challenge is around managing the new mega colleges. A policy developer says *“the key challenge at the moment is managing diversity of the mega colleges”* environment – managing different types of training programmes, many different funding sources, and many different quality assurance requirements”. There is a need that government develops college managers so that they are able to deal with these challenges in an effective and decisive manner. These are challenges that if they are not attended can render colleges ineffective in the long term.

A college manager felt that although managers have been developed around certain areas of their functions the participant felt that more still need to be done. The manager says “*the problem of capacity in government has become a little bit better, but we have not invested much time and money to build people’s confidence*”. Investing in capacitating managers at college level will build their confidence also benefit the colleges. One policy developer contrasted this perception that college managers have not been developed. In the words of this policy developer “*one of the first investments we made ... was a serious programme for skilling the councils and management – we had a strategic planning manual, we had a kind of exchange programme, and we had a series of senior management training programmes*”. In addition this participant argued that various capacity building programmes were organized for provincial departments and these were in the form of workshops, case studies and distance learning. The perception of this policy developer is that the national government has done enough to ensure that there is capacity both at provincial and college levels so that the implementation of policy can be a success. Skills and knowledge gained during capacity development initiatives should enable managers to function effectively and efficiently to a certain extent. To successfully address key challenges within the FET college sector on policy development and implementation in Gauteng government will have to develop human capital as a matter of priority. Continuous development programmes are necessary to capacitate managers on issues that impact on the implementation of the national vision of the department. Training workshops and other initiatives that are developed or used should be well planned and properly coordinated at an appropriate level in order to be beneficial to targeted recipients.

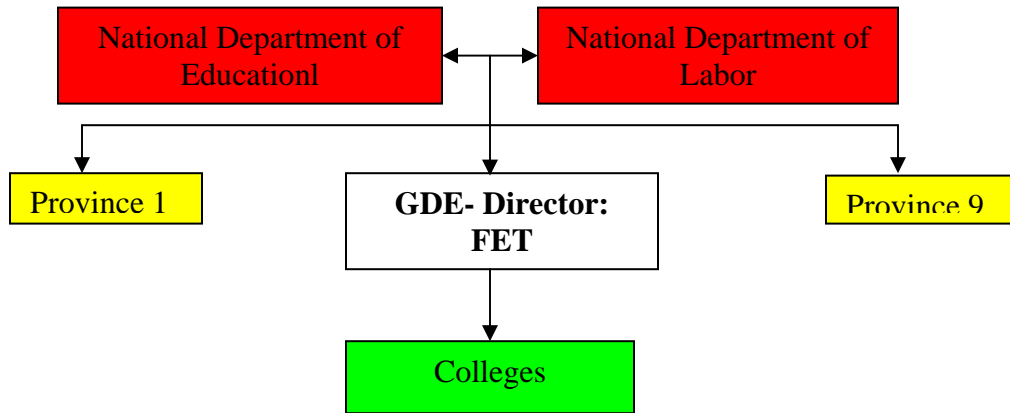
The development of human capital should also be extended to educators. As stated in the Green Paper on FET educators are lacking in many areas and therefore their development will enhance the effectiveness of the FET sector in general but more specifically, FET colleges.

One policy developer indicated that the national department should provide opportunities for educators to up-grade their qualifications. In the old system of FET many educators were either under qualified or unqualified and this might have a negative effect of the delivery of the new envisaged curriculum. Provision should therefore be made to assist these educators to increase their qualifications as this will improve different aspects of their teaching. Educator's development should also be extended to all educators. The purpose of further education has changed and therefore all educators should be capacitated to be able to deliver the curriculum in terms of the new subjects' requirements. For instance if colleges will want to offer learnerships to learners, educators should be able to relate theory and the practical aspects that learners will be trained on at the workplace. This will involve sending educators to visit workplaces and those in the workplace to visit colleges in order to enhance their understanding of the two different environments of a learner in a learnership.

### **5.3.3 Theme 3: Structures**

Every organization has a formally instituted pattern of authority and an official body of rules and procedures which are intended to aid the achievement of those goals and according to O'Neil (1994:101) this is what is referred to as a structure of an organization. Schermerhorn (1999: 202) defines an organization structure as *"the system of tasks, workflows, reporting relationships, and communication channels that link together the work of diverse individuals and groups"*. Stoner, et al. (2001:315) defines an organization structure as a framework that a manager devises for dividing and co-coordinating the activities of employees of his/her organization. There is a clear structure which is in place in terms of education in Gauteng. The hierarchy is depicted in Figure 1 below:

**Figure 5.1: Further Education and Training management structure**



From Figure 5.1 from the education side the national Department of Education is the uppermost level of authority, followed by the Gauteng Department of Education and then colleges at the bottom end. This structure is set in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996).

Each of the above levels is further regarded as a structure on its own. Therefore we refer to the national structure, the provincial structure and finally the college structure. Within each of these structures, there are management structures that oversee the functionality of that particular structure. In terms of Schermerhorn (1999:203) management structures at college level are meant to promote effective and efficient development and delivery of the curriculum of the college.

There is no one best structure that meets the needs of all circumstances. Sometimes existing structures are restructured in an attempt to improve the performance of the organization (Schermerhorn, 1999:203). Structures must be addressed in a contingency fashion because as environments and situations change, structures must often be changed too to suite the environment (Schermerhorn, 1999:203).

### 5.3.3.1 Management Structures

A structure is created to promote and facilitate organizational effectiveness. Colleges in Gauteng are managed at three different levels. Firstly at national level there is dual management. The Department of Education is responsible for the entire education sector which starts at general education through to higher education. On the other hand the Department of Labor is responsible for skills programmes which are presented in the form of learnerships. The provincial management is the second layer of management and college management is the third and final layer. These different structures of management have distinct functions. A policy developer earnestly believes that there is no any other management level that can develop policy except the national department. The implementation of policy is then left to the provincial departments which then accredit colleges to ensure that the objectives of policy are realized. In addition the provincial department also oversees the supervision and support of policy implementation. The management structure that is directly responsible for policy implementation is the provincial department i.e. GDE and colleges are referred to as sites of implementation.

There is a strong belief by policy developers and college managers that management structures at FET colleges in Gauteng have never been able to fulfill this assertion. One policy developer expressed the view that this could be attributed to the fact that the new FET system was inherited from a multi problem environment. Policy developers and college managers pointed out that even with the new structures that emerged after the merging and restructuring of colleges, procedures, processes and regulations are not fully implemented to facilitate effectiveness. Some of the policy developers locate challenges to effective performance of colleges on both the composition and functionality of college management structures.

### **5.3.3.2 Composition**

There seem to be a lack of will to transform management structures in terms of demographics and gender equity. One policy developer pointed out that “*there is hardly one college in Gauteng that is managed by a black woman*”. The majority of people in management positions are males and mostly Afrikaners. This situation is further aggravated by lack of women in senior management positions and government policy intended to change this kind of scenario.

Previous management structures were characterized by problems of racial exclusivity and inequitable distribution of resources and this situation influenced the new structures that emerged out of this apartheid era. Transforming the management structure at college level is a process that cannot be achieved by putting race and or gender into the equation. A policy developer accentuates this point by saying that putting politically correct races and gender does not mean management structures will do better. The new FET policy is meant to transform management structures so that they are representative of the demographics of the province, but all efforts towards transformation must be guided by national, provincial and more particularly, the objectives of the college.

### **5.3.3.3 Functionality**

It is the responsibility of GDE to ensure that all public FET college management structures are functional as these colleges are the competence of Provincial Departments of Education. According to O’Neil (1994:116 quoting Mortimore et al, 1988, Caldwell and Spinks, 1992) effective educational organizations are well led. These effective organizations are structured flexibly in the present educational environment to enable them to respond appropriately to a constantly changing set of demands from their various stakeholders (O’Neil, 1994:116).

Colleges were not able to function effectively in the past because of past unjust tendencies that characterized college management. One policy developer indicated that previous college management structures were actually dismal. Both state-aided and state colleges had management structural problems that inhibited national functionality of the system. According to some policy developers and a college manager state aided colleges served ambitions of the minorities in the country and hence they could not address national needs. The separation of colleges into state-aided and state colleges was the cause of non-functionality of college management structures. A college manager points out that there were privileged and disadvantaged colleges and these colleges functioned at different levels with the disadvantaged colleges being the biggest in terms of numbers of learners but faring badly. Duplication of structures result in wastage of otherwise scarce resources and fragmentation leads to non-coherence of the system. For structures to be functional means being able to perform responsibilities that are responding to identified needs national, provincial or college.

Difficulties within the college management structure arise, to a large degree, from both the lack of clarity concerning the role and authority of managers. One participant indicated that both the Gauteng Department of Education as well as national is not decisive in terms of what authority managers of FET colleges should possess. This leads to a situation where managers “*wait for the word from above before they can act*”. According to O’Neil (1994:112) there is a need to devolve increased authority and responsibility to those teams which interact directly and most closely with the organization’s customers. In summary the national department should clearly outline lines of authority and responsibilities of each level of management and set out expected levels of performance.

In spite of the many problems evident in the previous management structures there has been, as one policy developer puts it “*pockets of colleges that were functioning very well*”.

There were college managements that had good relationships with industry and this enabled these colleges to deliver on the much needed skills. According to this policy developer this is the direction government is trying to take in terms of new colleges. Industry and colleges should be able to have good relations in terms of what should be offered at colleges that will benefit the work environment.

There is a growing interest in more flexible organizational structures which are determined by the demands of the task and the shared values of the organizational members. Roles, authority and positions in more flexible structures are defined according to the nature of the tasks and the capabilities of the individuals or groups who undertake them. Some policy developers expressed the view that flexibility in the hierarchy of the FET structure will enhance performance at all the three levels. More specifically policy developers felt that if college management structures are flexible they will be able move from readily defined institutional goals to unclear goals and uncertain responses. In this manner structures will not determine the needs but needs will determine the structure. Flexible and radical management structures are needed to respond to constantly changing demands of the resources and expertise of colleges. It is the assertion of some policy developers that colleges need to operate as 'open' systems in order to interact successfully with their environments. Therefore college structures should not be rigidly prescribed from above, but should be formed and adjusted at college level as and when the need arises.

#### **5.3.4 Theme 4: Managing the curriculum**

The college is a curriculum and managing the curriculum has become another facet of managing change as indicated by Lofthouse (1994: 152). To successfully manage the curriculum means being able to manage the ambiguities caused by overlapping and competing agendas in the field of curriculum studies (Lofthouse, 1994:140).



The curriculum is characterized by struggles between and among various pressure groups. Successful college managers are able to manage pressure groups, parents, students and politicians as they all jostle for the right to shape the curriculum (Lofthouse, 1994:140). In spite of all these jostles the curriculum of a college need to address particular needs. Therefore curriculum design and management need to balance national, provincial and local needs. Therefore the relationship between the three levels of policy is important in order to ensure that the curriculum of colleges addresses real issues.

#### **5.3.4.1 The old curriculum**

A very strong view came from some participants who argued that government has failed the FET college sector. The process of policy development and mergers was completed long time ago but the issue of what should be taught is still being a tussle. *“In my view we should have started with the curriculum – we should have started with the process that is going on now other than putting a lot of energy on mergers, structures, management and so on”* indicated the policy developer. This participant indicated that the curriculum is still being shaped and educators are in the process of being capacitated to deliver the envisaged curriculum. The implementation of the new FET curriculum policy in colleges will not be effective until a curriculum is designed and implemented in these colleges in Gauteng. The government plans and implements priorities as the decision maker without considering policy implementers on the ground. One policy developer asserts that curriculum design should have taken precedence over the merging of colleges. The national Department of Education proceeded with its plans and it has become evident that its priorities were incorrect.

Both policy developers and college managers in this study expressed views that paint a gloomy picture about curriculum design and management in Gauteng FET colleges. Policy developers as well as college managers agree that the curriculum that is offered at colleges is outdated and is incorrectly designed.

The curriculum does not address any current need. One policy developer says that “*the colleges at the time were focusing and still on the history of the apprenticeship-based past and industrial age and sitting in a position when the sector was providing an outdated and incorrectly designed curriculum to an ever increasing number of young learners and a disparity was growing*”. The previous curriculum that was offered by colleges in Gauteng was designed to support the apprenticeship system which in itself was not working. According to one policy developer the non-functionality of the previous curriculum was caused by the fact that the curriculum was designed to support technical skills rather than supporting the industry. In other words the curriculum was not responsive to the need of the industry and hence “*it’s dismal failure*”, using the words of a policy developer. The intentions of government were to facilitate the design of a responsive curriculum that would deal with national issues while at the same time addressing local needs.

Another policy developer indicated that although the old curriculum was ineffective the apprenticeship that was offered should be regarded as an important programme that can be used effectively for skills development in the country. According to this participant there is sufficient evidence to show that there were colleges that were functioning very well with regards skills development in colleges. In addition this participant indicates that problems that existed previously were not because of the design of the apprenticeship, but solely because of the lack of management skills to manage the curriculum. Another policy developer supports this view and indicates that there was a stage in the history of colleges where colleges had a strong relationship with industry where the curriculum was design to offer skills training as per industry requirements. Colleges were never meant to be stand-alone learning vehicles, but instead they were meant to have a relationship with the world of work all the time.

In addition this policy developer argues that the apprenticeship should be continued as there are managers in FET colleges in Gauteng who are able to put together an effective apprenticeship programme and also have the knowledge of how and when to link up with industry.

#### **5.3.4.2 The new responsive curriculum**

There is also a perception from policy developers and college managers that there needs to be a new curriculum and that this new curriculum should be finalized speedily and be implemented at colleges. One policy developer feels that the type of curriculum that should emerge should be the one to lead the colleges back into that relationship with the workplace but most importantly is that this new curriculum must be adapted to local conditions.

The emergence of learnerships as learning programme is presenting a model that can be used by FET colleges to develop skills for both young and old people. The new curriculum should present quality programmes and better quality services that deals with skills and competence development among learners. A college manager indicated that the envisaged curriculum should offer a wider choice of learning programmes to a much wider range of customers, from young through to mature adults. In short the new curriculum should be more focused on the skills needs of the country as the goal of government. A working relationship with college managers will ensure that an effective and a responsive curriculum is designed and successfully implemented at colleges in Gauteng.

### 5.3.4.3 Curriculum delivery

The way the curriculum is delivered is also important. One college manager indicated that colleges should begin to move from being inwardly focused and self-centred and explore possibilities of customer-focused learning programmes. New methods of delivering curriculum should be explored and should not follow the old traditional pseudo academic approach or even largely practical operational-based programmes as it was the case with the old curriculum.

Although apprenticeships systems are still viewed as relevant to skills development, learnership systems have come to replace these in South Africa. One policy developer pointed out that learnerships are a vehicle through which the skills need of the country can be met as this approach combines college tuition with company-based training and they are more flexible than apprenticeships. Learnerships therefore offer participating learners opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge that is relevant to the needs of employers.

It is the responsibility of the Gauteng Department of Education and the college management to ensure that staff has access to, and shared ownership of curriculum process and content. College managers pointed out that an important aspect of effective curriculum delivery is to fully involve educators with the curriculum in order to ensure ownership by those who will be delivering it in the classroom. This can be done in many ways and one of them is to invite those who are in practice to participate during the development of the national curriculum.

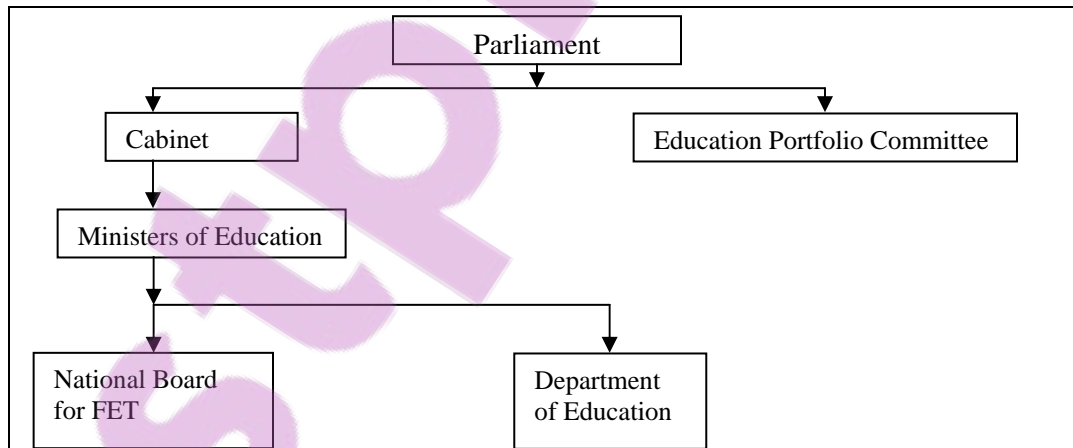
Secondly because the curriculum need to serve the needs of external stakeholders, it is therefore important to consult these stakeholders when deciding on delivery approaches. These will ensure that curriculum delivery methods are relevant and are responsive to stakeholders' interests.

### 5.3.5 Theme 5: Managing governance

Atchoarena and Delluc (2001:34) indicate that traditionally the state organizes the education system, including FET. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education therefore to oversee the governance of the FET sector but it is not to find more than one Ministry in a country overseeing governance in education.

In South Africa governance in education and training is split between the Department of Education and the Department of Labor. These two Ministries decide on the policy direction of government and relay their decisions to colleges through provincial Departments of Education and Labor centres regionally. Governance in education is concerned with relationships between people, i.e. individuals, interest groups, direct stakeholders, and institutions and structures in the education system (Department of Education, 2000:30). Therefore managing governance in FET implies ensuring that those who take decisions at college level do so in the interest of the college. Figure 5.2 below depicts governance at national level.

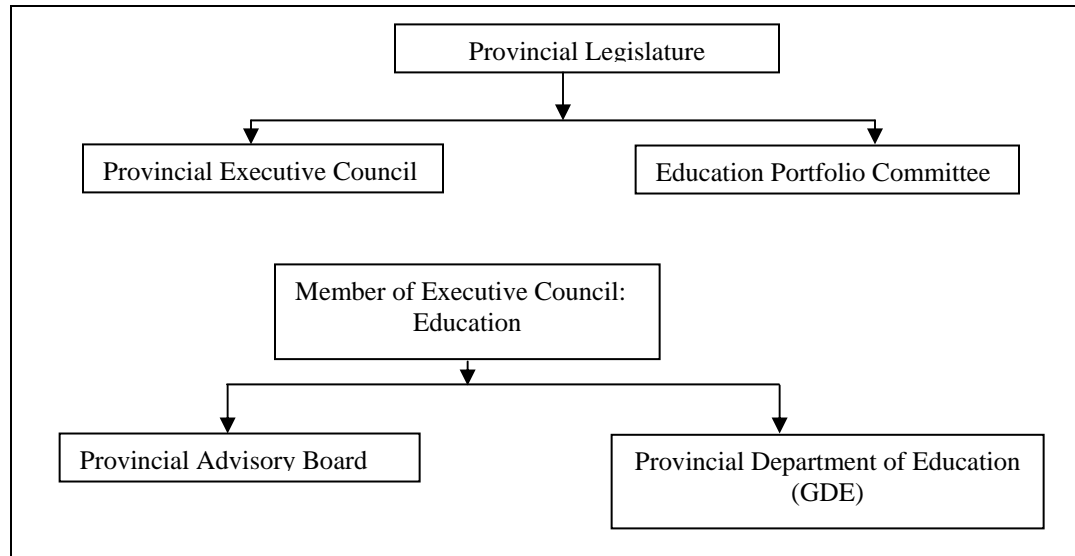
**Figure 5.2 Governance at National level (Zuma, 2000)**



At provincial level the MEC for Education is responsible for provision of FET.

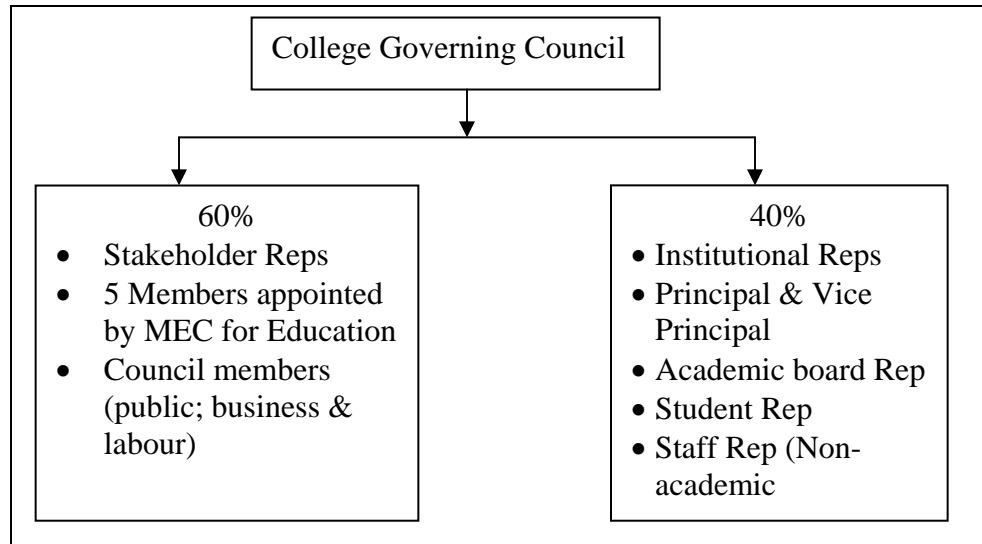
Figure 5.3 below shows how governance at this level is structured.

**Figure 5.3 Governance at Provincial level**



In terms of the Further Education and Training Act (98of 1998) the governance of FET colleges is the responsibility of the college council (Department of Education, 1998). Figure 5.3 below shows how governance at college level is structured. The council plays a critical role in terms of what goes on in the college and one of the key responsibilities of the college council is to develop a strategic plan for the college that will serve as a blueprint for all college activities. This implies that the consistency of the college effectiveness depends on the capacity and ability of the college council. A college council should have the capacity to perform its mandatory functions but also be allowed to do without imposed limitations. The manner in which these college councils functions or have capacity depends on how government relate to them in terms of policy. Policy intended to dispense more authority to college councils so that they can be able to effectively govern their colleges.

**Figure 5.4 Governance at College level (Zuma, 2000)**



### 5.3.5.1 Developing relationships with stakeholders

The relationships that a college has with its stakeholders are critical to its development and growth. The college is strategically positioned to serve the community that is regarded as the customer in education. One policy developer felt that the college council is conveniently positioned to respond to the needs of the community as the college is the closest to the community. Some policy developers indicated that it is important that the college council develop close relations with its communities in order to strengthen its capacity. The planning that is done by the council should be informed by local needs and these needs can only be established through the relationships that the college council has with communities. In addition the manager is able to use the structures created by council to clearly inform the community of what the college is doing and why the college is doing what it is doing. Furthermore strengths and weaknesses of the college need to be explained so that the community has a better insight into the activities of the college. This also assists in generating trust and interest to ensure community support.

It is of critical importance therefore that managers make the positive aspects of the college activities known to the community. It is therefore the responsibility of the college council to drive efforts to improve the efficiency and relevance of their colleges in Gauteng.

One policy developer indicated that the student component in colleges “*is beginning to flex muscles about their participation in the governance of their education*”. Students are an important part of college governance and their role is now recognized officially in Act 98 of 1998. Students should be represented on the governance structure of the college by the Student Representative Council (SRC) and this structure has been legislated by Act 98 of 1998. Interaction with and involvement of students in matters of college governance is a requirement as prescribed by legislation. Managing the participation of students in college affairs requires that the college manager be able to involve them especially on matters that affect them. One policy developer indicated that student participation should never be undermined by the college management as this has proven to be a recipe for a series of disruptions of the teaching and learning programme of the college. Disruptions do not only have negative results at college level but also disrupts the entire national programme. To counter students’ disruptions at Gauteng FET colleges will entail their full participation in the affairs of the college on matters that impacts on their education. Therefore the national Department of Education should perform its mandate as contained within the Constitution and develop policy that will facilitate full and democratic participation of students in their education. Therefore students should be considered earnestly especially when thinking about introducing change or implementing new policy.

A policy developer felt that there is lack of clear direction given by both the national Department of Education Gauteng Department of Education in terms of accountability of college councils. The roles and responsibilities of the various levels of governance are not clearly articulated for all key role players.



A policy developer indicated that “*our co-operative governance even though they belong to the province, they have a sense that in reality colleges are being worked by the national department, but also the national department is not bold to say these colleges belong to the province*”. Sometimes the national Department finds itself dealing directly with colleges and leaving out the province. As one college manager put it “*at one stage we were driven by national to put strategic plans. There was pressure on us to put those plans, only to discover that the province is still to put its own plan*”. With this kind of situation where there is no clear direction, college councils and management end up creating their own ambitions and this sometimes might not be in line with the intentions of government policy. Clear and unambiguous coordination of the various governance structures is of critical importance for the process of policy initiation and implementation to be successful.

It is important that clear and unambiguous communication networks and the flow of information are not obstructed at various levels of management. The bureaucracy should not in anyway compromise the provision of further education in Gauteng colleges. The willingness of government to develop capacity and the extent to which it grants autonomy will facilitate the effective functioning of college governance.

#### **5.3.5.2 Autonomy**

Decision making is one critical aspect which influences the effectiveness and efficiency of educational institutions. Autonomy means being able to make decisions without having to account to anyone. College councils are legally given the prerogative to decide on the form and other applicable aspects of the college. One college manager indicated that there are limitations as far as college councils’ autonomy is concerned.

The manager indicated that sometimes the province take decisions that are within the jurisdiction of college council and the province expect colleges to implementing these decisions. This scenario points out that national and provincial direct the way college councils' function is directed by national. One college manager pointed out that decisions about what should college councils do in colleges are taken at different levels and this usually impacts on the functionality of the individual college. This is the situation that existed prior 1998 when college councils had no authority to decide on the course of the college but to offer just advisory services to colleges. This kind of a situation suggests that college councils in Gauteng have no powers to take decisions and decisions are taken on their behalf at another level. The national government should provide training to councilors so that they can perform the work that they are mandated to perform

During the process of transformation colleges were afforded time to develop plans to direct its activities. According to one policy developer the development of those plans was the responsibility of the college councils with the principal held accountable. According to another policy developer colleges were given the discretion by the national department to make decisions with regard to what they plan for the college. Colleges could therefore through council, decide on the kind of curriculum they want to offer. Furthermore a policy developer felt that college council members lack capacity and this leads to indecisiveness in planning and decision-making. At college level the principal should enhance the process of governance by being supportive to council as well as providing information to council members.

Learning and teaching takes place at college level and therefore it stands to reason that the quality of learning and forms of delivery should be determined at the level of the college in order to ensure relevance and responsiveness. Taking decisions in terms of what are the goals of the national curriculum in the first place and secondly what objective a college need to address is critical for the council.

It is important that government facilitate the design and development of a curriculum that addresses issues of national concern but also college management has the responsibility to implement national policy by aligning their curriculum strategies to the national vision.

### **5.3.5.3 Staffing**

Colleges should be able to employ competent staff to ensure that the vision of the college and that of DoE are realized. To ensure that this happen one policy developer indicated that the DoE is considering shifting the employer status to colleges' councils. Presently the Gauteng Department of Education is the employer and employs staff on behalf of colleges. The granting of employer status to colleges will increase the autonomy of colleges in terms of staff recruitment and enable college councils to take strategic decisions in terms of college staff requirements. According to another policy developer granting greater authority to college councils will enable colleges to respond timeously to the challenges and changes that may arise now and then in the college environment. In short certain policy developers felt that with the increased degree of autonomy to employ staff, the college council will be able to employ people it considers competent to direct the vision and mission of the college. Government policies should therefore empower college councils to be able to decide on the skills and knowledge the college needs to address identified issues on one hand and on the other hand colleges should exercise their autonomy in such a manner that decisions taken at college level complement government policies.

### **5.3.6 Theme 6: Planning**

Everything starts with planning and planning is very critical for the success of any organization. According to Stoner, et al. (2001:265) planning is a process of setting goals and choosing the means to achieve those goals.

Without planning managers cannot know how to organize people and resources effectively and therefore planning should be evident at all levels of the organization. In other words planning in the sense of this study should be at national, provincial, and college levels. But one college manager felt strongly that this is the responsibility of the national department to “make planning coherent, make synergy, and put things together”. The different levels of planning should complement each other in order to create synergy within the department and colleges in Gauteng.

Strategic plans are designed by high-ranking managers and define the broad goals for the organization. Strategic plans deal with the relationships between people at an organization and people acting at other organizations. Strategic planning has both a planning component and a decision-making component. If the strategic plan is correct, any number of tactical errors can be made and yet the organization proves successful.

Strategic management provides a disciplined way for managers to make sense of the environment in which their organization operates, and then to act. Zuma (2000:87) indicates that planning is an important tool for management. According to him (i.e. Zuma) planning is equivalent to decision-making. Successful managers are those who plan and make decisions based on their plans. According to Zuma (2000:88) it is the responsibility of managers to determine the organization’s goals and then decide how best to achieve them. Therefore planning is critical at all the levels of management.

#### **5.3.6.1 National – level planning**

This strategy is referred to as corporate-level strategy in the business fraternity. With national-level planning top management oversees the interests of the entire organizations made up of more than one site. The aim of national-level planning is to put a broad vision and goals which should guide the entire FET sector.

One policy developer indicated that the whole process of planning at the national department was informed by research that looked at the whole FET system. The purpose of the research was to establish where colleges were at the time and also find out what economic regions they were serving and at the end of the day nine provincial plans supported by 50 college plans were developed. This kind of planning is inclusive and consultative and allowed the participation of colleges who drew their own plans. The department of education, both national and province, worked closely with colleges in this regard to get the plans in place.

As the national department is accountable to the socio-economic demands of the country, a policy developer felt that the national plan must reflect its purpose of making colleges more relevant in order to support economic growth which is the broad goal of the department. The national plan should outline critical key targets that government thinks should be achieved and this will be creating a guideline for colleges to develop their plans.

One policy developer felt that a national-level plan “*should provide a set of guidelines for the college within which to develop their own strategies*”. This policy developer indicated that national-level planning is not meant to be the plan for colleges instead it meant to guide colleges. National nor provincial departments should not prescribe plans to colleges. The province has the responsibility to review plans for the purpose of funds allocation and not to reject college plans. Instead of rejecting plans, provinces should rather negotiate changes, indicated one college manager.

### **5.3.6.2 Provincial – level planning**

Planning at this level is concerned with policy implementation and more specifically with the accreditation of local colleges. Planning at this level should be within the boundaries of the national plan and the allocation of resources and more specifically, funding.

As far as provincial planning is concerned participants indicated that the province is always not in the loop. As one college manager puts it “*we were driven by national to put strategic plans. There was pressure on us to put those plans, only to discover that the province is still to put its own plan*”. Another college manager indicated that sometimes the province delays in its planning and providing guidelines and when colleges submit their plans, usually they (i.e. colleges) find that they have to redo all their planning. Usually there is no synergy between the provincial plan and the college plans. Sometimes colleges develop their plans before GDE can prepare its provincial plan. This situation leads to colleges to feel that their plans are not characterized by college needs but those of the province.

The unclear demarcation of responsibility is affecting how different levels within the FET college sector function. When national directs college activities this becomes a constitutional transgression. It is the responsibility of GDE to guide FET colleges in the Province by approving the colleges’ mission and plans. On the other hand if the province is not performing its legislative functions, it transgresses the law and the constitution. Therefore provincial-level planning should be effective and guide and support colleges and approve their plans.

### **5.3.6.3 College-level planning**

Planning at this level is more concerned with managing the interests and operations of the college. This can be safely referred to as an operational plan and deals with activities of individual college in Gauteng. Some policy developers felt that colleges need to devote more time and energy on planning as this is the level at which implementation occurs. Curriculum delivery happens at this level and any mishaps in this regard cannot be afforded. In addition the college should use its plan to position itself to function optimally within its changing environment.

A college-level plan should be informed by local needs that the college needs to address. According to one policy originator managers need to understand both the local environment plus national staff before they can embark on planning. This is an important requirement for management. A policy developer felt that colleges should be responsive to the local needs and they should be able to show in their planning how they will meet local community needs and contribute towards the broad national targets.

Another policy developer indicated that for successful planning college top leadership and staff should plan together in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the college sector. Another policy developer warned that managers should note that “*people want to make a contribution*” and this enhances policy implementation. Rather than just being told what to do, staff want to be empowered. Managers can empower their staff by instilling the sense of ownership of the college plan. One of the policy developers says that empowerment comes in the form of involving staff in the planning processes of the college. Managers should remember that “people want to make a contribution”.

Planning should flow from central point through to implementation level if effectiveness is to be realized. While it is important to have synergy in planning, it is also equally important to ensure that planning at all levels addresses key aspects of policy implementation. Therefore planning should be bottom-up and not the other way round. It is important that the college plan informs that of GDE and GDE’s plan informs the national plan. Presently planning is done in reversal. Top structures inform lower structures and this might lead to a situation of compromising policy intentions.

#### 5.3.6.4 Strategy implementation

For successful implementation of strategy, top management should decentralize decision making. Successful strategy implementation is depended upon lower level structures being able to take those decisions that are critical for implementation. One policy developer indicated that sometimes it is necessary to make temporary structural changes to enable policy implementation to be effective. Therefore strategy implementation is in the first place depended on a relevant structure. One policy developer said that a structure must match strategy and not the other way around. A strategy that matches the structure is not responding to any strategic need except to accommodate the operational structure. Therefore the structure should be flexible to allow for changes in the environment at any given time.

Thirdly strategy needs to be institutionalized. A strategy should be institutionalized. It must be connected to the culture, the quality system and other driving forces in the college. It is impossible to successfully implement a strategy that contradicts the culture of an organization. One college manager indicated that sometimes it becomes difficult to implement departmental strategies as most of the time these strategies are removed from what is going on in the colleges.

There is lack of synergy in planning within the FET college sector. One policy developer attributes this to unclear responsibilities between DoE and GDE. For instance a policy developer indicated *“I do not know where colleges get their vision and mission from. I think it has been a dodgy area, from the national level all the way down because colleges were supposed to be the responsibility of provincial departments”*. This kind of a situation confuses colleges as they sometimes find themselves not knowing who to account to and who they should listen to. In trying to show this confusion between national and GDE one policy developer cited college examinations as an illustration that provinces are adjudicating their responsibilities.



As indicated earlier, colleges are the competence of provinces but one finds that FET college examinations are run by the national department. The Gauteng province should be managing college examinations, but this responsibility is presently carried out by the national department. Proper coordination and delineation of responsibilities between the two levels of government is attributed to this kind of situation.

Confusion as a result of this kind of situations is detrimental to the successful implementation of government policy. Colleges end up not knowing what policy should be implemented and which not to implement. Colleges will end up creating their own ambitions and this might lead to a situation where government goals are compromised.

## **5.4 FINDINGS**

### **5.4.1 Theme 1: Centralization and decentralization**

#### **5.4.1.1 Centralization**

Centralization is defined as the amount of authority placed at the highest level of an organization to take decisions. The national Department of Education (DoE) is the top uppermost decision making structure of the department. It was indicated by policy developers and college managers that presently planning and decision-making are heavily centralized. Aspects such as policy development, research and planning are centralized at national without colleges making any contributions.

Policy developers and college managers both agree that it is desirable that certain key decisions are taken centrally. Policy developers say that centralization will enable the national department to put control measures on the college environment to ensure that the college sector is transformed to address national needs and goals. In this regard decisions such as determining national priorities should be centralized at national level.

In addition policy developers argued that centralization ensures that the various levels of the department account to some top level authority. When strategic decisions are taken at a central point, those who should implement the decisions need to report back and this emphasizes accountability on both the decision maker and the implementer. Policy and policy priorities is the prerogative of the national Department of Education and in terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Gauteng Department of Education is the implementer of this policy priorities. GDE should plan for implementation and report its progress in this regard to the national DoE. Centralization therefore also ensures that work is done and done according to the centrally developed plan.

#### **5.4.1.2 Decentralization**

Although policy developers felt that central control is necessary, they also expressed the feeling that the type of centralization envisaged should not turn colleges into slaves that work on the master's decisions without any input whatsoever. In this regard policy developers feel that a certain measure of authority should be decentralized to lower levels, especially FET colleges to ensure successful implementation of national policies. Decentralization is needed because it allows decisions about policy implementation to be taken at a site of implementation.

Policy developers indicated that decision-making has been decentralized to colleges. One policy developer indicated that colleges have been given the discretion to make decisions and also to develop college plans. Another policy developer indicated that developments are at an advanced stage to decentralize more authority to college councils in terms of employer status. With this increased authority college councils should be able to employ staff at their colleges.

Although policy developers indicated that some aspects within the FET college sector have been decentralized, strong sentiments emerged advocating for more decentralization. College managers felt that increased decision-making authority should be given to college management and council. These college managers felt that colleges are meant to serve their communities and therefore their plans should reflect and address community needs and this is not possible if they are limited by policy to take certain decisions in this regard. If decisions are taken at a level that is removed from the communities, then it becomes very difficult to implement policies that seek to address their needs and demands.

College managers further indicated that decentralization should be supported by strong coordination and leadership. Colleges felt that decentralization should be properly coordinated to ensure that decisions taken at a lower level can be supported and monitored by a higher level structure.

Another finding in this study on decentralization is that policy developers feel that for policy to be successfully implemented at FET colleges in Gauteng, colleges will need to be capacitated. Capacity building programs and workshops should be organized for college managers and council members. These will ensure that both managers and council members execute their functions from an informed background and this will enhance the implementation of national policy.

Both centralization and decentralization play an important role in terms of policy development and policy implementation. There is a need to have decisions taken centrally in order to be able to coordinate activities of the entire department of education. Secondly centrally determined decisions help with accountability. Centralization ensures that work is done according to a particular standard. Decentralization on the other side of the pendulum helps with addressing local demands and needs. The constantly changing environment of colleges in Gauteng calls for decentralized decision making to allow management to acquire and adjust resources in accordance to needs.

#### **5.4.2 Theme 2: Managing resources**

State resources are always limited and therefore their utilization should be carefully carried out in order to ensure value for money. The degree of success in policy implementation is proportional to the availability of these scarce resources. In other words the availability and use of resources are the determinants of the degree of the success of policy implementation.

Policy developers and college managers indicated that the supply of resources by government to FET colleges in Gauteng is limited. Policy developers expressed that in this situation colleges need to be entrepreneurial and raise additional operational resources. This calls for managers to manage their colleges as business entities as this will help them raise additional funds for the colleges. Although the study found that participants felt that college managers need to raise additional funds, it was also found that the policy environment as it stands presently does not allow this. A policy developer indicated that policy should create an enabling environment for managers to act in an entrepreneurial manner in order to enhance the performance of their colleges with additional resources.

It was also found that some of college managers are under qualified and cannot manage effectively. Policy developers and college managers suggested that human capital should be enhance through capacity building initiatives in order to improve the performance of colleges.

The management of resources requires managers to possess certain skills. Policy developers indicated that it is the responsibility of GDE to skill college managers on issues that pertain to resources management. The skilling of managers can enhance policy implementation at college level.

### **5.4.3 Theme 3: Management structures**

Management structures are the key in policy development and implementation. A structure is defined as a formally instituted pattern of authority and an official body of rules and procedures that are used to aid organizations realize their goals. A structure is created to promote and facilitate the effectiveness of an organization.

It was found in this study that management structures for FET colleges in are not effective. The management structures of FET colleges are still plagued by many past problems and these renders effectiveness difficult. The previous separation of colleges into state and state-aided colleges influences the way new FET college managers manage. Managers of FET colleges in Gauteng have to deal with these problems on a continuous basis and they were found to be indecisive when it comes to managing these situations.

In addition it was found that the national department was slow when it comes to the transformation of college structures. Policy developers indicated that the transformation of colleges has not yielded any results when it comes to management structures.

The composition of these structures is still dominated by males with few if no female in key management positions. There is still no single FET college in Gauteng that is headed by a black woman. Most key positions are occupied by males and mostly Afrikaners. While the demographics of the student population indicate that the majority of learners in most Gauteng colleges are black, management structures are still not representative. Much has not happened in terms of transforming college structures to respond favorably to the new challenges in the college sector in Gauteng.

#### **5.4.4. Theme 4: Managing the curriculum**

Education is about the curriculum and therefore the successful design and management of the curriculum results in effective education. A national curriculum is a reflection of the national needs of the country. It was found that the curriculum for FET colleges should be constituted by government goals and priorities. This kind of curriculum will be addressing the vision of the department of quality skills development for the country as well as responding to many broad national problems in South Africa.

It was established in this study that the curriculum that is on offer in FET colleges in Gauteng is old and out-dated. It is not relevant and responsive to the needs of the country and therefore it needs to be speedily changed. College managers indicated that a new and a customer-focused curriculum is needed.

Furthermore it was found that learnerships have replaced the old apprenticeship system for crafts skills development. Learnerships are found to be the new approach that the country as a whole has adopted as a skills development strategy. In addition it was found that learnerships are a way of bringing colleges and industry together for the benefit of learners and the province of Gauteng.

The involvement of educators during the curriculum design and development stages was found to be critical as well. Participants indicated that the effective and successful implementation of the curriculum depends on the role played by educators.

It was found that educators desire to be part of the process of policy development as they want to contribute towards its success. Colleges, GDE and national should therefore afford educators with opportunities to be part of processes that deal with curriculum issues. This will enhance curriculum delivery.

#### **5.4.5 Theme 5: Managing governance**

Governance has taken a central role in education. This situation is attributed to the political history in South Africa where structures that supported government policies were given a say in education matters. One of the benefits of the democratic process in South Africa is the legitimization of college councils. College councils are regarded as governors of colleges and are tasked to oversee the affairs of their colleges.

It was found in the study that councils in Gauteng colleges are concerned have an important role to play. College councils have a responsibility to develop the strategic plan of the college. This is a legislative mandate and college councils have to carry out. Coupled with the development of a strategic plan, it was found that council has to mobilize social partners of the college. The function of mobilizing these social partners position colleges strategically. When social partners are involved in the activities of the college, it strengthens the capability to serve local needs which plays a critical in the relevance of each college.

For college councils in Gauteng to develop effective strategic plans, it was found that autonomy is important. In this regard it was found that presently college councils are not autonomous as they are still driven by either the national department or provincial department, whichever gets to reach colleges earlier. College councils are not able to make key strategic decisions with regards the operations of colleges. One college manager cited as an example the fact that college councils cannot decide on the form that the college wants to take. This should be decided by GDE. A participant indicated that councils are only allowed to take petty decisions that do not necessarily give any impetus to the college. It was found that decisions that college councils can take are of discretionary nature and these kinds of decisions can be rescinded at any time by higher authority.

#### **5.4.6 Theme 6: Planning**

Planning within the FET college sector takes place at three levels which is at national, provincial and college levels. Each of these levels develops their own plans that must fit in with plans of the other two levels to enhance policy development and implementation.

The finding of this study is that planning for the FET college sector starts at national level where broad goals are defined. This plan incorporates government goals as far as the whole FET college sector is concerned. Presently there is a national plan in place in the form of policies that are driving the FET college sector.

The next level of planning is provincial, i.e. Gauteng Department of Education. It was found that there is lack of effective planning at this level. College managers indicated that they are always called to order when they do their planning because colleges want to plan and when the province does not provide guidelines, colleges plan according to national guidelines.



It was also found that sometimes the national department requests plans directly from colleges. This is an indication that there is no proper coordination and the province is always lacking behind when the national department calls for the submission of provincial plans.

The last level of planning is at the college which is regarded as the site of implementation. It was found that college councils do prepare college plan in accordance with provincial guidelines although the ownership and the effectiveness of these plans are questionable.

It was established that college councils do not have the authority to determine the strategic plans without the interference of either national or GDE. The college plans are submitted for approval through to either the province or national. After approval then these plans serve as the road map for the individual colleges in Gauteng.

## **5.5 CHAPTER REVIEW**

Data presented in this chapter was collected through interviews and findings of the interviews were presented. The purpose of this chapter was to try and understand policy initiation and implementation through the perspectives of participants. Participants' perspectives and the researcher's interpretation of collected data were outlined.

Six themes that emerged from the data analysis were presented and these painted a picture of the relationship between policy initiation and implementation in Gauteng colleges. This chapter also captured the findings of the study. The next Chapter will try to explain this relationship.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE RELATIONSHIP AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The problem that this study was set to investigate is the relationship between the intended policy of government as captured in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training and the White Paper on Further Education and Training (Education White Paper 4) and implemented policy at Further Education and Training colleges in Gauteng. The study wanted to establish what the relationship between intended policy and implemented policy is.

A number of researchers have indicated that there is a gap between intended policy and implemented policy. Various reasons have been presented for this gap but most significantly non-implementation of intended policy has been cited as the one lacking. The following reasons have often been singled out by some as the cause for the non-implementation of government policy:

- lack of resources;
- difference in approach to policy development;
- inductive thinking focused on experience while disregarding theory behind practice
- deductive thinking – theory without considering practice or experience
- lack of communication

Transformation of the Further Education and Training (FET) sector and more specifically the college sector is at the forefront of government policy and this is reflected in the Education White Paper 4 title: A programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training. Government intends to transform the college sector into a vibrant, high-quality and responsive system that will spearhead human resources development in South Africa.

A number of problems that have always characterised the previous college sector have been outlined in chapter one section 1.3. Therefore transformation of the college sector will entail addressing these problems in a systematic and coordinated way.

The transformation of the college sector depends largely on the policies that are put into place and the capacity of management at college level to implement those policies. It has been argued extensively that South Africa has developed some of the best policies in the world and therefore non-transformation of the college sector cannot be blamed on bad policies. If transformation depends on policy and capacity and it has been shown that good policy has been developed, then the next aspect to examine is the capacity to implement policy.

It is argued in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training that the transformation of the FET college sector in South Africa to a large extent depends on the effective management of colleges. In other words transformation at college level will be influenced by the capacity of college managers to implement the new FET policy. It is in the context of establishing how developed policy and management capacity influence the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng that this study was conceived.

In order to be able to establish this relationship the following objectives were set for this study:

- Establish the original meaning of the FET policy from the policy originators' perspective;
- Establish from managers of FET colleges in Gauteng their understanding of the implemented policy; and lastly
- Describe this relationship between intended and implemented policy

The relationship between government policy and management practices at FET college level presented in this chapter emanates from the findings presented in this study and in particular those presented in Chapter 5. The themes identified in the research data will be used to explain the kind of relationship that exists between government policy and management practices at college level in Gauteng. Intended policy and implemented policy can be seen as two ends of a continuum. When the one end outweighs the other then this signifies that there is a problem. To explain how the two ends balances requires that forces that are at play at the two ends be examined and quantified. At the same time it is necessary to explain the relationship between intended policy and implemented policy, which requires that the views of those involved be used.

From the literature review a number of important aspects that pertain to policy development and implementation have emerged. In Chapter 2 **Policy conceptualisation** was dealt with and it emerged that the purpose of policy is to address a particular problem or need. Therefore the intentions of the policy maker need to be very clear in the policy documents and should be carried through to implementation. In short policy implementation should match policy intentions.

Chapter 3 focused on **Further Education and Training policy from the international perspective**. FET is internationally well known as VET and it regarded as the most appropriate approach to skills development, which in turn assists in alleviating poverty and unemployment. Various international organizations such as the World Bank, UNESCO and Danida have been dedicating resources to the development of VET policies.

Chapter 4 addressed **The research design** of the investigation. It was shown in Chapter 4 that a number of quantitative studies have been conducted to measure the degree to which certain government policies have been implemented or to verify certain claims in research.

Chapter 4 of this study indicated, that to be able to understand non-implementation of government policy a qualitative research is more appropriate and hence the qualitative approach was adopted.

## **6.2 THE RELATIONSHIP**

### **6.2.1 Centralization and decentralization**

Centralisation and decentralisation refers to the amount of authority the three tiers of management and governance has. It was found that centralization has as its intention the measure of control nationally. Accountability by both those in authority and those implementing policy should always be ensured. Lastly it was also established that centralised authority is very desirable in order to define clearly the operating frameworks for colleges as well as the two level of government (i.e. national and provincial).

The Green Paper on Further Education and Training (RSA, 1998) does not explicitly assert the amount of authority each of the levels will wield in terms of taking decisions.

In other words there is no certain measure of authority allocated by the Green Paper as government policy to any of the management and governance structures envisaged by the FET policy.

The current circumstances is that according to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) the National Department of Education (DoE) has authority to formulate policy and take decisions with regards the education system of which FET is part. There is no other piece of policy that articulates which power should be centralised and which and to what extend should be decentralised.

This study has established that there are centralised functions within the DoE and this is for the purpose of ensuring accountability by both provinces but more particularly the colleges. The DoE is given mandate by legislation to determine national priorities and therefore in this regard authority is centred at national level.

A certain measure of centralised authority will ensure that even if policy allocates certain powers to colleges, they still need to be able to account to a higher authority if the FET system has to respond to national needs.

Autonomy is very critical in the FET policy. Decentralisation of authority was seen as the ultimate solution to relevance and responsiveness. The core business of education is curriculum delivery and therefore policy intentions were to devolve more power to those who are directly involved with taking decisions on curriculum matters. Colleges as sites of curriculum delivery were therefore seen as appropriate to have increased authority in terms of taking decisions with regards curriculum design and delivery. These colleges are in a better position to interact with local communities, employers as well as the labour market and giving colleges more power will enable them to take appropriate and beneficial decisions.

Presently the scale of power tilts in favour of centralisation. Colleges as sites of policy implementation do not have sufficient authority to make strategic decisions, as these are privileges enjoyed by the national Department of Education. Therefore the relationship between policy intentions and practice are skewed. Practice is not according to the intentions of policy. Policy indicates that colleges will be given substantial powers and promotes partnerships between government, business and labour, and communities (RSA, 1998b: 27). It was established in this study that colleges do not have the power and authority to enter into any partnership. The authority for this kind of an initiative rests with the Gauteng Department of Education.

### **6.2.2 Managing resources**

The FET policy places the responsibility of managing college resources squarely on the shoulders of college managers. The resources that the state provides to colleges are limited in nature and therefore this requires college managers to have the appropriate skills and capacity to manage them effectively. Although policy mentions entrepreneurship at college and both policy originators and college managers agree that government needs to develop a framework that will encourage entrepreneurship, the implementation at college level does not reflect the spirit of entrepreneurship.

While managers are expected to raise additional resources for their colleges, practice bars colleges from entering into contracts or agreements with third parties without the permission of the Provincial Department of Education (GDE).

Therefore government policy does not enable college managers to manage and raise resources in the most effective way that will enhance performance at college level.

### 6.2.3 Management structures

The FET policy is very clear on management structures within this sector. This FET policy augments other pieces of legislation such as the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) with regard to the management of FET. Therefore management structures in education are clearly demarcated by policy although there are problems with regards to the implementation of these policies. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996) unambiguously states that it is the responsibility of the national Minister of Education to determine national policy but it is the responsibility of provincial departments to implement policy.

College managers who participated in this study indicated that sometimes there are problems in terms of to whom they should account. For an example the national department sometimes requests college plans directly from colleges without consulting GDE first. Examinations at colleges for example are run by the National Department of Education while in terms of policy GDE should be running examinations for colleges.

The structure at national level is fully functional in terms of fulfilling its mandate of managing the entire education system. The Green Paper on Further Education and Training alludes to the problem created between the national and provincial management structures in terms of implementing policy. There are usually overlaps in terms of functions between these two structures and this creates confusion for colleges. A lack of clear specific responsibilities of the national and provincial department creates management problems for colleges.

The college management structure is not functional due to the slowness of policy implementation. The FET policy talks about the transformation of management structures within the entire system but implementation is slow in this regard.



This non-implementation of policy results in the non-functionality of college management. Thus whilst policy pushes for the transformation of structures within the FET, practices at college level are hindered by its non-implementation at other levels.

#### **6.2.4 The Curriculum**

Policy talks about a relevant and responsive curriculum. This means a curriculum that will address both national and local needs. In addition the new FET curriculum should link colleges with the world of work but in terms of practices at college level this seems not to be the case. College managers are not able to take decisions or form relationships with for instance, the private sector providers in order to propel their colleges to better performing ones.

The establishment of such relationships is seen as contradicting what the Gauteng Department of Education expects from colleges. The Gauteng Department of Education insists on first sanctioning any agreements on behalf of colleges of which most of such interventions usually takes long or sometimes they never materialise. This is in contrast to what policy stipulates in terms of relevance and responsiveness. Responsiveness addresses local needs of which the college through management is able to identify and respond accordingly. Currently curriculum seems to be removed from the communities which colleges are deemed to serve.

#### **6.2.5 Governance**

In terms of governance policy states that there are three tiers of governance for the FET system. Each of the tiers should be working towards enhancing the others instead of seeing themselves as independent of each other. In addition policy indicates that governance at college level should have autonomy to make decisions that impact on colleges.

In this regard policy allocates more autonomy to college councils as governors of FET colleges in Gauteng but practice is far from this policy indication. The National Department of Education still defines what colleges should do especially in terms of strategic planning. Planning is still centralised and colleges are expected to mirror their plans to those of National.

### **6.2.6 Planning**

Planning is an important aspect of functionality. For any system to function effectively planning should precede all other activities. Government policy articulates the planning sequence that should be applicable within the whole system of the FET. It was established that there is a lack of co-ordination among the three levels of planning and this results in creating confusion at the level of implementation. Colleges sometimes find themselves without any direction because of this lack of co-ordination especially between GDE and DoE.

In summarizing the relationship between government policy and management practices at college it can be stated that theoretically policy informs practice whilst at the same time practice is evaluated to further inform policy development. Practically this relationship depicts a different scenario. Those who are tasked with the responsibility of supporting and monitoring government implementation usually do so without due consideration of policy directives. Those who actualise policy find themselves implementing departmental decisions that contradict policy intentions. This then creates a relationship of 'silos' i.e. operating as two totally unrelated entities.

## 6.3 CONCLUSION

Based on the research question as elucidated in chapter one, the study can deduce the following conclusions:

### 6.3.1 Understanding of policy

To be able to understand policy and its concepts requires direct immersion in the process of policy development and implementation. Policy originators come into policy committees with prior knowledge, experiences and understanding of the subject at hand. In other words they bring preconceived ideas about policy, but their engagement with the process enriches their understanding of the policy under consideration. The development of policy involves research, analysis of data and the formulation of the policy statements by policy originators themselves.

Again there are discussions within policy committees that further clarify certain aspects of policy members who might not have fully understood a particular policy topic. For instance within the National Committee on Further Education there were sub-committees such as Programmes, Curriculum, Qualifications, Support Services and the sub-committee on Governance, Policy and Planning. Subject specialists served on these committees but what is important is that discussions were conducted within the entire committee to ensure that non-subject specialists within the broader committee understand issues in the same way as subject specialists.

The understanding of policy originators of the FET policy intentions is common. Even though the final report of the National Committee on Further Education was submitted in August 1997 and this study was conducted nine years later policy originators are still in a position to agree on most policy intentions and issues.

This is evident in their responses to the interview questions and there were no contradictions whatsoever amongst policy originators. Therefore it can be concluded that the development of government policy is a rigorous process that yield good policies with intentions clearly articulated and understood by all policy originators.

### **6.3.2 Policy implications for management practices in Gauteng colleges**

Policy implementation at college level is the responsibility of managers. The success or failure of policy implementation is directly linked to the capacity and ability of college managers. Therefore once policy has been developed and adopted for implementations, colleges' managers need to familiarize themselves with those policy imperatives that have a bearing on implementation at college level. College managers need to firstly ensure that they understand policy as intended as this will provide a sound basis on which to found their implementation.

Secondly government policy has direct implications on the capacity of managers. Effective management skills and thorough knowledge by college managers will ensure that these managers are able to plan and implement policy without serious challenges. This then requires colleges' managers to be prepared to acquire new skills for them to manage effectively, more specifically in the twenty first century. The conclusion that is reached is that government policy requires that college managers should have the capacity to manage change effectively and efficiently by being knowledgeable and skilled on managing and implementing policy.

### **6.3.3 Policy interpretation by college managers**

Interpretation of the policy by college managers, as expounded in the Green Paper on Further Education, seems to have been correct. From the responses of college managers to the interview questions it can be deduced that college managers have a common understanding of policy.

There were no contradictions with regards policy statements and they all understood policy the same way. Therefore it can be concluded that college managers have the ability to engage with policy and interpret it correctly.

### **6.3.4 Implementation of policy by college managers**

Implementation of government policy takes place at colleges in Gauteng and managers of these colleges are at the forefront of policy implementation. Therefore practices at FET colleges in Gauteng should be interpreted in the context of management practices. The success or failure of policy should be attributed to the role that college managers play in policy implementation.

College managers sometimes implement government policy according to their own interpretation and understanding as it has been established by this study and their understanding is congruent with policy intentions. Therefore college managers strive to interpret, understand and implement policy in terms of government intentions. For instance policy requires that college managers spearhead the development of college plans and colleges in Gauteng are implementing this imperative. It can therefore be concluded that sometimes management practices at FET colleges in Gauteng comply with policy requirements.

But sometimes college managers find themselves implementing un-adopted policies. They find themselves implementing what bureaucrats insist on. Taking the example of planning as cited above, college managers find themselves having to develop their plans to meet the needs of the provincial department or the national department. This is in contradiction with policy. Policy indicates that planning for colleges should be informed by local needs but colleges find their plans being more focused on the provincial or national needs than on the needs of their immediate local communities.

Therefore the implementation of policy is not uniform and it can be concluded that how policy is implemented at colleges in Gauteng is dependent on the power relations. Those with power insist on the implementation of policy that is more favourable to them.

#### **6.4 POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study on the relationship between government policy and management practices at FET colleges attempted to address the issue of policy origination and implementation for the college sector, however there were other aspects that impact on the two concepts and these were not addressed in this study. Therefore further research into power relations, capacity to implement policy and aspects can assist in forming a much clearer picture with regards the relationship between government policy and management practices at FET colleges. The following aspects are considered most important in this study in order to take this debate forward:

#### **6.4.1 Capacity of Provincial Departments of Education to mediate the FET policy**

Provincial Departments of Education (PDEs) play an important role in the process of policy implementation. Therefore it will be important to establish if these PDEs have capacity in terms of power and authority as well as knowledge and skills to effectively develop provincial policy that seeks to mediate national FET policy in order to ensure that implementation of the intended policy is realized.

#### **6.4.2 Harmonization of power relations between the national Department of Education and Provincial Department of Education**

The tensions between the two centres of Constitutional power need to be resolved if the implementation of government policy is to be improved. This study established successful policy implementation is impacted negatively by the tussle between the national department and provincial department in terms of control of FET colleges. Harmonizing the power relations between these centres of power can benefit colleges and therefore there is a need to research how this can be achieved.

#### **6.4.3 Allowing FET colleges to manage themselves while delivering on both National and Provincial needs**

It is important to incorporate the needs of the local community which FET colleges serve with those embedded in national policy in order to meet the requirements of the Constitution that stipulate that local communities need to determine their destiny, especially education for their children. Therefore research into how PDEs should implement national policy successfully while also meeting their legislative obligation is important.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main argument in this study is that to be able to establish and describe the relation between government and management practices at FET colleges it is important to have a better understanding of the processes of policy conceptualization (statements of intent) and implementation (experiences of college managers). Various reasons have been given for the gap between policy and practice but the relationship between policy and practice has never been explained. Therefore this study was undertaken to investigate and describe this relationship between government policy and management practices at college level in the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng.

The purpose of policy is usually is to guide practice. Practice that is guided by policy needs to differ in effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy and responsiveness from haphazard policy. Government policy should therefore be able to regulate practice in order for government to effectively, efficiently, adequately and responsively address issues that are of both national and local importance. However, policy and practice normally do not relate in terms of addressing a common goal.

The goal that is envisaged to be addressed by policy is not always the same goal that is addressed by practice. This situation creates a challenge for government on how then to ensure that the planned policy will be turned into practice.

It was established by this study that the cause of this situation (where intended policy differs from implemented policy) is not necessarily because those who implement the planned policy do not understand the policy. It was also established that issues of power affect policy development and implementation.



Those who wield more power expect those with less power to act in accordance with their wishes. In this regard therefore wishes of those in power supersede policy. The South African policy development processes are deemed effective. According to Sayed and Jansen (2001:1) comparatively speaking South Africa has an abundance of policy expertise and this aids the development of good policies, but good policies do not guarantee effective policy implementation. Therefore adopted policy cannot be blamed for the unchanging practices at implementation level with regard to the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng.

It was indicated in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training that transforming the college sector will depend largely on the capacity of managers at the level of implementation. Managers of FET colleges need to possess certain critical skills in order to be able to manage the transformation process within their colleges. Some of these skills include policy interpretation, planning and managing resources to mention just a few. Accordingly the possession of management skills should enable managers to successfully implement government policy.

It was established in this study that it is important to develop good policies that are clearly understood by all role-players in order to facilitate implementation. Furthermore it was established that managers of FET have the capacity to understand policy (statements of intent) and implement policy accordingly, but the problem emanates when it comes to the power and authority required to implement certain policy directives. Managers of FET colleges have limited authority when it comes to policy implementation. Some power and authority for policy implementation exist at central level and this sometimes creates implementation problems. The study showed that there are inconsistencies between national, provincial and college management and that centralized power is more dominant and influences practice.

It can therefore be stated that power relations play a pivotal role in policy development and implementation. The two processes (i.e. policy development and policy implementation) themselves reflect certain measures of power. The policy development process reflects the political power as indicated in section 2.3 of Chapter 2. Policy development is initiated and finalized at a political level. Therefore political power will always be visible at all levels of policy. On the other hand policy implementation also reflects a particular measure of power although limited in nature. Section 2.3.1 of Chapter 2 indicated that democratisation of public institutions is key to the new political dispensation. In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the National Education Policy Act the local communities should determine and shape their destiny. Colleges represent the lowest level of democracy in education and they serve the local community within which they are situated. In short in a democratic society the people at grassroots wield considerable power. In Sepedi they say “kgoši ke kgoši ka setšhaba” which when loosely translated means political power of the king stems from the king’s subjects. Therefore in a democratised education system decision-making at colleges should be influenced by the needs and demands of the local communities. Therefore the power vested in local structures by democratic principles should dictate policy implementation. Managers of FET colleges in Gauteng should have both the power and authority to direct and manage the implementation of the government transformation agenda at college level.

In addition the issue of structural responsibilities seems to be confusing the interplay between intended policy and implemented policy. When those who serve in certain structures are not sure of their responsibilities they end up trying to find the middle ground from which to act. The middle ground most of the time is a compromise to what is expected.

If it is taken that planned policy needs to satisfy needs, preferences and values of a particular community, then compromises lead to dissatisfaction of the identified needs, preferences and values of that particular community. The result of such a situation is ‘policy serving the masters’ and not the intended recipients.

From the above explication of policy development and implementation it emerges that there seem to be a conflict when it comes to policy implementation. The two levels of power seem to be in conflict. Centralized power is more dominant than the decentralized power and this stands in contrast with democratic principles. This conflict creates problems for managers as they try to implement government policy. On the one hand they have the bureaucrats who are the custodians of the developed and adopted policy while on the other they have the local community to serve. The expectations of the two levels of power on college managers are confusing. Managers find themselves having to satisfy both and sometimes it becomes difficult for them. Policy implementation that is biased towards the one will be viewed by the other side as being ineffective and irrelevant. Power therefore influences practice.

In conclusion the study contributed significantly by bringing forward a better understanding of underlying reasons for policy implementation problems in South Africa. This will not only benefit the FET sector, it could be extended to other sectors of education as well.

The study has shown that the gap between policy development and implementation is as a result of the conflict between two power structures i.e. the centralized and decentralized powers. The harmonization of these two conflicting powers is critical for effective policy development and practice at institutional level. In addition this study points out that policy implementation should be revisited. It shows that policy implementation should be approached practically if it is to be successful.

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## ANNEXURE A

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO POLICY ORIGINATORS

#### Dear Participant

My name is **Nhlanhla Moyo** and I am a **PHD student at the University of Pretoria** and employed as a Manager: Vocational Education and Training at Umalusi. I have been with the Department of Education of Gauteng from 2000 to 2004. I became interested in the gap that seems to exist between government policy origination and implementation and I'm focusing my PHD research on "*The relationship between government policy and management practices at college level in the transformation of Further Education and Training colleges in Gauteng*". According to the report of the National Committee on Further Education you were a member of the Task Team/Steering Committee that started the process of developing the FET policy and you can provide me with indispensable data that is crucial to my study. I would therefore be grateful if you could assist me in this regard.

I am conducting semi-structured interviews with members of the NCFE and NBI to obtain information for my studies. The interview schedule that I am using is open-ended and you are free to provide as much information as you feel is necessary for me to form a picture of the reasoning behind certain policy assertions or recommendations.

Interviews will also be conducted with Heads of Colleges in Gauteng to ascertain their understanding of the FET policy. The intention is to establish if college managers have the same understanding of policy as policy originators. The data collected will be of immense value in helping me to understand and explain the relationship between intended policy and implemented policy.

## **THE RATIONALE**

The research is aimed at investigating the relationship between intended government policy as perceived by policy originators and implemented policy as understood by college Managers as implementers of policy. It is accepted that the implemented policy may not be the same as intended policy. The NCFE/NBI made specific points on the transformation of the FET college sector that were to inform FET policy and legislation. This interview schedule will focus on the vision, mission, values and principles as aspects critical for the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng.

For the purpose of this schedule it is important to establish the thinking and perceptions behind certain policy statements as captured in the Green Paper on Further Education and Training on the vision, mission and values of the new FET college sector in Gauteng.

Please note that not all the recommendations or policy statements made by the Task Team/Steering Committee will be covered in this study. The policy statements selected are viewed as important to the implementation of policy from the point of view of both policy originators and implementers. The study focuses specifically on these issues by giving you the opportunity to recall and reflect on the discussions of the members of the Task Team/Steering Committee of which you were part and provide me with your own perception regarding the intentions of specific policy statements or recommendations.

All information provided will be treated as confidential and no names will be revealed in this study.

Would you like to continue with this interview?

## QUESTIONS

### SECTION A

1. Currently who do you work for? .....
2. What is your position in your current organization/company? .....
3. How long have you been in this position? .....
4. What are some of your responsibilities in this position?.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
5. In which way does this position link you to Further Education and Training? .....
6. Are you currently involved in FET policy issues? .....
7. If your answer in question 6 above is ‘yes’, in which specific area is your  
Involvement? .....

### SECTION B

**“This transformation must be achieved by restructuring the current fragmented arrangements into a single co-coordinated system, with a common purpose and coherent planning”.**

1. How did you perceive the proposed restructuring to look like?  
.....  
.....

2. What is your understanding of a “common purpose”?

.....  
.....

3. How would you describe “coherent planning”?

.....  
.....

4. Additional comments and/ notes

.....  
.....

**The future development of FET should also rest on the following principles:  
‘Accountability and transparency’ and ‘Cost-effectiveness and efficiency’**

1. What is your understanding of ‘accountability’?

.....  
.....

2. Describe what you understand by ‘transparency’.

.....  
.....

3. How will we know if a college is ‘cost-effective’?

.....  
.....

4. What is your understanding of ‘efficiency’?

.....  
.....

5. Additional comments and/ notes

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



**Organizational capacity and infrastructure**

**“Institutional capacity, where it is most needed, is often most seriously lacking”.**

**This lack of capacity is evident in:**

1. What is your understanding of ‘governance and management structures which fail to provide strategic direction and leadership’?

.....  
.....

2. What do you understand by ‘a lack of planning capacity at provincial level’?

.....  
.....

3. What will be the implications of ‘administrative and organizational weakness’ for the new FET colleges?

4. Additional comments and/or notes

.....  
.....  
.....

**Organizational culture and work ethos**

**“The culture of many institutions and providers militates against the development of a sense of ownership amongst staff, learners and management; inhibits innovation, flexibility and cooperative ways of working, as well as an entrepreneurial, business-like approach to running the organization”.**

1. What do you understand by ‘the culture of many institutions and providers militates against the development of a sense of ownership’?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. In your understanding how will ‘an entrepreneurial, business-like approach to running the organization’ enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of FET colleges?.

.....  
.....

3. Additional comments and/notes

.....  
.....  
.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION. ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED  
WILL BE TREATED AS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AT ALL TIMES**

## ANNEXURE B

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO COLLEGE MANAGERS

My name is **Nhlanhla Moyo** and I am a **PHD student in Educational Management** at the **University of Pretoria** in the Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies. I am conducting semi-structured interviews for my studies with managers of Further Education and Training colleges in Gauteng. My research topic is titled: **“The relationship between government policy and management practices at college level in the transformation of Further Education and Training in Gauteng”**.

The aim of the research is to establish what the relationship exist between government policy and management practices at FET colleges in Gauteng

My objective in this study is to explain the relationship in terms of intended policy (statements of intent) and implemented policy (management practices) within the FET college sector in Gauteng.

#### THE RATIONALE

The research is aimed at investigating the relationship between intended government policy as perceived by policy originators and implemented policy as understood by college Managers as implementers of policy. It is accepted that the implemented policy may not be the same as intended policy. The NCFE/NBI made specific points on the transformation of the FET college sector that were to inform FET policy and legislation. This interview schedule will focus on the vision, mission, values and principles as aspects critical for the transformation of FET colleges in Gauteng.

For the purpose of this interview schedule it is important to establish the thinking and perceptions behind certain policy statements as captured in the Green Paper on Further

Education and Training on the vision, mission and values of the new FET college sector in Gauteng.

Please note that not all the recommendations or policy statements made by the Task Team/Steering Committee will be covered in this study. The policy statements selected are viewed as important to the implementation of policy from the point of view of both policy originators and implementers. The study focuses specifically on these issues by giving you the opportunity to reflect on the FET policy being implemented in your college.

As the Manager of an FET college in Gauteng you therefore have valuable information that can help me form a picture of the relationship between intended and implemented policy. Therefore I will be grateful if you can assist me in this regard.

All information provided will be treated as confidential and no names of participants will be mentioned in any way in this study.

**Would you like to continue with the interview?**

## QUESTIONS

### Recommendation 19

**To give Gauteng a competitive edge and to better serve the people of the Province colleges should take a positive view of transformation and be prepared to take the lead in this process.**

1. What is your understanding of ‘a positive view of transformation’?

.....  
.....

2. In your view what is meant by ‘colleges should take a lead in the process of transformation’?

.....  
.....

### Recommendation 22

**Colleges should draw up an institutional development plan, to equip themselves for the new functions and responsibilities that increased autonomy will entail, and to meet the strategic planning, information systems and financial management requirements outlined in the Education White Paper on Further Education and Training.**

1. What do you see as ‘an institutional development plan’?

.....  
.....

2. In your view what new functions and responsibilities should be performed and taken up by management of FET colleges with the envisaged autonomy?

.....  
.....

**Recommendation 29**

**“Colleges should ensure that the new vision, mission and strategic plans of the institutions and the new FET framework are effectively communicated and shared with all members of the college community”**

1. What do you understand under ‘a new vision and mission’?

.....  
.....

2. How will we know if colleges ‘effectively communicate and share’ the new framework?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL BE TREATED AS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AT ALL TIMES
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