A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO IQMS IMPLEMENTATION IN VULINDLELA CIRCUIT: A STUDY IN REFLECTION IN VULINDLELA WEST WARD

BY

BONGANI SIBUSISO MCHUNU

MEd (University of Natal)

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the degree of Master of Commerce
in Strategic Project Leadership and
Management in the
Faculty of Management Studies
At the Leadership Centre,
University of Kwazulu Natal

October 2006

i

ABSTRACT

The study reviews the implementation of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela Circuit from 2003 to 2006. The systems thinking approach and Soft Systems Methodology served as a point of leverage in identifying problematic situations besetting the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The use of systems tools provided the means for creating dialogue between the facilitator and the SMT members and principals. The study illustrates the use of the systems maps, spray diagrams, iceberg tool, brainwriting and rich pictures in surfacing the assumptions and beliefs about the failure of DAS and IQMS. With this approach, SMTs and principals developed their ideas about the way they could implement DAS and IQMS.

Systems thinking provided a perspective for approaching the problematic situations. A conceptual model for DAS and IQMS evolved though the collaborative efforts of SMT members and principals. A developmental and holistic model evolved from this process of school development. A new way of thinking about problematic situations is presented to participants. A process of dialogue set the stage for school development. Notable improvements are highlighted as indicators of improvement during the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The approach promotes active participation, dialogue, reflection and continuous inquiry and a shared vision in the formulation of conceptual models.

DECLARATION

The study described in this dissertation was carried out
in the Vulindlela Circuit and Vulindlela West Ward,
from 2003 to 2006, under supervision of Stan Hardman.

This study represents original work by the author and has not
otherwise been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to
any university. Where use has been made of the work of others it
is duly acknowledged in the text.

Submitted by: ... B.S. Mchunu   *~~~~* ... ...
Date   : ... 15/10/26 ... ...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of contents

List of figures

List of tables

ABBREVIATIONS

Customers, Actors, Transformation, Worldview, Owners, Environment (CATWOE)

Developmental Appraisal System (DAS)

Development Support Group (DSG)

Head of Department (HOD)

Human Activity Social System (HASS)

In-service Training (INSET)

Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

Joint Executive Team (JET)

Matric Improvement Plan (MIP)

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Personnel Administration Measures (PAM)

Post Provisioning Model (PPM)

Post Provisioning Norm (PPN)

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

Root Definition (RD)

School Development Plan (SDP)

School Governing Body (SGB)

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

School Management Team (SMT)

South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)

Soft Systems Methodology (SSM)

Superintendent of Education Management (SEM)

Towards Effective School Management (TESM)

Whole School Evaluation (WSE)

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1 Orientation to the study

Working as a Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) with 24 schools in Vulindlela West Ward involved being part of a selected team in a Towards Effective School Management (TESM) programme. The TESM programme worked in partnership with the Leadership Centre. The selected team involved principals and SEMs. In 2003 this collaboration between these two led to a programme for Education Leadership with accreditation for a Leadership Certificate. The programme exposed us to a two-year programme of academic work which focused also on modules for learning and change, school effectiveness, school improvement and systems thinking. This became the turning point in the way one approached work as a Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) in Vulindlela West. The Education Leadership course required that participants transfer the acquired skills and knowledge into the work environment. For all the written assignments and group work the requirement was that it needed to be based on the work situation. The problematic situations in the context of work offered opportunities for engaging with the realities of the failures in the implementation of policies. The colleagues in the TESM programme worked jointly in some of the assignments. The focus of written assignments was based on the reflections of working as a group, sharing the experiences of working in different work situations.

From 2003 onwards being an SEM involved a changing role in conducting duties due to the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) in Vulindlela West Ward and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). This study reflects on some of the sessions that were observed in the facilitation of policy implementation for DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West Ward. A shift in the understanding of the role of working as SEM became a focal point of the study during the implementation of policies in complex situations. The coursework provided the academic rigour, a new practical approach and a paradigm shift in engaging with complex and dynamic school contexts. The Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) document identifies seven roles of an educator, one of which is that of a reflective practitioner. The study was based on undertaking a reflective approach whilst using systems tools in the implementation of DAS and IQMS policies. The historical nature of the study involved a series of workshops conducted with SMT members and principals from 2003-2006. These observations also touch on the implementation of DAS and IQMS and how the nature of work of the principal and the SEM has changed due to these policies.

1.2 Purpose Statement

The primary purpose of this study is to reflect on the experience of working as SEM during the implementation of Development Appraisal System (DAS) and Integrated Quality Measurement System (IQMS) in Vulindlela Circuit and Vulindlela West Ward from 2003 to 2006. The study explores how the role of the systems thinking and soft systems methodology contributed to the
facilitation of the implementation of the programme of DAS and IQMS amongst the schools in Vulindlela West Ward.

1.3 Stating the Problem

Three decades ago Sarason observed and expressed a concern about how the teachers were ill prepared and not fully equipped for the realities of classroom life (1971: 55). This statement can still be uttered about the state of our system and the dynamics nature of the school in which the educators, School Management Team (SMT) members and SEMs work. The education system is such a complex system of interrelationships that need to be understood also from the perspective of systems thinking. The educator that was prepared one, two or three decades ago cannot be guaranteed to cope with the issues that are current in our schooling system. The other significant actors in the schooling system are the SMT members and SEMs who have also been caught up in this web of complexity and dynamic change that is influencing their work situation. In this decade alone there have been attempts to bring about school reform in the curriculum, teaching, assessment, quality of teaching and learning, the training and re-training of educators, SMT members and SEMs in order to cope with the latest changes. This has been a difficult terrain fraught with a lot of trial and error and projects that were lacking in sustainability.

The National Education Department introduced Resolution No 4\1998 called Developmental Appraisal System (DAS). The attempts for the cascading of this Resolution 4\1998 were unsuccessful due to a number of reasons. Then in 2003 the National Education Department and the teacher unions collectively signed Resolution 8\2003 that is Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). In 2004 a concerted effort was made to cascade the implementation of IQMS. These attempts were unsuccessful due to a number of reasons. During the course of the year in August 2004 there were teacher strikes around the issue of backlogs. In November 2004 the Quality Assurance directorate called for an IQMS Indaba, where all the stakeholders were called to discuss the failures, challenges and work out a strategy for implementing IQMS in 2005. All the stakeholders adopted the programme of action for implementing IQMS in 2005. At the beginning of 2005 the District co-ordinators for IQMS were called for a refresher course in order to embark on an integrated approach to the implementation of IQMS across the schools of Kwazulu-Natal.

2

Motswakae (2006:215) reports that in the early 1990s Botswana experienced teacher strikes with the introduction of teacher appraisal and its link with salary increase and pay progression. In 1992 the Botswana Education Ministry introduced the Teacher Performance Appraisal: Form TMS 3\4 aiming at portraying a non-threatening, valid and comprehensive system. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is used to evaluate teachers and allows educators to assess their peers' work by observing them teaching. In a Sunday Times article of 2 April 2006, the report indicates that teachers are giving their colleagues top marks for classroom performance, although the results of learners are dismal. The National Education Department is admitting that its rating instrument for teachers is not working well. The National Education Director-General Duncan Hindle in his report to the portfolio committee admitted that most teachers had given their peers good marks, which were not warranted by learner performance. He indicated that the National Education Minister Pandor was considering an external monitoring agency to evaluate teachers. In this regard Kwazulu-Natal's Superintendent-General Dr. C. Lubisi said that his department had expressed the need to work with teacher unions to discuss the 'aberrations' of IQMS. One of the problems, according to Lubisi, was that IQMS served as both an evaluation tool for salary progression and, at the same time, developmental tool for teachers. Linda Rose, the Western Cape's director of quality assurance, said there were glitches in the system as this was the first year it had been implemented. He added, 'our view is that it takes about three years for such a system to operate at an optimum level'. Mpumalanga's MEC for Education, Siphosezwe Masango, said the practice of teachers inflating their colleagues' scores deprived the department of getting a proper understanding of the quality of its managers. Free State Superintendent, Mafu Rakometsi, said the issue of teachers being lenient with one another 'cannot be ruled out' because they do not want to offend their colleagues. The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) criticised the linking of the payments to assessment. John Lewis, the media officer for SADTU, indicated that there were major problems around the implementation of IQMS, adding that the system needed to be reviewed, (Sunday Times, 2 April 2006: 6). This is an indication of working with a human activity system that is highly complex. For the policy makers, IQMS appears to be a quick fix for some of the problems besetting the school system.

Gultig et.al. (1999) in their analysis of the use of such concepts as 'learning organisations', 'self-reliant schools', 'self managing schools', 'school effectiveness', 'school improvement' and 'whole school development', are rather concerned at the lack of attempts to operationalise and implement these concepts at school level (in Ndhlovu, 2000-2001:53).

In view of the above general overview, the study has been confined to the following questions:

1. What were the experiences in the implementation of DAS in 2003-2004 and the implementation of IQMS in 2005 to 2006?
2. How were the system's tools utilised during the workshops with the SMT members and principals?
3. How was the IQMS policy implemented in Vulindlela West Ward?
4. What models emerged during the implementation of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West?
5. What can be explored from the use of systems thinking in the professional development of SMT members and principals?
6. What were the learnings from the IQMS training sessions?

1.4 The Present Study: Reasons for Undertaking the Study

The main reason for conducting this research is motivated by the involvement as a Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) in Vulindlela Circuit in the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The duties involve working with twenty-four schools in Vulindlela West as an SEM in policy implementation and monitoring. The study attempts to achieve the following, namely to;

1. Reflect on the experiences of the educators in working with researcher in the implementation of DAS and IQMS
2. Draw from the experiences of the participants in the formulation of the model for DAS and IQMS
3. Indicate the manner in which the DAS and IQMS models were implemented in Vulindlela West schools
4. Analyse the patterns emerging from the use of the systems tools
5. Give a general overview of the emerging patterns during the implementation of DAS and IQMS

1.5 Possible Value of the Study

The study will be of value in illuminating the strengths and shortcomings in the current practice for the IQMS implementation in the Vulindlela West schools. The study will justify the value of using a reflective approach in analysing and giving meaning to policy implementation. The models formulated by the participants will be discussed in order to justify the use of a soft systems methodology in policy implementation. Based on the reflections and learnings from the experience, the study aims to achieve the following results:

1. To provide a historical understanding of the implementation of DAS and IQMS.
2. To record the use of systems approach in policy implementation in Vulindlela West schools.
3. To illustrate the models for DAS and IQMS that were formulated through a collaborative learning effort.

4

4. To bring about a general awareness of the soft systems methodology in the facilitation of change.
5. To inspire practitioners to consider the strengths implicit in the use of a systems approach.

It is envisaged that this research project will lead to a greater appreciation of systems thinking and soft systems approaches in dealing with issues of policy implementation in schools. The research gives scope for the use of systems thinking approach, combined with an action research based perspective in the schooling system.

Should this study lead to the awareness of the value of soft systems approach and reflection on practice by educators, albeit partially, the research will have succeeded, and thus considered justified.

1.6 General Layout of the Study

In the seven chapters to follow the intention is to develop the study along the following lines:

Chapter One outlines the general problems that beset IQMS and orientates the reader to the study. The complex nature of the DAS and IQMS is established and the role that is played by the researcher in the work environment.

Chapter Two presents the reviewed literature, inclusive of the concepts on reflection. The latter part of the chapter presents a general overview of concepts such as appraisal, performance measurement and evaluation. A range of concepts related to the school system, particularly professional development and school improvement are highlighted. The detailed account of these concepts was included as part of the theoretical framework to demonstrate the complex nature in which the DAS and IQMS policies are working.

Chapter Three focuses on a general overview of systems thinking. A variety of concepts are defined and explored as part of the theoretical grounding for the study. This part of the chapter builds a case for using the systems approach. Based on the general orientation in chapter one, a systems approach is espoused in order to gain insight into the complex nature of the problem. The chapter includes the systems tools for use in conducting the research enterprise. Chapter three builds a case for the use of the systems approach to the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The chapter ends with insights to Senge's work which falls within the systems thinking approach. This chapter broadly introduces the systems thinking in preparation for Chapter Four which focuses on the Soft Systems Methodology.

Chapter Four provides a review of the systems thinking approach generally, and specifically the Soft Systems Methodology (SSM), which informs how some of the steps in this method were used to conduct the

study. Checkland is the exponent of this SSM, and as part of this methodology, he proposes a seven stage model.

Chapter Five reports on the implementation of DAS and IQMS, covering the period 2003 to 2006. The chapter includes illustrations on the use of systems tools as one of the alternative ways in which successful policy implementation can be facilitated. Furthermore it reflects on some of the workshops conducted with participants, that is, SMT members and principals in Vulindlela Circuit and Vulindlela West Ward.

The Sixth chapter analyses the general findings based on the work covered during the implementation of DAS in 2003-2004 and IQMS in 2005-2006 in Vulindlela Circuit and with special reference to Vulindlela West.

The Seventh chapter outlines the recommendations, limitations of the study, proposals for further research and conclusions.

1.7 Summary

The aspects dealt with in this chapter involve a personal profile and brief background to the work environment. Included in this chapter is also a review of the general problems surrounding appraisal systems that are also manifesting themselves in IQMS. Amongst the examples cited in this chapter are the current problems that were experienced in South Africa in the implementation of IQMS. The key questions for undertaking the study have been clearly defined and the key objectives for the research. The chapter gives a background to the implementation of DAS and IQMS as the policies that were jointly formulated by the National department with the unions. The critical questions for undertaking the study have been clarified, including the critical role of the researcher.

This chapter indicates the general overview of the problems that beset education and issues concerning the shortcomings in the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The second chapter introduces key concepts that are salient to the understanding of the study. The review of literature is based on the reflective practice approach. The chapter develops the study by introducing the idea of school improvement and school development to the whole picture of teacher appraisal. Furthermore, the key concepts in systems thinking are defined and clarified as the study unfolds. A wide range of concepts that fall within the systems thinking paradigm are clarified for purposes of grounding the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature based on the concept reflection. The first part of this chapter covers the definition of the concept reflection, its nature, different interpretations, the development, growth and practical suggestions in its application in different contexts. This part demonstrates the value of dialogue and the use of reflective approaches. The second part of this chapter provides an in-depth conceptual treatment of appraisal, performance measurement, evaluation and other related concepts. These concepts are considered as necessary in this chapter for an understanding of the context in which the policies for DAS and IQMS operate. Most of these concepts are implicit in the DAS and IQMS policy documents.

2.2 Understanding of Reflection

According to Ross (1987), reflection is defined as:

"a way of thinking about educational matters that involves the ability to make rational choices and to assume the responsibility for those choices" (cited in Bainer and Cantrell 1992: 571).

Reflection, according to Lucas (1991) is a systematic enquiry into one's own practice, in order to improve the practice and to gain more insight into what is happening (McIntyre cited in Calderhead and Gates 1993:42-43). McIntyre believes reflection is a pivotal means of learning for experienced practitioners (cited in Calderhead and Gates 1993:43). The idea of reflection is more than thinking and focusing on the activities of the day, but also includes the institutional structures in which people are working (Kemmis 1982:5). According to Kemmis (1982:5) this is an action-oriented, historically–embedded, social and political frame, to locate oneself in the history of a situation, to participate in a social activity and to take sides on issues. Apple (1975:127) describes reflection as a process of examining current positions and asking pointed questions about the relationship that exists between these positions and the social structures from which they arise. This means being systematically engaged in practice and to inquire into social reforms. In the engagement is an examination of the origins and consequences of everyday teaching. It also involves identifying the factors that impede change and looking at the relevant interventions to engage with the problematic situations.

Reflection is a form of learning that involves a practice, a process of learning whilst actively engaged in practice. Schön (1987) expounds the idea on the nature of professional practice. Schön clarified his main ideas on what he meant by reflection-in-practice and knowing-in-action (1987:22). This process involves conscious deliberation and debate between practitioners. Despite the different interpretations and approaches to reflective thinking, its proponents share the view that learning and teaching involves being critical or engaging in critique, involves analysis, enquiry and reflection on the issues implicit in the social context (Schön 1987). What makes reflection different from the traditional approach to teaching practice is that the practitioner is involved in the context where learning takes place. In this way this immersion in the context and practice, creates a conducive atmosphere for learning by reflection in action (Schön 1987). In this engagement as a learner one needs to formulate some questions, to draw a hypothesis, to investigate, imagine and debate issues (Fosnot 1989: 21). In the context of engaging with issues as a learner one needs to be able to think on the spot in relation to what prevails in that particular context (Clark and Lampert 1986). The interaction and dialogue needs to centre around questioning, listening and probing – these are important skills that promote interaction during the process of learning (Fosnot 1989: 21-22).

Reflection is widely accepted as a crucial element in the professional growth of teachers. Lately there has been a plethora of concepts that are related to this approach. There are such terms as 'reflective teaching', 'inquiry-oriented teacher education', 'teacher as researcher', and 'reflective practitioner'. All these concepts are prolific in the discourses on classroom practice and professional development (Calderhead and Gates 1993: 1). Valli (1993, cited in Calderhead and Gates 1993:19) explores a variety of perspectives on reflection. He distinguishes between the narrowly focused and reductionist approaches and those with a broader outlook (in Calderhead and Gates 1993: 11-19). From Valli's (1993) critique of various education programs three strategies emerge namely, journal keeping, seminar dialogues, and action research projects (Valli, 1993 cited in Calderhead and Gates 1993:19). Reflection has been defined as an important human activity in which people recapture their experiences, think about it, mull over and evaluate it (Balfour, Buthelezi and Mitchel 2004: 59). Fellows and Zimpher (1989) are of the view that in reflection, the main focus is about the past experiences and understandings; these are linked with present experiences to new understandings and appreciations (cited in Balfour et.al., 2004:60). Reflection happens in a context, where it could be focused on practical\technical, socio-political, moral\ethical issues (Van Manen 1977 in Calderhead and Gates 1993:26). The literature that has been reviewed indicates that reflection is contextual in nature-it is influenced by the conditions of the environment (LaBoskey in Calderhead and Gates 1993:23). In the field of education, reflection has come to be widely known as a crucial element in the professional

development of teachers. According to Calderhead the need for reflective teacher education has been argued on the grounds that it facilitates the linking of theory and practice, subjects the expertise of teachers to critical reflection, and enables them to take a more active role in their own professional accountability (cited in Balfour et.al 2004: 60).

LaBoskey suggests that a reflective teacher:

"Should be able to describe and analyse the structural features of an educational situation, issue, or problem –problem definition; to gather and evaluate information as to the possible sources of the dilemma under consideration and to generate multiple alternative solutions and their potential implications- means/ends analysis; and integrate all the information into a tempered conclusion about or solutions for the problem identified- generalization" (cited in Calderhead and Gates 1993: 30).

Reflective teachers reflect in order to learn to improve their understanding of feelings and responses to the world of teaching (LaBoskey). LaBoskey (1993:6) suggests that reflective teachers reflect in order to learn- to improve their understanding of, feelings about, and responses to the world of teaching. She suggests that in helping novice teachers to become reflective practitioners, senior teachers should demonstrate to them by example (in Balfour et.al.2004: 60). Richert (1987) supports the idea that preconceptions about reflection also influence how teachers think about their work (in Calderhead and Gates 1993: 31). Boud et. al. (1985) acknowledges the complexity of the reflective process and the interrelationship and interaction between feelings and cognition (in Calderhead and Gates 1993:31). Linda Valli (1993), in her illuminating account of reflective teacher education programmes in the United States, comments on the irony of the concurrent problematising of the theory\practice relation in such programmes and the investment at the same time in attempts to articulate clearly and fully an academic knowledge on which teaching is seen to depend (LaBoskey in Calderhead and Gates 1993:40). According to Day 1995(cited in Busher and Saran 1995: 113) reflective practice is defined as continuing conscious and systematic review of the purposes, plans, action and evaluation of teaching in order to reinforce effectiveness and, where appropriate, prompt change. Day, 1995(cited in Busher and Saran 1995: 113) suggested eight strategies for engaging in reflective practice. The list includes investing in continuing professional development; promoting reflective practice; investing in the school's culture; knowing, communicating and sharing philosophy; developing a moral commitment; being the right kind of a leader; developing critical communities; promoting personal development profile (Day, 1995(cited in Busher and Saran 1995: 113).

In a newspaper article (Sunday Times 26. 3.06 p4) Lauren K. Johnson recommends eight skills for leadership. Amongst these eight essential skills is included:

1. Challenging: questioning your organisation's assumptions and testing their validity.
2. Learning: using information and personal experiences to make smarter choices and engineer corrections.
3. Enabling: offering the people around you the knowledge, means and opportunities to act.
4. Reflecting: investing time thinking about what went poorly in your previous decisions and reflecting into your future.
5. Observing: looking for confirming and disapproving data about a problem or course of action.

In their research Zeichner and Liston (1987) suggest that reflective practice requires a supportive environment in which it can be fostered. This notion points to a school that has adopted the new thinking of being a learning organisation (Senge 1990) where teachers are operating as lifelong learners, work collaboratively to reflect on the teaching\learning process in order to reach the school's vision and goals. Swarts (1998) believes that teachers are constrained by their narrow conception of reflection and critical inquiry. The tendency is to focus primarily on the immediate and technical aspects of teaching, (Swarts, 1998, cited in Dahlstrom, 1999:95).

The process of working with principals in DAS and IQMS involved a shift in the paradigm and the routine work of the SEM. It took the shape of being more involved in fieldwork that promoted dialogue, interaction and enquiry. There was a lot of experimentation, as compared to the routine of delivering circulars around schools. This experience needs to be supported by an approach that needs to empower SEMs in reflective field research. This is a strategic time and appropriate time for SEMs to reflect with more insight and focused questioning into their roles as supervisors. The kind of a model of an SEM that exists does not fit with the espoused role that has been created by the introduction of IQMS. The model that is appraised in the study, gives the SEM an opportunity to make an in-depth study of the questions related to classroom related issues and managerial issues in a new way. It requires the SEM to continually engage in frequent evaluation of his or her own learning in the process. The traditional models offer only that the SEM writes reports, which becomes a ritualistic in the long run. However this does not necessarily mean that the kind of SEM that is working does not reflect. Rather it implies that there are different levels of reflection-that which is technical, interpretative and critical reflection (Gore 1987 cited in Tabachnich and Zeichner 1991: 39). One of the serious flaws in technical reflection is the reproduction of the limited role of the SEM who focuses narrowly on what he or she does in terms of the way he or she has been perceived to perform.

The interpretive view exposes and clarifies personal meaning, although it fails to confront the hierarchical and alienating structures found in the way the SEMs work with their supervisors. The critical model holds promises for confronting the mental models, structures and ideologies that underpin the perception of the work of the SEM (Bullough and

Gitlin, 1985). The critical view not only clarifies educational means and ends but also holds them up to critical scrutiny in the belief that SEMs have to recognise and then confront unquestioned roles, internalised values and structures and power relations which foster narrow and oppressive relations of supervisor and supervisee.

This final paradigm is the one that offers the SEMs a place of respectability in the education system, not being regarded as the weakest link in the chain. It is the one that is needed in order to instil an enquiring and critical mind in the prospective SEM. Teaching practice and teaching are mutually dependent. In the South African schooling system the SEMs have been detached from the observation of classroom practice. The political era from which the country has evolved required that the SEMs be distanced from the classroom context, due to the nature of the approach that was used by the previous regime in conducting inspections. The SEMs were conducting these school visits in a negative way, which instilled fear and anxiety amongst the educators. The way SEMs performed their duties was premised on judgemental approach to evaluation. Their approach to work was characterised by a technical rational perspective which lacked dialogue. It assumed that the SEM due to his or her experience knew everything. They only came to confirm their assumptions regarding what may not be the right way of teaching. Somehow, their technical and judgemental approach was also ritualistic.

The ritualistic way of conducting inspections promoted a ritualistic approach to teaching. This could be observed from the behaviour of teachers, whenever inspectors were coming to conduct school visits. Teachers performed on the day of the visit and reverted to their old ways once the inspectors had finished their work. The reports that were written by the inspectors were never discussed with those who were being inspected. Cornbleth believes that thinking is a social product, as well as a cognitive activity shaped by the milieu and norms of the community it occurs (cited in Graves 1990:193).

In the 1980s to 1990s with the emergence of politically led teacher unions, the practice of inspection was challenged in the South African schools. In some areas inspectors were physically chased away from schools. The schools became terrains and places of influence for the unions and the practicing teachers. Political events of early 1990s led to the first democratic elections. For a number of years a vacuum had come to existence in terms of teacher evaluation.

2.3 Teacher appraisal

With the wide-ranging changes in education, appraisal has become a significant feature of the school system. The literature (Evans and Tomlinson, 1989:8; Jones et. al., 1989; Poster and Poster, 1991) indicates that appraisal was implemented fifteen years ago in the British education system. Evans and Tomlinson (1989:8) point out that the main reason for implementing appraisal is to improve teaching and

11

learning. The school improvement movement overemphasised the idea of school accountability for purposes of learning. In the eighties the British system was involved in trying to find means through which schools could undertake curriculum reappraisal in a way that would involve all staff looking at the school's total provision (Tomlinson 1980: 19-20 in Evans and Tomlinson 1989:14). The school improvement approach reinforced the concept of teachers being reflective and self-critical about their individual and collective work. One of the questions that Evans and Tomlinson (1989:15) raised was whether the system needed teacher appraisal, performance review, or performance improvement. Accountability and professional development are the two contrasting approaches to teacher appraisal. The difficulty that was experienced with the combination of the two approaches was that teachers were not open, frank and forthright during the process of appraisal (Evans and Tomlinson 1998:15).

Monyatsi (2003:62) identified two appraisal processes, namely the professional and accountability models. The professional development model is premised on teacher improvement of their performance in order to enhance the learning of students. The model envisages a two way process of relationship between the appraiser and the appraisee. This model is based on a collegial relationship of trust and confidentiality between the latter. In this process every teacher is an active participant. Murdock (2000:55) insists that participation by staff in initiating and contributing to the interpretation of procedures and the use of tools is critical (cited in Monyatsi 2006:217). Monyatsi recognises the critical importance of reflection on practice in this appraisal model that is developmental in its nature (2006:218).

2. 4 Performance Appraisal

Appraisal is an overall assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of funding (Development Assistance Committee: 2002). According to Bernandin et.al (1995: 470-471) appraisal is the act of estimating or judging the nature or value of something or someone; an estimate of value; an estimate or considered opinion of the values; quality importance (cited in Wenas 1998: 75).
The ACAS agreement (1986) defined appraisal as:

"A continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help them with the in-service training and deployment of teachers that matches with the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools" (cited in Jones et.al. 1989:247).

According to Poster and Poster (1991:1) performance appraisal focuses on setting achievable, often relatively short-term goals and by giving feedback: on task clarification through reaching consensus on an employee's objectives consistent with those of the organisation; and on identifying raining needs as indicated either by shortcomings in performance or by potentialities for higher levels of endeavour.

12

Performance is defined as the degree to which a development intervention or a development partner operates according to specific criteria, standards, and guidelines or achieves results in accordance with stated goals or plans (DAC: 2002).

Baseline study is an analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made. The beneficiaries are individuals, groups, or organisations, whether targeted or not, that benefit, directly or indirectly, form the development intervention (DAC: 2002). According to Hickcox and Musella (1992:159) performance appraisal has a purpose of improving teaching and ensuring accountability. Poster differentiates between performance appraisal and merit rating (1991:6). Appraisal has various potentialities depending on the context of the organisation. Poster (1991) offers a list of scenarios and expectations about appraisal systems. Included in this list are some of the following scenarios, namely,

1. the integration of the individual and the organisation,
2. encouragement of self-development
3. the provision of the basis for an institutional audit
4. the dissemination of career development advice to the managers with clear objectives
5. enhancing the communication and a democratic style of management
6. the recognition of individual and staff (Poster 1991:6-7).

I agree with Randal et.al. (1984) that appraisal needs to cater for performance, reward potential and consider professional development (cited in Poster 1991:6). Poster identifies four types of appraisals, namely developmental, managerial, laissez faire and judgemental appraisal (1991:9).

2. 5 Appraisal and Evaluation

Appraisal and evaluation are treated interchangeably in most situations, although in the South African context they have taken different meanings, particularly in education. In this context, evaluation is associated with making judgment; as a summative exercise while appraisal is taken as a positive; developmental and a formative process focused on teacher development (Quinlan and Davidoff 1997:8). Evaluation still involves some elements of inspection, and reports based on performance for purposes of confirmation of probationary teachers; promotion; passing salary\scale barriers; dismissal (Quinlan and Davidoff 1997:8). Appraisal takes the feature of being a learning exercise for purposes of diagnosing faults; building on the strengths and correct weaknesses; inform teachers about their progress; setting new targets (Quinlan and Davidoff 1997:8). Peer appraisal is a system whereby colleagues observe one another, offering their perceptions and facilitating a process of self-reflection (Ibid10).

13

According to Evans and Tomlinson (1989: 22) appraisal is a mechanism that enables schools to bring coherence to their development plans, to establish priorities and to offer better targeted INSET. Appraisal offers teachers a system opportunity to make demands from below, whereas reform emanates from the top (Evans and Tomlinson 1989:27). Evaluation is described as an overall assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of a development intervention prior to a decision of funding (Development Assistance Committee: 2002).

Bradley (1989) identified the following purposes for appraisal:

1. Planning the induction of entry grades for teachers and assessing their readiness for transfer to next grade
2. Preparing individual teachers and principals for professional development and improvement in career prospects
3. Identify the potential of teachers for career development,
4. Recognition of teachers who are experiencing performance difficulties in order to provide guidance, counselling and training (cited in Evans and Tomlinson 1989: 51).

Evaluation refers to the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim of evaluation is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or program (DAC: 2002).

Quinlan and Davidoff (1997:14) suggest that a relationship can be forged between appraisal and whole school development by:

1. A shared vision and educational values for the school need to be established
2. Goals and strategies of how to attain such vision \values need to be developed
3. Criteria, based on the vision and values, goals and strategies then to be decided upon which will be appraised on an ongoing basis

Jantjies (1996) provides an in-depth analysis of performance based teacher appraisal, whereby he suggests a shift from the mode of judgment towards development. The paper draws from the American and United Kingdom studies on teacher appraisal. There are lessons that can be learnt from the philosophy that underpins these appraisal models. Most of his suggestions appear in the policy document for DAS and IQMS.

2.6 Forms of Evaluation

Jones et.al. (1989:63) consider self-evaluation as an integral part of staff development. The process of self-evaluation is the teacher's appraisal of him- or herself as a teacher, involving a careful

14

examination of values and attitudes and the influence that these have on actual practice (Jones et.al. 1989:66). Self-evaluation involves engaging the teacher in active investigation and in an analysis of their values and practice (Jones et.al. 1989:66).

Formative evaluation is carried out during the programme to improve it as it runs. It influences the direction the work takes (Jones et.al. 1989:119). Summative evaluation is carried out at the end of the programme, often on the form of a final report. It reflects upon the effects of what has been done (Jones et.al 1989:119). Summative evaluation focuses on overall, major changes that may be necessary, whereas the focus of formative evaluation is more on selected aspects of the programme (Gordon 1991:64 cited in Heyns 2000:164). Summative evaluation at the end of the programme is a formal process, while formative evaluation could be either formal or informal. Generally, evaluation is part of a process that involves observing, monitoring, recording, analysing and reviewing (Jones et.al 1998:118).

2.7 Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is referred to as a system for assessing performance of development interventions against stated goals (Development Assistance Committee: 2002). Peer teachers find it difficult to reflect on classroom practice due to their lack of understanding of what is involved in observation (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992:36). Jantjies (1996) outlines the philosophy and the rationale for undertaking teacher appraisal. Furthermore, he provides informative aspects for performance measurement from American models of performance measurement. He aligns the aspect of performance measurement and suggests the criteria that are used in the American and United Kingdom education system (see Jantjies 1996:50-57; Marchington, et.al.(2004); Farrell and Morris (2004); James and Colebourne (2004).

2.8 Professional Development

According to Jones et.al. (1989:5), staff development programmes provide the means for teachers to experience continuing education as part of a team of professionals. By (INSET) Jones et.al (1989:12) means the in-service education and training. Hickox and Massella (1992:158) consider the purpose for staff development as to bring about mandated changes in order to solve a specific school problem. There are many interpretations regarding professional development. The need for continuous professional development forms an integral part of teacher appraisal. According to the Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP 1998; 2000), the seven roles and competencies assume the significance of developing the professional competencies of educators. By these roles is meant the educator being regarded as a learning mediator; interpreter and designer of curriculum, leader administrator and manager; scholar, researcher and lifelong learner; community and citizenship and pastoral role; assessor; and subject specialist (COTEP

15

1998:2000). In a study conducted by Thomen on the practitioners' views on professional development, it was discovered that their views differed in some areas from those of the COTEP in terms of emphasis (2005:815-820).

2.9 Norms and Standards for Educators

In the South African context, reflective practice as an integral part in the initial preparation of teachers and in the continuing professional development of educators has been clearly foregrounded in recent gazetted policy documents, particularly the Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE) (DoE 2000 in Balfour et.al.2004:80). According to the Norms and Standards for Educators, the professional development of teachers is considered as an ongoing activity, which includes both pre-service and in-service education and training (DoE 2000). In this document the educator is considered as a professional who is self-directed with knowledge, skills, and the ability to reflect on actions with a view to adapting and improving. It lists seven roles that educators are expected to perform in the course of their teaching careers, amongst them that of scholar, researcher, and lifelong learner as well as an assessor (cited in Balfour et.al .2004: 59).

The Norms and standards for educators state the vision of an educator in South Africa. One of the expectations is that educators need to be actively involved in research and be reflective in their practice. The approach that holds the future for educators is one that promotes action research. The question is what action research is required for educators. McKernan (1988:6) describes practitioner research as a form of self-reflective problem solving, which enables practitioners to better understand and solve pressing problems in social settings.

Thomen (2005:820) concludes that practitioners hold a broad view that embraces their practice, the community, and the teaching profession within a global context.

2.10 Staff Development

Poster (1991:1) identifies the focus of staff development on the thorough identification of individual development needs and subsequent training or self-development, on improving the ability of the employees to perform in their present or future roles. Staff development involves improving teacher performance, career and personal development, and improving the quality of educational provision in the school (Jones et.al 1989:92). It also affects individual members of staff to improve performance, enables reflection, encourages self-evaluation, improves motivation and enhances personal and career development (Jones et.al. 1989:92). Jones et.al. suggest evaluation of staff development by course feedback, classroom observation, questionnaire, interview feedback and formal report (1989:93).

16

2.11 The Mentor Model

A radical shift in thinking required that consideration be made of mentoring in teaching. A mentor is an experienced teacher who relates to, orientates and guides less experienced teachers (Heyns 2000: 163). Mentors fulfil a very important role in the induction of newly appointed teachers. The mentors are the cornerstone for any school-based staff development programme, if it has to be successful. Most of the identified areas for the professional development of teachers require that these services be rendered within the school. A mentor needs to relate to junior teachers, in assessing data, coaching and guidance to other educators. The idea that each educator has to get a peer sounds interesting; however it could be stifled by staff shortages. The educator thinking about what a peer needs to be can also cause systemic problems. The guidance that is envisaged in the model for purposes of development calls so much on the part of the mentor and evaluee\appraisee. The Development Support Group (DSG) comprised of the evaluee, peer and supervisor may vary from DSG to DSG in terms of functionality. A mentor should be a person who has an interest in working with newly appointed educators (Heyns 2000:163).

Canton and James (1999:6) defined a mentor as someone who may act as a teacher to enhance skills and intellectual development, may serve as a sponsor, may use influence to facilitate a person's entry and advancement. Mkhwanazi and Baijnath (2003:111) indicate that mentoring involves exposure by creating opportunities for aspiring teachers.

2.12 Model of Principal \ SEM

As indicated in the above, mentoring is a strategy for assisting with the professional development of educators. The IQMS policy document clearly states the role of the supervisor is to be a mentor of the supervisee. This clearly poses a challenge for the Head of Department (HOD), the principal and the SEM, who are supervisors in terms of their roles in the IQMS policy. In a master- teacher kind of relationship the SEM and principal could be taken as the master craftsman. Stones and Morris (1972: 8) describe the master- teacher, 'as the master craftsman'. The kind of disaster which that idea holds is one in which the principal as supervisor can be regarded as the master-teacher in teaching skills. This can simplistically be taken for granted that principals as supervisors are supposed to take the lead in teaching skills. The major concern that needs to be raised is that principal, SMT members and SEMs were left out of the training in outcomes-based teaching. Therefore the system that produced the kind of HOD, principal and SEM who was marginalised in terms of training in outcomes-based teaching, requires of him\her to observe educators and mentor them in classroom practice. The observation model may be narrowly interpreted for being a one size-fitting all- it may assume that teaching activities are simplistic for everyone to observe. This may stifle individual style to the unqualified observer.

Keith Ridyard says:

"the experience to date in preparing teachers for appraisal, would suggest that it is possible to de-mystify the concept of relationship building in order that elements, which are crucial to constructive dialogue, can be digested by both appraiser and appraisee" (cited in Evans and Tomlinson 1989: 132).

2.13 Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in use of allocated funds (DAC: 2002). Eraut (1988) defines monitoring as the process that involves checking what has happened and the extent to which things have gone according to plan (in Jones et.al. 1989:118). Amongst others the role of the SEM is to ensure that the school policies are implemented. Amongst other reasons that have led to the failure of the implementation of programmes such as DAS and IQMS was the lack of monitoring from the SEMs.

2.14 Clustering

This is one of the strategies adopted by small schools in an attempt to maximize learning opportunities. Teachers in rural schools come together on a more formal basis to attend cluster meetings. This strategy is described in the Plowden Report (1967:484) as a close relationship developed by groups of small schools, where staff interchange (cited in Jones et.al .1989:226). This strategy assists schools that are isolated and extends learning opportunities for teachers. Schools group themselves in terms of their locality and vicinity in order to share resources, expertise and experiences. Cluster co-ordinators are appointed at times as a way of formalizing these clusters and in order to monitor their programmes. The clustered schools assist the SEMs with the communication of information and the meetings of teachers for purposes of professional development. The clusters are also used as way of monitoring that there is continuous progress with the IQMS programme and other curricula activities.

2.15 School Improvement

With the advent of the school improvement movement from the United Kingdom, came a number of initiatives for school improvement. The concept of school improvement is defined as a "systematic sustained effort aimed at changing learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively" (Wijesundera 2002:169). School improvement programmes focus on ways and means of achieving effectiveness or the 'How' of the school effectiveness

(Wijesundera 2002:169). There is a plethora of literature on various interventions and approaches aimed at bringing about change. According to Hopkins (1998) school improvement relates to general attempts being made to make schools better places for learners. Lander and Ekholm (1998) consider school improvement as a process of deliberate change in structures, rules, norms, conceptions, habits and working patterns, which immediately, or over a longer period, helps students to improve their learning and development according to the requirements of school society' (cited in Wijesundera 2002:170).

2.16 School Development

Chuckle and Broadhead (2003:230 cited in Xaba 2006:15) consider that school development planning intends to effect change and innovation for school improvement. According to Bell (1998:453) the purpose of development planning is to assist the school to introduce changes successfully, so that the quality of teaching and the standards of learning are improved. MacGilchrist and Mortimore (1995:207) assert that school development planning can be a school improvement strategy although not all school development planning (SDPs) lead to school improvement. Jones (1998:281) regards SDPs as a widely adopted approach to the management of planned change (cited in Xaba 2006:15-16). School development planning is undertaken to give direction to the work of whole school development in order to ensure that learners receive quality education in terms of both their holistic development and their academic achievement (Broadhead and Cuckle, 2002: 310; SDPI, 1999: in Xaba 2006:16-17). According to Mcmanara et.al. 2002:204) school development planning entails the school's analysis of its development needs, prioritisation and planning for addressing such needs and development; an SDP to address those identified development needs (cited in Xaba 2006: 17).

2.17 Summary

As a background to the study this chapter has briefly reviewed literature on diverse views on the concept reflective practice. These views enrich the theory that informs reflective practice. Various arguments for the use of reflection in practice have been advanced that further enrich our understanding of reflective thinking. The concept will be further clarified in the context in which the researcher is working as a ward manager. The point of departure undertaken was to clarify and interrogate the assumptions of the concept 'reflection.' Reflection is a critical aspect in the nature of the study as this will be further demonstrated in the fifth and sixth chapters. The researcher reflects on a study which covered three years. The scope and nature of work covers a period when the policy DAS and IQMS were implemented over a period of three years.

During the period that is covered by the research, the study was conducted on appraisal and performance measurement in the school system. The second part of the literature review covered the general

exploration of the concepts which form an integral part of the practice in which the study was conducted. The review covered a wide variety of concepts which form a background to an understanding of appraisal, performance measurement, school improvement and school development. As the study unfolds the justification for the review of this literature will be clear and evident in the following chapters. Some of these concepts give a philosophical and contextual orientation of the study. The wide scope of the conceptual framework is indicative of the complex nature of the study, especially the policies DAS and IQMS.

This chapter builds a case for the introduction of systems thinking in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter an exploration was made of the literature related to the reflective practice and a variety of concepts ranging from appraisal to school improvement. Reflection was presented as an approach for dealing with issues in the work situation. The study argues for a reflective approach in the sharing of experiences and observations made on what and things unfold in the context of work. Reflection is viewed as being inextricably linked to systems thinking. Reflection promotes the use of dialogue and sharing of experiences based on the problematic situations. On the other side systems thinking as an approach enables the analyst to utilise systems tools in the interrogation of assumptions, beliefs and mental models. This chapter presents systems thinking as the approach used in the study. This presentation is a general overview of the concepts that form an integral part of systems thinking. Systems thinking is presented as the cornerstone of this research enterprise. The systems tools used in the process of conducting the research are clarified. Systems thinking is considered to be a particular perspective that was used during the approach to the study by the researcher. The other parts of this chapter elaborate on the concepts that Senge uses as he is also one of the exponents of systems thinking.

3.2 Systems Thinking

Before one can get into deeper discussions about systems thinking one need to unpack the constituent parts of the concept; one needs to first understand what is meant by the term system. Systems thinking forms such an integral part of the approach that was used in understanding the implementation of DAS and IQMS policies in the schools in Vulindlela West Ward.

3.3 What is a system?

A system is a collection of things and or activities which are interrelated and which can be regarded as a single, whole entity that has a purpose and that can adapt and survive in a changing environment such that the purpose continues to be met (Sydney Lucket 2004 cited in Notes on Soft Systems Methodology: 1). Ackoff (1999) defines a system as a set of two or more related and interdependent elements. In his elaboration, he believes a system is a whole that cannot be divided into

independent parts. Systems theorists have defined the critical characteristics of a system as being interdependent and interconnected.

Systems are looked at in patterns and types of cycles and include explicit modelling of complex issues. In the discipline of systems thinking each system is perceived as a whole, with interconnected parts that interact and influence each other (Moloi, Grobler and Grovett 2002: 89). According to French and Bell (1995) interrelated parts are bound together in such a way that they become coherent with one another (cited in Moloi et.al 2002:89). A system is a number of interdependent components that form a whole and work together to attain a common goal (Ibid. 2002: 3). Capra (1996) contends that a system is an integrated whole whose essential properties arise from the relationships between its parts, whilst systems thinking is the understanding of the phenomenon within the context of a larger whole (cited in Singh 2002: 14).

Systems can be ascribed the following characteristics;
• purpose
• boundary (ies)
• emergent properties
• existence in nested hierarchies
• internal processes of communication and control
• (Luckett, 1996: 6-7).

3.4 What is system thinking?

Systemic thinking is the conceptual cornerstone of Peter Senge's approach. It is the discipline that integrates the others, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice (1990:12). Systems theory enables the analyst to comprehend and address the whole, and to examine the interrelationship between the parts. Peter Senge advocated the integration of all the five disciplines into a coherent system. The other four disciplines are centred on systems thinking. Systems thinking allows people to look beyond the immediate context and to appreciate the impact of their actions upon others (and vice versa). To this extent it holds the possibility of achieving a more holistic understanding. Second, systems thinking offers a language that addresses the structure of one's thinking. It enables us to rethink the way we perceive problematic situations in organisations. Senge argues that one of the key problems with much that is written about, and done in the name of management, is that rather simplistic frameworks are applied to what are complex systems. When we add these two points together it is possible to move beyond a focus on the parts, to begin to see the whole, and to appreciate organisation as a dynamic process. Thus, the argument runs, a better appreciation of systems will lead to more appropriate action. According to Senge (1990) systems thinking allows us to realise the significance of feedback mechanisms in organisations. Senge (1990) concludes that systems viewpoint is generally oriented toward the long-term view. He recognises the

22

significance of delays and feedback loops in the system. Senge (1990:92) considers that feedback loops are unavoidable and inconsequential. Systems thinking is a cornerstone of how learning organisations think about their world.

Senge (1990) considers the integration of the disciplines as pivotal for the analyst, whereas other writers emphasize the systems theory. According to Francis Chapman systems thinking assists in providing tools for handling the complexity more adequately and helping deepen understanding of the interactions (cited in Armson, Chapman, Hamwee, Martin and Paton1999:7). John Robles contends that systems thinking enables one to tackle problems in a scientific and holistic way (cited in Armson et.al. et.al. 1999:8). Paul Warren (cited in Armson et.al. 1999: 8) regards systems thinking as a formal recognized framework to explain organisational events. Most of the people concerned with systems thinking agree that this approach is of great assistance in dealing with complex issues. Systems thinking is different from systematic thinking, which deals with orderly and methodological thinking.

Systems thinking enables the analyst to deal with situations using different kinds of tools. These tools need to be used per case and context and are relevant to a particular situation. The systems analyst gets the tools into the toolbox, and chooses those relevant for the complex situation being dealt with. The systems tools are drawn from different spheres of life and disciplines. There is need for change in mindset and going beyond the boundaries in trying out new alternative ways of thinking. Systems thinking require that we attain the ability to acquire the ability to explore and value other people's point of view and try out new perspectives (Armson et.al. 1999:11). The tools and their use will be determined by the nature of the problem situation. Systems thinking opens new avenues of attempting to gain insight into what happens in a system. It also offers new ways of understanding the problematic situation. Different kinds of tools for thinking are developed and explored for use in various ways. Some of the concepts that have been generated are for an example, boundary and perspective. According to Jackson (1991:133) soft systems thinking opens up a completely new perspective on the way systems ideas can and should be used to help with decision-making and problem solving.

The essence of systems thinking lies in the shift of the mindset in such a way that one is able to see interrelationships rather than linear, cause effect chains and processes of change rather than snap shots (Moloi et.al. 2002:89).

3.5 Drawing a boundary

This concept is used when the situation is explored and new angles are tried out in order to understand the situation. In dealing with the school as a system needs the identification and enumeration the elements that make up the school system. This process is referred to as drawing the

boundary. The elements that make up the school system are enumerated.
In the drawing of the boundary the elements that do not fall within the
system, fall outside of the boundary. Therefore in a drawing these
elements can be illustrated. Some of the elements are those that come
from the environment, yet influence the system. The boundary includes
all the parts of the organisational system within the boundary and
everything outside the boundary is considered as belonging to the
organisation systems environment (Ulrich 1983 in Singh 2002:12).

3.6 Perspective

According to Armson et.al. (1999:18) perspective is the ability to
explore and value other people's points of view. Armson et.al. consider
these two thinking tools as the main features for intellectual thinking
(1999: 11). Furthermore, they expose the shortcomings in logical and
causal thinking. They are critical of the empirical approach for leaving
out the subjective and emotional factors (Armson et.al.1999:11). The
behaviour of systems is unpredictable therefore these tools cannot be
used in such complex situations. Systems are characterized by
interconnectedness and feedback loops. The scientific way of breaking
down systems into small elements may not be applicable in all
instances. The reductionist approach artificially restricts the
components in a system to repeatable experiments. By perspectives is
meant points of view, in order to know more about the whole (Armson
et.al.1999:17). One way of identifying perspectives of people is what is
called weltanschauung or worldview. By worldview is meant an
understanding of people's beliefs, assumptions, values and interests.
Role-playing is one way that can be used for exposing different
perspectives on an issue. Secondly, one other way is to see the system
through the eyes of another person (Armson et.al. et. al. 1999: 17).

3.7 Difference between a difficulty and a messy situation

The system differs in terms of degrees of problematic situations. Some
of the situations may be referred to as difficult, depending on the
complexity and seriousness they manifest. There are situations that may
be referred to as difficult and those that are messes because of the
nature of their complexity. According to Lane et.al (1999) the simpler
situations are referred to as difficulties, whereas the more complex and
nastier ones as messes. Messes have a number of features that make
them qualitatively different from difficult cases (cited in Armson et.al.
et.al. 1999:27). Messes tend to have numerous and serious implications,
whereas difficulties are less complex. Messes involve a number of
people and cover a wide and larger area. In a messy situation there are a
number of interconnected elements that may appear in different guises.
The messes due to their complexity may last longer and are quite
complicated. There is an element of uncertainty when one is dealing
with messes. Armson et.al. (1999:28) describes a mess as a situation
that is very difficult to pin down. In a difficult situation it is easy to
identify the relevant factors. In a mess everything looks fuzzy and

24

difficult to explain in terms of what is happening. There is less control of the situation in terms of the direction it may take. With a difficulty one can be able to identify the factors, which are part of the situation. The difference between a difficulty and a mess is that the latter is unbounded, whereas the former is bounded. According to Harding (1995:1) a turbulent environment is messy to work in, and is marked by the unexpected changes.

System thinking has a way of dealing with both difficult and messy situations. Systems analysts can make an opinion whether a situation is difficult or messy. The different perspectives within the system can be analysed by the analyst and be interpreted and considered for what they are. Emotional factors can be separated from the rational factors that tend to involve technical or computational complexity, which is known as "hard " complexity. Emotional factors are considered as "soft" issues and include the interaction of people within the system (Armson et.al. 1999: 37). In this approach one is dealing with a lot of information that needs to be organised in order to understand the problematic situation. A holistic way is preferable in simplifying reality by taking multiple partial views. A systems approach to complex situations can also assist in less extreme situations (Armson et.al. 1999: 25). According to Armson et.al.(1999:17) one way of identifying perspectives of people is what is called weltanschauung or worldview. Armson et. al.(1999:17) considers role play as a way of seeing the system through the eyes of another person.

3.8 Hard and Soft Systems

Systems thinking shifted its focus from the traditional way of looking at methods of solving the problem. Rather, the emphasis moved to a way of dealing with complex human problem situations. This shift resulted in the perception of problems in terms of being hard and soft. Jackson (1995) describes hard problem situations as well-defined (simple) problems and are associated with goal seeking and problem solving, often called "deterministic". A soft problem situation, alternatively, is ill-defined; it is unstructured and is viewed as "probabilistic" in nature (Jackson, 1995). The shortfall of traditional approaches is their failure to deal successfully with soft problem situations. Hard systems thinking is well suited for use in linear and less complicated problem situations, which are more of a technical nature. The appropriate tools for use of these are in areas which require goal-seeking and problem solving (Kiker, 1999:34-35).

3.9 Points of leverage

By points of leverage Senge (1999) meant the problematic situations that present themselves in an organisation. In order to bring about change one needs to locate these points of leverage. According to Flood (1999:14) leverage is achieved when action is taken that leads to significance and enduring improvement. Furthermore Flood (1999: 15) insists that working on leverage points realizes focused action that is

normally less than obvious to most people operating solely from intuition.

3.10 Learning organisation

Learning organisations are organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together (Senge 1990: 3). A learning school has a vision of where it is going. This shared vision cannot be achieved simply by training individuals; it can only happen as a result of learning at the whole organisation level. A learning school is an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself (Pedler et. al. 1991:1). Learning organisations are characterized by total employee involvement in a process of collaboratively conducted, collectively accountable change directed towards shared values or principles (Watkins and Marsick 1992: 118).

3.11 Dialogue and the learning organisation

Peter Senge (1999) also places an emphasis on dialogue in organisations – especially with regard to the discipline of team learning. Dialogue (or conversation) as Gadamer (1979:347) has argued is a process of two people understanding each other. As such it is inherently risky and involves questioning our beliefs and assumptions. Thus it is a characteristic of every true conversation that each opens himself to the other person, truly accepts his point of view as worthy of consideration and gets inside the other to such an extent that he understands not a particular individual, but what he says. The thing that has to be grasped is the objective rightness or otherwise of his opinion, so that they can agree with each other on a subject (Gadamer 1979: 347 cited in Senge 1999). The concern is not to 'win the argument', but to advance understanding and human well-being. Agreement cannot be imposed, but rests on common conviction (Habermas 1984: 285-287). As a social relationship it entails certain virtues and emotions (cited in Senge 1999:3).

It is easy to see why proponents of the learning organisation would place a strong emphasis upon dialogue. As Peter Senge has argued, for example, team learning entails the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine "thinking together" (1999:10). Dialogue is also necessary to other disciplines e.g. building a shared vision, team learning and developing mental models (cited in Senge 1999:10). However, there are significant risks in dialogue to the organisation. One factor in the appeal of Senge's view of dialogue (which was based upon the work of David Bohm and associates) was the promise that it could increase and enrich corporate activity. It could do

this, in part, through the exploration and questioning of 'inherent, predetermined purposes and goals' (Bohm et. al. 1991 cited in Senge1999). There is a clear parallel here with Argyris and Schön's work on double-loop learning but interestingly one of Bohm's associates has subsequently suggested that their view was too optimistic: 'dialogue is very subversive' (Factor 1994 cited in Senge 1999).

The conceptualisation of learning organisations (Senge 1990) points to some particular problems associated with the thinking held by some managers in organisations. These include a failure to fully appreciate and incorporate the imperatives that animate modern organisations; the relative sophistication of the thinking required of managers (and whether many in practice they are up to it); and questions around the treatment of organisational politics. It is certainly difficult to find real-life examples of learning organisations (Kerka 1995 cited in Senge 1990).

There has also been a lack of critical analysis of the theoretical framework for learning organisation. Finger and Brand (1999) provide us with a useful listing of more important shortcomings of the learning organisation concept. They conclude that it is not possible to transform a bureaucratic organisation by learning initiatives alone. They believe that by referring to the notion of the learning organisation it was possible to make change less threatening and more acceptable to participants. Finger and Brand (1999:146) contend that the success for organisational change and transformation is a collective effort. They further suggest that learning organisations need to have a clear focus. They argue that learning organisations focus on the following;

"Focuses mainly on the cultural dimension, and does not adequately take into account the other dimensions of an organisation. To transform an organisation it is necessary to attend to structures and the organisation of work as well as the culture and processes. Focusing exclusively on training activities in order to foster learning favours this purely cultural bias" (Finger and Brand 1999:146).

The exact functions of organisational learning need to be more clearly defined. Organisational learning is just a means in order to achieve strategic objectives. But creating a learning organisation is also a goal, since the ability permanently and collectively to learn is a necessary precondition for thriving in the new context. Therefore, the capacity of an organisation to learn, that is, to function like a learning organisation, needs to be made more concrete and institutionalized, so that the management of such learning can be made more effective (Finger and Brand 1999:147).

Finger and Brand (1999:147) conclude that there is a need to develop a true management system of an organisation's evolving learning capacity. They suggest that this can be achieved through defining indicators of learning (individual and collective) and by connecting them to other indicators (Finger and Brand: 147).

3.12 Learning

Day (1987) (cited in Busher and Saran 1995: 114) indicates the futility of teachers working alone in their classrooms in silos. This tends to restrict their professional development. Argyris and Schön (1974) describe single-loop learning as a way in which learning tends to maintain the field of constancy by designing actions that satisfy existing governing variables (cited in Busher and Saran 1995:114). This kind of approach to teaching is restrictive and non-developmental in nature. Argyris and Schön (1974) emphasize the need for 'double-loop' learning in which intentions and practices in teaching are raised to an explicit, publicly accessible level, and others advocate action research as a powerful means of achieving this (cited in Busher and Saran 1995:114). Day (1987) conducted a lot of research in classroom observation, analysis and evaluation of in-service professional development in primary and secondary schools in support of reflection on teaching (cited in Busher and Saran 1995:114). During this process Day (1987) was observing the difference between what is considered as single-loop learning and 'double-loop' learning.

Argyris and Schön (1976) characterize the normal way of learning as 'single-loop learning'. They argue for 'double-loop learning', that allows things that were previously taken for granted to be seen as problematic, and opening oneself to new perspectives and new sources of evidence (cited in Day et.al 1987: 20). There are decisions that are made based due to rule of thumb and are never critically analysed. The way we tend to perform some of our activities may no longer be appropriate for the occasion and the context.

The role of leadership and management is to create a conducive environment for policy implementation. A learning atmosphere in a school needs to be promoted and teachers can be motivated to engage in learning and reflection on their day-to-day activities. They can do this by allowing time and resources for engaging in teacher reflection, evaluation and planning for school development. The alternative requires listening to the teacher's needs for learning. Day et.al (1987:21) suggests the following principles as a way of maximizing the conditions for effective professional learning in the context of appraisal viz;

Learning requires opportunities for reflection and self-confrontation; teachers and schools are motivated to learn by the identification of an issue or problem which concern them. Teachers learn best through active experiencing and participation. Decisions about change should arise from reflections upon and confrontation of past and present practice. Schools and teachers need support throughout processes of change.

A model advocated by Handal and Lauris (cited in Graves 1990: 65) also describes the role of the people involved in observation. The

28

observation needs to be done in such a way that the questioning should be based on key issues Such key issues may involve reflection on lesson presentation, examination of assumptions held by learners, observers, and the educator. One can imagine the lack of development of the evaluee if the supervisor and peer simply sit down and ring on the levels and performance standards. The role of observation of both the supervisor and peer is quite crucial for the dialogue that needs to ensue between the parties concerned.

It is difficult for people to work reflectively when they are pressured for time and this poses another problem. The tendency is that educators will resort to ritualism. These inadequacies are manifestations at times of lack in skills and also a lack in time management. The members of the Development Support Group (DSG) need to be trained in the use of reflection as a thinking tool. The lack of time on reflecting on the experiences poses another problem for practitioners, when they fail to think on the spot. The DSG's needed to advocate collaboration in the sense that observation needs to be jointly discussed by the appraisee, peer and supervisor. The researcher jointly promoted the use of diaries for discussion and reflection.

3.13 Summary

In the literature that has been reviewed, the significance of systems theory was outlined. The justification for using systems thinking as an approach to the study was also emphasized. Systems theory as such is a wide field; however systems thinking forms a significant part in this field. The account in this chapter is by no means a complete one. However, it does clarify key aspects that pertain to the study. The foundation that has already been laid by justifying the use of systems thinking cannot be over-emphasised. Systems thinking as a perspective, presents a particular way to the approach on reality. As part of this chapter the literature that was reviewed included Senge's approach to systems thinking, which he considers as the cornerstone of the five disciplines. Senge (1990) brings another dynamic approach by putting systems thinking at the centre of the other four disciplines. Senge takes the issue of systems thinking into the organisations, by bringing in the concept of learning organisations. This brings in another slant to the understanding of the organisations and the environment in which they operate.

This chapter forms the scaffolds for understanding the role of Soft Systems Methodology in conducting the research. Soft Systems Methodology is a methodology which is located within the broad systems thinking paradigm. The focus in the next chapter will be on Checkland's seven stage Soft Systems Methodology. The study will follow an interpretivist, and qualitative paradigm, based on the use of SMM tools in conducting the research.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The nature of the research problem justified the use of systems thinking. Soft Systems Thinking forms an integral part of systems thinking. This study that was based on the implementation of IQMS required a systems thinking approach. As indicated previously, DAS and IQMS are complex policies, which needed to be implemented in an environment which was considered messy. In the first chapter it was mentioned that DAS came after a period when the schools were terrains of the unions. The school environment was politically volatile and heavily unionised. DAS came after the 'inspection' system had been rejected in the schools by the active unions. In order to implement DAS and IQMS policies the situation needed to be negotiated and dialogue used as a tool for facilitating the implementation. The systems thinking approach enables the researcher to view the problematic situation as messy, yet also find points of entry. In such a messy and complex situation the policies cannot be simply imposed, rather as an analyst one needed to work in a collaborative manner with the actors. Systems thinking and SSM makes provision for the tools that a researcher can use in order to work in such complex and messy problematic situations.

The systems thinker is exhorted to think holistically; ensure compatibility between the philosophical, methodological, and practical aspects of systems, be knowledgeable of the power, social and political contexts of their work, be critically aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all relevant systems methodologies, methods and techniques; take an ethical approach; create, implement and sustain improvement in problematic situations (Main 2002:118).

The SSM provides the necessary tools for use in conducting the study. The most prominent tools that feature in the study are namely, rich picture, spray diagrams, Learning iceberg, brainwriting tool and CATWOE. These tools are useful particularly in promoting dialogue. Secondly, they assist in exposing the systemic issues do not appear on the surface. The practitioner uses them for purposes of identifying the assumptions, beliefs and that influences our thinking. These assumptions are exposed during a process of dialogue. The systems thinking approach enables the researcher to work with the participants in identifying the elements that form the system. This kind of an approach brings a new perspective into the problematic situations. These may be unstructured, but as the process of dialogue and engagement continues they are given a structure.

4.2. Systems Tools and Disciplines for Learning

4.2.1. The Events, Pattern, Structure Pyramid

The iceberg tool suggests that there are events, patterns and structure. These structures refer to those issues which are fundamental to the problem. For an example the beliefs, assumptions and ideologies that are held by a particular group of people may influence their thinking and actions. From an analyst's perspective there are events that are observable. The tendency is to use fire-fighting methods, which are shortlived. Eventually the root cause of the problem has not been identified. The underlying features and causes remain un-attended. The tendency is that some of the observed events are repeated and become a pattern. Senge (1990:52-54) analyses these levels and indicates the difference between each level. Below the surface (the events level), lies a deeper reality, which allows us to gain a better understanding of the events level. Patterns are trends or changes in events over time. Patterns and trends provide more information, but are not ends in themselves-rather they are means to an end. Patterns and trends can assist in contextualising the event with other similar events. These patterns can take different forms in terms of the degree and level of being difficult or messy problems. The difference between a difficult and messy problem was defined earlier in this paper. At this stage the most significant thing is to identify the manner in which these patterns manifest themselves. Structure is the level where the true root causes lie (Moonsamy, G. 2002:8-99). Understanding the structure is of utmost importance for the other two layers. Solutions at this level will lead to changes in patterns and trends at the next level up, and forever eliminate the recurrence of problems at the events level. The structure refers to those underlying issues that reveal our thinking. Our thinking is influenced by our assumptions, beliefs, ideologies, values and worldviews. By structure is not meant what people may think in terms of what is visible, rather that which can not be seen but can be surfaced through dialogue.

Systems thinking equips one with a variety of tools to look deeper into the system, to surface the structure and not just operate at the events or patterns level. From a systems perspective, each layer needs to be understood and the kind of questions that practitioners ask need to fit with the layer. Senge (1990:53) refers to systemic or structural thinking as the ability to discover structural causes of behaviour.

4.2.2 Mental Models

Senge (1990) talks about mental models that people carry with them. These mental models are the collection of one's beliefs, assumptions, worldview and ideologies. All of us carry these images, assumptions and ways of looking at the world, which, control the way we see the world and the action we take. At times we make generalizations in terms of

31

our assumptions. For the systems analyst it is important to make people understand that through dialogue we may be able to expose some of these assumptions. Senge (1996:235-236) indicates that mental models are subjective images, deeply ingrained assumptions, generalisations and stories that people carry in their minds about themselves, other people, institutions and events that take place in the world. These are internal pictures (subjective images) of the world that need to be unearthed and brought to the surface and critically scrutinized (Moloi et.al. 2002:89). In order to surface these assumptions, dialogue is encouraged between individuals. In these conversation people begin to think and experience different patterns of thinking, whilst listening to colleagues. In those conversations individuals influence each, hence the shift in thinking patterns, as people see the other side of the story (Moloi et.al. 2002: 89). Pascale (1990) thinks that professional development is essential in changing the mental maps or frames of educators (cited in Busher and Saran 1995:114). Day (1993) in his research in classroom observation in primary and secondary schools discovered that educators indulge in single loop learning (cited in Busher and Saran 1995:114).

4.2.3 Shared Vision

According to Senge (1990:206) a shared vision is a vision that ensures that many people are truly committed to the achievement of the set goals of the organisation. This is significant for a learning organisation as it provides the focus and energy for learning. This means building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there (Ibid. 1994:6). Bierema and Berdish (1996) describe shared vision as an all encompassing world which provides focus for an individual and team concerning what is to be learnt and what is to be valued (in Moloi et.al. 2002:89). The strength of learning organisations is the shared vision. Without a pull towards some goal, which people truly want to achieve, the forces in support of the status quo can be overwhelming. Vision establishes an overarching goal, therefore new ways of thinking; acting and approaches are needed in learning organisations.

4.2.4 Team Learning

The discipline of dialogue also involves learning how to recognize the patterns of interaction in teams that undermine learning (Senge 1990:10). Team learning for Senge (1990:10) is vital for teams to set the pattern for learning in an organisation. This involves transforming conversational and collective thinking skills, so that groups of people can reliably develop intelligence and disability greater than the sum of individual member's talents (Senge 1994:6). Team learning begins with dialogue, which involves the capacity to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine thinking together (Senge 1990:10). This is a vital aspect

in a problematic situation, where every member of the group needs to make a positive contribution for the sake of the organisation.

4.2.5 Personal Mastery

Personal mastery is the capacity to focus on intrinsic desires, not only on secondary goals (Senge 1990:148). It refers to learning to expand the personal capacity to create the results are mostly desired and creating an organisational environment which encourages all its members to develop themselves toward the goals and purposes they choose (Senge 1994:6). It is a discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively (Senge1990: 7). People with a high level of personal mastery are able to consistently realise their set goals and are committed to lifelong learning.

4.2.6 Points of Leverage

According to Senge (1990:114) leverage is seeing where actions and changes in structures can lead to significant, enduring improvements. Senge (1990:95) identifies system archetypes that embody the key to learning. The purpose of archetypes is to recondition our perceptions, so as to be able to see structures at play, and to see the leverage in those structures (Ibid. 95).

4.2.7 Reflective Journal

In order to achieve reflective learning and reflection on practice, a variety of reflective tools may be used, such as action research and reflective journal writing. Ballantyne and Packer (1995) define student journal as a "learning exercise in which students express in writing their understanding of, reflections on, response to or analysis of an event, experience or concept " (cited in Balfour et.al. 2005:60). It is similar to a diary or log in that it is used to describe events in detail. However, it also entails a self-reflective component (Snyder 1985) that may assist in the development of professional self-reflection (Lukinsky cited in Balfour et.al. 2005:60). Grant (cited in Balfour et.al. 2005:59-61) in his study explores reflective journal as a strategy for developing reflective practice. The study reports on the use of reflective journals by a group of fifty-two student teachers undertaking their second compulsory year of Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Grant (cited in Balfour et.al.2005:61) supports the idea of using a reflective journal in order to introduce students to the process of reflective journal writing and its usefulness in promoting self-reflection and reflection on practice. This exercise promotes that each individual needs to reflect on the way he or she is performing a particular task. Journaling is such a significant tool in one's own learning and individual growth.

Woodward (1998) suggests that reflection tends to remain private and reflection on action seldom becomes explicit unless specific processes are put in place to encourage this (cited in Balfour et.al.2005: 61). Jones et.al. (1989:132) promote the use of diaries by teachers for observations and comments during the activity of evaluation. Teachers can write notes and comments based on their observations on these diaries. By so doing they can identify patterns and connections between things which might otherwise remain unarticulated or unnoticed (Jones et.al. 1989:132). Systems thinking needs the disciplines of building shared vision, mental models, team learning, and personal mastery to realize its potential. Building shared vision fosters a commitment to the long term. The process of identifying one's assumptions and beliefs forms and integral part of reflecting on the practice. Team learning develops the skills of groups of people to look for the larger picture that lies beyond individual perspectives. Personal mastery fosters the personal motivation to continually learn how our actions affect our world. Systems thinking enables us to shift our mindset regarding the way we perceive our learning organisation and our world (Senge 1990: 12).

4.3 Understanding Soft Systems Methodology

Systems thinking is a way of seeing or understanding the world. Soft systems thinking (SST) emerged as an organised way of exploring human problem situations. For almost four decades Peter Checkland has been working on developing the Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). Checkland (1975, 1981, 1989, and 1990) built upon the foundations of systems engineering to develop systems thinking as a method of inquiry. He believed that just going through the process could change an organisation. This approach provides a structured approach for dealing with soft problems. Checkland's idea of an organisation was extremely general; it could be a multinational corporation, a department, a group of people, or even a single individual. SSM is a system of inquiry and action for improving unstructured problem situations where the issues of concern are vaguely perceived but not clearly defined (Luckett et.al. 2001: 523 cited in Systems Methodology Notes).

SSM considers the different views of people. It assumes that each individual will see the world differently, which will often lead to varying understandings and evaluations of situations. Inevitably, the culture and politics of an organisation will include diverse views. These views may not be necessarily opposed to each, but they may be different enough to cause problems in defining clear objectives. Because the process assumes people will have different views, the goal is to achieve consensual action by moving towards understanding of the varying perceptions. The practitioners of SSM must be open to other people's ideas for the process to be successful.

SSM is a learning system. The Soft Systems Methodology users learn by comparing pure models of purposeful activity with perceptions of what is going on in a real-world situation (Luckett et.al. 2001: 524). SSM is

not appropriate for all situations. It is quite concerned with existing systems because the process explicitly requires a current system to be taken into account. Even if the goal is to create a new system that is not similar to any existing system, there is always the possibility to compare with existing ideas or practices if the concepts are viewed at a high enough level. SSM is geared towards complex, dynamic environments that often include human factors. The methodology is helpful when objectives need to be clarified, and perhaps how the objectives can be attained at a high-level.

SSM is a useful process because of the following reasons. It provides a structure for making sense of difficult problems. It helps an organisation to gain a better understanding of how its objectives will be achieved. For example, senior executives may have objectives for the organisation, but they may not have worked out with the staff what activities need to be undertaken at all levels to achieve these objectives. SSM can also be used to generate hard questions, which can then be approached using more systems engineering approaches.

Checkland suggested a seven-stage cycle for analysis in the soft systems methodology. In systems thinking problems can be broadly grouped into two areas: ill-defined and well-defined problems. Those referred to as hard problems are well-defined problems as compared to those classified as soft. The hard issues are of a deterministic nature, whereas the soft issues are complex and involve human interaction. The interrelationship between the elements on soft issues can be quite complex and not easy to follow for the practitioner. The dynamic nature of the system makes it very difficult to predict.

The 1975 version is rather bold and it gives the impression that it is a sequential seven stages process that must be followed to the letter. Peter Checkland introduced the new version in 1988. In this version, the SSM is an iterative learning cycle that ideally never stops (Bulow 1989). Also Checkland introduced the stream of cultural analysis, which has three other types of analysis to be considered in order to structure the problem situation correctly. This analysis will be implemented in the finding out stage, which involves getting more information about the system politics and power structure. However the new version maintained the main concepts of the seven stages of SSM. The seven stages are now implemented within the new SSM. To see this, we can have a look at the new description of the SSM process, which has the following phases:

1. Understanding real world situation of concern (stages 1 and 2 in Checkland's 1975 version).
2. To develop relevant systems of purposeful activity (stages 3,4 and 5 in Checkland's 1975 version)
3. Compare these relevant systems with the real world and suggest different actions to improve the problem situation (stage 6 in Checkland's 1975 version)

4. Implement the agreed actions (stage 7 in Checkland's 1975 version) In 1975 Peter Checkland introduced the traditional SSM methodology which was composed of seven stages (Wilson 2001: 2-4).

These stages are listed as follows:

1. The problem situation unstructured
2. The problem situation structured
3. Root definitions of relevant systems
4. Conceptual models
5. Comparison of stage 4 and stage 2
6. Identify feasible and desirable changes
7. The problem situation structured
8. Action to improve the problem situation

4.3.1 The Problem Situation

The situation needs to be defined, although it is not advisable to quickly confine the definition of the problem. The situation that prevails can be approached from a perspective that takes into consideration its complexity. The tools that may be used at this stage of situating the problem may not necessarily be the same. A systems analyst needs to identify his \ her assumptions in terms of identifying the problem. The assumptions held by an analyst can predetermine the outcome and cloud the issues. Therefore it is crucial at this stage to be able to identify one's assumptions in order to take perspective. If one's assumptions are reductionist in nature that will surely have an influence on how the system is perceived. Our perspective that we have taken in analyzing the problem can limit our approaches to a problem.
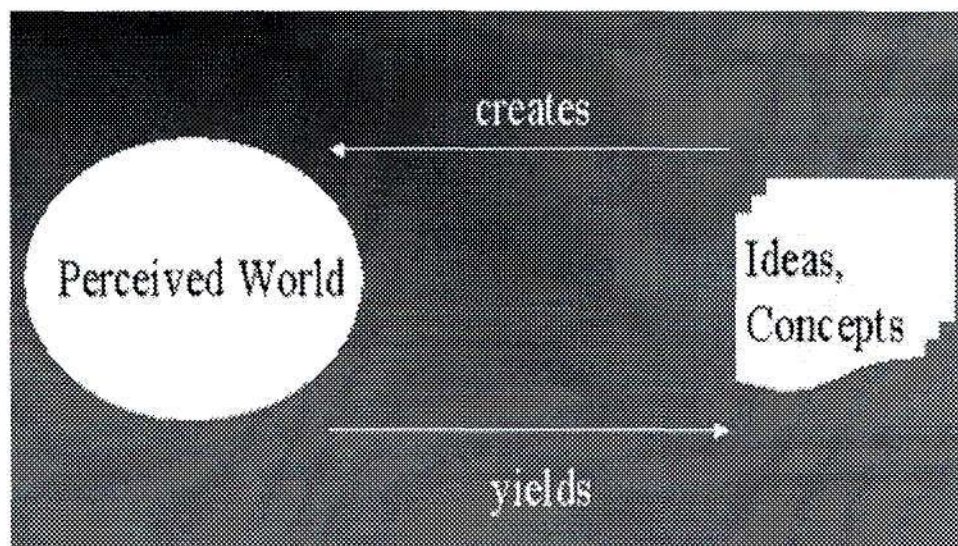
Figure 4. 1 The relationship between the perceived world and people's ideas (Wilson 2001: 5).

36

4.3.2 Problem Situation Unstructured

The purpose of this stage is to gain a general understanding and a wider view of the problem. Information is gathered about who is involved, what their perceptions of the situation are, what the organisations structures are, and what processes are going on. Also in this phase, the SSM practitioner in his efforts to gain a general description and understanding of the problem situation, must understand the organisation's culture and the internal policies. This usually involves talking to organisation members and reading as much as possible of the organisation documents. The practitioner will decide what questions should be asked to gain better understanding and who should be asked intensively.

The procedure for this phase will include the following points:

1. Gather and examine as much as possible from the available information.
2. Learn as much as possible about who and what is important in the organisation.
3. Understand as much as possible the organisation's specific language.
4. Pay close attention to the information about how things are done in the organisation (Wilson 2001: 4).

There are no specific or predefined tools to be used in this stage. The only tool is the SSM practitioner senses and experience and it is up to him to decide what type of questions should be asked, whom to ask, and what documents and materials he should read to understand the organisation language. At the end of this stage the outputs will be in the form of a clear idea of what is going on in the organisation, what processes are involved

history

Real world
Problem situation

Would be improves
Of the problem
situation

Tasks, issues

The situation as a culture

Analysis of the intervention

Social system analysis

Political system analysis

Relevant systems   model   situation

Compare to

Compare to

Differences between models
And real world

Stream of
cultural analysis

Changes: systematically desired
and culturally feasible

Action to improve the situation

Logic-based stream
of analysis

Figure 4.2 The two strands of version of SSM, (Wilson 2001: 9).

within the situation, what specific tasks and issues are important and a general satisfaction of understanding the problem situation. The most important thing is to have a file that contains all of these notes beside any other comments that the practitioner might want to add, and to keep this file as a reference to go back to it when it is necessary in the later stages.

4.3.3 Problem Situation Structured

This stage helps to structure and express the information and the understanding of the organisation problem situation to enable and facilitate the analysis that will follow especially in stage3 when you choose relevant systems. The procedure for this phase can be based on the practitioner judgment but the basic rule is not to trust your judgment 100%, but rather use other tools to help you get better understanding of the features of the problem situation. These tools will involve other analyses, such as analysis one (analysis of the intervention), analysis two (social and cultural analysis), analysis three (political analysis), and the rich picture analysis (Wilson 2001:5).

4.3.4 Analysis One: Intervention Analysis

It is useful in thinking of the intervention of a problem as itself being problematic. In this analysis we have to think of three roles separately, the first one is the role of the client: which involves who is the client and what are the aspirations of this client. The second role is the role of the problem solver, which involves who is the problem solver, what are the available resources, and what are the constraints. The third and last role is the role of the problem owner, which also involves who is the problem owner and what are the implications of this problem owner. We can conduct analysis one by doing the following steps:

1. Define the client (the individual who causes the intervention to take place)
2. Define the 'would-be problem solvers' (those individuals who conduct the study)
3. The would-be problem solver then make up a list of possible problems

For each of the problems on the list, the would-be problem solver then names one or more 'problem owners': those people with an interest in the problem situation as identified, and those who are likely to be affected by the problem.

The third role, which is the problem owner, is a very important role. It can be sometimes very useful to think of each problem in the view of who is the owner of this problem that eventually gives the SSM practitioner a better understanding of these problems from the perspectives of their owners. One good suggestion is to draw a table that contains problems in one column and the owners in another (Wilson 2001:11-12).

4.3.5 Analysis Two: Social and Cultural Analysis

It is used to know the internal policies of the organisation and to think of the possible motives and factors that influence the perspective of an individual. This involves internal friendship, possible advantages to be gained or weaknesses to be covered. This stage involves thinking about three important entities:

1. Think about the roles that the various individuals involved in the problem situation play.
2. Think about the expected behaviors of each role.
3. Think about the values that are used to evaluate the performance of the individuals involved
4. These three entities form a circle, which means that each one of them is defined and totally dependent on the other two as shown in figure 4.3.

39
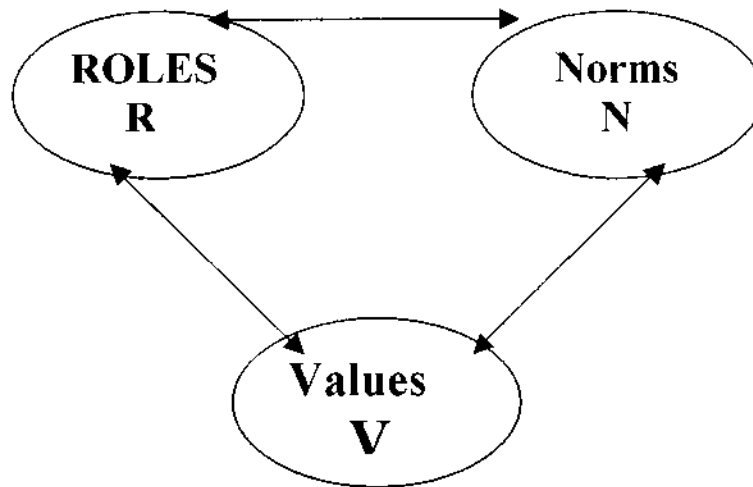
Figure 4.3 Social and cultural analysis entities

Source: (Wilson 2001:11-13).

4.3.6 Analysis Three: Political Analysis

It is also a cultural analysis but with respect of power. The SSM practitioners have to study the organisation structure in order to understand the structure of power, and the implicit organisational beliefs. The analyst analyses the culture that prevails in the organisation, by observing the behaviour of members in relation to the environment in which they work. Secondly, the analyst also observes the way members are performing their duties within their existing hierarchies in the organisation and how they relate to their subordinates.

1. Thinking about what makes an individual powerful within the organisation.
2. Thinking about what the symbols of power are, for example: accepted knowledge; a certain title or position, or access to specific individuals might be symbols of power within an organisation (Wilson 2001: 13).

4.3.7 Rich Picture

Rich pictures are a means of capturing as much information as possible relating to the problem situation. A rich picture can show boundaries, structure, information flows, and communication channels (Checkland 1990:13-14). But mostly it shows the Human Activity System. This is the element that is not included in such models as data flow diagrams or class models. Rich pictures are a graphical representation of your understanding of the problem situation. The use of this exercise is depended on the approach of the analyst; there is no method that is recommended as the best for conducting a rich picture. The important thing in a rich picture is that the people will recognize this rich picture

as being representative of the situation they find themselves in (see Checkland 1999:45; Checkland and Scholes 1999: 317; Wilson 2001:13).

4.3.8 Formal and Informal Methods

The analyst can use many formal and informal methods for collecting acts. Some of the formal methods are: work observations, interviews, and workshops and discussions. Some of the details of the methods are the following.

4.3.8.1 Work observation

This involves the following steps to be taken namely:

1. Identify tasks performed
2. Identify tools employed
3. Establish interactions between people\systems
4. Produce logs
5. "Day-in-the-life-of" descriptions
6. Make drawings of structures\layouts
7. Collect samples of tools used to handle information
8. Perform participant observation
9. Video recordings

4.3.8.2 Interviews

1. Unstructured, informal ("tell me what you do")
2. Semi-structured (questionnaire with open-ended answers)
3. Highly structured (questionnaire with boxes to tick)
4. Critical incidents
5. Audio recording

4.3.8.3 Workshops and discussion

1. Future workshops
2. Review workshops
3. Conflict resolutions workshops
4. Mock-ups, simulations, mind-games
   (Source: Wilson 2001:15).

4.4 Outputs

By the end of this stage (problem situation structured), you should have a rich picture that sums up the problem situation understanding, have a list of problems and problem owners, have notes on political, social, and cultural aspects, and most important feel comfortable about your understanding of the problem situation (Wilson 2001:15).

4.4.1 Naming of Relevant Systems

Now starting from this phase, we get to the system thinking activities. This phase is mainly concerned about formulation of root definitions for a number of relevant systems. As a facilitator then at this stage you need to guide the participants in the identification of themes. The themes that emerge from the problem are identified. This is significant for the formulation of the root definition (see Checkland and Scholes, 1999: 36; Checkland, 1999:164; Wilson 2001:16).

4.4.2 Root Definition

The root definition is one way of describing what is the system, how the system will work, and why we need this system. Confusion needs to be avoided between the how here with the how of implementation. The how in the root definitions gives a general framework of how this can be implemented. However it does not include the definition of certain technology and certain steps to be taken. A root definition is expressed as a transformation process that takes some entity as input, changes or transforms that entity, and produces a new form of the entity as output. The transformation process here is a key word of SSM, it usually describes the action of transformation required to transform an input to an output (see Checkland 1990: 16-18; Checkland and Scholes1999: 36-38; Wilson 2001:16-17).

There are two kinds of root definitions supported in SSM:

1. Primary Task Root Definition
2. Issue based Root Definition.

Primary Task Root Definitions concern processes, which the organisation being studied performs as a part of their regular activities (for example, in an oil company, the process of refinement of the oil). Issue Based Root Definitions concern processes, which are rare or one-off occurrences (such as a management restructuring).

The following procedure can be helpful in deriving root definitions of relevant systems:
1. Identify a problem which seems important enough for further investigation
2. A properly structured root definition has three parts, referred to as what, how and why.
3. The 'what' is the immediate aim of the system, the 'how' is the means of achieving that aim, and the 'why' is the longer term aim of the purposeful activity.
4. Naming a series of relevant systems using the CATWOE formula can compose Root Definitions.
5. (Source: Wilson 2001:17)

42

4.4.3 CATWOE Analysis

In this stage also, a CATWOE analysis is conducted. The basic idea here is also to formulate and structure the real world situation in a meaningful way and also to ensure that the RD written does really represent the relevant system. One of the major tasks in this stage is that after the SSM practitioner performs both the root definition and the CATWOE analysis is to consider each of them with respect to the other one, if there is any kind of inconsistency then this is a clue that there is something seriously wrong in the SSM practitioner's understanding of the problem situation and he has to go back and iterate to stages one and two. The CATWOE stands for:

Customer - the immediate beneficiaries or victims; the beneficiary of the system
Actors - the people who do the activities; the people who perform tasks in the system
Transformation - What the event may achieve; the core activity of the system, or the primary change brought about as a result
Weltanschauung (or worldview)–What view of the world makes this definition meaningful; the underlying belief about the system; whether it is the priority; the type of system for the objective of the system
Owner - who can ultimately direct the event and could close it down or stop it from happening; the person or body that has the power to approve / cancel the system
Environment - the external environmental constraints that limit what we might do. (see Checkland and Scholes, 1999:35-36; Checkland, 1999: 224-225; Wilson2001:17-18; Bob Williams 2001; Couprie, et.al:12-14).

4.4.4 Conceptual Model

The root definitions represent an individual's perspective of what the business\system is trying to achieve. The next stage, also in the systems thinking strand, is to propose an ideal view of the activities that should be followed in order to realise that perspective. At the moment, the model does not follow what is happening – it is not analysing the real world yet. At the initial drawing, there should not be too many activities shown, somewhere between five and ten are sufficient. Each activity could be decomposed in more detail later.

The conceptual model has a very simple notation – the activity itself is shown as a bubble, with the activity named (use an imperative verb to denote the activity) and a line that links it with the other activities. The first set of activities refers to purely operational activities, that is, those needed to perform the task identified in the root definition. In a system the component parts are interconnected, so that a change to one part will affect the other parts. Not only this, but the problem domain itself is a subsystem of several larger systems – changes in one will affect our domain as well.

43

Although Checkland coined the term Soft Systems Methodology, it is not strictly a methodology. It does not prescribe a rigid series of steps that must be followed scrupulously. Rather, it suggests a framework for enquiry, with a number of recommended techniques. The end result is an understanding of the problem domain so that a hard study can then be applied to specify a solution.

The conceptual model is the last of the techniques recommended by Checkland. After the models (one per root definition) are completed, they are compared with the real world activities to see whether or not the perspectives are being met, and where there are discrepancies. This comparison can be carried out in many ways: interviewing the appropriate actors, documenting the current practices, or benchmarking, to name just three. This is how the diagnosis of the problem situation is carried out.

The problem situation: this is the status quo before the study, and at the start of the study. During this time, the analyst (or problem-solver) will become part of the problem situation in order to observe it as fully as possible, remembering that his\her presence there will have its own impact. The problem situation expressed: having studied as much of the problem situation as is feasible, the analyst expresses in diagrammatic form what s\he understands is happening. This will include aspects of the Human Activity System (HAS). Checkland recommends a rich picture to achieve this, but mind maps, herringbone diagrams and other tools can be used instead. However, techniques from hard systems such as data flow diagrams or object models are not sufficiently versatile or 'rich' in the rich picture, there will be 11 root definitions derived.
Conceptual model: this is an ideal schematic for each actor\stakeholder. If one stakeholder has a particular perspective, then there must be, in principle, a set of activities to be performed that will meet the perspective. The conceptual model is a simple diagram that represents the activities. There will be one conceptual model drawn for each root definition.

Comparison of 2 and 4: this returns us to the 'real world'. The ideal view in the conceptual model is compared with the activities actually in place, and any mismatch identified as a 'problem' rather than the symptom. Checkland does not prescribe any one technique for making this comparison; that is left to the analyst. Comparison of 2 and 4: this returns us to the 'real world'. The ideal view in the conceptual model is compared with the activities actually in place, and any mismatch identified as a 'problem' rather than the symptom. Checkland does not prescribe any one technique for making this comparison; that is left to the analyst. The final two stages, 6 and 7, are closer to the work of traditional/hard systems analysts. Possible solutions are evaluated and then designed (see Checkland 1999:169-174; Couprie et.al.1999: 12; Williams, l; Wilson 2001:18).
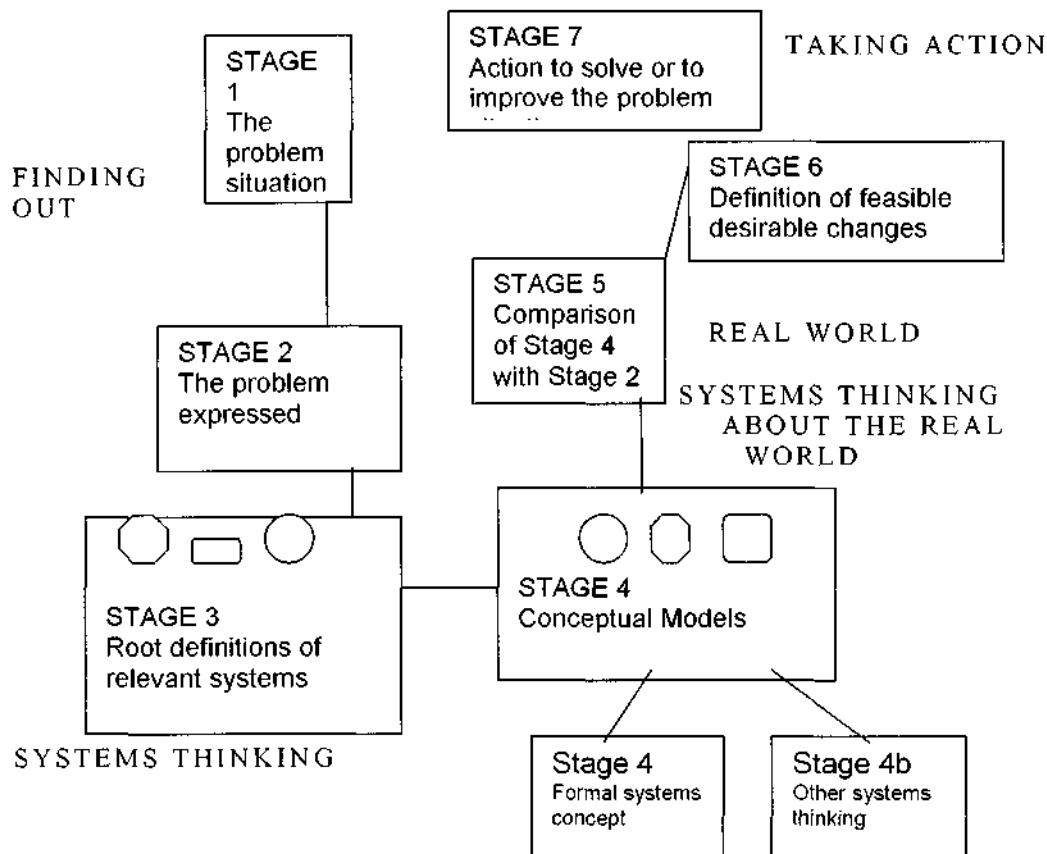
Figure 4.4 The Soft Systems Methodology

Source: (Dick: 2002).

4.5 Building the Conceptual Model

The conceptual model is the core of the SSM methodology because it is now required to establish a relevant system based on defining the minimum number of activities required for this relevant system to be the one described in the root definition. A conceptual model is a human activity model that is used to show each operational activity that is necessary to carry out the process described in the root definition. There must be at least one conceptual model for each RD.
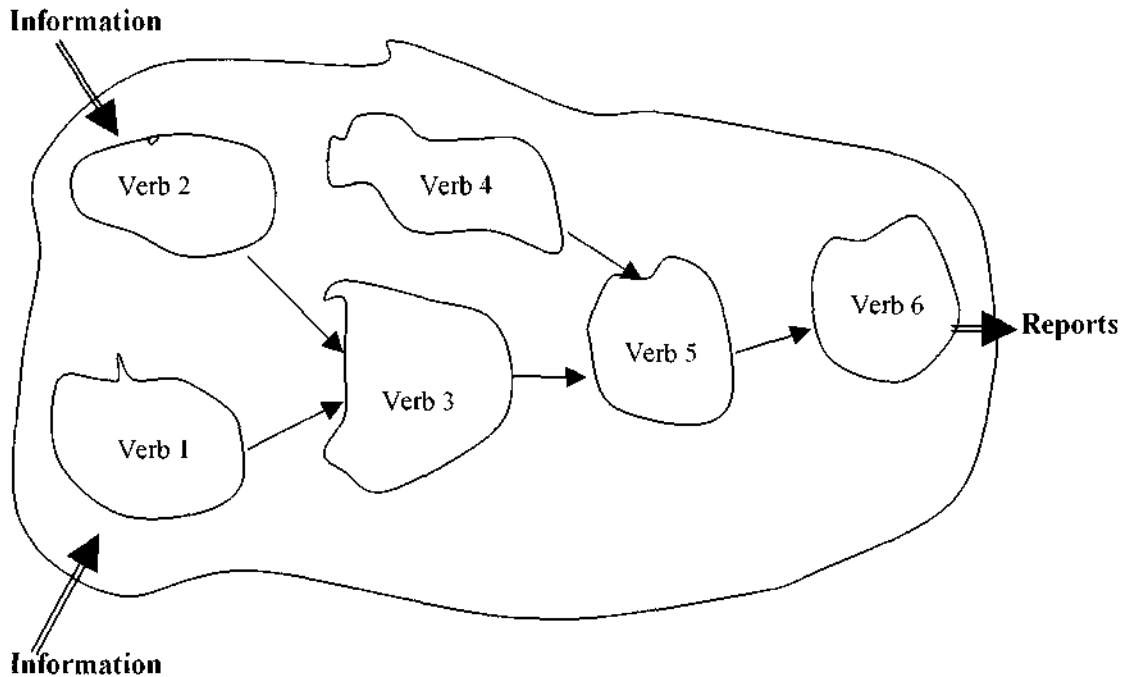
Figure 4.5: Basic components of the conceptual model

Source: Wilson 2001: 19

4.6. Formal System Thinking

Formal Systems Thinking is applied to the development of the conceptual model. The Formal System Model serves as a guideline for checking the conceptual model to be drawn. The HASS represents a human activity system. Under the Formal System model, S is a formal system if and only if it meets the following criteria:

- S must have some mission
- S must have a measure of performance
- S must have a decision making process
- S must have components which interact with each other such that the effects and actions are transmitted throughout the system
- S must be part of a wider system with which it interacts
- S must be bounded from the wider system, based on the area where its decision making process has power to enforce an action
- Source: Checkland 1999:173-74; Wilson 2001:19.

46

4.7 Monitoring the System

Monitoring the operational system consists of three activities:
Define a measure of performance:

- Efficacy - Does it work?
- Efficiency - How much of work completed given consumed resources?
- Effectiveness - Are goals being met?

Monitor the activities in the operational system, in accordance with the metrics defined in step 1.
Take control action: Use the outcomes of these metrics to determine and execute action to control the operational system.
As an example of building the conceptual model, given the following RD: "A system to meet a perceived requirement for web-based resources intended to help users teach and learn SSM methodologies by constructing and publishing appropriate web pages in order to help interested parties to teach and learn"(Wilson 2001:20). The suggested activities are:

1. Identify potential users for learning resources
2. Know about capabilities of World Wide Web medium
3. Know about authoring and publishing web pages
4. Know about methodologies and how to teach them
5. Identify likely help needed by potential users
6. Identify ways of meeting users' teaching/learning needs
7. Design web pages intended to meet users' likely needs
8. Construct web pages
9. Publish web pages
   Source: Wilson 2001: 12-24).

4.8 Comparison

This stage deals with the comparison between the conceptual model(s) developed in stage 4, and the structured analysis of the problem situation from stage 2. The purpose of this stage is to analyse the similarities and differences between the model and the real world in a thorough and structured manner. In this stage, the practitioner will likely find out where the models are unrealistic, as well as determining where the new ideas generated from the modelling might be of practical use in the situation being examined.

First of all, how do you know when to go to stage 5? It is often better to get to this stage quickly after stages 3 and 4, and then refine the artefacts generated from stages 3 and 4 if required. Stages 1 and 2 should not be passed through quickly because it is laying down the

47

foundation for the comparison. The systems thinking view of the system (stages 3 and 4) can be refined because they are more related to the new system. For this reason, the practitioner should not become too attached to the systems shown in the models from stage 4, but rather see it as a tool to facilitate his / her learning.

There are several approaches to use when comparing the real world with the models derived from the root definition. Four approaches will be discussed here because they appear to encompass the main ideas for a thorough comparison.

The four approaches are the following:

1) using conceptual models as a base for ordered questioning,
2) comparing history with model prediction,
3) general overall comparison,
4) model overlay.

Using conceptual models as a base for ordered questioning can be done when the real world situation is very different from the conceptual model. The reason this approach can be used when the two models are different is because the technique is simply to generate questions about the existing system. The questions should be written down and answered systematically. Questions should be generated for each activity in the conceptual model. Comparing history with model prediction involves reconstructing events that occurred in the past and asking what would have happened if the relevant conceptual model had been implemented at the time. This technique should be used sensitively because it could reveal inadequacies in past performance and so some people take offence that they did not do the right thing.

A general overall comparison can be used with a comparison table. A comparison table usually involves systematically going through each activity and link (that is, a relationship between two activities) in the conceptual model(s) and asking specific questions about the differences. Each activity and the links between the activities can be given a row. For the comparison table, the following questions can be answered.

- Does the activity occur in the real world?
- How does the activity occur in the real world?
- How is the output of this activity assessed and judged, and on what criteria?

The final column can be used to write any notes or observations that may be of use. In particular, notes related to possible changes are very helpful and can be used in the next stage. The technique of model overlay involves directly overlapping the concept map derived from the root definitions with a second model that is used to represent what actually exists. Although the second conceptual model has not yet been created (there only exists a rich picture), the conceptual model derived from the root definition can be used to create the second conceptual

48

model. However, be wary of forgetting or misusing elements during the construction of the real-world concept model because the systems thinking conceptual model may be quite different from the real world.

The second model should have as near as possible a form to the first model. Once the model of the real world is finished the two models can be directly overlapped on one another to see the differences between the activities and links. This technique may require a fair amount of work depending upon the number of activities and links. As well, similar elements in the two models need to be positioned in approximately the same positions on the page so that the two representations can be compared.

In tables 4.1 and 4.2 below are examples of how to make a comparison using the Soft Systems model (Checkland 1990:25; Bob Williams (1999:10); Couprie, et.al. (No year: 24-26).
This is part of the SSM process to make this kind of comparison. This table can be used to compare the conceptual model(s) generated in stage 4 (generate conceptual models) with the ideas generated in stage 2 (structure problem situation) (Wilson 2001: 24-26).

Activity	Exist?	How is it done ?	Assessment	How is it judged ?	Notes
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
Links					
1->3					
2->4					
3->4					

Assessment is good (no change), poor (further analysis), and does not exist (explore change)

Table 4. 1: Comparison table using SSM adapted from.

Source: Wilson 2001: 25

Conceptual Model Action	Real World
1. Extract effort drivers	Derived mainly from the user requirements.
2. Compare with previous projects	Project accounting systems do not collect details at the level of individual modules.
3. Produce estimates	Well defined way of presenting estimates exists.
4. Record actual performance	Project managers are essentially concerned with allocating hours to their projects - not with lower levels of information.
5. Analyse variance and identify new effort drivers	Post implementation reviews do not specifically address accuracy of individual estimates in a blame-free manner.

Table 4. 2: Comparison table for the system that estimates effort. Source: Wilson 2001:6

4.9 Definition of Desirable and Feasible Changes

The purpose of this stage is to define those changes that are most feasible and desirable. The possible changes from the previous stage are considered and weighed using several criteria, including the cost and benefit of the change, and the political feasibility. It is important that any problems that might occur as a result of the changes are considered. The result of this stage is that those changes that seem likely, if implemented, to have a positive outcome in the situation are recommended.

There are some steps that should be followed when examining a change. For each proposed change, the following should be described:

1) reason for change,
2) nature of change,
3) means to bring about change,
4) potential long-term effects of change.

The reason for the change should include arguments for why the change was suggested in the first place. In other words, why does the existing system need this change? The nature of the change is an explanation of the context of the change. The means to bring about change includes the steps required to bring about the change. The long-term implications of the change to the system should also be considered.

The political feasibility can be analysed by considering for whom the expected outcome will be positive. Furthermore, who will likely oppose the change, and why. It is also helpful to examine the relative power of the individuals for and against the change. The cost feasibility analysis includes the cost implications. For example, how much will the change likely cost, and do the benefits justify the costs. The benefits should include short and long-term benefits that might offset or justify the cost.

Stage 6 includes a general framework for how to approach the weighing of the potential changes. It is quite flexible and so can be tailored for a particular situation. Other methods will likely have to be used in this stage, such as a method for estimating the cost of a change (Wilson 2001: 27).
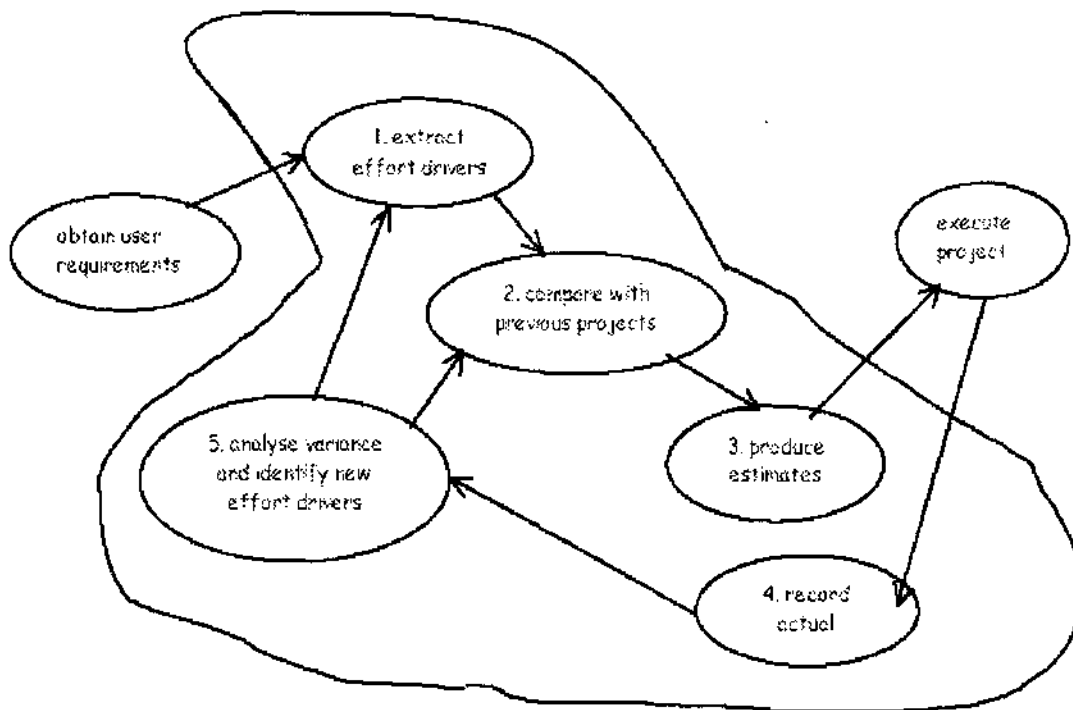
Figure 4.6: The conceptual model for a system used to estimate that current effort.

Source: Wilson 2001: 26

Problem Owner and Problem Solver
The table for illustrating the problem owner and the problem solver is
hereby given below.

PROBLEM OWNER	PROBLEM SOLVER

Table 4. 3: Problem and Problem owner.

Source: Wilson 2001: 27

4.10 Recommended Action

The purpose of the final stage is to help the practitioners recommend
the change. The recommendations should reach the people who have the
authority to approve the changes. This stage can also include the actual
starting of the change process. It is important to note that the
introduction of the action may change the situation so that new
problems may arise. If possible, it may be a good idea to carry out the
change in a temporary mock system to gauge the repercussions.
However, this method of testing would have to be on a fairly simple
system otherwise it could require a lot of resources. Once a temporary
system is used and observed by an analyst, it could then be introduced
into the real system.

51

The final report should include the following elements:

1) an outline of the measures recommended,
2) the benefits of the change,
3) the costs of the change,
4) the cultural and political implications, and
5) the feasibility of the measures.

Of course, the conclusions should be easily understandable for all of the actors (that is, stakeholders) within the organisation.
Source: Wilson 2001: 28.

4.11 Critique of SSM

Some of the critics of SSM argue that it does not take into consideration the issue of coercion in the organisational setting. Compared to other models, the SSM provides the instruments for attaining such objectives and it is clearly detailed and practical to implement. Midgley (1997:38) argues that coercion can not be addressed through the use of conventional systems methodology, but can only be dealt with methods of campaigning and direct political action.

The SSM is used to solve some problems of the system but it does not suggest building a whole system. Neither does it suggest telling the participants what to do; rather they engage amongst each other in clarifying issues. In some cases management may not be impressed by open-ended nature of the SSM. The seven step and stages of the SSM is time consuming. It tends to be limited in designing a new system.

From the above discussion it is clear that, although soft systems thinkers, have made an important contribution to management, the shortcomings must be recognised and a framework defined that would utilise the strengths of Soft Systems Thinking and at the same time supply additional support in the areas of weakness (von Solms 1998, 73).

4.12 Role of Facilitator

The facilitated sessions were conducted with a variety of stakeholders. This responsibility was to transfer the skills for using that particular tool without dictating the terms. Facilitation is considered at the catalyst in the formulation of problematic questions, combined with the use of systems tools by participants in dealing with particular problematic situations. The role of the facilitator is to provide leadership and giving direction in the formation of groups and providing the way forward.

This role demands the building of rapport, trust and collegial feeling with the participants. The facilitator needs to be resourceful in giving guidance on various aspects regarding the use of a particular tool and in conducting special exercises.

A systems thinker facilitating change in an organisation can:

- Think holistically;
- Ensure compatibility between the philosophical, methodological, and practical aspects of systems
- Be knowledgeable of the power, social and political contexts of their work
- Be critically aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all relevant systems methodologies, methods and techniques;
- Take an ethical approach;
- Create, implement and sustain improvement in problematic situations (Main 2002:118).

4.13 Summary

This chapter briefly reviewed literature based on systems thinking. The chapter explored the ideas of Senge on systems thinking as the cornerstone of the five disciplines. The second part of the chapter included the clarification of the SSM in detail. In this chapter the seven-stage model by Checkland has been clearly defined. The research tools used in the study are foregrounded in systems thinking. These form an integral part of the approach that influenced the methodology of the study. This literature serves as a background for gaining insight to the following chapter. The SSM provides the necessary tools for use in conducting the study. The most prominent tools that feature in the study are namely, rich picture, spray diagrams, Learning iceberg, brainwriting tool and CATWOE. These tools are useful particularly in promoting dialogue. Secondly, they assist in exposing the systemic issues that do not appear on the surface. The practitioner uses them for purposes of identifying the assumptions, beliefs that influences our thinking. These assumptions are exposed during a process of dialogue. The systems thinking approach enables the researcher to work with the participants in identifying the elements that form the system. This kind of an approach brings a new perspective into the problematic situations. These may be unstructured, but as the process of dialogue and engagement continues they are given a structure.

The next chapter describes how these tools were used in the implementation of DAS and IQMS policies. Some of these tools have been described in detail in the seven-stage SSM model. It will be noted in the next chapter that not all the envisaged stages of the SSM model were covered in the exercises. The reflections were based on the work that covered the years 2003 to 2006 in the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The Leadership Centre kept a record of some of the portfolio of evidence of the written assignments that were submitted for examination purposes. Most of the work was kept in the journals and portfolios after these workshops were conducted with the SMT members and principals in Vulindlela West Ward.

CHAPTER 5

REFLECTIONS ON USE OF SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH

5.1 Introduction

Although there has been a long discussion of the background and methodology of SSM, it is not the purpose of this research to give a step-by-step implementation of the method in practice. Further details regarding this SSM can be obtained from the literature that has been cited and other proponents who belong to the same tradition e.g. Flood and Jackson (1991), Flood (1995), and others cited in the previous chapter. This chapter gives a description of some of the highlights of the work that was covered whilst working with the Leadership Centre and also the engagement with the SMT members and principals from 2003 to 2006 during the implementation of DAS and IQMS. The study did not use all of the seven stages of Checkland's model. The historical presentation of the outputs from the workshops conducted is presented in detail. The workshops were facilitated using the systems tools. The chapter accounts for the way the systems tools were used and the insight gained whist using them in the problematic situations in the implementation of DAS and IQMS programmes. The key highlights included are considered as indicators of improvement in the schools due to the systemic interventions. The study also features the weaknesses and shortcomings that were exposed during the implementation of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West Ward.

5.2 Setting Boundaries in the analysis of the problem

The context of the problem situation as earlier indicated in first chapter, can also be captured from the diagrams indicating the hard systems for DAS and IQMS. It can be seen from the ensuing reflection that the whole problem context is not only complex, but also involves so many stakeholders and would become an unmanageable group. Although historical in its nature, the research was also time consuming. The research draws from four years of engagement in which the researcher was subjectively involved as a both a participant and a facilitator. The involvement in the Mcom coursework was more engaging. It required that the involvement as a researcher, facilitator and participant. The research draws some of the learnings from the portfolios of evidence that were collected as documentary evidence of work from 2003 to 2006, as well as the engagement in workshops. Documents were used in order to address some of the issues and keep the records of progress. In addition to the analysis of these documents, the reference is made to the notes that were accumulated whilst working in the TESM project in collaboration with the Leadership Centre programme. The other sources of documents were the written assignments which included work for the Leadership Centre and TESM from the year 2003 to 2004.

5.3 Phases of Development

The engagement with the TESM Project and Leadership Centre (Accreditation Programme), involved being part of a team in the residential workshops. Some of the modules offered by the Leadership Centre, were systems theory and systems thinking, learning and change and school effectiveness and school improvement. The programme required that one had to work with a particular group and present assignments. One assignment that was completed was based on the development of systems maps, models and brainwriting tools, after engaging with participants on chosen problem situation. In order to meet the above requirements we worked with SMT members of Vulindlela Circuit. Each ward presented a selected number of ten to 12 participants for the TESM workshops. The programme was compiled by myself and another SEM colleague from the Vulindlela Circuit.

DLOKWAKHE WORKSHOP FOR SMT MEMBERS: 14-16 March 2003

On 14-16 March 2003, a three-day workshop (which started on a Friday till Sunday) was conducted amongst the SMT members from the five wards that comprise Vulindlela Circuit. From each ward invitations were sent for each school to send two SMT members. We ended up with a group that was too big for the venue that we could secure. However, the TESM group members divided all the logistical tasks for the workshop to continue under those circumstances. The participants were divided into groups of five per desk and seating. All the nine TESM members were allocated groups to work with and provide guidance where necessary. However, different facilitators on each item conducted the workshop, whilst the others were giving assistance where there was a need for clarification. The programme made provision for reflective exercises after each item. The problem situations that were presented were formulated after the TESM group was briefed to conduct workshops and get their findings on the lack of use of TESM material in schools. The TESM facilitators suggested the following topics for purposes of getting as much information as we could use these tools. These were some of the topics that were formulated by the team for purposes of further discussion.

Amongst these topics were such topics as namely:

- The problems around management responsibilities and governance
- The lack of support by SGB members in performing their duties
- The conflict between school management and school governance
- The continual usage of corporal punishment by educators in schools
- The failure in the implementation of DAS in schools
- The failure of schools in using TESM manuals
- The failure to implement Whole School Evaluation

The group was assigned the topic; *The Failure in the implementation of DAS in schools.* The group discussed the problems around the DAS

programme. This collective agreement was signed in 1998 by the National Education department and the teachers unions. In 1999 workshops were conducted for principals and SEMs about the policy document. However, the resolution was never implemented in the schools across the province of Kwazulu Natal. This problematic situation surfaced when the TESM group worked with the Leadership Centre facilitators. The participants were briefed that the use of this approach does not necessarily equip one to be a systems analyst, rather it gives you another perspective on the real world.

The Learning Iceberg
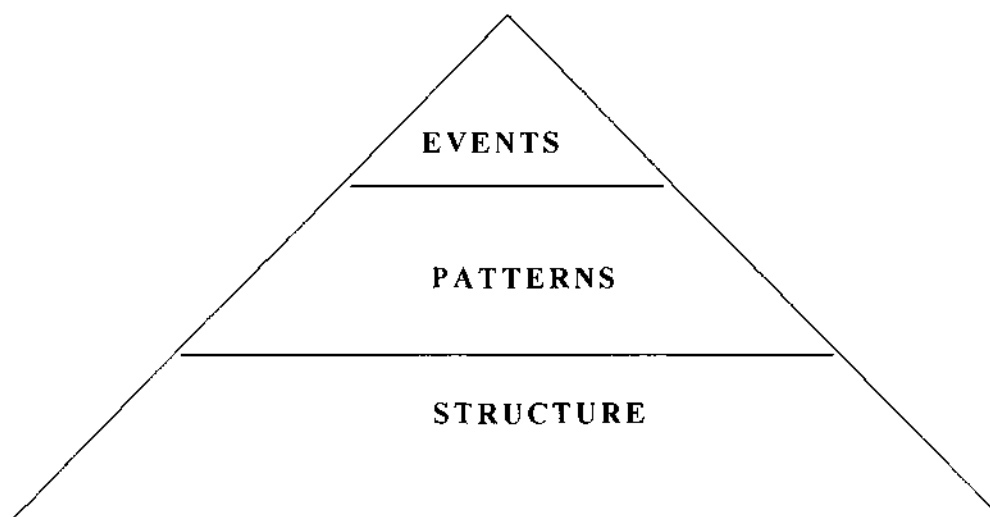
Figure 5.1: The Learning Iceberg Tool

During the programme the responsibility rested on the researcher to be the main facilitator and to drive the whole programme. After all the logistical arrangements had been attended, the programme continued. During the initial stages of the programme, the purpose was clarified and the rationale for working with the SMT members. Secondly, an explanation was made of the school as a system and a demonstration of this concept in terms of the elements that make the school system. The SMT members made their contributions regarding the elements of a school. As lead facilitator, the researcher described the learning tool illustrated above. This involved explaining the different stages, starting from the events, patterns eventually to the structure. Examples were made to clarify each step in order to point out that what each concept entails from a systems perspective. This was the most crucial part of the workshop, because the SMT members needed to understand the value of using the learning iceberg tool. The example of a school was used in order to develop the conceptualisation from the event level to the structural issues. Most of the structural issues that were raised were used as problematic situations for the other groups. The main point that this section aimed to get through is the significance of identifying our assumptions and bringing them under scrutiny by using these tools.

EMD   COLTS

OBE

VALUES IN
EDUCATION

FET

TGE

MIP

DAS

SDP

TESM

SYSTEMATIC
EVALUATION

WSE

FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT
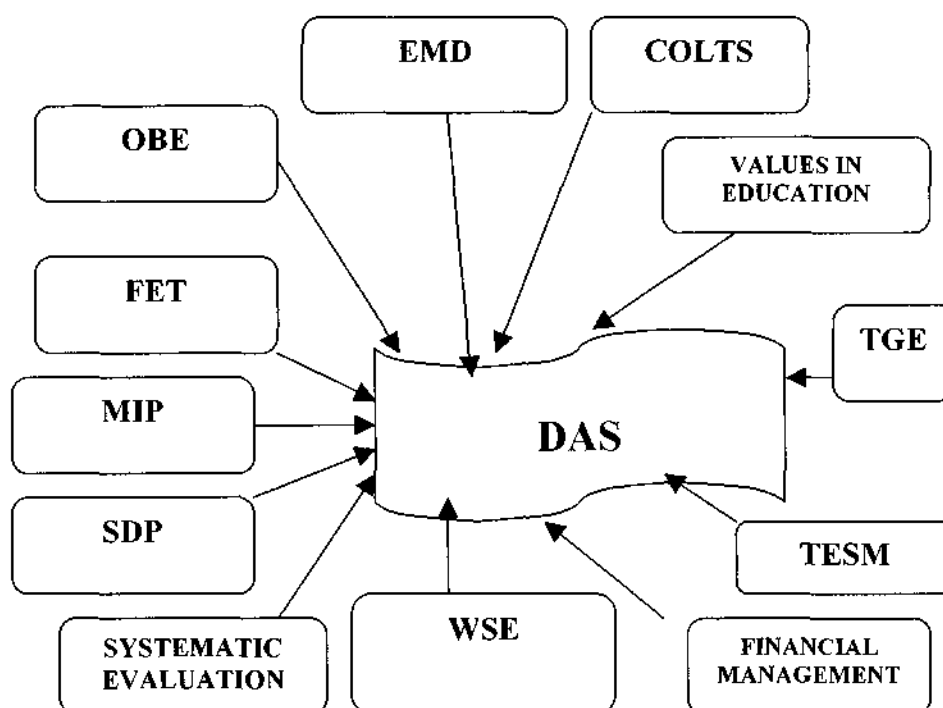
Figure 5.2 : System Map for initiatives

The next exercise was based on the topics that were assigned to each
group, working with the TESM facilitators. Each group was given a
problematic situation, whilst working under the guidance of a TESM
facilitator. Every group was given paper and koki pens, and was
supposed to report during that session. The researcher's group worked
the failure in the implementation of DAS in schools. During this
exercise members of the SMT group identified the boundary for DAS, by
naming all the initiatives offered by the education department. The next
exercise that was performed by the group was the identification of other
initiatives that are conducted by the education department and which
have an impact on the school system. In their presentation they had
classified the above sub-systems as elements that are considered to be
initiatives that have an influence on the school. The department of
education drives these initiatives, although in an uncoordinated manner.
The other systems map indicates the criteria that make up the DAS
system.

These criteria are linked and have an influence on each other.
Figure 5.2 indicates the boundary for DAS and the environment in which
it operates. All the presentations were put on paper for the plenary
session. Figure 5.2 indicates the initiatives that were conducted by the
department of education during that time. The groups presented about 12

systems maps during the plenary session. These topics covered a variety of issues regarded as problematic situations. During the discussions the SMT members raised serious concerns about the roll out plan by the education department for these programmes, as they were driven from different sub-directorates. The manner in which these programmes were driven made a negative impact on the teaching and learning at school.

These were also illustrated in the rich picture that was compiled by the participants. There a number of underlying assumptions which are the cause for such competition for space, particularly when the programme or initiative co-ordinators plan their workshops. This causes a lot of stress and strain on the school resources- teachers are called for adhoc workshops, learners are left without teachers due to a series of workshop invitations.

Hard Systems for DAS Criteria

Figure 5.3 : Hard systems for DAS criteria

In another exercise the SMT group analysed the DAS criteria in order to get insight into what sort of link and relationship exists between them. A systems map was compiled after a brainstorming session, in which contributions were invited. The DAS policy document indicates all of the above criteria that need to be performed by the educators at different levels of their functionality. The above systems map illustrates

58

the criteria for DAS, although there is no link in the way it was articulated.

The systems map in figure 5.4 below indicates the number of criteria in which the different levels of educators are supposed to work with. The Post Level PL1 educators are assigned only 13 criteria, whereas the HODs work with 15 criteria and the Deputy principal and principal share the same 23 criteria. The above criteria were consolidated in order to get a picture of the criteria and check for relationships. The IQMS criteria have been consolidated into a few criteria. It could have been done for purposes of minimizing the scope for the appraisee and the appraiser. From a comparative perspective the criteria in DAS are too cumbersome. This ends up in the lengthening the process of observations. Nevertheless the criteria are all related to the job descriptions of the educators in their different levels and ranks as indicated in figure 5.4 below. From a hard systems perspective, the analysts can observe that this approach to the implementation of DAS was problematic, in the sense that the appraisee ended up with a number of things that needed to be handled within the time constraints of the academic year. The implication for the practice is that every educator needed to be observed by his or DAS Support Group performing on the above criteria, depending on the level and position of the educator. Without any proper training on the implementation, the educators were left on their own without any guidance. During year 2000 the co-ordination and training for DAS was left to chance. There was no ownership of the programme by any of the sub-directorates that were in existence.

Systems Map for DAS Criteria
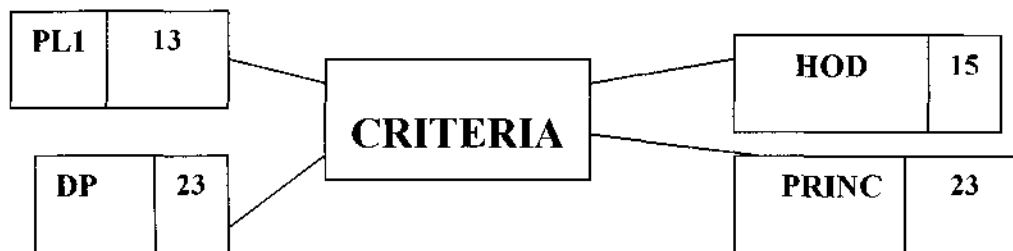
Figure 5.4: Systems Map for DAS criteria

The Brainwriting Tool

This tool is also referred as the 6-3-5. The 6 stands for the number of people in a group, the 3 stands for the three ideas to be written and lastly the 5 for the allocated five minutes to read the previous person's ideas and write new ideas before the paper is moved to the next person. After each member has jotted three ideas on the columns, the A4 paper is moved to the next person. This exercise requires that the next person read the ideas written by the person who has forwarded the paper and develop further ideas that triggered from what he/she has read. The papers from group member will move until all the squares are filled, in each paper.

In the following exercise the SMT members were divided into groups of six per table and desk, according to their sitting. This was done for the purpose of using the brainwriting tool.
The report was based on the failure in the implementation of DAS in schools. In the meanwhile other groups were working and continuing on their topics. This exercise ensured that everyone participates by means of contributing his\her fair share. Unlike in a discussion some people tend to dominate the proceedings. At the end of the task the members of the group checked for those points which were similar, or more or less the same and those that were totally different. Later on those comments were grouped together in terms of the above criteria.

In summary, the participants captured the following issues namely:

- The lack of proper training for the principals, SEMs and educators
- The lack of ownership of the DAS programme by the Department of Education officials
- Poor communication of the policy to all the relevant stakeholders
- Lack of co-ordination of initiatives within the education department
- The suspicion that DAS was another 'inspection' in disguise
- The negative attitudes that principals, unions, educators demonstrated against DAS
- The fears of getting into something new
- The cascading model that was used left everything to chance
- The policy overload being experienced at school level due to transformation
- The lack of capacity, resources and skills for the implementation of DAS programme
- The lack of accountability, time frames for the whole programme

These issues were of a systemic nature, indicating a messy situation. The situation requires an understanding of the context in which DAS was supposed to operate. Due to the time constraints the next step could not be conducted. This step involved the use of the influence diagram, whereby it could be checked which points have direct and less direct influence on each other. The issues that emerged during the brainwriting

exercise are more or les the same as those illustrated in the multi-cause diagram indicated in figure 5.5 below.

Brainwriting Tool

Name of person : ....

1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

Figure 5.5 : Brainwriting tool
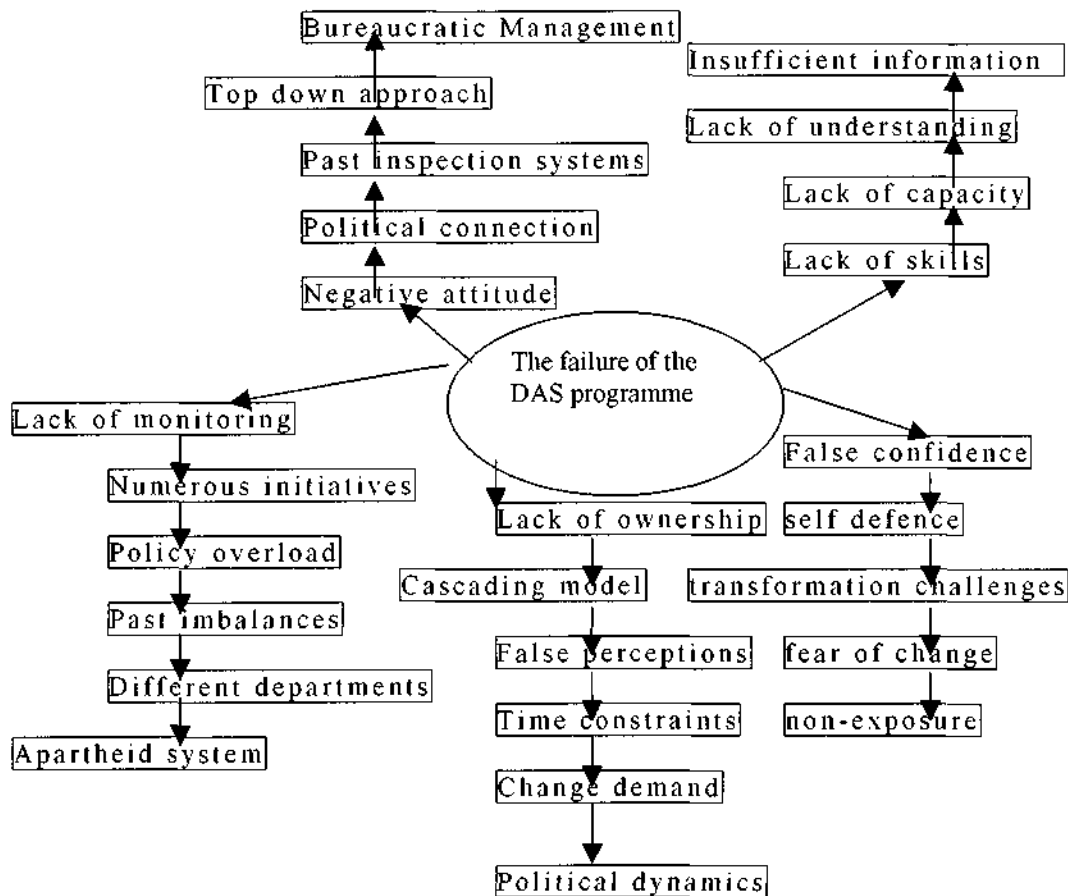
Figure 5.6: Spray diagram for Failure of the DAS programme

Another exercise that the group embarked upon involved the use of a spray diagram. The researcher described how to use the above illustrated spray-cause diagram to the participants. Every participant was made aware that this involves asking the question about 'what causes what'. In the above responses the participants were responding to the question of what caused the failure in the implementation of DAS. The other groups also continued to deliberate on their problematic situations \ topics. Thenafter, all the groups were issued with the next set of papers to draw a spray diagram. During the plenary session every group presented their output, depending on the allocated problematic question.

The spray diagram indicates the inputs that were made by the participants concerning DAS. This exercise became clearer as the participants had initially conducted a brainwriting session, on the similar topic.

This became the turning point for some SMT members in terms of their understanding of the issues that led to the failure of the implementation of DAS in Vulindlela Circuit.

SACOL WORKSHOP 15-16 JULY 2003

On the 15-16 of July 2003 a two-day workshop was conducted during the winter holidays. The planning and facilitation of the workshop was jointly done with an SEM colleague from Sweetwaters Ward. For this workshop SMT members were invited from the five wards that comprise the Vulindlela Circuit. During those holidays there was a tremendous response from the SMT members who initially had participated in the three-day 14-16 March 2003 workshops. The venue that could be secured was at Sacol in Pietermaritzburg. That venue was not suitable for the number of people who responded, besides those who came due to the interest that was created by those who were in the previous workshop. The workshop was more focused on the failure of the implementation of DAS. The highlights and challenges of this will be summarised in order to avoid duplication. However, the workshop was different in the sense that principals also attended and the outcomes set for it were different. Most of the exercises conducted in this workshop were clarified in the above discussion. The key outputs of the workshop were a focus on the use of the systems tools in order to understand the problems around the failure to implement DAS in Vulindlela Circuit. The areas that we covered are on the use of the charts for the systems maps, the influence diagram, the brainwriting tool, and the rich picture. For this dissertation we will not repeat the whole process once again, except to indicate its highlights.

The engagement during this workshop was different in the sense that some principals also wanted to be part of the workshop. The exclusion of these SMT members in the previous workshop was realised as a mistake. Secondly, most of the participants who were in the 14-16 March 2003 workshop were assisting in giving guidance to the other members. The groups were assigned a range of problematic situations that have a bearing on the work of SMTs. These topics included issues about the failure of SMT in conducting their responsibilities, the increasing security and safety issues at school, the high failure rate of learners in grades, the failure of the SGB in playing a leading role in financial management. Every group was tasked with the role of selecting a group leader who will assist in liaising with the facilitators, and resenting reports and submissions. The keen interest on DAS generated a lot of enthusiasm amongst the SMT members who participated in these last two workshops. There was a positive attitude and renewed interest in attempting to implement DAS in the schools. However, the prevailing circumstances at schools were not the same, as being in a workshop atmosphere where everything seemed easy. What permeated through these workshops was a spirit of understanding the messy and complex issues prevailing at the schools. The process of engaging with these

complex issues resulted in the surfacing of a number of issues that were taken for granted as givens.

WORKSHOPS IN VULINDLELA WEST WARD: 2003

One-day and two-day workshops were conducted with post level 1 educators, SMT members and principals on DAS implementation. This study reports on summarised versions on the key highlights and some outputs of those workshops. Ongoing DAS workshops were held with various stakeholders to ensure maximum participation and understanding of the process. It was strategic decision to work most of the time with the principals, as they are the key entry points for all the departmental policies at school level. Secondly, they play a meaningful and influential role in taking policy decisions about the changes to be effected at the school.

STEPS

The principals were engaged in a series of workshops (2003) with the intention of finding out more about the DAS policy. Most of the time that was spent with principals revolved around DAS. These following suggestions emanated from some of those workshops. The core activity of these workshops was to formulate interventions that will make the system efficient. The principals were working in groups and writing their suggestions in charts. The groups presented their writing in large newsprint on large pieces of paper and hung it on the wall. Each group was presented with an opportunity to clarify their work. In this plenary session all these ideas were put together under the subheadings indicated. A significant emergent issue was value of group work and ownership of the programme by the participants.

In the subsequent workshops this model was presented in a typed format to the principals. Some of the suggested ideas were implemented during the cluster meetings held amongst the principals. The following are some of the outputs from the principal's workshops.

PROBLEM DEFINITION\ OPPORTUNITY: *The Failure in implementation of DAS*

STATED OBJECTIVES

These were considered to be the objectives for improving the situation. The groups formulated these as the objectives for the exercise.

- To implement an effective DAS programme.
- To empower educators on skills required for DAS.
- To change attitudes of educators towards perceptions of DAS.
- To improve implementation programme.
- To design effective monitoring tools for DAS.
- To expose educators to transformation programs.

ACTIVITIES

Schools to conduct a SWOT analysis in order to identify and prioritise the needs
- Identify needs based on priorities.
- Design plans for development.
- Integrate DAS programmes with School Development Planning.
- Engage in advocacy campaign to educators.
- Practical completion of DAS forms.
- Use videos as referrals for observations of educators reflection exercise.
- Based on video observations.
- Develop DAS programme for all levels of education.
- Design an operational plan for the Ward.
- Clustering of schools for DAS networks.

RESOURCES : Identified for implementing DAS

- Stationery, DAS manuals.
- TESM manuals.
- OHP/ tele-videos, videocassettes
- Human Resources that is, unions, department officials, Das Support Groups
- Files and forms
- Transparencies
- Checklist for the criteria needs to be formulated
- Lesson observations
- Evaluation forms
- Monitoring Instruments.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: *to indicate the performance in implementation*

- Increased number of appraised educators.
- Availability of DAS plans.
- SWOT analysis reports.
- Filled Professional Growth Plan forms/files.
- Functional SDT's increased number of completed cycles of appraisal.
- Readily available school programme.
- Changing of teaching methodology and improved learner achievements as reflected by WSE.
- More invitations for DAS interventions.
- Increased number of learner motivations.
- Visible school development programmes.
- Increased use of TESM manuals and other resources.

During the course of the workshop each group was assigned a topic and a task to perform. From the tasks that were assigned the above inputs

were put together. The group decided to formulate the objectives for the implementation of DAS at school level. The above objectives were considered as the key objectives to be accomplished. Secondly, one group was working on the activities that needed to be performed working on the implementation of the policy. The above were considered to be strategies for the implementation of DAS in all the schools. Another group was busy with the resources that are required in order to implement DAS in each school. As will be noted above the above resources were identified as the main requirements for a proper implementation of DAS. The last group's task was to identify the indicators of performance. The above pointers were considered to be indicators of performance. The pattern that was followed was based on the Professional Growth Plan (PGP). This PGP requires that each individual educator with his/her DAS Support Group needs to formulate a professional growth plan. In this PGP he/she must indicate the areas that need to be developed, in terms of the self-evaluation he/she has conducted.

The continual engagement with other participants allowed further inputs on DAS. Initially the Vulindlela West principals participated in previous workshops which laid the foundation for the above inputs. This study would have been too cumbersome to involve all the reports on the envisaged SSM process. The following systems tools were used for this study, namely, the iceberg learning tool, spray diagram, the brainwriting tool, the rich picture, CATWOE, Root definition and Conceptual model. The study presents a summarised version of the key highlights of those workshops. However, as the study unfolds, clarity will be given on the use of some of the systems tools during the implementation of IQMS from 2004 onwards. Suffice to say that some of the strategies that were suggested above, were not necessarily looking at the messy and complex issues.

In the policy document the cycle that is envisaged for the implementation of DAS is illustrated in the diagram (Fig 5.4). The cycle looks easy to implement DAS from a hard systems perspective. During the discussions with the group of participants the suggestions above were formulated as some of the means for improving on the existing DAS model. The policy document proposes that the following activities need to be conducted during the implementation. Although the cycle may look on paper to be clear, the implementation was not easy due to some of the issues that were surfaced in figures 5.5 and 5.6 that is, from the brainwriting exercise and the spray diagram. A quick look at the above inputs from the principal's workshop illustrates that the method that was followed did not fully consider the cultural and political issues. From a critical perspective, the main problems for the implementation of DAS were those of a systemic and structural nature. Those issues were surfaced during the workshop and are illustrated in figure 5.4, that is, the spray diagram for DAS.

Hard System for DAS Cycle
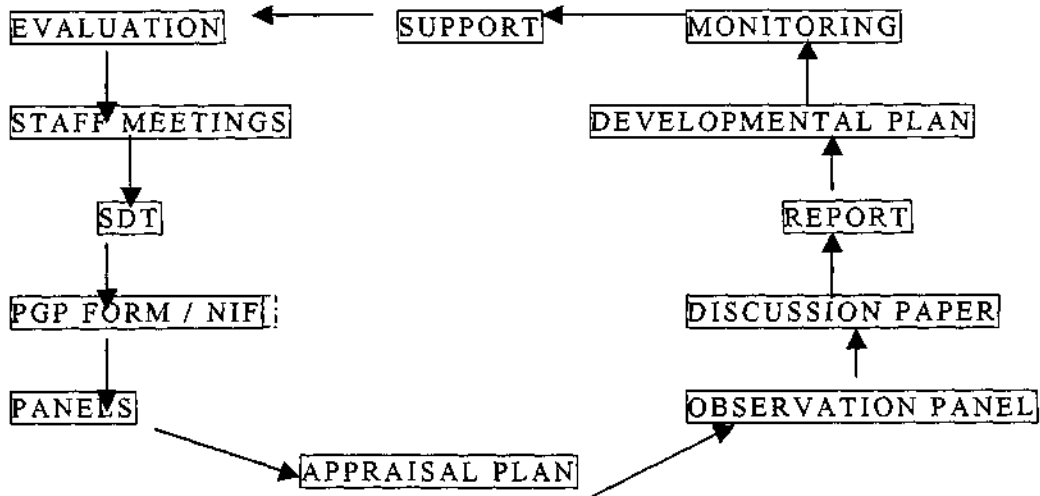
Figure 5.7: Hard Systems for DAS Cycle

Source DAS policy document (Res 4 /1998)

The above illustration indicates the cycle for the implementation of DAS as indicated in the policy document. From a hard systems perspective, it looks very easy to implement the policy, although there are a number of dynamics in the practice. These are not easy to notice from this model. However, as the process continued the participants indicated other issues that are may supplement and enrich what is illustrated in the DAS cycle. All these issues of a systemic nature were undermining the implementation of DAS. Inspite of all the schools receiving their policy documents, that could not guarantee the implementation. A cultural and political analysis needed to be conducted to identify some of the structural issues and bring them to the surface. From an operations perspective this system looks complete and simplistic. It envisages all the above logical and sequential stages to be followed without any consideration of the complex nature in which the schools function. The general contention would be that given the proper training and guidance all the principals will implement the policy in their schools by using the policy document as a guide. Such a mechanistic view holds that the schools are efficient, educators are rational, and the environment is conducive for the implementation of the policy. Therefore these policy document need to set these predetermined sets of activities- the emphasis being on control. The strategy that the education department adopted was very far from a people-centred approach- and this watered down all the good intentions and efforts of the policy-makers and decision makers.

67

Hard Systems DAS Model {Integrated Model}

```
┌─────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  NEEDS ANALYSIS     │        │  EVALUATION( Report)    │
│  (Forms)            │        │                         │
└─────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
          │                                  ▲
          ▼                                  │
┌─────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│  PRIORITIZATION     │        │  SUPPORT                │
│  Individual Needs/Skills│    │  (Monitoring)           │
└─────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────┘
          ▲                                  ▲
          │                                  │
┌──────────────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐
│  ACTION PLAN                 │  │  IMPLEMENTATION          │
│  (Staff Development Plan     │──▶│  (School development     │
│   SDP/WSE)                   │  │  plan)                   │
│                              │  │  (School improvement     │
│                              │  │  plan)                   │
└──────────────────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────┘
```
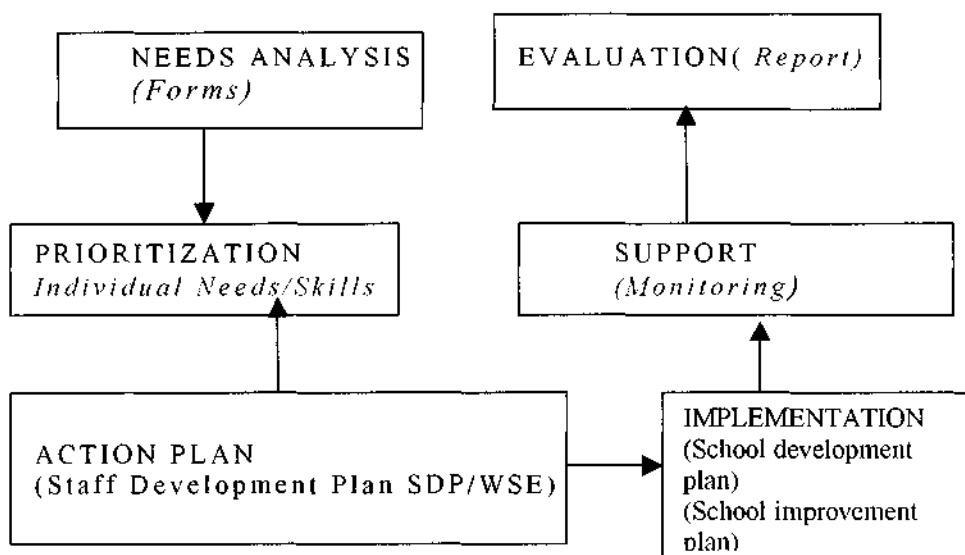
Figure 5.8 : Hard System for DAS model

Source DAS policy (Res 4/1998)

The policy documents for DAS envisage the above stages that complete the cycle for the implementation of DAS. Although these steps are clearly laid down in the policy document, which does not mean the implementation can be done up to the last stage, let alone the first stage, which involves the analysis of needs. A quick look at the policy document for DAS indicates that the system is very simple. The issue is that problems arise when the policy needs to be implemented at the school. The above systems diagram indicates the cycle for DAS implementation as illustrated by the policy document. This is a simplistic illustration of the DAS model from a hard systems perspective. The assumptions were that in order to implement this policy they needed to set a programme of logical activities, without considering the situational issues. The assumptions are that all schools are operating on the same level in terms of their performance. This means that what prevails in school A, also prevails in school B. The policy was conceived without any consideration of the legacy of rise in unionism that led to the demise of the inspection system. An approach based on the above paradigm conceives schools as closed systems. This is based on the mechanistic metaphor, that the system has all the elements that have been put together to comprise the whole. If a problem exists with a certain element, the assumption is that there will be a 'quick fix' in that particular dysfunctional area.

This kind of thinking negates the notion of seeing the other environmental factors that may impact negatively on the school.

With such a managerial bias that believes that problems will be solved by simplistically defining the goals. Such an authoritarian and autocratic decision-making relies on the use of a 'stick' policy in the implementation of policy documents.

THE RICH PICTURE

In most of the workshops conducted with the big groups involving the SMT members, the rich picture were drawn by the participants. In 2003 the TESM group conducted the exercise whereby a rich picture was developed. Those were the first experiences of working with rich pictures.

Most of those rich pictures and other outputs were compiled for group portfolios for TESM students. Most of the experiences in working on this DAS problematic situation were shaped by that experience. The other rich pictures that were produced by the participants in the workshops were not included for this study. Only two rich pictures have been selected to illustrate the failure of DAS and IQMS (see figure 5.9 and figure 5.16).

In issues that emerge from the rich picture are the following issues, namely; the negative attitude of educators against the DAS policy, the lack of ownership by the department of education officials, the multiplicity of other programmes that tend to supersede DAS, lack of training on DAS, the misconceptions about DAS, lack of direction in DAS, to mention a few. The themes that emerged indicate that these are structural issues that impede the implementation of the policy, due the incapacity and incompetence of officials within the institution, and the demonstrated negative attitude towards transformation of the institutions.

ROOT DEFINITION

The Vulindlela West SMT members and principals can be considered to be the client during these series of workshop that were conducted. In a session conducted with principals in the Vulindlela West Ward, as participants they formulated the root definition. They were divided into groups, which presented their own root definitions. In the plenary session all the participants started working on the final root definition. This was a learning experience for the principals, as they were directly involved in the process. The final root definition that was formulated involved bringing the different ideas from the participants.

The Root definition was formulated collectively as follows;
An integrated holistic DAS programme that will be fully owned by the educators and supported by the departmental officials in order to empower them with the relevant capabilities for effective teacher development.

69
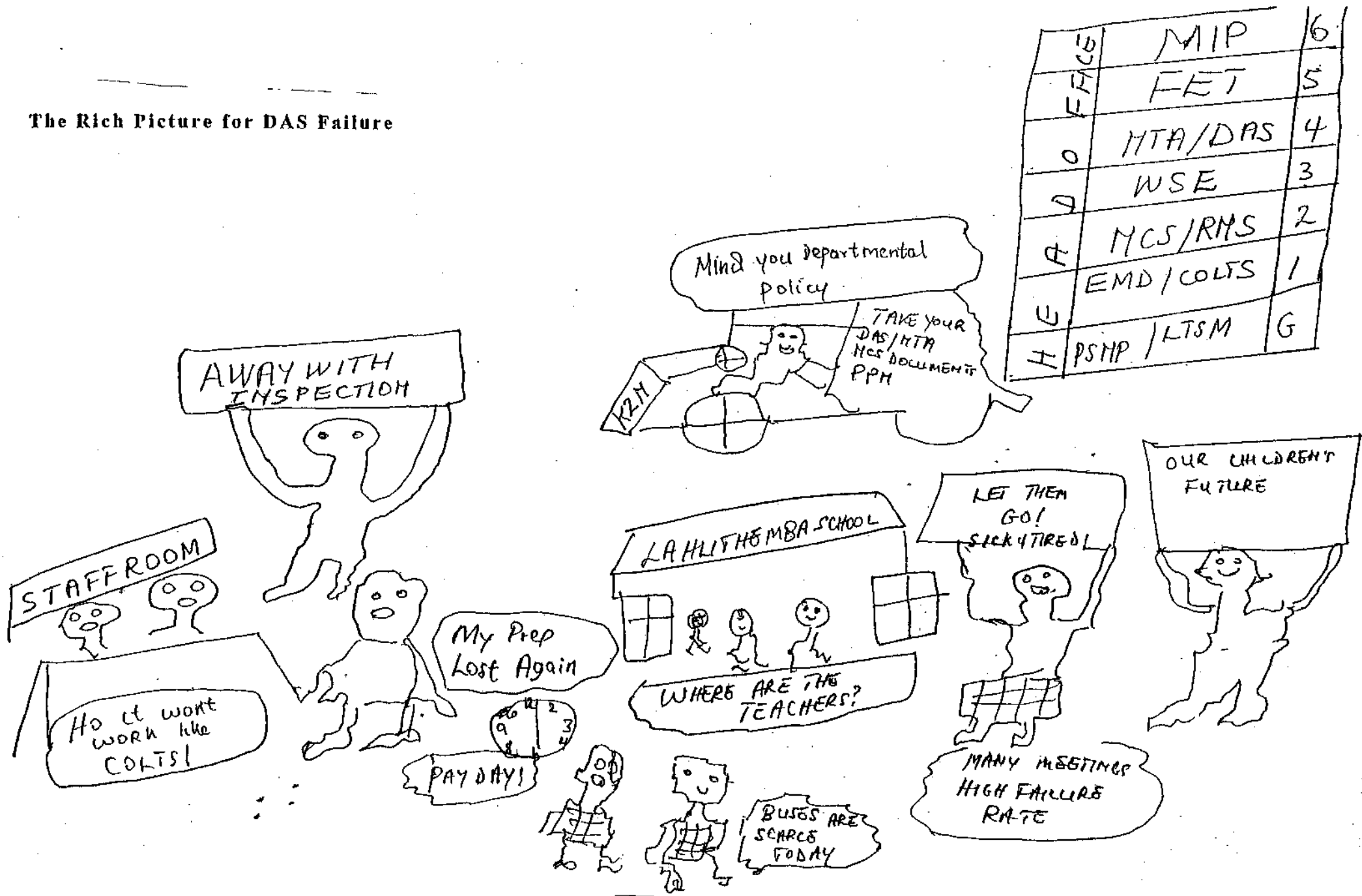
Figure 5. 9 : Rich Picture of DAS

CATWOE

This root definition was checked against the CATWOE mnemonic. The participants felt that the owners are the educators, SMT members and departmental officials as they were the key people in the system. The kind of transformation that was envisaged is expressed as one that captures areas concerning ownership of the process, support by the departmental officials, empowerment of educators, and teacher development. The kind of transformation that the system requires also includes a programme of continuous training, monitoring and evaluation of every stage and phase of the process. The Root Definition was tested against the CATWOE in order to cover aspects that feature in these two tasks.

CATWOE TOOL ANALYSIS

CUSTOMERS	educators, SMT members, principals, departmental officials,
ACTORS	educators, officials of the department
TRANSFORMATION	integrated programme, continuous process of engagement, ownership, continuous training, monitoring, evaluation
WELTANSCHUUNG	judgemental, inspection, bureaucratic policy, union document, disowned policy document, lack of co-operation, cascade model
OWNERS	unions, educators, departmental officials
ENVIRONMENT	time constraints, transport and commuting issues, policy overload

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The next stage involved the formulation of the conceptual model. The ideas flowed from the discussions amongst the principals. The conceptual model considered the issues that were raised in the rich picture and the systems diagrams. The model that was formulated was presented for a critique. These contributions were recorded and circulated for further inputs. These were made available to all the principals for use at school level. These were considered as the stages required for the implementation of the DAS policy document.

A Conceptual Model for DAS
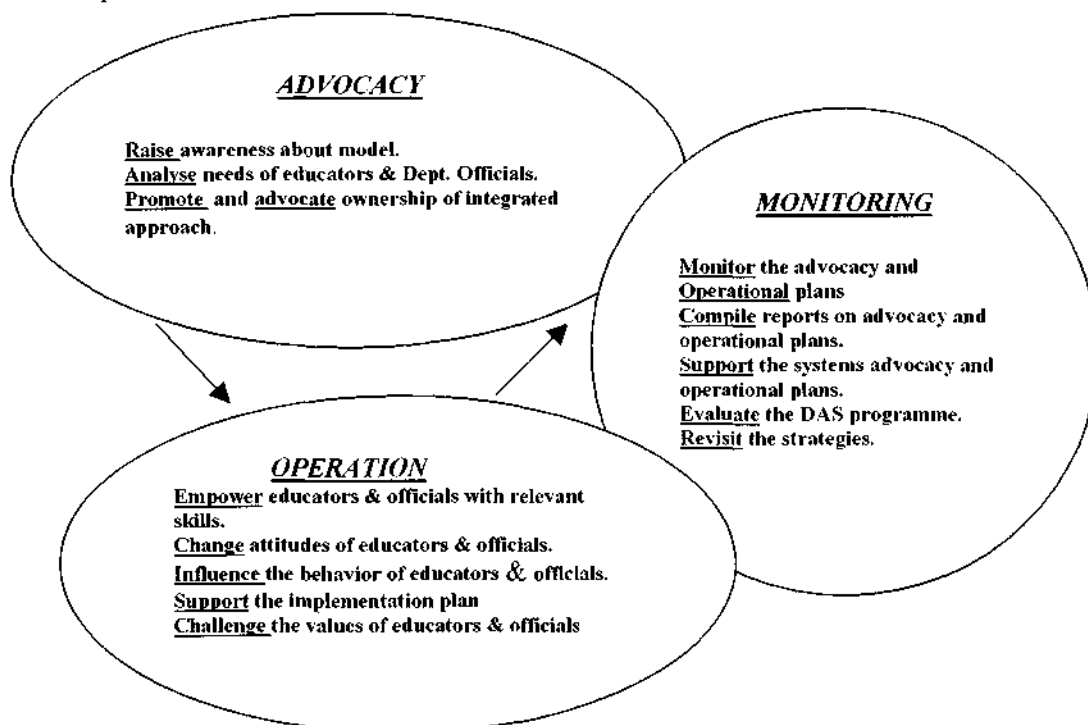
Figure 5.10 : Conceptual Model for DAS

5.4 Developments and Improvement 2003-2004

The DAS model envisaged a three-stage process in order to implement DAS in Vulindlela West Ward. It envisaged a transformation process. involving creating awareness and advocacy for the model, operational and implementation stage and lastly monitoring and evaluation. The interest that was developed in DAS was due to the awareness and advocacy amongst the SMT members and principals. A major thrust was made for the use of TESM manuals to support the development at school level. These manuals were prepared for the school managers as resource material. They range from Nos 1-12, covering a wide range of topics. The information contained in these TESM manuals was used for purposes of training the SMT members in school management and governance.

The principals started to group themselves into clusters according to the proximity of the schools. There were six clusters that were formed out of the twenty-four schools that make Vulindlela West Ward. These clusters were named after the areas and the locations of the schools. To mention a few, in the east there is Zwartkop made of Umthoqotho secondary, Umqongqotho primary and Zwartkop primary. The Mpande cluster consists of Nyanda primary, Maria Memorial primary, Mpande Secondary, and Zuzulwazi junior secondary. The Mconjwana cluster is

made of Haza primary, Julukandoda primary and Mconjwana secondary. At Emafakatini the cluster is made of Zamuxolo primary, Khobongwane primary and Emafakatini primary. The other cluster is comprised of Sanelisiwe primary, Musawenkosi junior primary and Mqhathi primary. Lastly, Henley primary, Kwashange primary and Mtholangqondo secondary also comprised a cluster. DAS required that schools identify areas of need and formulate school development plans. For the most part of 2003 the focus for most schools was on criteria No 17, that is contribution to school development, No 12, servicing the governing body, No 21 financial planning and management. Every principal identified his /her DAS Support Group, that is - a peer, senior and union member. In most of the panels the SEM played the role of senior, although these panels worked even during his absence. Each principal developed a Personal Growth Plan (PGP). The panel members also assisted the appraisee with the formulation of the PGP.

Through these clusters and panels communities of practice were being formed (Wenger 1998:7). Wenger (1998:9) argues that learning transforms our identities in such a way that we feel great for the achievements that we have acquired due to our exposure to learning. Workshops were conducted for the criteria for the critical criteria, Nos 12, 17, and 21, on servicing the governing body, contribution to school development and financial planning and management. The principals worked on the requirements to meet the above criteria. The main focus area in these clusters was the development of school policies, the development of school financial systems and records. Within the Ward we identified a team that was focusing on financial management workshops. Each principal brought along the school financial records where a group workshop was conducted. Each panel checked the records of the appraisee, using a checklist. From these group workshops, the standard was set by the different presentations. Each member was exposed to the work of other principal. No marks were really allocated, but a list was used and everything presented checked against the checklist. This exercise assisted everyone, as the principals started to work on those areas that were considered to be shortcomings. The critical areas in financial management were bank reconciliation, auditing and development of financial policies. Cluster meetings were held where principals used to meet and exchange information and conduct training on bank reconciliation. The Circuit manager issued a circular that spelt out the criteria for choosing auditors. Schools were encouraged to update the outstanding audited financial statements from 2000 to 2003.

A policy checklist was issued, which spelt out the requirements for criteria No 17, that is, contribution to school development. When this appraisal began most schools did not have the school policies that were required as a demonstration of good governance. Consequently, a concerted effort was made by these principals to work on every required school policy. Every school SMT and SGB was required to work on the school vision, mission and goals. The lack of security in the schools was also prioritised as a requirement for school development. Towards

the end of 2003, the schools started to apply for section 21 status. For all those applications, what was considered as the criteria were those aspects in the section 21 application form. In the application form for section 21, there are 50 questions that form the criteria. The head office approved the applications of the first two schools towards the end of 2003. In 2004 most principals were encouraged by the positive response received by these two schools. They also made a concerted effort to improve on governance, financial management, security and policy development. During the course of 2004 the head office also approved twelve more applications that were processed. In 2005 six more applications were approved, which put the number of section 21 schools at 20 in Vulindlela West Ward. Vulindlela West Ward has the largest number of section 21 schools, combined with those of the Vulindlela Circuit. From 2000 to 2005,comparativey almost all the schools in Vulindlela West submitted their audited financial statements, except one school. The situation changed in the latter school in 2005, under new management and leadership.

Another criteria in the section 21 application is the need for a school to have a strongroom. Of the 24 schools in the Ward, only three schools had strongrooms. As part of school development, a concerted effort was made to encourage the principal and SGBs to provide strongrooms in the schools. Some schools managed to convert their existing storerooms into strongrooms. This required that some schools add steel strongroom doors, add partitioning and concrete roofing in order to build makeshift strongrooms. From those efforts there are seven schools that managed to convert the space that was available at school into strongrooms. In 2006 there were four more schools that were working on building up their strongrooms.

The panels conducted appraisal for principals for the classroom-based criteria and the out of class criteria. However, it was discovered that some principals in the primary schools were not teaching any classes. In terms of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document, principals are required by policy to teach a certain percentage of lessons, depending on the school staffing. Through this intervention a number of workshops were conducted on the curriculum development issues. Some of the principals needed to be trained in outcomes-based education. During the cluster meetings, the SMT members also focused on curricula issues. I identified that this DAS policy document did not provide the guidelines for lesson observation. Nevertheless, the lesson observations continued. In a SMT workshop conducted in July 2003, a lesson observation checklist was presented for all members for their input. I received that lesson observation grid from IPEB, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in former Edgewood College, now University of Kwazulu-Natal campus. The marked change was that all the primary school principals started to teach classes in junior and senior phase, after the above interventions had been made. With the advent of IQMS, there was a concerted effort by the primary school principals to attend their classroom teaching duties as prescribed in the Res. 8 of 1999 policy document.

5.5 IQMS Implementation: 2004

In August 2003 three draft resolutions were distributed from the provincial department to the schools. Amongst these was Res. 8 / 2003 for Integrated Quality Management System. On 6 December 2004 all SEM's were called for a one and half day workshop on Res. 8 of 2003. This resolution was called Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), because it integrated Performance Measurement, Whole School Evaluation and Development Appraisal System. This policy has integrated all of the above three policies. It was also linking DAS to performance measurement as an instrument for pay progression of 1% and salary progression. On the 22nd June 2005 the Director-General Duncan Hindle announced on Radio SAFM (105fm) that the teachers were not going to get a 1% increment automatically as it was done in 2004, because they have not been evaluated for their performance. Thulasizwe Nxesi, the Secretary General for SADTU in his comment, insisted that the educators were supposed to get an automatic 1% increment because the problem was caused by the department in its failure to set up the structure and implement the IQMS Resolution. One can see how significant this resolution is for both the department and the educators as partners in the process of development and the measurement of that performance.

In 2004 the issue of pay backlogs and salary increments of 1% was a bone of contention. It led to prolonged negotiations and deadlocks that led to a disrupted year fraught with strike actions by the unions. It is surprising that this issue is resurfacing again and the union is taking advantage of the failure of the department's failure to implement.

On 15-16 February 2004 we embarked on the training of educators on IQMS. Each school was supposed to send three representatives to the workshops. After those workshops each school was supposed to implement the IQMS (Res. 8/2003) by establishing the structures at school level and conduct training of educators. This process was begun with much vigour in all the wards. The researcher was assigned the role of being the IQMS co-ordinator for Vulindlela Circuit, which is made of 5 wards namely, Impendle, Vulindlela South, North, West and Sweetwaters. The team of facilitators was comprised mostly of educators and principals from Vulindlela West Ward. (a team of 5 principals who were trained from 2002 to that date on DAS). The workshop started with a comparative exercise of the two policies, namely Res.4 /1998 (DAS) and Res. 8/2003. What was noted is that the performance standards for PL1 educators were 7; 10 for HODs, and 12 for Deputy Principal and principal. The participants were more better informed in these workshops about these policies and were able to transfer their learning. Another interesting observation was that IQMS is linked to rewards for the performance by the educators. These include the 1% annual increment payment and salary progression. The other difference was that the panel was now referred to as Development Support Group (DSG). This DSG is compare to the panels for DAS, but

75

the difference is that this structure is made of the senior, evaluee and peer. When compared to the DAS panels, it did not accommodate the union representative. There was also a move from the notion of a peer, which some educators took for 'a buddy' in DAS. With IQMS the emphasis was on choosing a person who is a subject specialist. It was stating clearly that there were class observations that needed to be conducted with all educators, including SMT members for performance standards (P/S) No 1-4.

On 6 December 2006 a workshop on IQMS was conducted for SEMs. There were notable gaps in the presentation, besides the shortcomings that were noted in the new IQMS policy document. This became an academic discourse, although it demonstrated the value of engaging with the policy document in a critical manner. The whole argument was centered around the idea that not all of those criteria could be observed in a classroom visit of 30-45 minute. One difference was that the policy referred to a process of developing a school improvement plan. The facilitators could not clearly give convincing answers on the difference between the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the School Development Plan (SDP). One other flaw in the initial training was the lack of philosophical and epistemological underpinning of the policy. It is important to understand the rationale of the people who formulate a policy and understand the assumptions of the policy. In an article entitled 'The Sound and Fury of International School Reform: A Critical Review' Muller and Roberts review the history of all these trends, that is school effectiveness, development planning, whole school development and school improvement. The report was written and prepared for the JET in February 2000.

5.6 IQMS Model formulated in 2005

The model that is illustrated below was the output of a series of workshops that were conducted with principals of Vulindlela West Ward. The development of the IQMS model was a result of a developmental process of engagement. Whenever the occasion occurred the facilitator would draw the attention of the educators to the previous steps that were achieved. The workshops were conducted for most of the period in 2005. The process was a developmental process of iterations of the model. The outputs were recorded and put together into the following model. The process involved a process of learning and reflecting on the experience.

5.7 IQMS Implementation Plan using SSM

Background

At the beginning of 2005 IQMS refresher courses were conducted for principals. In this workshop the new vision for Kwazulu-Natal Education under the leadership of Mrs. Ina Cronje was introduced. These comments were made in the context of the new 2005 strategic plan in the document.

The Minister of Education spells out the vision of " *a literate and skilled 21ˢᵗ century society capable of benefiting from participating in all democratic processes and contributing to the development of the people of Kwazulu-Natal* ".

In the Strategic Plan document the Superintendent-General identified IQMS amongst the priorities for 2005. In Kwazulu-Natal almost all the districts failed to implement IQMS at the school level. There are a numbers of reasons that were cited as causes for this failure. Most of the causes are of a systemic nature. The participants contributed by making inputs regarding the departmental initiatives that are offered and which have a role to play in the school system. These are indicated in the systems map for departmental programmes.

PROBLEM OPPORTUNITY : *The failure of IQMS*

The problem statement was formulated and presented to the client, in this case the principals of Vulindlela West Ward. The participants were grouped into a number of six in a group. The systems tools for analysing this problem statement were clarified by the facilitator. It was not the first time for these participants to be exposed to the systems tools and to work on such issues as a group.
The participants deliberated on the reasons that led to the failure of IQMS. They also made use of the spray diagram to express their views regarding the failure of IQMS.

A System Diagram for Initiatives

| DAS | WSE | Performance Measurement | Systemic Evaluation |
FET	RNCS	ECD	EMD
Norms & Stds	School Governance	Education Management Development t	PSNP
Human Resource Management		Teacher Development	Financial Management
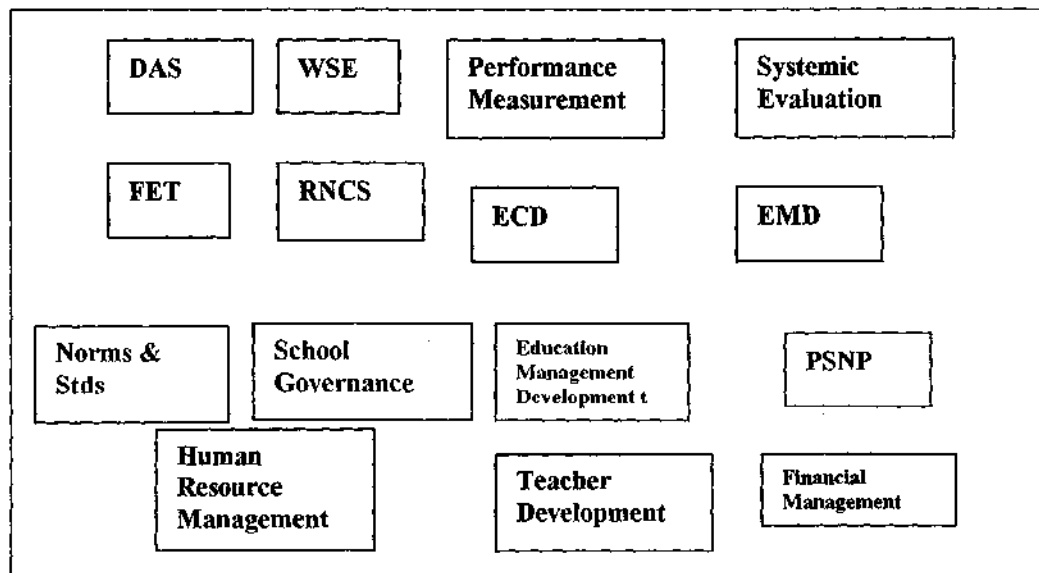
Figure 5.11: Systems Diagram for Initiatives

The participants identified all the above as the programmes that the head office is facilitating. Some of these programmes have a direct

The participants indicated the relationship between performance measurement of the educators who are PL 1, HODs, Deputy principal and principal. The participants indicated that PL1 educators have 7 performance standards, the HODs 10 performance standards, whilst both the deputy principals and principals have 13 performance standards. The principals compared the DAS and IQMS criteria. What is notable is that the DAS criteria were consolidated in IQMS into fewer performance standards. During the workshop, we indicated the connection between the DAS and IQMS. The above indicates that for the seven performance measurement criteria, every educator needs to demonstrate how they perform in each of them.

STEP: The Learning Iceberg
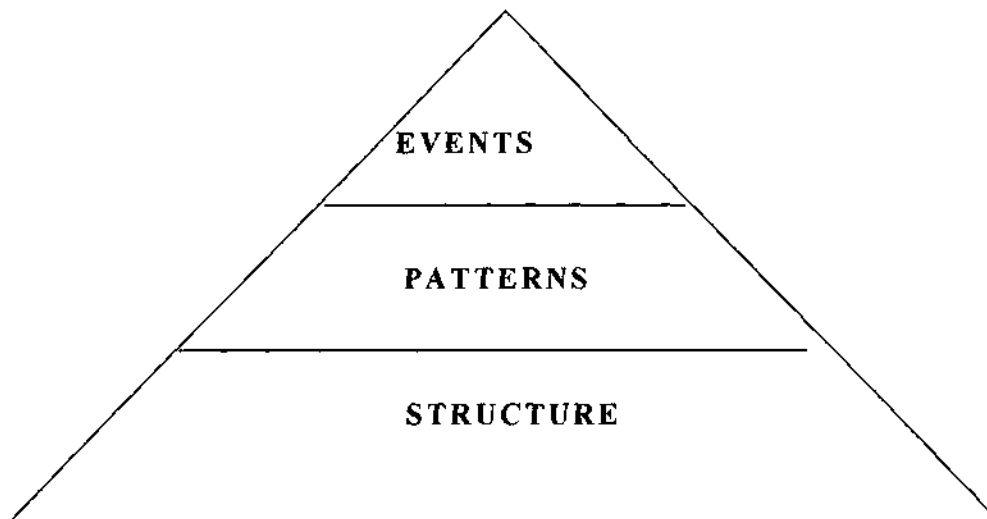
Figure 5.13: The Learning Iceberg Tool

This tool was used in order to illustrate to the participants that in problem situations we might see the events, and patterns structures. The tool assisted in pointing to the group that there are issues of a systemic nature. These issues are the assumptions, the beliefs, and the perspectives that we bring to the understanding of the problem situation. The facilitator indicated that the there is more to understanding that IQMS has failed. The group was made to see beyond the problem situation, concerning the failure of IQMS and other problematic situations that were later discussed.

STEP : INFLUENCE DIAGRAM

This exercise required that the participants give us an understanding of what constitutes the performance standards for IQMS. In figure 5.14 below is an illustration of the IQMS performance standards. During the discussion the participants also commented about the difference between the DAS criteria and the IQMS performance standards. There are more criteria in DAS than in IQMS, as illustrated in the figures 5.3 and figure 5.11 respectively. This point that was made also was how these

have been clarified further in IQMS. In IQMS every performance standard has criteria that further clarify it. The other difference noted was that in DAS the policy document refers to criteria for DAS, whereas in IQMS it refers to performance standards. The first four performance standards for IQMS we referred to them as classroom-oriented.

The Spray Diagram for performance standards
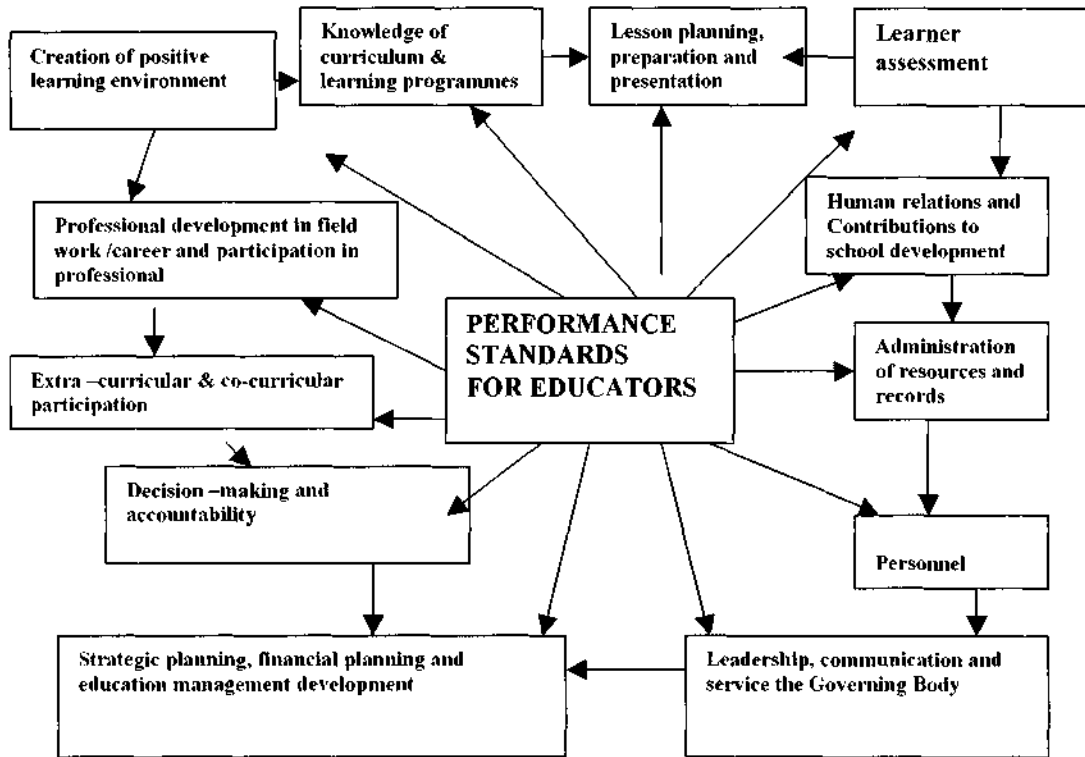
Figure 5.14: Systems diagram representing Performance Standards for Educators

The systems map indicates the relationship between the criteria for performance. The group noted the significance of each of these criteria to each, particularly from a systems perspective. This means that educators need to be developed in all the aspects for performance to be enhanced.

80

STEP: SPRAY DIAGRAM FOR IQMS

Spray diagram for IQMS Failure
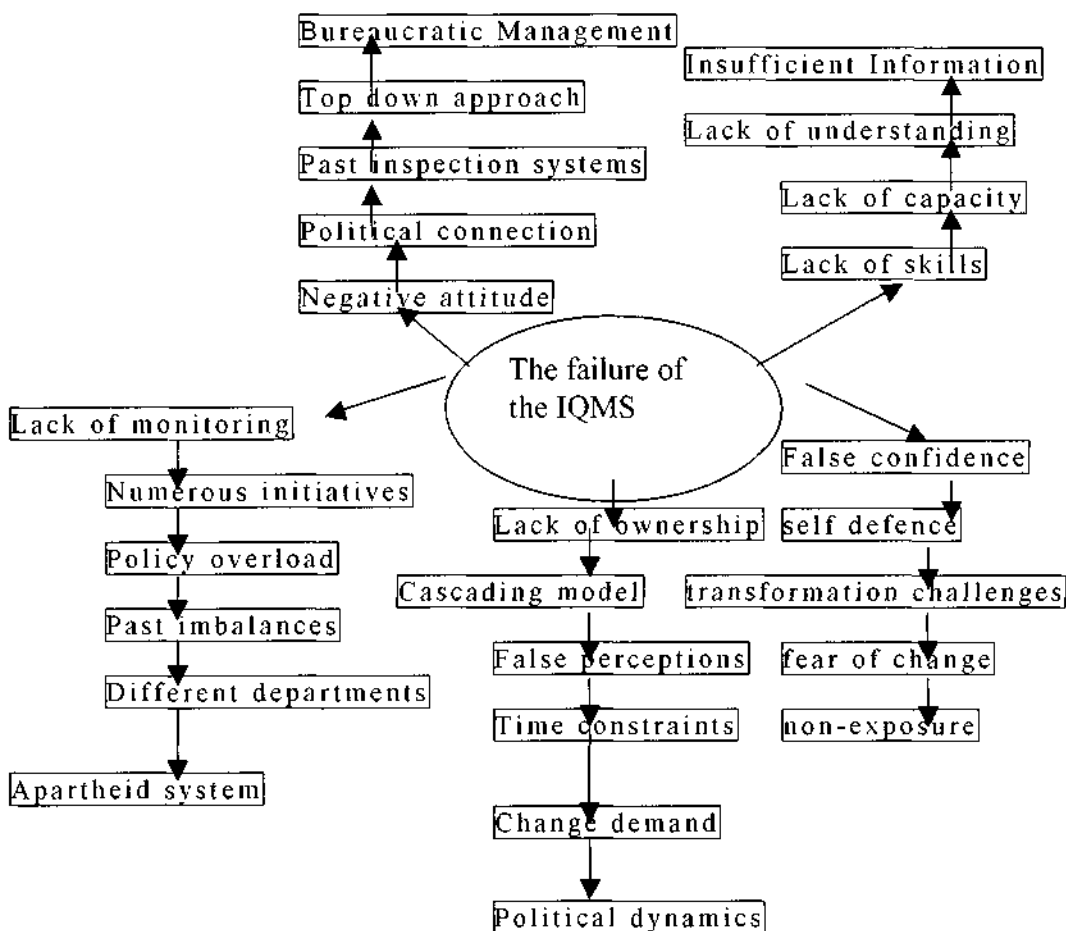
Figure 5.15: Spray diagram for IQMS failure

In this exercise the principals brainstormed on the reasons for the failure of IQMS in 2004. The discussion produced a lot of debate where the principals expressed their opinions about the failure of IQMS. I led them with the questions such 'what caused what?' Every time an answer came, then would ask 'what caused what?'. The issues that emerged indicate that the prevailing culture undermines policy development and school improvement. Issues that tend to sabotage the implementation of policy revolve around the culture of educators at the school level. Some educators demonstrate a negative attitude, fear the change, perceive appraisal as 'the 'old inspection', lack proper training. The SEMs perceive IQMS as 'union's document', which took their power and authority to conduct inspections. This leads to IQMS being disowned, not given proper time, the principals do not get the proper training. At school level IQMS does not get proper time, due to a number of issues. Educators are still undergoing training for the newly implemented

81

Outcomes Based Education (OBE) workshops for National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), using a phased approach for each grade. Most of the teachers in Vulindlela Circuit are commuters, using public transport from their residences to school. Consequently, the issue of transport tends to undermine the time required for staff development meetings and trainings. The lack of skills and the capacity to cascade the model to the school level is noticeable amongst the individual principals. If a principal has been trained, he/she has a responsibility of cascading the information to school level. The success of any programme also relies on how it has been presented to the teachers by the principal and SMT member at school level.

Although the above exercise and tool elicits information in linear way in terms of cause and effect, how ever the participants get engaged in the process of thinking about the issues.

Educators are still undergoing training for the newly implemented Outcomes Based Education (OBE) workshops for National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), using a phased approach for each grade. Most of the teachers in Vulindlela Circuit are commuters, using pubic transport tends to undermine the time required for staff development meetings and trainings. The lack of skills and the capacity to cascade the models to the school level is noticeable amongst the individual principals. If a principal has been trained, he/she has a responsibility of cascading the information to school level. The success of any programme also relies o how it has been presented to the teachers by the principal and SMT member at school level.

STEP: THE RICH PICTURE

The participants were given an opportunity to work on the rich picture that depicts their views on the IQMS failure. For this exercise the principals were working as a bigger group of eight. Each group was presented with a set of coloured khokhi pens and charts. At the end of this session all the three groups presented their Rich pictures. Each group clarified to the others the meaning of their Rich picture and the underlying features and issues from the picture. Finally the participants worked on combining the issues that emerged from their Rich pictures. For purposes of this study we selected only one Rich picture, which is presented as figure 5.16.

Figure 22: Rich Picture for IQMS

83

STEP:EMERGENT PROPERTIES FROM THE FAILURE OF IQMS

During this phase the emergent properties from the rich picture indicate that the departmental officials did not fully own the IQMS programme. Another new dimension to this messy problem has been the infighting between the sub-directorates, Teacher Development and Quality Assurance over the ownership of IQMS. This has resulted in the IQMS programme being stalled in some districts due to this impasse. It is interesting to note that what was considered as the lack of ownership in DAS is now a fight for the ownership of IQMS amongst the sub-directorates. In 2004 Teacher Development sub-directorate started with the training of IQMS, whereas Quality Assurance came to the picture in 2005, when there was a renewed effort to implement IQMS.

STEP: ROOT DEFINITION

The six groups made up of four members. Each formulated a root definition for IQMS. The IQMS system as it was had been a failure, therefore the groups were told that they need to come with a, 'system that " will address the failures indicated in IQMS. After the discussions the groups presented the following root definitions, namely:
- *An IQMS system that will be supportive and developmental.*
- *IQMS system that will support and motivate all who work within it*
- *An IQMS that will be regularly monitored for purposes of accountability so that in the end there is development among all the role players.*
- *An IQMS that can develop, motivate and support, educators to promote sense of ownership and accountability through monitoring and evaluation.*
- *An IQMS that is explicitly relevant to all core transformational values and systems.*
- *An IQMS that will bring ownership and transformation to all the stakeholders.*
- *An IQMS that will be identify measures of performance*

During the plenary session the participants discussed the presented root definitions. The model addresses the following systems. The model has to be fully owned. The model must be supported. The model identifies areas of development. All role players are to be developed. The educators must be supported. The model needs to build accountability amongst the stakeholders. Issues of transformation must be accommodated within the model. The system needs to be grounded on transformational values. The system needs to be building measures of performance. After a discussion a umber of iterations were formulated. These were eventually consolidated in the following root definition.

An IQMS system that is integrated and holistic and that will be fully owned by the educators at all levels and supported by the departmental officials in order to empower them with the relevant capabilities for effective teacher development.

84

Finally the root definition that the group formulated addressed some of the issues identified in the rich picture and the systems map for IQMS failure.

STEP : CATWOE PROCESS

During this process the participants embarked on identifying the elements in the CATWOE. The group used it to test the words used in the RD. Whilst working with the same group on DAS the facilitation of on using CATWOE was not new.
During this engagement of the CATWOE process, various issues were addressed.

Customers: educators; SMT members, principals; SEMs; departmental officials
Actors: educators; principals; departmental officials; SDT; DSGs
Transformation: developmental; ownership; participatory; supported; monitored; accountability measures; monitored and evaluated programme
World View: unions document; old inspection in disguise; judgmental system; payment by results; results
driven-performance; political opportunism; conflict-stricken
Owners: unions; site stewards; educators; departmental officials;
Environment: infighting; disintegrated system; under-performing educators; negative perceptions; strife-torn; under-resourced schools; institutional incapacity; negative unionism; dysfunctional schools; under-performing; political opportunism.

The customers were considered to be the educators, SMTs and principals in the sense that they were the direct recipients of salary and grade progression. Besides that, the educators, SMTs and principals directly benefit from any form of developmental and support programmes, whether they are school-based or district-supported in-service-training (INSET). The other indirect beneficiaries are the departmental officials and SEMs – the latter also benefit when the schools they are managing are working according to the expected standards.

The people who are involved in the whole process are the educators, SMTs, principals, departmental officials, SDTs and DSGs. The different roles of the people involved is co-existent and indicative of the complex human activity in the system. The departmental officials initiate the IQMS process by means of providing the initial training, providing materials support and monitoring of the progress of the whole programme. SEMs can play a meaningful role if they are able to manage the above role, involving ongoing training, support and monitoring and evaluation of the IQMS process.

At the school level, the principal plays a meaningful role in providing training for the staff members. The principal chairs meetings of staff –

educators are guided in electing the School Development Team (SDT). The SDT manages and controls the IQMS programme – formulates an IQMS programme, monitors, moderates scores. The DSGs assist the individual educator in the formulation of a PGP and in providing support and mentoring.

The transformation required in IQMS is where the system will be fully owned by all the relevant stakeholders- that is all the people identified as the customers, actors and owners. If the system has to work it requires – the full participation of all the departmental officials, SMTs, educators, SMTs, principals and union officials. This system needs to have all the accountable measures put in place. Besides that, all the relevant actors must be accountable for their different roles. There needs to be control systems and monitoring of all the stages of the IQMS process-beginning with the advocacy and awareness stage up to the compilation of reports, submission of marks, awarding of salary payment and grade progression to educators. The system needs to have built in indicators and measures of performance. The kind of transformation required has to take into consideration the procedural, structural and attitudinal issues. The different views, perceptions and beliefs were also captured in the rich picture, multi-cause diagram and brainwriting exercises. The SEMs consider IQMS to be a union document-which came in order to reduce the power of inspection. On the other side the unions claimed the IQMS policy to be their own product. This created unnecessary tension between the unions –as SADTU was making these claims that as a union they made most of the contributions to the formulation of the policy. This resulted in unnecessary tension amongst the unions on their own –because all the unions signed the resolution. The resolution does not tell us what went on behind the scenes- when it was conceived, debated and adopted.

Some of the following were considered to be the prevailing conditions that militate against the implementation of IQMS. The unions members at times play double standards- they may send confusing messages to their members; sabotage the process if they consider that they were not initially involved; the union members can also positively motivate and convince their members to participate in departmental activities.

The environment prevailing in schools varies from schools that are efficiently managed to those which are dysfunctional. The sub-directorates Quality Assurance and Teacher Development were fighting over the control of training educators in IQMS. This was sending the wrong messages to the schools and districts. Unionism is still rife in some schools and may negatively impact on the training at school level. Institutional incapacity also compromises the implementation of IQMS-there are different levels of capacity to institute change at school level.

A check against the CATWOE elements confirms that there is consistency between them and the words used in the RD. In the RD the additional words *"educators at all levels "* are included. The RD is sparse yet still a legitimate definition. It is initially poorly structured

86

since the use of the word "and" between *integrated* and *holistic* indicates the transformation processes. The transformation activities would also require activities related to *supporting* and *empowering*. The Actors are specified within the RD as *educators* and *departmental officials*, although there was no specificity regarding all the actors and their roles. The Customer is also implied in the RD as the *educators and departmental officials,* although it is within the CATWOE. The *educators* and *departmental officials* play both the role of being the Actors and Customers. During the transformation process the educators end up being the direct beneficiaries, whilst the departmental officials are the indirect beneficiaries.

Although "*teacher development "is* stated as another requirement within the RD it is not an externally imposed constraint. The fact that the Owner is not specifically defined within the RD illustrates the proper use of this CATWOE element. For the group the inclusion of the owner is not explicit, rather implicit. The decisions that were arrived at during the iteration were through dialogue and shared decision-making.

Use of Brainwriting Tool: Identifying problem solving cycles

The participants were grouped into six for purposes of developing the conceptual model. For this exercise the groups were working from the root definition in formulating the conceptual model. During this stage they were given the Brainwriting tool in order to write their ideas about the process.
The 4 groups brainstormed on the ideas on the four phases, which were identified as the most significant for the conceptual model. This approach tended to border on the hard systems approach.

Step 1: Awareness of the problem
Step 2: Setting of Goals and objectives
Step 3: Strategies
Step 4: Support, monitoring, evaluation and implementation

The participants wrote their ideas using the brainwrting tool.
They were later requested to summarise their inputs together as a group. During the plenary session, these ideas were presented in charts for the whole group. Each presenter for the group explained and clarified the work on the chart.

A summarised version of the deliberations of the groups was presented in the conceptual model.

STEP 1: AWARENESS

- Problem situation: The failure of IQMS implementation
- Factors emerging from the influence diagram were the ff.
- Lack of ownership
- Insufficient time for training
- Lack of positive attitude

- Lack of support and motivation from structures
- Institutional conflicts
- Lack of resources
- PPM allocations leading to redeployment; restructuring displacing educators
- Different versions
- Lack of proper planning and monitoring
- Lack of will power

RICH PICTURE
- Worldview: misconceptions of IQMS as another inspection tool;
- System for financial gain
- Customers look at it as another load on their shoulders

CATWOE TOOL
1. Who are the customers?–educators departmental officials, SMTs, principals
2. Who are the actors? educators, SDTs, DSGs
3. What sort of transformation is needed?- owned, supported, developmental, monitored system
4. Who are the owners?- educators, unions,
5. What is the prevailing environment?-

STEP 2: GOALS and OBJECTIVES

GOALS	OBJECTIVES
To provide quality education	To set up an advocacy campaign
To provide a quality assurance system	To plan properly the implementation
To integrate the WSE Performance Measurement and Developmental Appraisal	To increase the level of support
To implement IQMS system	To form relevant structures
To design an effective implementation plan for IQMS	To provide monitoring tools
To improve evaluation	To set effective evaluation standards
To engage educators on issues	To address educator concerns
To prioritise the initiatives	To avoid the overloading of initiatives

Table 4: Goals and Objectives for IQMS implementation

88

STEP 3 : STRATEGIES

No	Strategies	Tasks
1	Consistent advocacy by departmental officials	Circuits to formulate uniform advocacy and training programme
2	Uniform training of facilitators	Identify training sessions, tools, materials
3	Ensure an effective and formal Monitoring	Design monitoring tools and checklists ; set clear time frames
4	Align implementation with school vision	SMT, SGB, SDT and staff engage in review of vision
5	Integration of initiatives for purposes of driving the vision of the school	Strategic planning and School Development Planning
6	Develop the capacity for principals, Deputy principals and HODs	Implementation of PGP's& SIP in staff development programmes

Table 5: Strategies and Tasks

STEP4:IMPLEMENTATION, SUPPORT, MONITORING, VALUATION and IMPLEMENTATION

1. SUPPORT
   - Support material be available for everyone
   - Advocacy to be well structured and conducted
   - Clearly stipulated goals and objectives and principles of IQMS

2. EVALUATION

   - Is support material available and adequate?
   - Do professionally trained facilitators conduct workshops?
   - How effective was advocacy?
   - Were the goals, objectives and principles of IQMS clearly stipulated and clarified?

3. MONITORING

   - Designing a monitoring tool in a form of action plan –determining who will do what, when, and where SDT in consultation with SMT draw up timetable for the 1st phase of self, pre and class observation; PGP's for all educators
   - School Improvement Plan for developmental purposes, time frames to be strictly adhered to.
   - Recording to be accurate, confidential and be safely placed.
   - The second phase of evaluation and developmental phase to be done before summative evaluation.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- The whole process of IQMS is implemented procedurally, from the election of SDT, formation of DSG's, self-evaluation.
- Filling of PGPs and drawing up of School Improvement Plan right up to summative evaluation.

STEP 5: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

IQMS that can develop motivate and support educators, to promote sense of ownership and accountability through monitoring and evaluation.

5.8 Implementation challenges in 2005

On the 11th November 2005 the School Development Team members and the Ward Task Team members met in order to review the implementation of IQMS in 2005. Amongst the issues that were raised in that meeting were ranged from the difficulties experienced by the Development Support Groups in supporting and mentoring the appraisees to overscoring by the DSGs. These also included difficulties with educators in terms of reducing the scores of the appraisees. These scores were unjustified and the SMT members failed to moderate those scores.

The agenda for the day focused on the 2005 implementation challenges. They issued a long list of the realities they were faced with whilst implementing IQMS in 2005.

The following issues were captured during the discussion:

(i) We were affected by time: the issue of time has been very critical for the proper implementation of IQMS, considering that there are two observations. The IQMS management plan accommodates two cycles for development. What happens in practice is that the Educators fail to meet the time frames and priorities as indicated in the IQMS management plan. Consequently the time allocated for the two cycles of development gets compromised due to the lack of planning by the educators at the schools. Time is also lost if the schools start very late in setting up the SDT and DSGs structures for IQMS.

(ii) Development tasks were not covered: The policy states that each educator needs to undergo two cycles of development- one in the first to second time and the other cycle in the third term. The educators were not able to cope with the pressure for training, implementation and development during that year.

(iii) Contextual factors (PPM, planning was disturbed large class numbers): the other factors that were considered to be impeding the proper implementation of IQMS were contextual factors. In some schools the issue of new PPMs for the academic year 2005, resulted in

the disruption of the plans for staffing. Some schools had surplus educators who were bound to be redeployed to other schools with a favourable PPM. In some schools the classes were too big for proper teaching and learning.

(iii) Lack of skills between DSGs: In terms of the policy for IQMS, each educator needs to select a DSG, that is, is made of the peer and a senior/supervisor. The critical factor for any school-based development is that the person who is selected as a peer plays a critical role in the development of the appraisee. Most of the peers- whether for an PL1 educator, an HOD and Deputy Principal and principal were lacking the requisite skills to guide, and mentor the appraisee.

(iv) Educators do not familiarize themselves with the document. They wait for the SDT as a source of information. This comment was made which says educators were not reading the policy documents that were given to them. The educators wanted the SDT to take the responsibility of clarifying the policy document to the staff. The policy states that in the initial meetings for advocacy training, the SDT needs to train all the staff members. However, these trainings cannot rule out that each educator needs to take the responsibility of reading the document in order to get all the facts regarding what is supposed to be done. This results in educators pushing the buck to the SDT.

(v) Challenges of the cycles for development: The lack of time for development is due to poor planning in most schools. Those schools that started late and were behind the management were not able to cope with the IQMS requirements.

Time frame: mentoring and development of educators by the DSG's meeting

(vi) Attitude (negative): resistance in development: It has been noted that there was also in some instances a negative attitude that was displayed towards the policy- educators were resisting the challenges for exposing themselves for development where there identified needs.

(vii) Poor human relations -- choosing the DSGs: In some schools the poor human relations amongst staff members is undermining the whole effort. These difficulties are experienced when educators have to select their individual DSGs, that is a peer and a senior.

(vii) Too much paper work: Educators are reluctant to engage in activities that require record keeping and use of papers. Records are required as indicators of performance in IQMS. Consequently, some educators are very poor when it comes to record keeping.

(viii)Scores and self-evaluation argument between educators and DSGs: The policy states that an educator needs to conduct self-evaluation, before embarking on appraisal and observation by the DSG. The DSGs find difficulties during the scoring –some of the appraises dispute the scores that are assigned by the DSG. This results in stalemates and deadlocks. Besides that, what was noted in the previous year is that most of the scores were over-inflated by the DSGs.

(ix)Time consuming: on the side of learners (primary school) while it is observation: teaching time gets compromised due the number of meetings and feedback sessions that need to be fitted during school teaching time.

(x) *Resistance: PGPs:* Some educators do not want assistance in the formulation of the PGP.

(xi) Attitude towards IQMS: The negative attitude that was displayed against DAS- seems to be there in some schools against IQMS.

(xii) No time allocation for IQMS: This concern about time cuts across the other issues that were raised.

(xiv)Lack of commitment: negative attitude, senior education-resistance to change: Some educators are lacking in commitment towards their work. This is displayed in negative attitude.

(xv) Lack of understanding: Some educators do not understand the procedure manual and all the processes entailed in it.

 (xvi) Absenteeism: during the process
Proper planning only for IQMS: references, resources, records (cass and marks)

(xvii)Dissatisfaction in scoring: The scoring leads to dissatisfaction amongst the educators. Some of them end up making other choices of peers.

(xvii) Monetary incentives: The focus has shifted away from development to salary progression.

(xiv) Distribution of documents was insufficient: Some of the educators did not have access to the IQMS policy documents.

Spray Diagram: Dysfunctional DSG
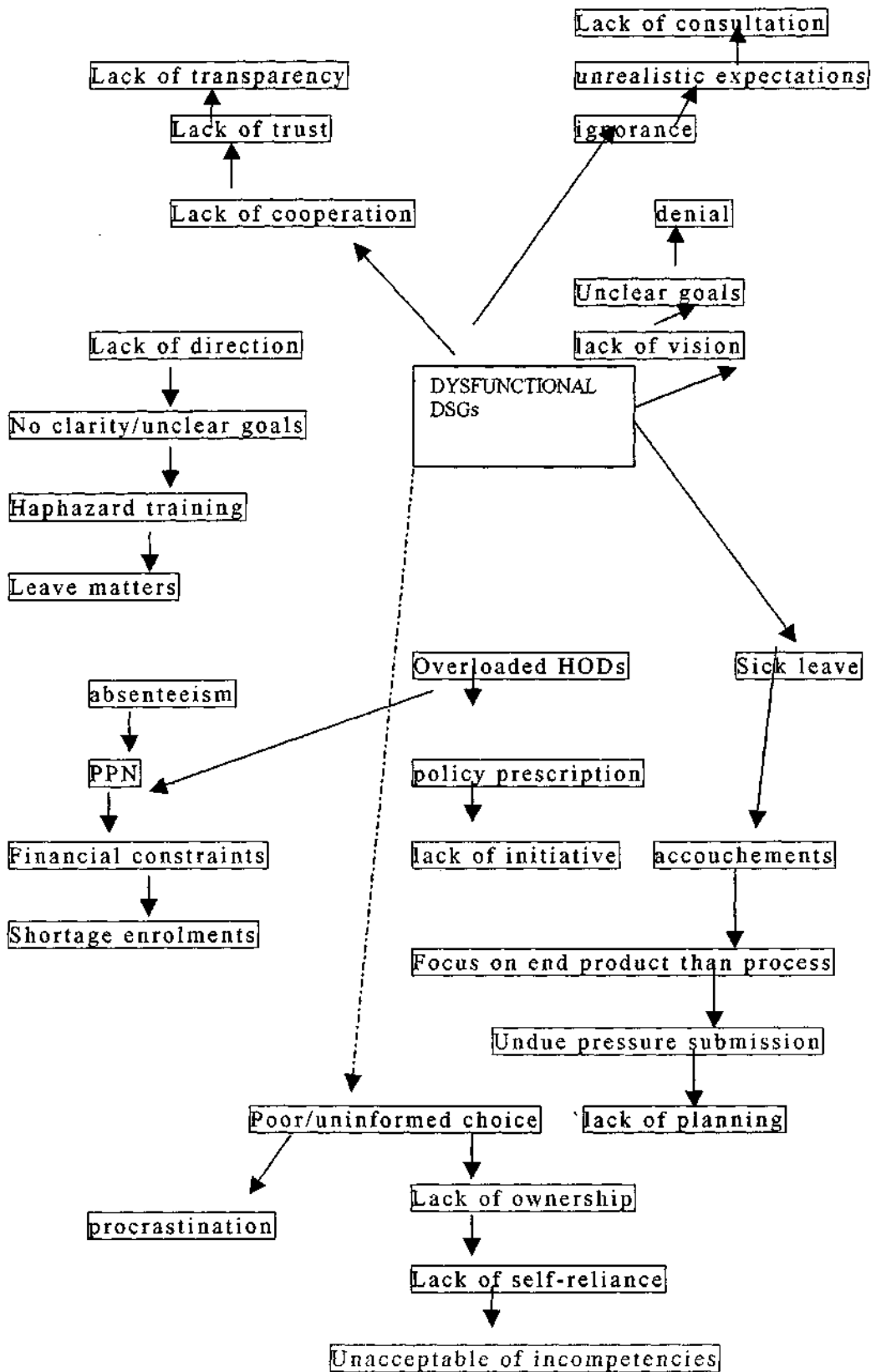
Figure 5.17 : Spray diagram for dysfunctional DSGs

93

On the 24th February 2006 the SDT members and Ward Task Team members were called in order to discuss way forward in the implementation of IQMS in 2006. Amongst the issues raised were the lack of capacity to implement the School Improvement Plans, the dysfunctionality of DSG's, lack of ownership of the process, the unjustified scores by some appraisees, negative attitude of some educators, to mention a few.

The discussions were facilitated using the soft systems tools -on the charts the groups listed what they considered as the root causes of the dysfunctionality of DSGs. The outputs of this workshop can be seen in figure 5.17 where the spray diagram for dysfunctional DSGs is pictured.

The challenges that were faced in 2005 were more focused on the appraisal of all the educators. All the above mentioned challenges were overcome due to the concerted efforts to finish the programme.

5.9 Implementation challenges in 2006

On the 25th January 2006 the Superintendent-General, Dr Cassius Lubisi in his address to principals made critical remarks about how the schools have focused on the salary progression at the expense of professional development. He made sarcastic remarks about how the scores look; yet there is a high failure rate in our schools. He appealed for reasonableness to the principals in the moderation of the marks. On the 7th February 2006 the District Task Team (DTT) met a delegation of SADTU members. During that bilateral meeting, SADTU expressed concerns about the lack of a programme of development from the District Task Team, the disjointed nature in the rolling out of the plan. SADTU recommended that principals absolve themselves from serving as chairpersons of School Development Teams (SDTs). Other areas that were identified as challenges were around the lack of synergy amongst the sub-directorates that are responsible for development. To make an example the sub-directorates that are responsible for development are Skills Development, Teacher Development, Quality Assurance and Education Management Development and Governance (EMGD). The point that was illustrated here was that when the schools identify the needs during the process of developing the Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs), these are collated into a District Improvement Plan. The District Improvement Plan is supposed to be fed to the above-mentioned sub-directorates in order that they may respond to the areas of development. These are all the systemic issues that indicate the lack of synergy within the department, particularly the leadership at the Head Office.

94

Spray Diagram on Poor Human Relations
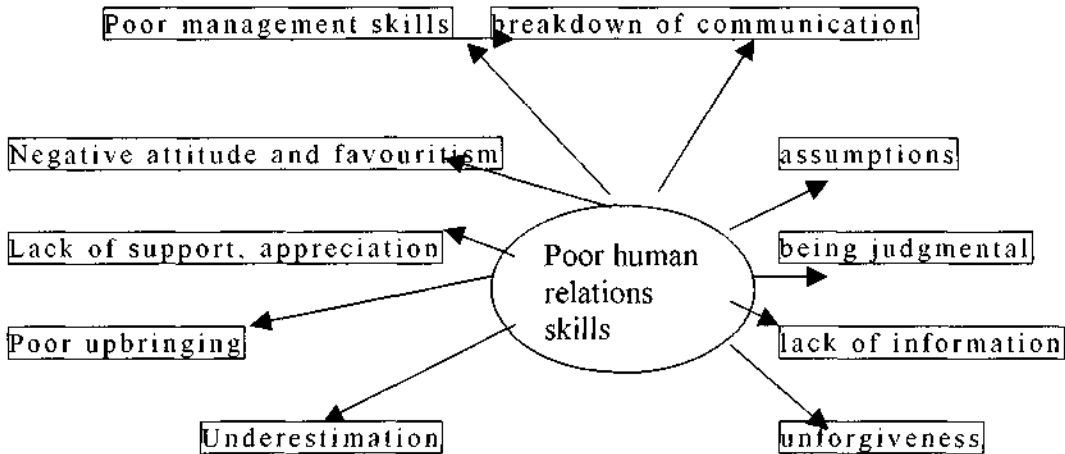
Figure 5.18 Spray diagram for poor human relations

On the 20th March 2006 in a workshop conducted with the SMTs and SDTs a spray diagram was used to elicit their opinions on poor human relations amongst the educators. The state of poor human relations amongst the educators is a cause for concern. This has been attributed to negative attitudes displayed due to favouritism. Some attribute this to the state of poor upbringing of some educators, due to the lack of support and appreciation for work being done. Educators are judgemental of each other- this leads to the breakdown of communication. The above emerging issues illustrated in the multi-cause diagram are indicative of the underlying assumptions that affect the culture of the school.

A spray diagram exercise was conducted to find out about working of Development Support Groups. During the brainstorming session, the SMTs suggested the above as some of the reasons attached to the dysfunctionality of the DSGs. In most schools the DSGs were considered to be dysfunctional due to the above cited factors. This could be attributed to the lack of vision, which is also caused by unclear goals. Furthermore, the training the SMTs received is considered to have been haphazard, due to the lack of time. Other participants cited the lack of planning on the side of schools as a main contributing factor – resulting in overloaded workloads. One cannot rule out the lack of ownership by the owners, which results in the lack of self-reliance. Other considered the prescriptive manner in which the policies are presented. Schools are experiencing a spate of absenteeism due to sick leaves, low morale, depression and accouchment leave. The low level of co-operation amongst the SMTs is attributed to lack of trust and transparency –resulting in poor showing in meetings.

Spray Diagram for Dysfunctional Schools
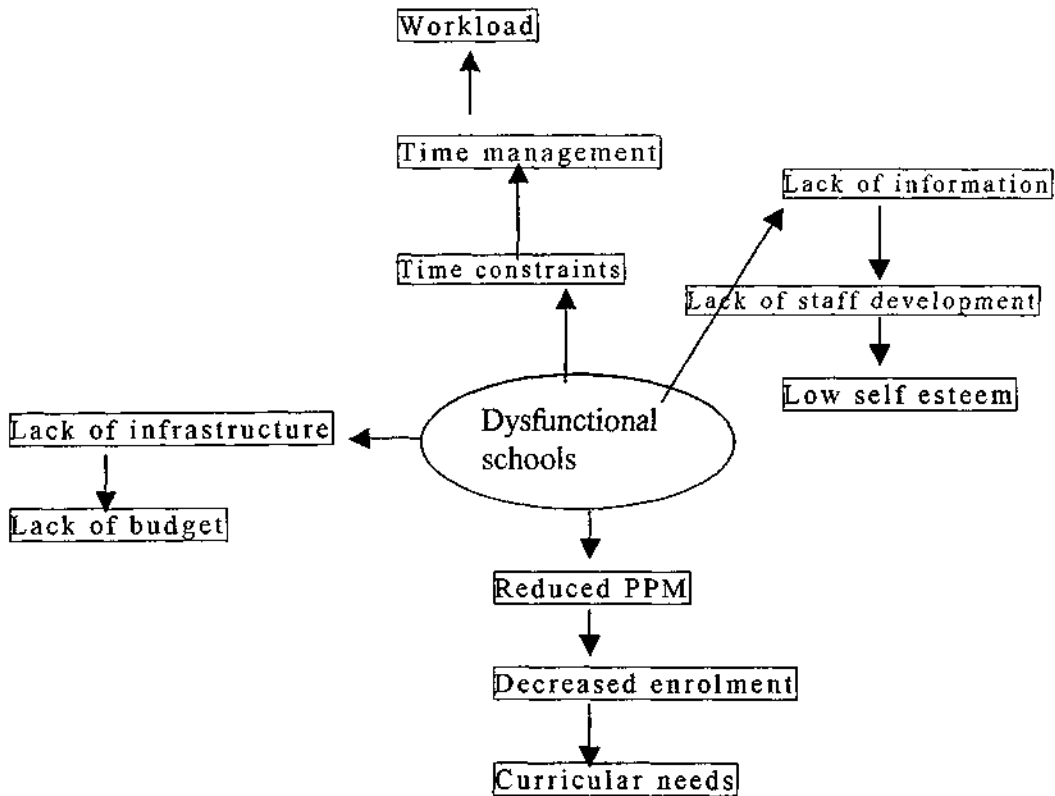
Figure 5.19 : Spray diagram for dysfunctional schools

The SMTs conducted another exercise using the multi-cause diagram. The focus during this session was on getting an understanding of the causes of dysfunctionality in the school system. During the brainstorming, the above issues were raised as causes of dysfunctionality in schools. Others regard the reduction in allocation of posts to schools as a factor contributing to dysfunctionality. As I probed further, the reduction in PPM was attributed to the decrease in school enrolment. In other schools, dysfunctionality manifests in lack of infrastructure, which is caused by budgetary constraints. In most dysfunctional schools there is a lack of staff development, due to the lack of knowledge, information and expertise to conduct the training for empowerment.

At the school the members of the Das Support Group are reported to be unable to develop their evaluees. Some educators are reported to be fearful of the changes brought about by the IQMS programme. The other issue is that educators are afraid to indicate what are their shortcomings and weaknesses. When others make a choice about their peers, they simply chose someone who is a friend.

The other issues that were raised concern the formation of the committees that tends to be biased towards the educator's needs. There is a negative perception about the whole programme of IQMS. The educators indicated that there is lack of collective ownership, which is linked to resistance to change. There is a general lack of proper staff development across the schools. Some of the educators are reluctant to score due the conflicts resulting from scoring. The attached monetary incentives that go with performance measurement also cloud the issue of development.

The SDT chairpersons made the following proposals as some of the proposals for addressing some of the issues.
(i) Self-reflection: the point was raised that educators need to take time and reflect on their daily activities. However, most educators are not exposed and nor trained on reflective practice. Reflection on the practice holds the key to the acquisition of a variety of skills.
(ii) Openness: all educators at all the levels require the principle of openness. The DSGs cannot function properly if the participants are not open to each other.
(iii) Skills development: There is such a dire need for the development of skills. These skills shortage can be addressed by means of professional development programmes.
(iv)Transparency: A significant attribute for the success of any organisation. The sub-structures for IQMS, that is DSGs, SDTs can only work appropriately if there is transparency.
(v) Be supportive: The participants called for each member to be supportive of the vision. The IQMS structures need support from the leadership.
(vi) Consultation: Every stakeholder needs to be consulted –this can guarantee the success of the implementation of the project.
(vii) Be approachable: The leadership needs to be easily accessible and be approachable for any kind of advise.
(viii)Empowerment: The model that is envisaged needs to be able to empower the participants.

In another exercise the SDT chairpersons some of the following suggestions for changes. This includes creating the conducive conditions at the school for introducing changes. There was also a strong need for the empowerment of SMTs. Educators need to conduct themselves in a professional way in order to improve the situation.

CATWOE
C - educators, learners, parents
A – SMT, educators
T – conducive conditions; empowered SMTs; healthy working environment; professional conduct;
W – educators' interests
O – SMT, SDT, educators
E – consider environment (internal and external)

Multi-cause Diagram for Lack of Strategic Planning

Culture

↑

Upbringing

↑

Stereotype

↑

Resistance to change   solutions

↑   ↓

Autocratic leadership   consultative approach

Lack of   Involvement of relevant stakeholders

strategic

Lack of consultation ← planning →

↓

Inferiority/superiority complex   ability to accept, not tolerate each other

↓

Own perception   communication

↓   ↙   ↘

Lack of capacity   verbal   non-verbal

↓   ↓

Lack of confidence   defiance

↓   ↓

Low self esteem   poor human relations

↓

Favouritism (pets)

Figure 5.20 : Spray diagram for lack of strategic planning

On the 25th February 2006 a principal's workshop was conducted in Vulindlela West Ward. The review was based on the implementation challenges that were faced in 2005. The discussions included the review of the performance standards for IQMS. The lack of strategic planning has been identified as a gap. Strategic planning is one of the criteria in performance standard number 12. Some of the problems experienced at school, are due to the lack of strategic planning. This skill is attributed as one of the significant leadership skills for any principal. During the

98

discussion we wanted to find out more about some of the causes for the lack of strategic planning. These were the views of the principals elicited, using the multi-cause diagram. During the brainstorming session, the above-mentioned issues as cited in the multi-cause diagram. The ability to involve the relevant stakeholders is a critical factor for strategic planning- as it addresses the principle of consultation. The assumption is that due to the inferiority complex or alternatively a superiority complex -some principals will not consider consulting other SMT members for strategic planning. The autocratic nature of leadership is also a determining factor leading to resistance to any proposed changes. Communication was cited as a strong attribute of strategic planning-which means the lack of communication can lead to people defiance of instructions, messages and any intended actions if these are not appropriately communicated.

Challenges of the SDTs

The educators identified some of the following as the challenges for implementation of IQMS at school level. They cited the lack of confidence that SDT members lack confidence in what they are doing. Some problems are of an institutional nature and systemic nature. The implementation of the School Improvement Plans for some is hindered by the lack of capacity within the institution. The lack of time to perform the job properly also poses a great hindrance in reaching the goals of the system. What comes very clearly during this process is also the lack of mentoring experience by the seniors / supervisors and peers (Reid and Jones 1997; Reid 1999 in Flesch 2005:70). This is due to the lack of training for the latter personnel. The changes of dates for conducting the baseline and summative evaluations, further complicate the process of appraisal in the schooling system.

5.10 Conceptual model for IQMS 2006: Reviewed

On the 17 February 2006 the principals and the SEM discussed the IQMS system. After some iterations it was considered that the system does not accommodate the KZN vision and the end result for teachers development and school improvement. As the system gets reviewed time and again the other gaps are identified and thus it is further improved.

After some iterations the group formulated the IQMS model as a system *That is integrated and holistic and that will be fully owned by all the educators at all levels, and fully supported by the departmental officials in order to empower the educators with the relevant skills, attitudes and values for effective teacher development and whole school development.*

On the 10th March 2006 at the Umgungundlovu District Indaba, I presented the conceptual model for discussion. However, there was not enough time to deliberate and allow the participants to respond and get their perceptions regarding this model. The people who understood what I was talking about were the Vulindlela West principals. They really

understood the process, starting from when the DAS model was conceptualised. The IQMS model was conceived after these principals had a great exposure to the previous sessions where deliberations were held in formulating the model.

The model captures and captivates some of the work that was continually going on at school. The kind of IQMS that the SMTs and principals envisioned is captured in the words that were used by the participants. The model envisages an IQMS that needs to be *integrated* – which means that the three programmes that need integration are Development Appraisal, Performance Measurement and Whole School Evaluation. In order to realise this vision of and integrated IQMS system- a concerted effort was put on setting up the structures to realise this dream. Most of the workshops that were conducted in Vulindlela West were based on identifying the needs of the individual educators and schools. The selection of principals in the Vulindlela West Ward included people who were passionate and capable of promoting DAS in their schools. In February 2004 there were trainings that were conducted across the Vulindlela Circuit. During those trainings, each school was supposed to send three delegates. The team of trainers that conducted the workshops came from Vulindlela West Ward. The previous experience of working in DAS helped in unpacking the IQMS policy document.

In Vulindlela West Ward the advocacy and awareness campaigns for IQMS continued for purposes of reinforcing the previous training. We did not want to assume that the training that was delivered to the three educators was enough to get the rest of the educators to understand the IQMS process. Consequently, we embarked on series of workshops and meetings with different stakeholders. These workshops were conducted with SMTs, post level 1 educators, HODs and principals. The idea of facilitating *ownership* of IQMS amongst all the educators in Vulindlela West Ward became the main focus for the whole year. We realised that IQMS could be another 'quick fix that fails' if we do not advocate for the ownership of the programme. The emphasis during 2004 was on the interpretation of the IQMS policy document, whilst using the tools for systems thinking. In most of the workshops all the relevant stakeholders were exposed to the use of tools for systems thinking. Although the main target group which was easier to work with was the principals. The model was a result of a collective effort and collaboration by the relevant stakeholders, that is, the SMTs, the SDT chairpersons and principals. An attempt to embark on a *holistic* approach was not easy. Nevertheless, the approach that was used involved the development of performance indicators that served as a guide for demonstrating performance. In some of the principals' workshops we used the Whole School Evaluation instruments in order to make concerted effort to cover the nine focus areas for WSE. The idea of working in clusters grew from the realisation that every principal needed the strength of the other in order to work on his/her shortcomings.

100

The discussions above indicate that the lack of support was another cause for the failure of DAS. In order to make IQMS *fully supported by all departmental officials*, a number of structures were formed. Initially, I led the task of forming the Vulindlela Task Team, responsible for the training of the three educators in February 2004. This team was also tasked with the responsibility of training educators across the Vulindlela Circuit schools. During the course of the year, Umgungundlovu District Task Team was launched- given the responsibility of monitoring the implementation, and reporting on the progress of IQMS implementation across the district. These initiatives resulted in sharing the responsibility for IQMS with the other sub-directorates, such as Education Management and Governance Development (EMGD) and Teaching and Learning Services (TLS).

The hands-on approach can be attributed to the success of DAS and IQMS implementation, which also galvanized the direct involvement of SMTs, principals and PL1 educators. The IQMS model featured *the empowerment of educators with relevant skills* as its main goals. A number of strategies and action plans were put in place for purposes of empowering the educators. It was earlier cited that a group of educators were selected due to their expertise in financial management to conduct training for principals in financial management skills. Those workshops bore some fruit- a number of schools attained section 21 status in Vulindlela West Ward. In 2004 to 2005 volunteer educators were called to conduct training in assessment skills. A team of HODs started working with other HODs for the junior, senior primary and Further Education and Training (FET) band. The cluster meetings that were conducted in 2004 and 2005 were mainly focused on using curricula skills and financial management skills.

Due to the consistency in engagement with DAS in 2003-2004 and IQMS in 2004 to 2006, *attitudes* and mental models were continually changing. The professional *values* of educators were also being shaped for the better. Whilst we were working with DAS, there was a lot of commitment and professional demonstrated by the SMTs as compared to IQMS in 2006. The latter seemed to take the focus of educators from their development to personal gain- this could be substantiated by the inflated scores submitted in 2005 by the educators. Before the schools closure in June 2006, I requested the principals to send the scores for performance standards No 1-4. A general analysis of these scores indicates that educators are fixated on scores at the expense of development.

The idea of integrating Development Appraisal, Performance Appraisal and Whole School Evaluation from a policy perspective is an approach that envisages a holistic and developmental model. In dealing with such systems involving a lot of human activity, there are a series of unintended manifestations which impede the progress. This justifies the use of systems approach to the implementation of these policies. *Teacher development* is implicit in the model, although the rush to submit the required scores can overshadow it. The development of

teachers is at the centre and heart of DAS and IQMS; it can only be sabotaged through the vile of human failure.

5.11 Personal Vision

The other project that one had to engage him in was to write an assignment on a personal vision. The idea of writing one's personal vision is significant for purposes of finding direction and focus in life. Senge (1990) strongly believes in personal vision. In his writings Senge regards personal vision as one of the key areas for development in a learning organisation. Senge (1990) rates personal mastery amongst the other five disciplines. The principals were trained in the writing of their personal vision. This exercise is considered to be significant for one's personal development.

5.12 Organisational Structure

The understanding of schools as organisations determines the way the learning patterns are analysed within the school. Senge (2000) describes about nine patterns in organisations. The most popular is " fixes that fail " (2000:91). In the study on has noted how projects have been initiated, but not being followed through. Amongst these projects was the training of SMT using SACRED Heart manuals in 2000-2002. The following years 2002-2003 saw the TESM manuals sent to schools, but some schools never used so much of the material contained therein. Stacey (2003:95) maintains that the essence of mastering systems thinking as a management discipline is to see patterns where others only see events and forces to react to. From a managerial point of view, the change in behaviour is crucial particularly for the growth of the organisation if it comes from the leadership. Achtenhagen (2003) maintains that management needs to change its mindset in order to allow a conducive atmosphere for learning within the school (cited in Pettingrew et.al. 2003:77).

5.13 The Relationship between learning and systems thinking

The assumption is that reality can be approached as system, which also implies the interaction between the different elements of a system and also the interconnection with other systems. In this analysis Flood (1999:14) brings in the notion of understanding the significance of systems dynamics. He refers to the tools that Senge (1990) uses in order to bring some understanding to the nature of reality. Senge (1990) observes the patterns that recur in living organisms, which he calls system archetypes. By system archetypes it becomes clear to identify what happens in the dynamics of a system. Amongst these systems archetypes are observable patterns of behaviour. Flood (1999: 14) argues that the knowledge of archetypes expands one's ability to get to grips with management issues.

Whilst working with the schools one was able to understand some of the prevailing systems archetypes. During the process of negotiating entry to the schools through the DAS and IQMS programmes, some of these opportunities eventually led to notable improvement in the schools. There is a strong argument for viewing organisational learning is the 'activity and the process by which organisations eventually reach the ideal of a learning organisation' (Finger and Brand 1999: 136). Finally, Finger and Brand conclude, that there is a need to develop 'a true management system of an organisation's evolving learning capacity' (op. cit.). This, they suggest, can be achieved through defining indicators of learning (individual and collective) and by connecting them to other indicators (op. cit.).

Finger and Brand (1999) observed that the interventions may trigger individual and collective learning processes at all levels of the organisation, although these may not necessarily be properly connected to the organisation's strategic objectives. Popular models of organisational learning (such as Dixon 1994) assume such a link. It is, therefore, imperative, 'that the link between individual and collective learning and the organisation's strategic objectives is made' (ibid: 147). This shortcoming, Finger and Brand (1999:147) argue, makes a case for some form of measurement of organisational learning – so that it is possible to assess the extent to which such learning contributes or not towards strategic objectives. Donald Schon (1987) made the defining contribution by providing a theoretical framework linking the experience of living in a situation of an increasing change with the need for learning. The experience of working closely with the schools in DAS and IQMS yielded some tangible results which can be attributed to the above argument by Finger and Brand (1999). Some of the principals who were engaged with the process of DAS and IMQS implementation benefited through the process. In some schools there were indicators of notable improvement.

5.14 Systems theory and the learning organisation

Systemic thinking is the conceptual cornerstone of Peter Senge's approach in working with organisations. Senge (1990:12) considers it as a discipline that integrates the others, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice. Systems theory's ability to comprehend and address the whole, and to examine the interrelationship between the parts provides, for Peter Senge, both the incentive and the means to integrate the disciplines. Three things need noting here. First, systems theory looks to connections and to the whole. In this respect it allows people to look beyond the immediate context and to appreciate the impact of their actions upon others (and vice versa). To this extent it holds the possibility of achieving a more holistic understanding. Second, while the building blocks of systems theory are relatively simple, they can build into a rather more sophisticated model than are current in many organisations. Senge argues that one of the key problems with much that is written about, and done in the name of management, is that rather simplistic frameworks are applied to what

103

are complex systems. The addition of the two points together moves the focus from a linear to a holistic approach. The shift takes the perspective to the point of appreciating the organisation as a dynamic process. Thus, the argument runs, a better appreciation of systems will lead to more appropriate action. Third, systemic thinking, according to Senge, allows us to realize the significance of feedback mechanisms in organisations.

Senge concludes that the systems viewpoint is generally oriented toward the long-term view. To Senge the delays and feedback loops are so important. It is very easy to just simply disregard the delays and feedback loops, although they are unavoidable and inconsequential. In the words of Senge, the feedback loops and delays come back to haunt you in the long term (Senge1990: 92). While other writers may lay stress on systems theory, in Senge's hands it sharpens the model - and does provide some integration of the 'disciplines' he identifies. For this study the systems thinking became an integral part of the approach to the implementation of DAS and IQMS. In the above figures as indicated with the use of different systems tools, these feedback loops were illustrated. They are the reality of what prevails in the school system.

5.15 Coaching and Staff Development

The issue of professional development of teachers is an integral pat of DAS and IQMS. Any programme that is considered for staff development needs to consider the following factors, that is, the challenges faced by the educators and administrators and the relevant support to staff (Senge 2000:385). The use of the right tool for the right purpose is significant in order to achieve the required results.

The assumptions regarding the choice of tools are namely:

"If the purpose is to make mental models explicit, to notice conflicts, and resolve apparent differences, then causal loops are highly effective systems models should be judged on their insight, usability and relevance "Senge 2000: 264).

Induction is lacking in most of the schools where IQMS was conducted. According to Henry (1998 in Heyns 2000:163) the secret of successful induction lies in a multiple of support programmes that combines the activities of mentors, Development Support Groups, district officials, and peers. Induction programmes need to be part of the School Improvement Plan. Mentors can play a significant role during the induction of educators.

This approach fitted in the context and workplace in dealing with policies that are problematic. The literature that was reviewed grounds the study in the understanding of the concepts that are peculiar to the systems thinking. The literature reviewed elaborates on the concepts and the conceptualisation of the issues from a systems perspective. The discussions and activities ranged from the use of various tools for

104

understanding the problematic situations. Different tools were used for purposes of understanding systems and engaging with problematic situations that lend themselves to human activity. The different stages of engaging with the nature of the reality and problem at hand were done over a period that spanned four years. Since this study has been reflective in nature-it recorded only the key highlights and failures in this process of dialogue and engagement during the implementation of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West Ward.

5.16 Summary

In this chapter an attempt was made to explore the implementation of DAS and IQMS from 2003 to 2006. During that phase we indicated how the use of the systems thinking and systems methodology tools were employed in order to gain insight into the issues of policy implementation, particularly DAS and IQMS. In the examples cited it has been clearly indicated that not all the steps of SSM were followed to the letter. However, the approach that was used contributed to the development of an initiative that saw SMTs and principals beginning to engage with the reality of DAS and IQMS. The unfolding developments are not necessarily in a logical order. Nevertherless, the reflection is based on the key points during the process of using this theoretical framework of systems thinking and Soft Systems Methodology.

This chapter makes an important contribution in outlining the practical application of systems tools for analysing messy situations in which there is a complex interrelationship of human activity. The study adds depth into an understanding of the phenomenon of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West Ward. The systems tools enable us to understand the key barriers to the implementation of DAS and this also prepared the SMTs and principals to be able to approach IQMS with a different perspective. There were a number of training sessions that were held and not everything has been put in sequence that emanated from some of those engagements. During the first year of implementation of DAS, one has noted that although there was not much understanding of SSM as in 2006, yet there was much input from the participants regarding the implementation. With regard to the enthusiasm demonstrated by the participants, there was much activity shown by the groups in the formative years of our introduction of DAS. The conceptual model that was formulated in 2003 by the participants as principals indicates how they knew what they were supposed to do. Comments will be made in the next chapter concerning what I consider as some of the findings and learnings during the course of this work. The study reviewed the systems thinking process and the SSM approach used for purposes of implementing IQMS in Vulindlela Circuit, although the main focus was in Vulindlela West Ward.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I intend to indicate the findings and learnings from these experiences, covering 2003-2006. The purpose of this study can be summarised as to reflect on the implementation of DAS and IQMS whilst working with SMTs and principals. Secondly, to demonstrate the method of using the systems approach and the SSM in the implementation of DAS and IQMS. Thirdly, to analyse the patterns emerging from this period of school development, using the policy of DAS and IQMS.

In this chapter I focus on the findings and learnings based on this process of using a systems approach whilst implementing DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela West Ward. I analyse the conceptual models for DAS and IQMS, and give interpretation to these models. I address the key questions presented and the themes emerging from the analysis. I identify the professional development patterns that emerged from the development process. I explore the areas for professional development that are a challenge for SMTs, DSGs, principals and superintendents. I recap on the mental models emerging from the dialogue process with SMTs and principals.

6.2 DAS : a developmental approach

The systems perspective enabled the participants to get a better understanding of the problem situation. With the use of multi-cause diagrams, the rich picture, the Iceberg tool and mind-maps, the SMT members were able to gain insight and analyse the underlying issues that led to the failure of DAS implementation. The tools being used contributed in the facilitation of dialogue. The SMT members developed a sense of *ownership* of the problem situation. The active participation of the SMTs and principals created a conducive atmosphere for group learning.

The systems approach enabled the participants to have a new perspective on unstructured problems. The tools that were being used such as rich pictures, systems models and SSM stages opened a new window into the complex nature of DAS, particularly the identification of the clients, actors and owners of the problem. The SMTs and principals gained a better insight into the problems that led to the failure of DAS. The contributions led to the crafting of a conceptual model for DAS. The SMTs and principals made a turning point in the perception of DAS. The positive spirit that was showed by the SMT

members in the interpretation of the DAS document was remarkable. The systems maps succinctly illustrate the boundary for DAS and the environment in which it operates. The skill of mind-mapping clearly demonstrates what can be done in complex systems.

The emerging innovations that the SMT members introduced in the conceptual model for DAS demonstrated their commitment to development. The rethinking on DAS created the platform for the implementation programme. The enthusiasm from the workshops dovetailed to the schools. A sense of adventure was carried into the school environment. A greater awareness and advocacy for DAS resulted from these initiatives. The issues that emerged from the rich pictures and the situation as analysed using the systems tools indicate the complexity in the implementation of DAS within the schooling system. However, with a facilitated approach that bordered on the empowerment of SMTs, some of the perceptions held by educators were dispelled during this process of engagement. With a deeper insight into the structural issues, the principals were better prepared to meet the challenges for development in their schools. There was a sense of focus and direction that was injected by the principals in school development planning. When one compares the past years when the principals were focused on the improvement of schools during the era of DAS, the commitment was intrinsic. Development was the main focus, and the strategy being DAS. It can be argued that DAS was the leverage point for mobilising principals to embark on school development planning. The success indicators are the number of schools that applied for section 21 status in Vulindlela West Ward. The principals, working in clusters, addressed the skills shortages in financial management. Policy development, security of school assets, administration of school records received priority for development. Some of the primary school principals were not involved so much in classroom teaching. They started to engage in lesson preparation, assessment, as required for classroom observation during the appraisal process.

6.3 IQMS : a holistic approach

The experience of working with SMT members from 2003-2004, created an enabling environment for the implementation of IQMS. With the advent of IQMS in 2004, the stage was already set for the training of SMT members and educators on the implementation of IQMS. A concerted effort to implement IQMS across the province faced a number of challenges. However, with a systems perspective to this challenge the complex issues were addressed with a better understanding. Compared to DAS, the IQMS had its own complexities, which were illustrated in the systems maps. These tools clearly illustrate what is in store in IQMS. Besides the hard core issues in IQMS as illustrated in the systems maps there were also 'soft' issues to be dealt with. The IQMS strand that complicated the issues further was the pressure exerted by the department and unions. The department needed to fulfil its obligation to implement. The unions were fighting for their members to get the salary increments attached to the IQMS appraisal process.

The three-pronged nature of IQMS policy further complicated the issues regarding implementation. The three systems are developmental appraisal, performance measurement and whole school evaluation. The pressure for implementation resulted in teething stages and mistakes. What emerged from this pressure is that the training took the cascade model. In order to ensure continuity in Vulindlela West, the systems approach was incorporated into the training aspect. Due to that process IQMS became the focal feature for further training. This continuity resulted in further engagement with the messy issues emerging from the implementation process. A platform was provided for dealing with the complex issues besting the implementation. Besides that, the approach required a more focused attention in order to meet the time frames for the submission of scores.

The IQMS training was focused on making the SMTs and principals to synergise their approach with school development planning. During these engagements baseline evaluation was conducted, a SWOT analysis of the school, the formulation of the School Improvement Plans, and the implementation of the cycles for development. During these engagements the focus was on the conceptual model. The IQMS conceptual model was reviewed, in order to include *school development and professional development of educators*. School principals were empowered to use the use the Whole School Evaluation instruments. A *holistic approach* required the use of systems tools in order to assist SMTs and principals to consider the nine focus areas in School Improvement Plans. A lot of focus was put on the *developmental* aspects of IQMS. During the Ward principals and SMT workshops the IQMS conceptual model was being continuously clarified. The gaps that were identified in the IQMS policy document were analysed using the systems tools. A concerted effort was made to make IQMS a point of departure for all developmental initiatives.

The principals of Vulindlela West contributed to the formulation of the *summative observation instrument* (see Appendix A). The *cluster* meetings continued amongst the SMTs and principals. The main agenda in cluster meetings is focus on school development. It was indicated that the conceptual model for IQMS was revised in order to consider *teacher professional development* and *school improvement.* The process of dialogue extended to the newly formed Ward Task Teams, comprised of SDT chairpersons. As illustrated in the previous chapters, the implementation was *operational* and *systemic* in nature. From a policy perspective (the hard systems approach) there were challenges in terms of meeting the timeframes for submission of scores. However, from a *soft systems perspective*, the analysis focussed on the challenges using the rich pictures, the CATWOE analysis, and other systems tools. The implementation was not as simplistic as it appears on the policy document. In some session discussions revolved around the IQMS challenges.

The implementation of IQMS was further complicated by the shift from the developmental aspect and the focus on *performance measurement* for financial rewards. With DAS, the initiative for development reached a stage where it was intrinsic, rather that obligatory on schools. The positive aspect in IQMS is that some principals started to take classroom teaching seriously. Consequently, classroom-oriented training also became a feature of Ward Development initiatives. Some principals started to engage with outcomes-based teaching in preparation for classroom teaching and observation.

The School Improvement Plans that were submitted by schools took into consideration the nine key areas of whole school development. However, there are shortcomings in embarking on a whole school approach due to individual and collegial skills shortages in the leadership of the school. Through this engagement on continuous learning and openness to development, the identified skills shortages are prioritised and exposed for specialist attention. A number of workshops were conducted by the SMTs and principals within the ward who posses these specialist skills.

6.4 Professional Development

One of the requirements for DAS and IQMS is that every educator must engage in professional development. In the IQMS policy document one of the criteria states clearly that educators need to meet certain standards to demonstrate professional development.

The conceptual models formulated in DAS and IQMS share the notion of *teacher development.* Our lack of ability to reflect on our own practice, disempowers the professional development of teachers. The Norms and Standards for educators policy document articulate the best intentions and the ideal educator. However, these articulations are not departmentally supported by the existing structures and systems. Neither is there proper alignment and integration between all the departmental programmes to support this vision of an ideal educator as portrayed in the seven norms and standards for educators.

The purpose of the theoretical framework is to support the notion of an educator who is a reflective practitioner. The conditions that are prevailing in some schools are not conducive to the practice of regular dialogue about the practice. The educators are not even conscious of reflection as a skill that needs to be practiced. These DAS and IQMS initiatives were intended to enable the SMTs and principals to be empowered to deal with the problematic situations they face in their daily activities. What is also lacking in most schools is the professional expertise that is needed to empower educators at all levels. In both the models that were developed for DAS and IQMS, the idea of a developmental and supportive element is implicit. Upon reflection I have noted that the approach that was used was indeed developmental. The principals and SMTs created a supportive environment for school development and improvement during the implementation stages of DAS and IQMS.

The findings of the study point out that through DAS and IQMS the teachers are able to take control of their professional development. These were initiatives promoted by the Vulindlela West Ward for the professional development of SMTs, principals and educators. With the relevant training, the SEM can also be a catalyst for sustained and consistent professional development initiatives. A professionally trained SEM has a key role in mobilising school-based initiatives aimed at professional development. In order to assist all schools with assessment, the SMTs have identified facilitators responsible for the junior, senior phase and FET band. These educators were responsible for facilitated workshops as part of the activities mentioned in the Ward Improvement Plan. In order to set a benchmark for criteria for assessment, the facilitators bring along samples of their teacher and learner portfolios. Other areas that are discussed include lesson planning and administration of records.

During some of the principal's sessions, each person was called upon to bring the administration records. The rationale for these exercise, is to promote transparency and create a collegial atmosphere for exchanging information and knowledge. This led to principals deciding to meet in clusters with their peers, in order to promote mentorship. With the advent of IQMS, the requirement for school-based professional development became a demand. The time constraints and the pressure to meet the appraisal requirements, have negated the collegial spirit which started during the era of DAS.

The meetings with SDTs indicate that there are serious gaps regarding school-based development. This challenge replicates in most schools, and is seriously hampering the development aspect. Another serious anomaly is the lack of professional skills amongst the members of the Development Support Groups and SDTs. Some educators tend to isolate their professional development needs from their Professional Growth Plans (PGP). The tendency to treat IQMS as an event, also disenfranchises the professional development of educators. Due to this identified institutional incapacity, SDTs and DSGs fail to give guidance and direction to their peers.

The other inhibiting factor is the discrepancies between school A and school B, in terms of development initiatives. The indicators of performance are not clearly stipulated the IQMS criteria. Overscoring tends to be the order of the day, as educators rush for salary increments, accelerated and grade progression. The human weakness tends to undermine the spirit and the letter of the policy, inspite of all its intentions. Teachers are not keen to enter into the National Teaching Awards, yet when one observes the scores they assume that there are excellent teachers in the schools.

There are challenges in terms of a strategy to curb the above tendency. Individual professional development and school development are the key integral components of IQMS.

The observation instrument (Appendix A) is not used by some of the educators, together with Apek document that contains the benchmarks. On the 30 August 2006 in a HOD workshop the comments on the appraisal instruments were discussed for further analysis. It was revealing to note the way this instrument is being filled. There are some serious discrepancies, and it tends to be an area that is controlled by the each DSG.

From 2005 to 2006 Umgungundlovu District IQMS Task Team has been convening conferences on IQMS. The Umgungundlovu District Task Team convened the conference in order to address the concerns that were raised by the teachers. A document with answers to most of the concerns that were raised was put together by the Task Team and distributed to all the schools. In March 2006 I was selected to lead the preparations for the Umgungundlovu District Task Team in convening an IQMS Indaba. During that IQMS Indaba I presented the IQMS conceptual model to the conference. The nature of the programme did not allow time for debate regarding the model that was presented, neither was there enough time to clarify the meaning of the IQMS conceptual model.

Peter Senge talks about personal mastery as one of the key features of the five disciplines. In 2003 during our TESM classes with the Leadership Centre each participant was requested to write his or her personal vision. Principals were introduced t this concept and they were guided to develop their own personal visions. This idea has caught aflame with some individual principals who have done exceptionally well in their schools. One can make an example of a school with exceptional leadership and individual teachers who have done very well in matric results. For the past three years the school has had a successful record of improvement due to a collective team effort based on individuals with a personal vision. In 2006 at a District Awards function the Minister of Education awarded the school twenty-four computers for its consistent improvement of quality matric results.

6.5 Learnings

The approach that was used to the implementation of DAS and IQMS considered the principles of participation, integration and ownership. For the success of policies in the public domain the above principles cannot be undermined and underscored. Besides that any policy implementation stage needs to be complimented with continuous training, support, monitoring and evaluation. Every stage has to be covered and constantly be followed up in order t check the current state of that particular stage. That is where the strength of a systems approach is, when every intervention needs to be conceived when the conceptual system is formulated. Besides the formulated conceptual system, the people who are considered as actors and owners need considerable support at every stage on the policy implementation.

Our schools are not the same at any rate and during any stage of their functionality. The level of school functionality is so diverse that for any policy to be implemented – serious cognizance needs to be taken of such dimensions ranging from efficiency and effectiveness in functionality to total dysfunctionality in schools.

The role of departmental officials is crucial in any form of policy that needs to be implemented at school level, particularly if the policy is challenging the mental models, the current thinking or is shifting people from their traditional ways of doing things. The process of dealing with mind-shift and paradigms cannot be taken for granted and left to chance and a control model. It does not matter whether people have been trained in doing things differently, yet they will still revert to the previous ways. If it is not regression to their traditional methods, they will change the very model, change the goals it intends to achieve or short-circuit the method in order to get quick results.

In 2005 one achievement was the initial stage of training the educators in the implementation of IQMS. However, the other challenge that emerged was that some educators over-scored in performance measurement. The over-scoring is motivated by the desire by some educators to get new gradings in their salary scales. What we have learnt is that new challenges will always emerge at any stage- and these need to be managed.

The second and third phases of implementation were the highlights of this particular initiative. The systems approach enabled the participants to unearth some important issues and some valuable lessons have been learned. Amongst the lessons learnt in the process, the researcher realizes the value of the systems approach and the SSM in complex practice. This value is notable in organisational diagnosis where the use of systems concepts adds value in the analysis. The use of SSM has demonstrated the value clarifying the problem situation. This can also be corroborated by the definition of the purposeful human activity, as it was elaborated during the process. The envisaged transformation that the system conceptualised, assists the clients in their search for direction. The participatory nature of the SSM fosters ownership of the process by the client. In this case the participants during the whole process were learning and suggesting some of the interventions.

The use of rich pictures as part of the SSM surfaced the issues prevalent in the IQMS system. The initial participation of most of the members in the root definition for DAS and IQMS enabled them to understand the unfolding of the process. The construction of the Human Activity Systems was fully owned by the participants. It was a very insightful exercise for learning to all the participants.

It is clear that participating in the development of the model is an empowering exercise on its own. During that process the critical elements regarding the owners, actors, beneficiaries, the transformation, and environment and in particular the worldview assumptions come

112

closer to the surface. Amongst the valuable lessons learnt during these years is that if teachers are empowered to handle issues on their own, they own the process of school improvement. The other issue is that through these processes some schools get to know where they are and where they want to get to and how they will get there.

6.6. Journals and Portfolios

The study demonstrated the invaluable need for keeping journals and records in a portfolio. The workshop outputs were kept as evidence of the participation in the exercises conducted during the workshops. In 2003 I submitted a portfolio of records that was required for accreditation for the Certificate in Education Leadership with the Leadership Centre. The diaries, notes and activities that were conducted were kept in files. The significance of keeping the records consisting of invitations and charts and notes kept in dairies cannot be overemphasised. At the Leadership Centre there was a great emphasis that was put on reflection after all the workshop activities. Reflection and journal keeping were the central features of the programme. This was a new way of approaching our learning. The focus was not on what was learnt, rather on how it was learned. At times we became so disorientated due to being not used to this kind of approach to learning. The aim of those sessions was to introduce the participants to another dimension of learning, by way of promoting self-reflection and reflection in practice, and to reflect on the value of journaling as a tool in our own learning. We were not used to the process of journal writing and we fitted with LaBoskey's category of Alert Novices. The experience has been of benefit for this particular study. It gave me an opportunity to relive some of the experiences and improve on the use of the systems tools. Through this effort could be realised the significance of reflective activities during the workshop sessions. These experiences gave me confidence in undertaking the study within a framework with the relevant body of literature. The participatory nature of these experiences promoted a collegial spirit with the SMT members and principals. For purposes of teacher development, teachers in their DSGs can use journal writing effectively.

Mentors are crucial to the introduction of reflective journal writing in the school system. Such mentors need to work with the novice teachers is supporting them with their professional development. Guidance is needed in exercising the skill of using journal in keeping the recorded selective experiences.

6.7 Mental Models

The study challenged the prevailing mental models implicit in our thinking about issues of policy implementation. The conceptualisation of DAS and IQMS policies was a major breakthrough from the perspective of the policy makers. The signing of such policy documents requires prolonged debate between the departmental officials and the

union representatives. In order to ensure the ownership by all the parties concerned, these agreements are collectively signed and advocated by the employer and the unions. As has been indicated with DAS, it was a product of the signing of Resolution 8 of 1998, although it was only introduced in 2000 to the principals of Kwazulu-Natal. The implementation of DAS was a failure throughout the entire province, inspite of the trainings that were conducted in the year 2000. The predominant thinking held by most educators was that it was another form of inspection in disguise. The beliefs and views of the unionised teachers negated against the implementation of DAS. Any policy change tends to be resisted by teachers, although this also depends on the nature of awareness and advocacy that has been conducted by the officials of the department.

The study shows that through deliberate engagement with the problematic situation surrounding DAS and IQMS, the participants were able to surface their own assumptions and views about DAS. The CATWOE exercise illustrates the worldviews of the different people involved in DAS and IQMS. With the iceberg tool illustrating the relationship and differences between the events, patterns and structure-issues of a systemic nature were identified and the emerging patterns from the rich pictures. The systemic issues emerging from the process during the implementation of DAS and IQMS 2003 and 2004 respectively, are due to fear of disclosure, time constraints, lack of self-confidence, lack of ownership, incompetence. Day et.al (1987: 23) in their writings cite some of the above challenges as factors that cause resistance to change. Elliot (1997) argues that most of the time teachers will say that some of the changes to be implemented are not practical. Hence he argues that Doyle and Ponder label this pattern of thinking as 'practicality ethic' (in Day et.al. 1987:24). Day et.al. (1987:24) points out teachers will reject any change if it does not provide the necessary peer support, and disturbs them from normal routine. From a systemic perspective, teachers consider themselves to be part of the system that remains constant. They stay as functional parts of the system that does not challenge them to change.

DAS and IQMS programmes are problematic in the sense that they involve self-disclosure of weaknesses. Teachers have been used to work on their own for a long time. The nature of the system is one that rejected the interference from others to check what they are doing. Therefore if they have to disclose their work, it threatens their comfort zones. For a long time teachers have been so used to working on their own. Their socialisation promoted individuality. I do not underestimate the complexity of the task that was involved in conducting a research of this nature. It was not easy to explain the steps involved in using some of the tools for research. Ponte concluded in his research that teachers learn more to conduct action research if they are supported in their practice (2002:419-420).

6.8 Shared Vision

The promotion of group work holds better results for all the schools. Although individual schools, principals and SMT members were found to be at varying levels in their implementation of DAS and IQMS- nonetheless the intervention challenged everyone towards achieving the same goals. In 2003 to 2004, the principals, SMT members, educators and schools rallied with the same vision – that is to implement DAS. Although this could not be monitored across all the schools- nevertheless all the principals and SMT members were exposed through this shared common understanding through the workshops that were conducted. With the advent of IQMS in 2005 to 2006, the main goals were that every educator needed to be appraised – since the IQMS policy stated categorically this standpoint. One cannot mention the idea of salary and grade progression that also accompanied this drive to get all the educators appraised.

6.9 Systems Thinking

Systems thinking provides a particular perspective on reality. The reality of work faced by the departmental officials, the principals and SMT members is open to this particular approach. This perspective holds an opportunity for enhancing school improvement-although it does not provide ready made fixes that may result in failure. Rather it provides a way of looking at the nature of reality.

There is a noticeable shift in nuance from what was happening in 2003-2004, when DAS was implemented, as compared to IQMS in 2005-2006. The difference between the two stages is that with DAS, the motivation to embark on DAS was more intrinsic as compared to IQMS, which became extrinsic. When the school principals were focused on DAS, there was a lot of collaborative work going on in Vulindlela West Ward. The observations are based on the focus that the principals were putting on school improvement. Through this school improvement and development emphasis – there were a number of functional clusters in the Vulindlela West Ward. During these cluster meetings a lot of focus was put on improving the financial management system. Consequently in 2004 the shared vision for most schools was to achieve section 21 status. For schools to attain that status, they needed to improve on their financial management skills. In Vulindlela West Ward there are now 20 schools that were able to comply with the section requirements and were afforded that status.

6.10 Summary

In this chapter generalised comments have been made based on the findings of the study which dealt with the learnings from the reflective exercise. There were significant discussions based on the views expressed on professional development. The learning emerging from this methodological approach teaches educators about the power of engaging in dialogue about issues in education. The process confirmed the need for an approach of this nature when dealing with activities where there is human activity. The introduction of systems thinking and SSM in the implementation of DAS and IQMS left an indelible mark in the lives of SMTs and principals of Vulindlela West Ward. The experience of working with SMTs and principals brought a realisation of the value of time whilst engaging for purposes of development. The key features and highlights of this study could not have been exploited if there was no regard for keeping the records in our journals. The findings indicate the limitations of the study in addressing professional development of educators.

The conclusion that could be drawn from the research is that the gaps that exists between policy and practice can be closed by means of engagement through a systems thinking approach and SSM. This is demonstrated by the extent to which some measure of development could be traced in some schools where DAS and IQMS was implemented.

CHAPTER 7

RECCOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

The study set out to review the implementation of DAS and IQMS in Vulindlela Circuit, with a particular thrust and effort in Vulindlela West Ward. The findings from this particular research have been noted. Observations have been made on such vital issues as professional development and the practical implementation of DAS and IQMS using the systems tools.

This final chapter focuses not so much on the proposals and conclusions drawn from the previous chapter. Some of the limitations of the study will now be noted before the recommendations and proposals prompted by the study are considered. Inclusive in the discussion will also be the implications for further research.

The observations made in this study indicate that most departmental policies fail during the initial stage of implementation. These failures can be attributed to a number of assumptions that policy initiators make. Some of the decision-makers do not consider the systemic issues that influence the implementation of policies. The findings point out that it is a tendency of departmental officials to live policy implementation to chance –without consideration of phases for advocacy, implementation, support, monitoring and evaluation. The problematic issues that are embedded in the system are assumed that they will be quickly solved though the implementation of policies. This suggests that the policy-makers and decision-makers never engage with the practitioners in order to get a feel of what is happening in practice. The simplistic manner in which policies affecting educators are designed – causes a wedge between theory and practice. What disempowers the practitioners is the narrow view they conceive of the problematic situations. The SDTs, SMTs and principals are regarded as catalysts for change and implementation of appraisal systems. In reality most of them are constrained by the lack of skills for reflection in the execution of their duties. The rigid approach in the training of educators, SMTs, principals, SDTs and DSGs is stifled by the lack of skills. Consequently, the training fails to take educators, SMTs and principals beyond what is prescribed in the policy document. Comparatively, a systems thinking and SSM approach promotes opportunities for action research, inquiry and reflection.

7.2. Limitations of the study

The methodology used in this study also has its own limitations.
Some of the critics of SSM argue that it does not take into consideration the issue of coercion in the organisational setting. However, a

117

methodology that provides the instruments for attaining such objectives has not been developed. Midgley argues that coercion can not be addressed through the use of conventional systems methodology, but can only be dealt with by methods of campaigning and direct political action (1997:38).

The SSM is used to solve some problems of the system but it does not suggest how to build a whole system. Neither does it suggest how to tell the participants what to do, rather they engage amongst each other in clarifying issues. In some cases management may not be impressed by open-ended nature of the SSM. The seven step and stages of the SSM is time consuming. It tends to be limited in designing a new system.

From the above discussion it is clear that, although soft systems methodology was used during the process, the shortcomings must be recognised in terms of its application during this particular study. The Checkland seven stage model could not be slavishly followed to the letter, due to the time constraints and the level of its complexity when considered against the participants in the study.

The findings may reflect a personal approach and selective reflection on the highlights of the process. The implications for this study are that until an independent perspective is presented, the generalisations cannot be made. The approach used in this study can provide valuable information for further study on IQMS.

7.3 Implications arising from the study

This study has shown that systems thinking has vast potential for the professional development of the body of knowledge for purposes of research. This knowledge can be tapped by means of action research, which is reflective and enquiry-oriented. There are however, implications for all the major role players involved in school appraisal. Continued action research, systems thinking and SSM approaches to the issues dealing with the overall aspects of IQMS need more elaboration in other studies.

This implies that there is a great need for further research on the professional development of the departmental officials, SMTs and principals in systems thinking, SSM, reflective practice and action research. The department of education can facilitate this by incorporating it in programmes of the Education Management and Governance Development unit (EMGD) and the Teacher Development sub-directorate. The potential amongst the SMTs, principals and district officials for collective work does exist within the parameters of the reflective action research. The possibilities for these sub-directorates formalizing collective and integrated strategies exist through dialogue and communication. The above postulated approaches offer the decision-makers and policy implementers a basis for appraisal of their practices and a way of improving their effectiveness in dealing with any professional shortcomings by way of systematic reflection.

118

Within this paradigm educators, SMTs and principals can be empowered to work towards the realisation of the skills implicit the norms and standards. The implication for appraisal is the innovation of new strategies in dealing with the systemic issues.

7.4 Recommendations

Although no single method of research is equally applicable to all problematic issues, systems thinking and SSM offers the tools for approaching problematic issues that replicate our schooling system. The department of education already has a sound policy framework upon which school reform is based-what is needed is proper training of educators, SMTs, principals and district officials with the relevant skills for dealing with messy issues. There is a high risk of falling into complacency if there is people can rest on their laurels and consider that IQMS has been correctly implemented.

The challenges facing the SMTs, principals, SDTs and DSGs are so immense and they vary in degree in terms of the roles of each player. Dialogue needs to be set in process in addressing the shortcomings faced by the above actors in IQMS. The viable way of improving dialogue is to train educators in systems tools, action research skills and reflection on practice. School-based experiences are vitally important for all the SMTs, SDTs, DSGs and principals in dealing with IQMS challenges. An all-inclusive strategy of professional development is recommended within this systems thinking paradigm. The systems approach is not a quick fix- it gives the practitioners a particular perspective on reality. It is not enough for the role players in IQMS to understand the policy per se. The knowledge that they have acquired should be reflected in their performance in broader school reform.

The inherent danger assuming that IQMS implementation is complete if all educators have been appraised and their scores submitted for payment has been exposed. By means of the discussions facilitated with the systems tools, systemic issues were brought to the attention of the SMTs and principals by means of dialogue. Therefore, a systems approach is needed in order to surface the systemic issues and identify the emerging patterns from the messy situation. Educators, SMTs and principals need to be provided with opportunities to practice systems thinking and SSM. The approach needs to incorporate reflection on a variety of IQMS activities in order to develop basic professional skills. These activities and experiences can provide educators, SMTs and principals with reconstruction of the accounts of the key aspects their work. The DSGs and SDTs need to be trained in recording their experiences in diaries and journals. It is only then that they can be in a position to reflect by asking critical questions about events, emerging patterns and systemic issues. This kind of perspective can prepare them for any of the problematic situations, the messy issues and deviations from what is expected or planned as the course of events. Guidelines for SSM can be provided to the SMTs and principals on the use of tools for

119

thinking. During these work sessions areas of development can be collectively worked by the role players.

The exposure of SMTs, DSGs, SDTs and principals in mentoring and providing support for educators will enable these key role players to develop their professional skills. Empower the school leadership to reflect on their experiences, assess their competence and make efforts to work on the school development plan. A programme of mentoring and coaching needs to be part and parcel of school improvement. Clustering of schools needs to be promoted, where it is viable and it needs to be sustainable. School SMTs and SDTs need to be involved in the planning, decision-making and implementation of any conceived programme for school improvement. The programmes need to accommodate reflective activities. School based initiatives need to be supported by the District officials. The senior educator can play a significant role in working alongside the SMTs.

Using IQMS as a point of leverage for school improvement can create a sense of purpose and direction. Develop the SMTs members on strategic planning and project management. Educators need to be immersed in sessions where they are exposed to deal with messy issues. These need to emphasise critical analysis, reflection and enquiry. Expose SMTs and educators to be able to engage in action research. I encourage close interaction between district officials across their sub-directorates. During such interactions they will share ideas and knowledge about school issues and challenge implicit assumptions and beliefs by critical analysis.

I recommend that the district office closely cooperate with schools in IQMS focused District Improvement Plans. The District Improvement Plans should be based on collaborated efforts by the SMTs, SDTs and SEMs. This can give SEMs an added advantage of being conceived in a different light by the unions and educators. Educators can also be better challenged for overscoring of marks for appraisal due to the ongoing collaborative relationship with SEMs. This could also create more opportunities for SEMs to visit schools with an objectives-based programme. SEMs will be received more freely in the schools due to the nature of their approach to their work with schools. The SEMs should come as learners when visiting schools. It is recommended that consistent and ongoing training for SEMs is a requisite, in order to empower them as catalysts for facilitating transformation.

The reflective approach suggests a rethinking of the role of the supervising teachers and seniors during the process of appraisal. Unlike the restricted roles that are implicit in the policy document, this approach promises to broaden the duties of DSGs, SDTs and seniors or supervisors. Their responsibilities as reflective practitioners include the task of preparing the educators to deal with messy and complex situations. Educators need to be introduced to a systems approach and the use of systems tools. Such an approach demands professional development of the educators, senior/ supervisors and SMTs. It means

120

that educators must engage in and deliberate with their problematic situations. These exercises will engage them in constant evaluation of their practice and the testing of their assumptions that underpin their views on the practice. The assumptions and beliefs held by educators and district officials need to be challenged by engaging in critical analysis and inquiry on their professional activities.

This model calls upon the educators in the schools to subject their activities to scrutiny and be prepared to be observed and be prepared to be familiar with observation techniques. The members of DSGs need to be prepared to work together and open up their classes for regular observation. Action research needs to be an academic exercise that all educators can conduct on their daily activities, through informed observation and planned objectives. All the educators need to be prepared in their mindset for observation, and be familiarized with observation techniques. The appraisees need to plan and begin to work together with their supervisees and peers on areas identified for development. Supervising educators and SEMs need to prepare the appraisees to respond to observations professionally but critically and deal with any ethical issues which arise from this. They should clearly outline their expectations and assist the appraisees in setting objectives for their own learning and development.

The development of mentorship will increase the credibility of appraisal in the eyes of the department of education. Every school-based development needs to be encouraged as it increases the capacity of the school to face developmental issues. Planned mentorship programmes need to be underpinned by principles of development, integration, teamwork and ownership. The district officials need to be available to provide leadership, support and monitoring and evaluation of the IQMS programmes. The school leaders and district officials need to create an enabling environment for teachers to engage in professional dialogue on IQMS related issues. I encourage district officials to work collegially and get out of the silo syndrome. With a renewed commitment and unqualified support to school-based programmes, district officials can provide leadership, support, mentorship, monitoring and evaluation on whole school development. I propose the need to create a greater sense of accountability, equality of responsibility and professionalism across the levels of the department.

7.5 Issues for further research

There is a great need for the evaluation of the implementation of decisions that were taken to the practice. The evaluation of the implementation of IQMS will give a better idea regarding the value of the systems approach used. The exercises that were used for analysis also need to be evaluated in terms of their strengths in facilitating the clarification of the problem situation. The participants during the process were engaging with the issues implicit in the system. An action research approach to schools as organisations provides the ideal opportunities for experimentation in the sense that opportunities to

121

explore complex theoretical frameworks are possible which cannot be separated in the controlled evaluation of individual theories. The systemic relationships within schools can be researched from such a paradigm that recognises the interlocking nature of systems. The current framework is one that upholds a systemic framework incorporating several related but different theoretical assumptions.

7.6 Conclusion

Systems thinking became a turning point in the way of perceiving reality. This insight has been shared in the work context. The SMTs and principals were empowered with tools for engaging with complex issues of DAS and IQMS.

In conclusion reflection in practice holds the key to reconstructing knowledge and reliving our experiences. Every educator can learn the administration of reflective journals and portfolios. Some of the shortcomings and skills gaps prevalent in schools can be attended by the superintendents of education management, given they are exposed to training. The facilitation skills need to be included as one of the criteria for appointment of key players such as SEMs and principals. Facilitation skills on their own may not achieve much, if the person concerned does not work on his/ her personal vision. Transformation rests at the threshold of the principal and the SEM. They are the entry points into the school development and reform. An attitude of being open to learning can go a long way. Conversely, a negative attitude holds the power to close any form of learning. Therefore, an open approach to the transformation agenda can easily locate the changes that are required in the school practice.

REFERENCES

Ackoff, R.L. (1999): *Ackoff's Best*. Wiley, New York.

Apple, M. (1975): *'Scientific Interests and the Nature of Educational institutions'*. In Pinar, W. (Ed.) Curriculum Theorising. Berkeley, California.

Argyris, C. and Schön, D.A.(1974): *Theory in practice : increasing professional effectiveness*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Armson, R. Chapman J., and Hamwee, J., Martin, J. and R. Paton (1999): *Systems Thinking and Practice: A Primer*. Open University, Milton Keynes.

Asgedon, B.K. (2003): *The Use of Soft Systems Thinking as a Process of Inquiry to Identify A Relevant System to Facilitate the Change Process of Tourism Education and Man Power Education in Eritrea*. Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Durban-Westville.

Balfour, R. and Buthelezi, T., and C. Mitchel (eds)(2004): *Teacher Development at the Centre of Change*. Intrepid Printers, Pietermaritzburg.

Bollington, R. D., Hopkins and West, M. (1990): An Introduction to Teacher Appraisal. Cassell, London.

Busher, H. and Saran, R. (eds) (1995): *Managing Teachers as Professionals in Schools*. Kogan Page, London.

Calderhead, J. and Gates, P. (eds) (1993): *Conceptualizing Reflection in Teacher Development*. The Falmer Press, London.

Capra, F. (1996): *The Web of Life*. Harper Collins, London.

Carl, A. (2005): *The 'Voice of the teacher' in Curriculum Development: A voice crying in the wilderness?* South African Journal of Education. 25(4) November.

Checkland, P. (1999): *Soft Systems Methodology: a 30-year retrospective*. Wiley, Chichester.

Checkland, P and Scholes, J (1999): *Soft Systems Methodology in Action*. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester.

Checkland, P. (1999): *Systems Thinking, Systems Practice*. Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

Checkland, P. and Howell, S. (1998): *Information, Systems, and Information Systems*. Wiley, Chichester.

Churchman, C.W. (1979): *The Systems Approach and Its Enemies.* Basic Books, New York.

Committee of Teacher Education Policy 1998. *Norms and Standards for Educators.* Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Educators. Department of Education, Pretoria.

Couprie, D., Goodhead, A., Li, B., Zhu, D., *Soft Systems Methodology.* university of Calgary, www. Calgary.ca Visited 3 July 06.

Day, C. (1999): *Developing Teachers: The Challenges of Lifelong Learning.* Falmer Press, London.

Dahlstrom, L. (1999) *Critical Practitioner Inquiry and Teacher Education in Namibia: The First Attempts to Build a Critical Knowledge Base for Education.* Educational Action Research.
18 (1): 81-97.

Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS): The Process *Top Ten Things Every Teacher/Specialist Needs to Know about Their Evaluation.* In www.deltafoundation.org.za/conference/registration htm Visited 4 April 06.

Dick, B.,(2002): *Action Research and Evaluation on Line: Session 13;Soft Systems Methodology* :In *http.://www.ne.au./action_research/ arp/erack.html.* Visited 3 July 06.

Development Assistance Committee, (2002): In *www. oecd. org /dac /evaluation.* Visited 22 November 2005.

Evans, A. and Tomlinson, J. (ed) (1989): *Teacher Appraisal: A Narrative Approach.* Jessica Kingsley, London.

Fleisch, B. (2002): *Managing Educational Change: The State and School Reform in South Africa.* Wits University, Johannesburg.

Flesch, G. (2005): *Mentoring the non-Teacher: a Preliminary Study.* Journal of Education for Teaching: international research and pedagogy. 31(2) May.

Flood, R.L. (1999): *Rethinking the Fifth Discipline: Learning within the Unknowable.* Routledge, London.

Flood, R.L. (1999): *Rethinking the Fifth Discipline.* Routledge, London.

Fosnot, C.T. (1989): *Enquiring Teachers, Enquiring Learners: a Constructivist Approach for Teaching.* Teachers College, New York.

Fullan, M.G. (1996): *Turning Systemic Thinking on Its Head, (in Annual Editions Education 97/98.* Dushkin/ McGraw-Hill, Connecticut.

Fullan, M. and Hargreaves, A. (ed) (1992): *Teacher Development and Educational Change*. The Falmer Press, London.

Gilmour, J.D. (1997): *School Performance Indicators in Developing Countries. In National Workshop on the issue of Indicators to Monitor and Evaluate School Performance*.

Goldstein, H. (2000): *Performance Related Pay-assumptions and problems*. In file://E:\Perfomance%20related20pay.htm Visited 4 April 06.

Govender, P. Newspaper article entitled, *"Teachers inflate colleague's ratings to ensure pay increase"*. Sunday Times 2 April 2006: 6.

Graves, N. (1990): *Initial Teacher Education Policies and Progress*. Kogan Page, London.

Grobler, B. (2002): *Management of the School in Context*. Heinemann, Sandtown.

Heyns, M. (2000): *Quality Education: Revival of Staff Induction in Schools*. South African Journal of Education. 20 (1):60-168.

Holye, E. and Megarry, J. (eds) (1980): *Professional Development of Teachers*. Kogan Page, London.

http://www.infed.org.thinkers/et. scho. html Visited 22 November 05.

Jackson, M.C. (2000): *Systems Approaches to Management*. Kluwer Academic, New York.

Jackson, M.C. (1991): *Systems Methodology for the Management Science*. Plenum Press, New York.

James. C. an D. Colebourne (2004): *Managing the Performance of Staff in LEAs in Wales :Practice, Problems and Possibilities*.32 (1):45-65.

Jantjies, E.E.M. (1996): *Performance based Teacher Appraisal: from Judgment to Development*. South African Journal of Education, 1 (1):50-57.

Johnson, L.K. Newspaper article entitled "You'v e got to be prepared for greatness", Sunday Times 26 March 2006:4.

Jones, K. J., Clarck. G. Figg, S., Howarth and Reid, K. (1989): *Staff Development in Primary Schools*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Kemmis, S. (1986): *'Critical Reflection'*. Unpublished manuscript. Deakin University, Australia. .

Kerfoot, C. and Winberg, C. (1997): *Learning about Action Research: traditional, collaborative.* Uswe, Cape Town.

Kiker, M. K. (1999): *The Integration of Adult Education and Training for Small-Medium-Micro Enterprises Development: A Systems Approach.* Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Durban.

Luckett, S (2004): (in Notes for Soft Systems Methodology. University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban-Westville.

Luckett, S., Ngubane, S. and Memela, B. (2001): *Designing a Management System for a Rural Community Development Organisation Using a Systemic Action Research Process.* (in Notes on Systems Methodology, University of Kwazulu-Natal).

Main, D.J. (2002): *An inquiry into the Transdisciplinary Nature of Systems Philosophy and Practice.* Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Durban.

Marchington, L., J. Earnshaw, D. Torrington, and E. Ritchie (2004): *The Local Education Authority's Role in Operating Teacher Capability Procedures: Working Towards Best Practice.* 32 (1): 25-44.
McCutheon, G. and B. Jung, (1990): *'Alternative Perspectives on Action Research' in Theory and Practice.* 29(3) in Kerfoot, C. and Winberg, C. (1997): *Learning about Action Research: traditional, collaborative.* Uswe, Cape Town.

McKernan, J. (1988): *The Countenance of Curriculum Action Research: traditional, collaborative, and emancipatory-critical conceptions'.* In Kerfoot, C. and C. Winberg, (1997): Learning about Action Research. Uswe, Cape Town.

Midgley, G. (1996): *What is this thing called Critical Systems Thinking?* in Flood, R. and Romm, NRA,(eds.) Critical Systems Thinking: current systems heuristics and beyond. Systems. Practice. 10, 37-57.

Mkhwanazi, V. and Baijinath, N. (2003): *Equity Development Programmes for Academic Staff at South African Higher Education Institutions: Progress and Promise.* South African Journal of Higher Education. 17(3): 106-113.

Moloi, KC., Grobler, B.R., and S.J. Grovett, (1998): *Educator Perceptions of the School as a Learning Organisation in the Van der byl park - North District, South Africa.*

Monyatsi, P., Steyn, T. and G. Kamper, (2006): *Teacher Appraisals in Botswana Secondary Schools.* South African Journal of Education. 26 (2) May.

Moonsamy, G. (2002): *A Systems Approach and Application of Multimethodology to Quality Management.* Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Durban.

Morris, J. and C. Farrel (2004): *Resigned Compliance: Teacher Attitudes Towards Performance-Related Pay in Schools.* Educational Management Administration & Leadership. 32(1):81-88.

Ndhlovu, T.(2000): *Globalisation and Transformation: An Investigation of Whole School Development.* Journal of Education, 25-26.

Norms and Standards for Educators. Government Gazette No.20844, 415(4) February, Government Printers, Pretoria.

Patching, D. (1990): *Practical Soft Systems Analysis FT Prentice Hall.*

Ponte, P. (2002): *How to Become Action Researchers and How Teacher Educators Become their Facilitators.* Educational Action Research, 10: 399-422.

Poster, C. and D. Poster (1991): *Teacher Appraisal: A Guide to Training.* Routledge; London.

Quinlan, O. and S. Davidoff (1997): *Valuing Teachers through Appraisal.* Via Africa, Pretoria.

Rogers, J. (2000): *Adults Learning.* (4th ed.) Open University Press, Buckingham.

Resolution 4 of 1998: Developmental Appraisal System.

Resolution 8 of 2003: Integrated Quality Management System.

Sarason, S.B.(1971): *The Culture of the school and the problems of change.* Allyn and Bacon, London.

Senge, P. (1990): *The Fifth Discipline.* Doubleday, New York.

Senge, P, Roberts, C., Ross, R.B., Smith, B.J. and Kleiner, A. (1994): *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook. Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organisation.* Nicholas Brealey, London.

Senge, P., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., Kleiner, A. (2000): *A Fifth Discipline Resource Schools That Learn. A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education.* Nicholas Brealey, London.

Schon, D.A. (1987): *Educating the Reflective Practitioner.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Sigma Resource Group, Inc. (1998): *Strategic Planning and the Learning Organisation: Revitalizing your Planning Process.* Lagrange, Illinois.

Singh, S. (2002): *A Systems Approach to Strategic Processes.* Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Durban.

Soft Systems Workshop 2. In *http://users.actric.co.nz.bobwillSmwk.doc* Visited 3 July 06.

Steyn, G.M. and E.J. van Niekerk (2002): *Human Resource Management in Education.* Unisa; Pretoria.

Tabachnich, R.B. and Zeichner, K. (1991): *Issues and Practices in Inquiry-oriented Teacher Education.*

Thomen, C. (2005): *Education Practitioners' Understanding of Professional Development and Associated Competencies.* South African Journal of Higher Education. 9 (4): 813-821.

Von Solms, S. H. (1998): *A Systems Approach to TQM for Integrating Quality and Environmental Management.* Unpublished masters thesis. University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Wenas, R.W. (1998): *Performance Management: Perspectives on Employee Performance.* International Thompson, London.

Wenger, E. (1998): *Communities of Practice.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wilson, B. (2000): *Systems: Concepts, Methodologies, and Applications* (2nd) John Wiley & Sons, Chichester. In Soft Systems Methodology (Module) Notes.

Wilson, B (2001): *Soft Systems Methodology: Conceptual Model Building and its contribution.* John Wiley and Sons, *http://sern.ucalgary.ca./%7Ebowen/613/report/#stage#stage3* Visited 5 December 05.

Wijesundera, S. (2002): *School Improvement: an Action-based Case Study Conducted in a Disadvantaged School in Sri Lanka.* In Educational Action Research. 10 (3).

Xaba, M. (2006): *The Difficulties of School Development Planning.* South Journal of Education. 26(1) February.

Appendices

A: IQMS observation instrument
B: Approval Letter to conduct study

KZN EDUCATION

Private Bag X9136
PIETERMARITZBURG
3200

UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO

ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI

TEL : 033 – 341 6461
FAX : 033 – 342 4018
REF :

ENQUIRIES:J. Dlamini/B.MchunuDATE: 04- 04- 2005

PREPARATION for SUMMATIVE EVALUATION SESSION

1. Inputs are invited in order to have common expected guidelines to assist in conducting an evaluation on the ff performance standards.

P / S NO	RECORD / SOURCE DOCUMENT	YES / NO	COMMENTS
1.	CREATION OF POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT		
	Record of visit by DSG to class		
	Written lesson preparation		
	Classroom observation instrument		
	Subject: Class policy		
	Seating plan for learners		
2.	KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM AND LEARNING POROGAMMES		
	SIP; SWOT analysis;		
	Syllabi of subject(s) taught		
	Subject policy; pacesetter		
	Monthly reports		
	Functionality of work programmes / pacesetters		
	Minutes of l/area committees:HOD's		
	Timetable		
	Personal timetable		
	Subject allocation: staffing plan		
	Homework policy		
	Assessment records		
	Learner Reports		
3.	LESSON PLANNING PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION		
	record of lesson presentation & observation		
	File of written lesson plans		
	Minutes of macro; meso & micro planning		
	Records of remedial work		
	Record of learner progress		

	Record of learner involvement			
	Assessment			
4.	**LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**			
	Assessment policy document(s)			
	Record of demonstrated use of multiple assessment techniques			
	Record of intervention strategies			
	Results analysis records			
	Minutes of discussion with educators			
	Reports to parents			
	Reports / invitations to parents for purposes of reporting			
	Learner notebooks			
	Learner homework policy			
	Learner portfolio(s)			
	Learner tests			
	Periodic assessments			
	KZN circulars on assessment			
	Interviews with learners			
	Learning schedule			
	Weekly preparation			
	Schedules			
	Commutative records			
	Personal timetable			
	Circular			
	Exercises /worksheet			
5.	**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FIELD OF WORK/CAREER AND PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL BODIES**			
	Invitations to courses / workshops			
	Record/proof of Courses growth plan			
	Proof of involvement in professional bodies			
	Written articles on professional issues			
	Papers presented on professional issues			
	Certificates			
	Membership to NGO's; CBO's; professional bodies			
	Published articles: papers			
	Unpublished articles: papers			
	Written speeches			
	IQMS files :Records & Circular			
	Training Manuals			
	Staff Development Meeting/workshop			
	Class observation members/records			
	Class level of conduct *			
	Pace level of conduct *			

6.	HUMAN RELATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION TO SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT		
	Staff development plan		
	SIP;		
	SGB development plan		
	Participation in subcommittees of SGB		
	Minutes of Staff Development Committee		
	Donation forms		
	Interview forms for Parents		
7.	EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION		
	Excursion forms		
	Invitations		
	Coaching certificates		
	Trophies: shield;		
	Miniatures		
	Certificates		
	Award		
	Programmes		
8.	ADMINISTRATION OF RESOURCES AND RECORDS		
	File of Circulars /		
	Log book		
	Communication book		
	Time book		
	Staff minutes		
	Snap survey; annual survey; educator survey		
	Leave register & forms		
	Control book;		
	Stock book		
	Late coming / absenteeism control book		
	Transfers		
	ID requests		
	Bank / Maintenance		
	Admission		
	Schedules		
9.	PERSONNEL		
	Staff personnel files		
	Staffing plan		
	Vision and mission statement		
	Written / oral briefing		

	Appointment letter		
	Delegated duties		
	Motivation speeches		
	Appointment forms		
	Assumption of duty		
	Appointment forms		
10.	**DECISION MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**		
	Communication / Instruction book		
	Parents / SGB Minutes		
	Stakeholder invitations		
	Appointment letter(s)		
	Contract for tenders		
	Subcommittee minutes		
	Policies		
	Admission		
	School policy		
	Safety & security		
	Code of conduct		
	Staff meeting & minutes		
	Disciplinary procedures		
11.	**LEADERSHIP, COMMUNICATION AND SERVICING THE GOVERNMENT BODY**		
	Parents / SGB minutes / Policy		
	Invitations to parents / SGB Policy		
	Vision & mission statement		
	Goals		
	Written reports		
	Invitation to parents / SGB circulars		
	Communication letter		
	Newsletter / magazine		
	Programme		
	Donation letters		
	Admission Forms		
	IC File & minutes		
	Nutrition		
	records		
	Claim certificates		
	Evaluation/		
	Circulars		
	Members		

	Delivery notes		
	Guidelines		
	Application forms		
12.	STRATEGIC PLANNING, FINANCIAL PLANNING AND EMD		
	Cheque book		
	Annual budget		
	Audited financial statements 2003/2004		
	Income / Expenditure		
	Stock book: register		
	Handing over certificates		
	Annual budget fund norms & Stds		
	Disposal of school fund records		
	Minutes of finance committee		
	SIP: SWOT analysis:		
	Finance policy		
	Remittance register		
	Deposit book		
	Reconciled statements		
	Receipt and payment cashbook		
	Receipt book		
	Report on finances		
	Remittance register		
	Distribution		
	Payroll		
	File circulars		
	Monthly report		
	Quality / monthly		
	Norms of Stds'		
	Requisition book		
	Orders		
	Delivery notes		
	Receipts		
	Petty cash		

Name of observer Supervisor) _____ Signature_____ Date_____

(Peer)_____ Signature_____ Date_____

(Appraisee)_____ Signature_____ Date_____

INHLOKOHHOVISI · **PIETERMARITZBURG** · **HEAD OFFICE**

Enquiries:	Reference:	Date:
Imibuzo: M Francis	Inkomba: 0208/06	Usuku:
Navrae:	Verwysing:	Datum: 17/10/2006

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that BS Mchunu has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

➢ That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.

➢ **BS Mchunu** has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.

➢ No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

INHLOKOHHOVISI   **PIETERMARITZBURG**   **HEAD OFFICE**

To: **BS Mchunu**

RE: **APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Please be informed that your application to conduct research has been approved with the following terms and conditions:

That as a researcher, you must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution bearing in mind that the institution **is not obliged to participate** if the research is not a departmental project.

Research should not be conducted during official contact time, as **education programmes should not be interrupted**, except in exceptional cases with special approval of the KZNDoE.

The research is not to be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where the KZNDoE deem it necessary to undertake research at schools during that period.

Should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application for extension must be directed to the Director: EMIS.

The research will be limited to the schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.

A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis must be provided to the Reseach Directorate.

Lastly, you must sign the attached declaration that, you are aware of the procedures and will abide by the same.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Declaration and Understanding –Ref:0208/06

I the undersigned declare that I acknowledge that I have read and understood the abovementioned terms and conditions and agree to abide by them. The Research, Strategy, Policy Development and EMIS Directorate reserve the right to withdraw my approval should I be found not to abide by the terms and conditions. I undertake to bide myself to the RSPDE directorate, to submit a copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis as per terms and conditions.

Name (print): _____ BONGANI SIBUSISO MCHUNU _____

Date: ____ 20/10/06 _____ Signature of applicant: _____