

**EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHOLE-SCHOOL
EVALUATION IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE
UMLAZI DISTRICT**

By

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ABSTRACT

Policy documents such as *The National Policy on Whole-School Evaluation* (Department of Education, 2001), *A Policy Framework for Quality Assurance and Training System in South Africa* (Department of Education, 1998) and *Integration Quality Management System* (Department of Education, 2003) propose broad participation of major stakeholders, in particular educators, in the process of evaluating and monitoring school performance. This represents a major shift from the inspectorate system of the past that had limited transparency and openness between the evaluators (inspectors) and evaluatees (educators) and had little to do with assuring the quality of education provision. Nevertheless many teachers have resisted the introduction of these policies designed to improve schools and their performance. The system known as Whole-School Evaluation focuses on the whole school rather than on individual staff members of the school, with the aim to develop schools in achieving their context-related goals and intended outcomes.

Reasons for teachers' resistance to such a well intended framework of policies is not well understood. Thus, this study sought to investigate perceptions of educators about Whole-School Evaluation, which is the component of Integrated Quality Management System. To do this a case study was conducted at one KwaZulu-Natal Primary School in the Phumelela Circuit of Umlazi District. The focus of the study is on educators' experiences of Whole-School Evaluation, their understanding of their roles in the implementation process as well as their perceptions about the intention of Whole-School Evaluation, an interpretive approach was appropriate. The study uses two methods, interviews and questionnaires, for generating data.

The major finding of this study is that, contrary to their initial resistance, educators are more positive about the Whole-School Evaluation system than the previous inspection system, because they perceive it to be developmental for themselves and their schools.

DECLARATION

I declare that this minor dissertation is my own work. The material included in this study has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university and all sources consulted and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of references.

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This minor dissertation is submitted with /without my approval.

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MRS. ZN MALIMELA (992278259)
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ETHICAL CLEARANCE: "EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS TO WHOLE – SCHOOL EVALUATION (WSE)"


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cc. Faculty Officer
cc. Supervisor (Dr. J Karlsson)

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

Whole-school Evaluation (WSE) is a debated issue in the staff development and improvement of schooling in South Africa. In 2001 the Ministry of Education introduced a monitoring and evaluation process that is vital to the improvement of quality and standards of performance in schools (Department of Education, 2001 p. ii). According to the Former Minister, Kader Asmal (Department of Education, 2001 p.ii), WSE model is radically different from the previous school inspection system carried out in South Africa under the apartheid regime. The WSE system is developmental and focuses on the improvement of schools, as well as teaching and learning, rather than inspection, as was the case prior to 1994.

The purpose of WSE is to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a school, the support provided by the District office to schools, how the school is being managed, its infrastructure and learning resources, as well as the quality of teaching and learning at the school (Department of Education, 2003 p.4). The intention of this opening chapter is to explain the problem that gives the impetus for the study on WSE and how the study was framed conceptually.

1.2 Background of the study

For many years there was no single national system in South Africa for evaluating the performance of schools. Inspection was the system used to evaluate educators'

performance. The previous inspection system was bureaucratic and, in the case of black teachers, applied in an authoritarian way (Chetty, Chisholm & Gardiner, 1993 p.3). Since the inspection system was judgmental, there was widespread rejection of it as a form of evaluation and it was regarded as a negative influence on the quality of education and needed to be replaced (African National Congress, 1994 p.7). In 1999 the Developmental Appraisal System was introduced to replace the inspection system (Department of Education, 1999 p.1). However, three years later, in November 2002, at the National Education Convention, all stakeholders debated critical issues relating to public education and evaluation, in an attempt to provide better access to education and to improve service delivery (Department of Education, 2003 p.3). As a result the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was accepted as an umbrella system that integrated the various assessment systems, including Whole-School Development and the Developmental Appraisal System.

According to the *Education Labour Relations Council, Agreement no. 8* (Department of Education, 2003 p.3), IQMS ensures a clearly defined process of evaluation and performance assessment in public schools. However, educators in all post levels are faced with many challenges in relation to the implementation of IQMS. One of these challenges is the design of local and institutional learning programmes for the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The NCS aims to develop the full potential of each learner as a citizen of a democratic South Africa. Secondly, it aims at promoting commitment and competence among educators, who will be responsible for the development of their own learning programme (Department of Education, 2002 pp. 1-2). To achieve these goals, the Ministry of Education implemented IQMS in 2003 to

monitor and enhance the performance of schools (Department of Education, 2003 p.6). IQMS consists of three programmes:

- Developmental Appraisal (DA). The purpose of DA is to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner with a view to determining areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up the programme for individual development.
- Performance Measurement (PM). The purpose of PM is to evaluate individual teachers for salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives.
- Whole-school Evaluation (WSE). The purpose of WSE is to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a school, including the support provided by the District, school management, infrastructure and learning resources, as well as the quality of teaching and learning (Department of Education, 2003 p.4).

The present study focuses only on WSE. WSE is the basic strategy that is used in all schools to ensure quality in education and is a way of judging the performance of individuals employed professionally in the schooling system (Department of Education (2002 p.4). The WSE consists of a school self-evaluation, assessment of ongoing district-based support, monitoring and development of schools and, external evaluations conducted by supervisory units from the provincial education department.

Evaluation, in general, is a systematic way of assessing a programme, object or activity. There are two types of evaluation: formative and summative (Freeman & Lewis, 1998). Although a fourth generation evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1990) is now also recognized, the function of formative evaluation is to improve and develop an ongoing activity, programme and/or performance. Summative evaluation aims to

inform decision-making and improve accountability and, by coming at the end of an activity, is more comprehensive but less developmental. I expand on the distinctions of all these types in Chapter Two.

WSE follows the formative approach, which is meant to help educators improve their performance on a formal, routine basis (Bell, 1988 p.85). WSE is radically different from the previous inspection system. It is intended to be 'less punitive and more supportive and developmental, with feedback mechanisms that enable schools and their support structures to agree on improvement targets and developmental plans' (Department of Education, 2003 p.3). Change, whether desired or not, represents a serious, personal and collective experience, characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty. If change is successful it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment and professional growth (Fullan, 1991 p.32).

In 2005 when I began this study, educators were expressing negative attitudes towards evaluation in general. This is mainly because they have entrenched negative attitudes dating back to the time of inspection and Development Appraisal System. Therefore, I wanted to study their perceptions in order to understand this negativity towards evaluation. Since WSE represents significant policy changes from an autocratic evaluation system, educators may have different attitudes towards it. This is because generally, change is threatening, painful and difficult to those engaging in it (Fullan, 1991 p.32). Since WSE was implemented in 2001, research concerning primary school educator responses to this change had not been undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal. This is thus the focus of the present study. I now describe the historical context of school inspection and evaluation in South Africa.

1.3 The historical context

Before 1994 there was no single national system for evaluating the performance of schools and no comprehensive data on the quality of teaching and learning (Department of Education, 2001 p.1). An inspection system, only, was operational.

There was inspection of teachers' or schools' performance, but no aims were defined for this form of evaluation. In evaluation, inspections are often conducted within a short time frame and focus on policy issues, fiscal management, compliance with sanctions, and abuse and fraud (Mathison, 2005 p.201).

According to Chetty *et al.* (1993 pp.2-3), the system was judgmental and politically biased, arbitrary and open to abuse and corruption. Although there was widespread rejection of the inspection system as a form of evaluation, schools needed an effective means by which performance could be monitored and assessed, through some kind of appraisal (Chetty *et al.* 1993 p.1) point out that “the majority of teachers wanted appraisal to be a part of their professional development and not a mechanism for enforcing control”. For this reason there was an urgent need to shift from the summative and authoritarian practices (African National Congress, 1994 p.7).

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997 p. 24) state that the system of inspection was perceived as a negative form of social control. Many schools refused to allow education department officials access to their classrooms. While there was resistance, there was no adequate evaluation to replace inspection. Thus, in 1999 the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) was introduced by the Department of Education to replace

the apartheid-era inspection system (Department of Education, 1999b p.1). Its basic principles were life-long learning and development in education and the aim was to facilitate the personal and professional development of educators in order to improve quality of the teaching practice and of education management.

Thurlow and Ramnarian (2001 pp.9-13) point out that the process by which DAS was developed, and the principle which underpins it, were not clearly explained to educators. They explain that there was a lack of financial and physical resources, as well as human resources to implement it. Other reasons for the failure of the previous evaluation systems were that educators asked for evaluative procedures that would enable self-reflection and improve their teaching. They complained that self-developments, collaborative discourse and self-reflection were restricted by tendencies from the previous inspection system. This led to implementation difficulties for the Department of Education.

The failure of DAS led to the introduction of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), in 2001. This embodied a Whole-School Evaluation System (WSE), designed by the Department of Education in accordance with the national model that was accepted by some educators. The main aim of WSE is to improve the overall quality of education in public schools by being supportive and developmental, rather than punitive and judgmental (Department of Education, 2001c p. 1). The main objective is to facilitate the improvement of school performance through approaches characterized by partnership, collaboration, mentoring and guidance. WSE has built-in mechanisms for reporting, finding and providing feedback to schools by accredited supervisors trained by the government.

In 2002 the former Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, stated that the WSE policy introduces an effective monitoring and evaluation process that is vital to the improvement of quality and standards of performance in schools (Department of Education, 2002). This initiative led to the establishment of the Chief Directorate for Quality Assurance in the national Department of Education. The main function of quality assurance is to develop and execute policy on all aspects of quality assurance. The accepted definition of quality assurance within this directorate includes reference to the determination by an expert body of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements, accompanied by a process of inspection or evaluation that examines the extent to which practice in schools meets these standards.

1.4 Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate educators' perceptions and their understanding of the WSE. In the process of researching this topic, two factors will be taken into account: the new roles of educators in the policy and implementation of WSE and the educators' experiences of WSE. These factors are affecting educators' lives, irrespective of their qualifications, especially if those educators are the ones who will implement this particular change. This study is therefore driven by three research questions:

- What do educators perceive is the intention of WSE?
- What are educators' experiences of WSE?
- How do educators understand their roles in the implementation of WSE?

To answer these questions I will review previous similar investigations by other scholars and engage in field data collection.

The significance of this study is that my findings will fill the gap in our understanding of how educators perceive WSE policy and the roles they should play in the implementation and their experiences of it. Understanding this is important in the field of curriculum research in South Africa, because WSE as a policy affects the implementation process of other policies such as the National Curriculum Statement, since WSE is conducted together with these policies.

1.5 Key concepts used in this thesis

Some key concepts used in this study are clarified here, in order to unambiguously indicate their meaning in the study and how I have used them.

Educator: Whenever I refer to the term ‘educator’ in this thesis, I mean a person who educates other persons or who provides professional services at any public school, further education and training institution or departmental office (Department of Education, 2003 p. 45). This concept is commonly understood as a teacher, referring to somebody who works with learners in a classroom and facilitates their learning. In broad terms, the concept ‘educator’ refers to anybody who is a source of knowledge and who guides young people to adulthood. According to Deacon and Parker (1997 p.151), the concept “educator” refers to someone who performs classroom and managerial duties in the education place and is constantly engaged in assessing both his/her learners and his/her own performances and also acts as a facilitator of the learning process. For the purpose of this research I include under the term ‘educator’ the principal, the senior management team and post level one educators (i.e. those in management) teaching Grade R (school readiness/ reception), up to Grade Four

learners. This is because my research focuses on educators in the primary school, especially in the foundation and intermediate phases.

Evaluation: Primarily, ‘evaluation’ is a process whereby the evaluatee reflects on his or her performance and then identifies areas for improvement. Evaluation can be used for any performance in schools, workshops and industries for remedial and feedback purposes. In the education sector the concept has been used for promotion purposes, especially of those teachers on probation. According to Dimmock (2000 p.234), ‘evaluation is the making of judgments about the worth or value of a phenomenon in terms of agreed criteria, such as goals’. In this study evaluation refers to a process whereby the evaluatee and evaluator look at the strengths and weaknesses of the educators’ and the schools’ performance, in order to identify some areas in need of improvement.

School self-evaluation: School self-evaluation means the process through which a school reflects on itself and determines, at a given point, to what extent it is succeeding in attaining its stated aims and objectives, taking into account the priorities set and the full range of available resources (Department of Education, 2001 p.17). It refers to a comprehensive, systematic and regular review of an institution’s activities and results, referenced against a model of performance excellence. This process allows the school to clearly identify its strengths and weak areas in which improvement can be made. Finally, a plan for improvement actions, are then monitored for progress. In this study I will use this concept in relation to the strengths and weaknesses identified by members of the school and improvements that they assert are needed.

Quality: Generally, quality is a term that infers the long-lasting value of something, usually associated with cost. The general understanding of the concept of quality is that the higher the cost, the better the quality and *vice versa*. However, this is not always the case. In education, schools that are expensive in terms of school fees are associated with notions of quality education. However, according to Hawes and Stephen (1990 p.11), quality implies efficiency in meeting goals, relevance to human and environmental needs and conditions in relation to the pursuit of excellence. In this study, the concept ‘quality’ aims to show the extent to which the school and individual members employed at the school accomplish their goals through their performance.

Perception: The term “perception” means different things to different people and is used loosely. According to the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (Kavanagh & Mantzel, 2002 p.864), “perception” means ‘the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses, or the state of being or process of becoming aware of something in such a way of regarding, understanding, interpreting something intuitive, and insight.’ This concept also means a belief about, or judgment or impression on, or impression of, objective reality. For the purpose of this study, I use this term to refer to educators views of WSE system as an evaluation structure. I will use this concept in my examination of how educators interpret and understand their roles in the implementation process of WSE as well as the intention of WSE.

1.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the fact that educators are negative about evaluation in general, not initially the WSE, but evaluation in general, since they have experience

of inspection and DAS. I presented the purpose of the study and lastly the historical context. The main terms used in this study, i.e. educator, evaluation, perception, quality and school self-evaluation, were explained briefly

Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework of the study and a survey of the literature in which scholars and other researchers theorise and research school evaluation. I reflect on the relationship between WSE and Fourth Generation evaluation as a responsive approach. I also reflect on change processes in the United Kingdom (UK) e.g. self-evaluation, to draw a lesson on how it was conducted and linked to inspection. In Chapter Three I present the methodology that I used for generating data and I describe the population, the selection of informants, how I structured the two data-gathering instruments of questionnaires and interviews, as well as my analytical approach and ethical considerations. In Chapter Four I summarize and interpret the data and discuss my research findings. In Chapter Five I present my conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter One I identified some challenges facing the education system, for teachers in particular and the dramatic changes in the evaluation systems in South Africa that demand significant changes in the implementation of educational policies. In this chapter, I discuss the key concepts and review the literature in order to answer my three research questions. My review of the literature will show which other scholars researched this topic and how they did this, and whether there are any gaps that might require me to research the topic empirically.

2.2 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study revolves around evaluation. In this section I cover models of evaluation, definitions of evaluation, the purposes that evaluation serves, justifications for evaluating educators, and evaluation processes of self-evaluation, pre-evaluation, on-site evaluation and post-evaluation.

There are various evaluation models. All are meant to evaluate achievements, weaknesses and strengths. Often, evaluation is carried out at the end of a course, with the aim of arriving at an informed decision about the effectiveness of the course, or some aspect of it, and then using that finding to make suggestions for improving the course (Petty 1995 p.361).

Different scholars have defined evaluation in many ways. For example, West-Burnham (1994 p. 158) states that it is an internal or external formative process designed to provide feedback on the total impact on the value of a project or activity.

The above definition relates to WSE where there are internal processes that are conducted within a school by educators themselves, where they develop each other in terms of planning, preparing & presenting a lesson. In a three-year cycle there are external processes that are conducted by government officials.

Mathison (2005 p.139) defines evaluation as:

an applied inquiry process for collecting and synthesizing evidence that culminates in conclusions about the state of affairs, value, merit, worth, significance or quality of a program, product, person, policy or plan.

In WSE processes, when evaluating the school, all findings and work done by educators or others within the school serve as evidence for making judgments about the value or quality of the school. Decisions are made thereafter on ways to develop that particular school or its individual members, according to their prioritized needs.

Dimmock (2000 p.234) defines evaluation as the making of judgments about the work or value of a phenomenon, in terms of agreed criteria such as goals. Among the units that may be evaluated in the education sector are schools, departments and programmes. In schools the focus is at three levels, namely the individual, the group and the whole school. In WSE there should be consensus between the evaluators and evaluatees about the steps to be followed in order to develop the school.

According to Dimmock (2000 p.234), there are four purposes for evaluation:

- Programme justification and improvement
- Personnel performance appraisal
- School and classroom performance appraisal
- School marketing and public relations.

If the intention is to improve the whole school, all the above purposes of evaluation are meant to be included. The personnel, school and learners' performances should not be separated because poor or good performance of learners is determined by how the personnel perform. Through these performances the school is being marketed to local communities, who will send the next generation of learners for enrolment. In all evaluations, formative and summative processes cannot be isolated, although they may pose threats to educators. For example, those with poor performance in their classroom may feel threatened by an evaluation and may not accept the form of evaluation because it may influence decision-making. They may be reluctant to have their weaknesses exposed. This can affect their trust of and cordial relationships with those who are identified as experts.

Peterson and Peterson (2006 p.8) give some compelling reasons to evaluate teachers.

These are to:

- Reassure the vast majority of teachers that they are doing needed and good work.
- Inform parents, the public and legislators of teacher performance and make sure that teachers make a real difference in society.
- Create a basis for rewarding the extra duty and leadership appointment by merit.
- Identify exemplary practices for emulation by other teachers.
- Provide exemplars for professional developers and pre-service educators.

- Provide data for educational researchers.
- Prevent bad evaluation practices.
- Improve the performance of some individual teachers.
- Inform staffing decisions, e.g. retention, assignments, advancement and dismissal.

In the education sector each assessment must serve a specific purpose. There are a number of programmes that have been implemented in South Africa e.g. outcomes-based education, and the national curriculum statement that indicates progress in the education system. These programmes need to be assessed and improved. Personnel performance appraisal is one of the strategies that is used to assess individual member's performance, with the aim of developing professionally.

According to Mathison (2005 p.201), school or institutional self-evaluations test any claims of democratic procedures, trust, confidentiality and authenticity. Trust and confidentiality are crucial in a working atmosphere. Educators need an assurance that the evaluation purpose is to develop them in their performance and not to expose their weaknesses. This means that the schools evaluate themselves in a systematic way. For example, there are processes to follow at all school levels. Even though the processes for evaluating individual teachers are identical with the processes for WSE, they both focus on growth and development of the individual teacher. WSE examines what the school has in order to exist and its strengths and what it has done with those resources. It then looks at how that performance can be improved. WSE uses the prevalent and current conditions for development. The partnership between the appraiser and appraisee is driven by the appraisee's need. This means that the effectiveness of WSE will be influenced by the educator's willingness to expose the

weaknesses of their performance. This is shown by the attention paid to classroom observations (Middlewood, 1997 p.173). The process of evaluation involves a pre-observation conference, classroom observational analysis and a post-observation conference (Dimmock, 2000 p.245).

Although South Africa has followed the principle of Integrated Quality Management System, all the above aspects suit South African context. I conclude that they are all undertaken for the same purposes, which are improvement of teaching and learning.

Most literature on WSE reflects the experiences of countries that have one integrated education system and where there are sufficient resources. The education system of South Africa is still carrying a legacy of a divided past. Before 1994 there were different education systems founded along racial lines. After 1994 different education systems were integrated into a single department of education. However, the new system is still defined by an unequal distribution of resources. This means that implementing WSE is bound to be problematic in such conditions.

The process of evaluation involves a pre-observation conference, classroom observational analysis and a post-observation conference (Dimmock, 2000 p.245). In South Africa the process of WSE is divided into four stages: self-evaluation, pre-evaluation, on-site evaluation and post-evaluation. Although these processes focus on different areas, I conclude that they are all undertaken for the same purpose that is improvement of teaching and learning. Although Whole-school evaluation is developmentally focused, judgments may be taken against the school and educators in a concealed way.

2.2.1 Self-evaluation

School self-evaluation is a stage where the school determines to what extent it is succeeding in attaining its stated aims and objectives, taking into account the set priorities and available resources (Department of Education, 2001b). Self-evaluation means that all stakeholders involved in the governance of the school, namely the principal, management and school governing bodies, need to identify the barriers that prevent learners from active participation in school activities. The reason is that these barriers may be hindrances to the learning and future of learners, as well as to the performance of educators. The barriers may include inaccessibility to teaching and physical learning resources, nutritional problems, infrastructure, lack of welfare support, lack of professional growth, insecurity, lack of parental involvement and negative attitudes towards development (Department of Education, 2000 p.4). Self-evaluation involves:

1. An examination of performance in key areas, namely curriculum, attainment, learning and teaching, support for pupils, ethos, resources, management and leadership, quality assurance.
2. A closer look at specific areas believed to be successful or problematic (Department of Education, 2004 p.14).

I doubt the possibility of a school evaluating or assessing itself effectively. How original and trustworthy will the self-evaluation be? In self-evaluation, objective standards need to be employed rigorously. Since WSE is conducted parallel with IQMS, self-evaluation is also practiced at the level of an individual teacher. According to Coleman (2003 p.159), self-evaluation is a vital part of a teacher's professional techniques in daily activities. In WSE the individual educator fills in the

templates for self-evaluation in order to evaluate and rate him or herself using the given criteria.

In terms of WSE the self-assessment process allows the organization to clearly identify its strengths and areas in which improvements can be made. It culminates in planned improvement actions, which are then monitored for progress. Coleman (2003 p.158) emphasizes that the ‘self-evaluation exercise undertaken by groups of teachers within a school can be a powerful force for change and professional development’. This process can be undertaken in a school where the planning for learning areas is done collaboratively.

Even though WSE focuses on the school as an institution, but it is undertaken collaboratively by all stakeholders involved in the running of the school. This stage is crucial for effective WSE in order to enhance the standard of the curriculum. WSE focuses on the development of the whole school but the aim is to improve the curriculum, which is why all individual classroom programmes are being reviewed.

The whole staff looks at the whole school so that everyone feels equally involved and committed to the review, but the focus is on the curriculum in the individual classrooms. The aim is to combine staff ownership of the programme of review and development with a commitment of the improvement of classroom practices throughout the whole school.
(Day et al., 1993 pp.117-118).

2.2.2 Pre-evaluation activities

Pre-evaluation is a stage that takes place before on-site evaluation. The Development Support Group (DSG) meets with the appraisee to clarify some issues before the observation takes place, for example to check whether or not the appraisee understands what is expected from him/her in terms of the various performance

standards. The appraisee is given an opportunity to clarify areas of concern that he/she may have. The appraisee is given an opportunity to raise issues that might hamper his/her performance. By this time the support mechanism that matches his or her individual needs is given to the appraisee to ensure enhancement of quality (Dimmock, 2000 p.234). The DSG also checks whether all necessary documents and required templates for WSE are at an accepted standard. The evaluation team agrees with the school about dates for the formal on-site evaluation. This stage promotes transparency. The scope of evaluation narrows, since the terms of reference are determined by the appraisee.

2.2.3 On-site evaluation

The on-site evaluation takes place during the external evaluation. For external evaluation, visits are carried out by accredited supervisors those are people trained and accredited to evaluate a school's performance. In South Africa they are known as the supervisory team. They are capable of evaluating nine focus areas, but for the purpose of this study only three focus areas will be dealt with. They are:

- (i) Basic functionality of the school, e.g. school policies, procedures, level of absence, and truancy and the behaviour of learners.
- (ii) Quality of teaching and learning and educator development e.g. the planning and schemes of work of educators, their knowledge of learning areas, teaching strategies used by educators and the use of resources, including books, assessment strategies and use of homework.
- (iii) Curriculum provision and resources e.g. national requirements met by the curriculum, effectiveness of the planning process and provision for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (Department of Education, 2001 p.5).

The aim of this stage in WSE is to develop a school profile on the general level of its operation, which includes evidence from the school's self-evaluation report. During this stage, the supervisory team reviews the school's documentation, focusing on the nine areas of evaluation. About fifty percent of the WSE is spent on observing lessons. However, conflict may arise here, as to whether or not supervisors are familiar with the subjects taught in the specific area, e.g. if the supervisor spends most of the time in the secondary school and lacks knowledge of the foundation phase learning areas.

2.2.4 Post-evaluation

The fourth stage of WSE shows that at the end of evaluation the strengths and weaknesses of a school are identified, so that the school can be developed in all areas being evaluated. This stage is crucial, because every stakeholder that has been involved in the evaluation needs the feedback. This affects student learning, school-wide programmes of curriculum and instruction and the well-being of teachers. Most importantly, the focus is on individual teacher performance and participation of peers.

The reporting exercise can help the improvement of the programme, especially for the formative evaluation, where the intention is to inform the decision-making about the staff and management and other changes that will take place. Secondly, 'summative reports are provided to demonstrate a program's effectiveness (its worth or merit) and as a means of accountability to funders, other primary stakeholders, the public, and others interested in the type of program evaluated' (Mathison, 2005 p.370). Since all the evidence taken from the school informs the decision-making concerning the value

and effectiveness of the school, the stakeholders involved may be less inclined to accept some of the recommendations. However, educators and all stakeholders involved in the evaluation of a school can make use of the recommendations provided by the supervisory team, so that the school will progress in terms of quality performance. In terms of the provision of the resources, however, schools are unlikely to improve within the stipulated time.

2.3 Fourth Generation Evaluation

People perceive evaluation in different ways. In addition to the three previous evaluation approaches, there is an approach known as the Fourth Generation Evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1990 pp 22-30). This is a responsive evaluation approach because it involves and seeks different stakeholders' views and considers their time and available resources.

According to Mathison (2005 p.142), evaluation theory serves to provide a way of explaining and providing direction to the practice of evaluation. Therefore, in Fourth Generation Evaluation, WSE requires evidence of what has been done. It mostly involves stakeholders who are participating in one or more component of the evaluation process and focuses on their claims, concerns and issues.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1990 p.40), there are three broad groups of stakeholders. These are agents, beneficiaries and victims. In WSE the 'agent' is the Department of Education and the 'beneficiaries' are educators. The 'victims' are the learners, because they may be affected by the use of evaluand. Since all the activities of the WSE involve all the stakeholders it is similar to Fourth Generation Evaluation.

In the next section I discuss the major role-players in the implementation of WSE.

2.4 Educators' role in the implementation of Whole-School Evaluation

By roles I mean work or duties, e.g. administration of the school as performed by the principal and management of a school. In the past, principals were doing things single-handedly. Under the WSE policy the principal can delegate certain functions, including quality management matters pertaining to the implementation of WSE, to the deputy, HOD or any appointee from the staff. However, the roles of post level one educators are not clearly stipulated, except for educators in District Support Teams.

In the policy document for WSE only the principal's roles for the implementation process are outlined clearly. It is stated that the principal is responsible for:

...Carrying out internal evaluations of the school in line with the requirement of the National Policy and Guidelines on Whole-School Evaluation...

He/ She identifies a coordinator to liaise with the evaluation team during a Whole-School Evaluation...

The principal only co-operates with the evaluation team by granting full access to school records, policies, reports and other documents, including those of the SGB, during external evaluations conducted by the supervisory units. ...

He/She collaborates with the support services and the SGB and discusses the improvement plan in response recommendations made in the evaluation report. Sending these improvement plans to the District Head for approval and working with professional support service members assigned to the school, in order to implement it...

Informing parents and other stakeholders about the intended evaluation and distributing a written summary of the main conclusions and recommendations of recent evaluation within one week of its arrival at the school... (Department of Education, 2001c p. 12).

Although the above roles are defined for principals, most of the time the principal identifies other educators or delegates some duties to selected management staff. The involvement of other staff members in the school innovations promotes openness and democracy within the working organization. For WSE all educators become the evaluators.

Mathison (2005 p.349) states that, in evaluation, an evaluator's role is to collect, produce, and disseminate information that allows democracies to act more rationally in seeking improvement or allow organizations to act more rationally in the pursuit of their own goals. Therefore, characteristics of educators as role players in the implementation of WSE should be that of being democratic and neutral. They must be

honest, careful and independent in their assertions and avoid any tendencies that can create an impression of bias in their presentation of findings. These roles apply particularly to external evaluators, but they also apply to all stakeholders within the school as internal evaluators

2.4.1 The Managing Change Role

When education is to be transformed the changes affect education as a whole. An example of change is in outcomes-based education that replaced the racially differentiated curriculum (Coetzee, 2002 p. 8). Inclusive education is also a change that upholds the right of learners with special needs to belong and learn in mainstream schools (Department of Education, 2001a). In evaluation, WSE, as the component of IQMS, is the first monitoring and evaluation policy for the whole school.

The process of change within a school requires principals to collaborate and work with all the role-players participating in the WSE. For change to be successfully implemented, all role-players must collaborate. This means that in order to manage change, educators in management need to practice collaborative skills, which include human relation and interpersonal relation skills, so that they will see themselves as role-players in the implementation of change.

According to Cumming and Worley (1993 pp.153-158), there are five activities contributing to effective change management. These activities involve:

- Motivating change
- Overcoming resistance to change
- Strategies for dealing with resistance to change
- Planning

- Providing resources for change

Since there are many changes that take place in education, the following section is about the school improvement role.

2.4.2 The School Improvement Role

The concept of ‘school improvement’ has become a dominant educational discourse.

The International School Improvement Project defines school improvement as:

a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively (van Velzen et al. 1985 p.78).

From my point of view, school improvement is the vehicle used by the Department of Education to accomplish its educational goals of quality education for all.

School improvement is a topical issue in staff room debates. This is because most schools lack resources and learners are stricken by poverty, which leads to parents being unable to provide their children with learning material such as reading books, exercise books and to support them fully in their learning. This hinders the improvement of the school because the school depends on learners’ good performance.

The role of educators is to develop a personal growth plan and school improvement plan, where they are able to prioritize their educational needs for developmental purposes. Educators also need to develop different structures within the school, and good relationships with other colleagues. By so doing, they will be playing their role in improving these aspects of human resources as part of whole-school development and WSE will then be successfully implemented.

According to Watermeyer (1997 p.9), WSE is the most appropriate means of achieving educational change, in that schools are able to empower staff through professional growth plans and school improvement plans, to move towards the desired goals of educators.

Fullan (1992 p.78) explains that school improvement can be achieved when teachers engage in frequent and continuous meetings, in which they plan, design, evaluate and prepare teaching materials. They can also observe each other teaching and provide useful evaluations of their teaching. Holt and Murphy (1993 p.176) state that professional development of teachers should be available on a continuous basis, so that teachers can improve their knowledge of schooling, the proposed reforms and their interpersonal skills. Although it is worthwhile to plan together, the issue here is continuous meetings for educators, but there is no concern for the time these proposed meetings take and whether or not educators can be available for these meetings.

For school improvement and teacher development to be successful, teachers need to become active agents in the school rather than the object of strategies (Frost *et. al*, 2000 p.11). They need to participate fully in the implementation of WSE, for the purposes of school development. Frost *et al.*, (2000) contend that higher education institutions could play a vital role in supporting school teachers by way of continuing professional development, as well as encouraging school improvement plans and projects. Initially, the school possesses inputs, i.e. educators, learners and parents and processes, i.e. how teaching and learning is conducted, how the communication between the school and the community works as well as the parental involvement in schooling and how the school seeks to achieve its goals. Outputs are what the school achieves. Therefore, by fostering the school improvement plan and projects, the

school will improve, with the active involvement of educators. The next role focuses on quality and improvement of performance.

2.4.3 The Quality and Performance Improvement Role

The educational authorities in South Africa assert that WSE is concerned with improving quality in education (Department of Education 1998). In this section I look briefly at how other researchers define education quality and the role played by educators in improving the quality of their performance. According to the *Collins Dictionary & Thesaurus* (Gilmour, 2005 p. 616), ‘quality’ means a degree or standard of excellence. In general, quality is associated with perfection. WSE aims at developing the whole school in terms of resources and its methods of teaching. The objective aim is to produce quality education. This will help educators change their attitude towards evaluation, because they will understand that the aim of this new WSE is to develop them and the school itself, not to judge them or their performance.

The concept of “quality assurance” is a popular subject for discussion and research in academic and teaching circles (see Smit, Wilkinson & Butcher 2000 p.183). Quality assurance refers to ‘monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the various levels of the education system in achieving the specific goals at each level and overall objectives of the system’ (Department of Education, 1998 p.9). This implies that educators’ performance will be evaluated and monitored at all levels, in order to achieve better outcomes in education as a whole. In education, it is difficult to measure the quality of performance, since human beings are involved. Du Toit (2001 p.25) says that there is no consensus on the instrument for measuring the quality of academic processes. Instead, the quality of academic performance can be measured

through learner achievement. Therefore the concept of improving quality should not be considered, but rather the concern should be on the improvement of performance.

According to a *Report from the Centre for Education Policy, Development, Education and Management* (Department of Education, 2000), improving the quality of education has been a key concern in post-1994 South Africa. Schools, especially black schools, have been identified as producing poor results, so they need to improve their performance.

The role-players in the case of quality and performance improvement are the evaluatee and the evaluator. The evaluatee needs to be thorough in his/her lesson planning and preparation. He/she needs to consult other colleagues where there is a need for assistance. The self-evaluation is crucial after every lesson taught. The role of the evaluator, especially those selected as DSG members, is to monitor everyday performance of the evaluatee. They need to provide support or assist where necessary in that particular area which needs to be developed, until they realize that the evaluatee has developed her performance. The quality of performance will be seen when the learners are able to apply the assessment standards in their real-life situations. The educator will see that he/she has played his/her role in improving quality and performance.

The quality management role in most cases is the responsibility of educators in management positions. According to the Policy Framework for Quality Assurance in Education and Training Systems in South Africa (Department of Education, 1998 p.9), quality management refers to the actions, processes and structures necessary to ensure that delivery of education is of the highest quality. Therefore, WSE aims at

improving these actions, processes and the structures within the school. Educators at different levels have particular roles to play in improving the above.

Educators need to collaborate in improving their performance, so that South Africa can be a competitive country. Collaboration means joint planning, decision-making and problem-solving directed towards a common goal. In WSE all the above activities are being formalised, since they serve as evidence for evaluating educators or school performance.

2.5 Conclusion

WSE has been seen as a major shift from the old kinds of evaluation systems in South Africa. Like any changes or innovations, WSE has undergone tests and is still striving for success. Therefore, WSE is a journey that will not be smooth, but with a result to achieve at the end. Fullan (1996) emphasizes that any innovation can sometimes be messy. Fullan regards innovations as a journey that everybody must take. Educators have experienced the problem of being overloaded with new terms and paperwork. They are expected to implement WSE with little training.

The success of WSE depends upon educators understanding their roles. My review of the literature suggests that educators need to collaborate and discuss their roles and the purpose of WSE, in order to succeed in its implementation. The government needs to consider the timing of evaluation, as well. The next chapter deals with how I undertook research in the field in order to discover how educators deal with these issues in real-school settings.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two I discussed evaluation in general and provided the conceptual framework for evaluation. I referred to the history of evaluation of schooling in South Africa and how evaluation systems had undergone a number of changes. In this Chapter I explain my approach to researching WSE and how I generated data concerning educators' perceptions, experience and understanding of WSE.

3.2 The Methodology

I used an interpretive approach to explore how educators interpret their experiences and understanding of WSE. It is interpretive because interpretation involves attaching significance to particular findings and drawing conclusions about the phenomena. Mathison, (2005 p.209) stresses that 'interpretation occurs after description has taken place and begins after the evaluator has extracted meaning from, and has tried to make sense of, data from transcripts, photographs and statistics. For interpretation to be considered trustworthy and viable, the evaluator will need to use techniques such as seeking alternative explanations, carrying out negative case analysis and peer debriefing'. For this research, data in transcripts are interpreted. A qualitative approach is defined as a study of things in their natural settings, trying to interpret phenomenon such as WSE in terms of the meanings people hold about them (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994 p2). Mouton and Marais (1990 pp.155-156) point out that in a qualitative research design, the procedures are not as 'strictly formalized' as in quantitative designs.

According to McEwan and McEwan (2003), there are three principal characteristics of the qualitative approach. It is naturalistic (meaning that it is based on cultures and people's lives), descriptive (meaning that it uses ordinary vocabulary to convey deep and rich meanings about people, places and programmes) and it focuses on meaningfulness rather than outcomes and explanation. As a qualitative researcher I focused on explaining and interpreting what I observed, heard and read about educators' perceptions of WSE. I used ordinary language and vocabulary to communicate with educators about their experiences and understanding of their roles in WSE.

The case study of one school was adopted. For the purpose of this study I have given the school the fictitious name of Simunye Primary. The school was selected on the basis of its past experience with evaluations. It was inspected during the apartheid era and participated in WSE in the post-apartheid era. Thus educators from the selected school had been involved in various types of evaluation systems over the two decades prior to this study.

Simunye Primary is in the Umlazi district of KwaZulu-Natal. The school is over 50 years old. In 2005 the school had a learner enrolment of 870, drawn mostly from the local community. It is situated in a largely low-economic housing township and is a well-resourced school. In the same year the staff comprised 23 members, all females. There is a principal, one deputy principal, two heads of departments and 19 post level one educators. All the educators have teaching qualifications. Seven staff members are university graduates. From the age of the school I assume that it has seen various policy changes and forms of inspection over the years.

Few of the educators had been present to experience evaluation systems typical internationally of the 1970s and 1980s, because inspection was the only form of evaluation used before 1994. Since 1999 the school has engaged in the Developmental Appraisal System.

By studying previous brochures about the school's progress, it is evident that Simunye Primary has consistently produced academic, sports and cultural achievements. Although recent changes in the South African education system have been problematic for many schools, the School Management Team (SMT) works with the entire staff to adapt to the changes.

3.3 Research methods

I used two methods to generate data that would answer my three key questions i.e. the questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

In this study, questionnaires (see Appendix 7) are used, as they provide information about how educators experience WSE. Moser and Karlton (1971 p. 283) give three reasons why the questionnaire is useful for obtaining information:

- Respondents express themselves freely without any interruption from an interviewer.
- While respondents are completing a questionnaire, they are able to collect information from their documents, for example if they need to revisit the education policy documents for more information. This may lead to more accurate information than a door-step interview.

- It allows respondents more easily to answer questions that are personal or sensitive in nature, because no-one sits in front of him/her to observe how they are responding and so the response becomes anonymous.

The reason why I chose the questionnaire method is that I needed to gather information from many participants.

Two different sets of questions are developed in the questionnaire namely structured (closed) and unstructured (open-ended). Open-ended questions are suitable because they encourage the respondents to formulate and express their answers freely and do not contain any fixed responses. This type of questions is appropriate because a wide range of opinion is anticipated from this study. I agree with Moser and Kalton's (1971) reasons why questionnaires are useful. Open-ended questions have the advantage of eliciting the expectations and feelings of respondents. However, the shortcomings of open-ended questions are that they require considerable thinking and writing on the part of the respondents. This may demotivate them to complete the questionnaire.

My questionnaire instrument was designed for educators and consisted of six sections (see Appendix 7). Section A relates to biographical information, section B to the respondents' experience of WSE, Section C to the nature of training and support which the respondents received, Section D to the evaluation process and response, Section E to the impact and effectiveness of WSE and section F is about WSE in general. In some cases the respondents were required to respond with "Yes" or "No"

answers and give the reason or explanation for their answers. In other cases they were required to express their own views or comments regarding the question being asked.

Before the questionnaires were administered at the selected school, I sent 20 questionnaires to two nearby schools to test the draft instrument. This made it possible for me to identify shortcomings of the questions and they were adapted. Thus, the testing was therefore useful.

Twenty respondents were selected to complete the questionnaires. These respondents were post level one educators, including one head of department. The criteria I used for the selection were negotiated with the principal. The criteria were that all post level 1 educators would complete the questionnaires. All post level one educators were selected (19 in total). A questionnaire from one educator was not returned so I negotiated with the principal to have one head of department fill in the questionnaire. The principal randomly selected one head of department.

When I administered the questionnaire I delivered twenty questionnaires to the principal of the selected school. The chosen respondents agreed to complete the questionnaires in one week. Only fifteen questionnaires were returned. Mertens and McLaughlin (2004 p. 9) calculate a response rate based on the number of completed questionnaires, compared to the numbers that were initially distributed. In this research the response rate to my questionnaires was seventy-five percent. This response is a high response rate and would be means that my data gathering was successful. Mertens and McLaughlin (2004 p.89) states that three factors contribute to a high response rate: follow-up contact, personal contacts and communication with

sampled people prior to sending out the survey. I had personal contact with the sampled respondents before administering the questionnaires. The personal contacts were with educators whom I had known before and are post-graduates. They are educators teaching at the nearby school. This may account for the high response rate.

Answers to closed questions were analyzed through a frequency count of themes, ideas and significant words. Responses to open-ended questions received a descriptive analysis (see Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2001).

3.3.2 Interviews

Interviewing involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals. One advantage of using interviews is that they elicit an elaborate response from an informant. Interviewing allows a dynamic interaction between the informants and the interviewer. Through dialogue the interviewee can become involved, flexible, positive, open and appreciative of the whole process of giving information to the researcher (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001 p.269).

This technique is however, time-consuming because it requires that the researcher and informant to spend time together and it required travel and preparation on the part of the researcher (Drew *et al.*, 1996 p175). After the interview, time was consumed in transcribing the audio-tape. The advantage of the interview as a data-gathering technique is that it is flexible and elicits in-depth information.

The format of the interview is semi-structured (see Appendix 6). I employed this format because it enabled the informants to give detailed information. It was possible

for the interviewer and the informants to clarify questions and responses to one another and asked for more information or follow-up probes that elicited additional information.

A pilot interview was conducted. Three interview questions were given to colleagues who were part of the school management team and three others were given to post level one educators at my school. With the exception of minor changes, the interview instrument was acceptable.

The interviews were conducted with the principal, the deputy principal, two heads of department and one post level one educator of the selected school. One educator was selected on the basis of her long experience in the field and that she had undergone the previous evaluation systems, namely inspection and DAS.

I conducted interviews with the educators at their place of work. In such situations there are risks of distractions, noise, time-pressures and lack of privacy (Thurlow, 1990 pp.9-13). Thurlow suggests that one way of reducing such risks is to avoid interviewing under such conditions. Building trust between the informant and the interviewer is an important consideration. In the case of WSE my work status is almost the same as those of the informants. Thus it was not difficult to establish rapport and trust. In many cases the interviews were conducted in the head of departments' office, which I found to be quiet and without interruption at the time of the interviews.

I prepared questions for the interviewees before the interviews. The interview was guided by the schedule. The interviewees were free to share their views and were able to introduce many issues, for example the clash of time for the implementation and instruction. I had not thought about this when I prepared the interviews question. The planned interview with an external evaluator was omitted, since at the time of fieldwork an evaluator had not yet been assigned to the school. The interview was conducted in mother-tongue and an audio-tape was used for recording the interviews. The transcript was done during my spare time and the data was analyzed in English.

Answers to closed questions were analyzed through a frequency count of themes, ideas and significant words. Responses to open-ended questions received a descriptive analysis (see Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2001).

3.3.3 Ethical Considerations

De Vos *et. al* (1998 p. 75) defines ethics as a set of widely accepted moral principles that offer rules for, and behaviour expectations of, the most correct conduct towards respondents and participants.

Ethical principles are important to consider, since they concern interpersonal interaction. Educators should be involved in research voluntarily and be able to withdraw at any time. Therefore ethical issues were considered when I was conducting this research.

For example, I sought and received permission to conduct research first from the education authority (see Appendices 1 and 2) and then from the principal of the

selected school (see Appendices 3 and 4). Participants were informed in advance about the investigation, to avoid their responses being affected by the stress of inadequate preparation. Babbie (1990 pp. 340-341) advised that participants should be informed about the potential impact of the investigation. All participants in my study were new to the implementation of WSE and had not yet experienced the process of WSE. They were reassured that their opinions were understood as being tentative. Furthermore, I assured the respondents that all the information gathered from them was confidential and their identities would not be disclosed (see Appendix 5). It is clear that ethical issues were taken into consideration for this research.

3.4 Limitations of the study

The major limitation in the present study relates to the investigation of overall perceptions, which tend to be a most difficult aspect to verify. This is because institutionalization of WSE takes place over time. The present study took place within a limited time frame and was unable to assess adequately the veracity of overall perception. Therefore, the study only found perceptions as stated by participants rather than confirmed experiences.

Furthermore, my study concerns perceptions about WSE only in one selected primary school. Time constraints and responsibilities other than research, limited me to the examination of one selected school.

3.5 Conclusion

In this Chapter I described my interpretive approach to the research methodology, the setting of the case and population, research instruments, data analysis approach and

how I addressed ethical considerations. In Chapter Four I will discuss my research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis and interpretation of data in terms of the three critical research questions for this study (see 1.4). The questions are:

- What do educators perceive is the intention of WSE?
- What are educators' experiences of WSE?
- How do educators understand their roles in the implementation of WSE?

4.2 Profile of respondents and informants

According to Steyn & van Wyk (1999), 'Perceptions are influenced by experience and demographic situation such as gender, age, length of service'. It is for this reason, that I conceptualize my analysis of perceptions, experiences and understanding in relation to aspects such as length of service, age, in roles and responsibilities. In this section I describe the SMT and educators' profiles.

Profile of the SMT

Simunye Primary School has a four-member School Management Team (SMT), which comprises principal, deputy principal and two heads of department.

The principal is a 42 years old female. She has 17 years of teaching experience and teaches Literacy in grade 3 and Natural Science Technology and Literacy in grade 4. She has no degree, but possessing a certificate in management studies and has been a tutor for five years at continuing professional development. She is a committee

member for the implementation of OBE in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

The deputy principal is 48 years old. She has 25 years of teaching experience and teaches Mathematics and Life Orientation to grade 4. She also has no degree.

The first head of department is 30 years old. She has 10 years of teaching experience and specializes in all Foundation Phase learning areas in grade 2. She has no degree but possessing an under-graduate certificate in management studies and co-ordinates sports and music at Simunye. She has shown success in this category as can be seen by the number of trophies in the school.

The second head of department is 46 years old. She has 20 years of teaching experience and specializes in Social and Environmental Studies in grade 4. She has no degree, but has a post-graduate certificate in management studies. She is active in community development activities such as HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, counseling and cultural activities. Table 1 illustrates the profile of the management team.

Table1. Profile of the Simunye School Management Team

	Principal	Deputy Principal	HOD 1	HOD 2
Age (years)	42	48	30	46
Teaching experience (years)	17	25	10	20
Grade taught	3&4	4	2	4
Highest level of Education	Certificate in management	Certificate in management	Certificate in management	Certificate in management

Post level 1 educator profiles

The post level 1 staff comprises 19 female educators. Two of the respondents have less than five years experience, while four have been teaching for between six and ten years and the remaining four have taught for over ten years. Thus, nine educators have more than fifteen years teaching experience. This means that the majority of educators have evaluation experiences from inspection and DAS, before the implementation of WSE in 2001.

Thirteen of the respondents teach from grade 1 to 3, i.e. the Foundation Phase. Two respondents teach grade 4, the Intermediate phase.

4.3 Perceptions about the intention of Whole-School Evaluation

If we look back at why previous evaluations failed, it is because educators lacked knowledge of what the intention of those evaluations were. Contreras (2000 p. 48) points out that teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of teacher evaluation are important to the idea that evaluations exist to improve instruction. If educators understand the approach and objectives they are likely to develop and as a result the

whole process will succeed. For this reason I explored their perceptions about the intention in WSE and I present my findings below in 4.3.1.

4.3.1 Professional Development

The first claim in the WSE policy document is that WSE is for developmental purposes and one of the formal experiences through which educators will develop their careers. I sought to investigate how educators perceive the intention of WSE in their professional development (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1992 p. 326).

I found that all the informants understand that WSE has a developmental intention. They saw this related to their performance as professionals. They saw WSE being better than inspection, because inspection was judgmental. Inspection also had no feedback mechanisms and transparency. With WSE there is a post evaluation process where the evaluation team and evaluatee sit down and discuss the findings and score of the evaluatee.

Most of the educators were eager to see the intention of their professional development being fulfilled. When one informant was asked whether she had or not noticed some improvement, as was the intention of WSE, her response was:

To be honest, I have not yet seen any change, especially to me as a professional. I think it will take about two years because observations are not done frequently and educators have a lot of work to do. WSE is a process and it is not easy at the moment to predict whether the intention, which is improvement, has been fulfilled.

Thus, although educators perceive the intention of WSE as improvement in the quality of education, they see it as a long process because the processes of WSE are

for a three-year cycle. They did not find it easy to monitor everyday performances over such a long period.

One informant perceives WSE to be a system that aims at developing a co-operative and collaborative spirit among educators. She says that the Personal Growth Plan (PGP) instrument shows that the intention of WSE is to develop educators and the institution. The educators fill in the PGP instrument, in which they identify areas in need of development and they also state how often their progress is monitored.

The principal's response shows a positive attitude towards the implementation of WSE. She states that when she first heard about WSE, she could not wait for the workshop, so she took the initiative of researching it from relevant people. This indicates the high degree of commitment from the principal as the leader of the staff.

Although other informants regard WSE positively, others see it negatively. For example, one informant said:

Although during the time of inspection, education was in control because as educators, we knew that the inspectors might come and we tried by all means to work harder, so that when they arrive they become impressed by our work although we had no idea of their intention to visit schools. But with WSE we know when being observed that at the end I will improve my strategies, planning etc. The problem is that teacher just relax and wait for his or her DSG to develop him or her'.

Therefore, the intention of WSE, according to this informant's response, is perceived as encouraging laziness among some educators. If teachers have doubts about the purpose of evaluation, they are unlikely to improve their instructions.

During the interview when one of the senior staff was asked, “How often do you give yourself time as the senior staff to check whether the staff develop professionally, for example asking them about the aim of workshops, studies and seminars they have attended in their professional development”, her response was:

Although we do have developmental structures in our school, we have not given ourselves time to check whether educators really understand the aim behind it. It did not come to our minds if, for example, the educator is studying B.Ed. We just appreciate that and we do not check the impact of that particular course in her professional development, but I think that is an idea because this will help us to utilize that educator in developing other educators”.

This response shows that members of the SMT realize that they lack understanding of the different kinds of professional development. According to them, professional development only takes place at workshops and not through studies. This understanding leads the SMT member to underutilize the educators’ knowledge obtained from their studies. For example, there are educators who studied pastoral care and they can assist SMT when learners and educators need this kind of help.

From the interviews conducted with senior staff, they indicated that, although they have a clear understanding of the notion of professional development, this has not filtered down to all staff. They say this is largely because senior staff is unable to devote sufficient quality time to professional development of the teachers. Senior staff reflects that in the future this aspect of their role function should receive more of their attention. This implies that even the senior staff lacks knowledge about the intention of the evaluation for educators. This may build educators’ understanding of the government’s intention in WSE.

I found that only five respondents have a clear picture of what is to be done in WSE. They state clearly that WSE should give an indication about what is taking place at the school, for example the culture of learning that is taking place at the school. Two emphasize that their understanding of WSE, after attending workshops, enabled them to prepare effectively and thoroughly for both internal and external evaluation. These respondents help to assess how well schools are providing for learners and which schools are encountering barriers to teaching and learning, especially in the classroom situation.

In the questionnaire, educators were asked about their personal and professional development and whether or not they saw any change in their development as a result of WSE. These questions were asked in relation to their perceptions that the intention of WSE is for the improvement of quality in education. By improvement I mean of both educators and the school. Educators were asked about the impact of WSE in different aspects of school life. My finding is that the majority of the respondents' comments relate to their own personal development. In this aspect the two remaining respondents see little change, five see some change and two see a lot of change. No respondent indicated that there was no change. Two educators did not respond to this question. They ignored this question. The majority of educators did not respond to the question relating to the effect on their professional development. The reason for this was not stated.

When responding to the aspect of curriculum delivery, I find that the majority of educators saw a little change and a minority sees no change. Two respondents saw a lot of change. In the quality of the school site there was equal response, with no

change and some change, although it was a low number, and very few answered that they saw a lot of change. This implies that educators who responded in this aspect were uninformed about their working environment. There was no response to whether or not there was very little change. To the organizational structure of the school, there was equal response, indicating that more educators see a little change and very few indicated that there is a lot of change. Table 2 summarizes the responses to the questionnaires.

Table2: Summary of educators’ responses to the question about professional development

	No change	Very Little	Some change	A lot of change
Personal development	0	2	5	2
Professional development	1	1	0	0
Quality of curriculum delivery	1	5	1	2
Quality of the school site	3	0	3	1
Organizational structures of the school	0	2	2	2

This summary shows that the majority saw change in their development. This means that the intention of WSE, which is improvement, is evident in educators’ perceptions of their personal development.

From these findings I deduce that, although WSE focuses on the whole school and not on individual members, but more time is spent on observing individual teacher’s lesson. This is because the school institution cannot perform, but it is people working in it who are performing. As a result, most responses are about personal development and curriculum delivery, because these aspects are closer to the individual members

of staff. Most respondents are not members of the SMT or SDT. They are not involved in meetings concerning the development of the school. They merely receive reports from the WSE committee. On this basis I find that their responses about what they perceive is the intention of WSE is only related to the improvement in their own personal development and what they deliver in the classroom.

4.3.2 Organizational Development

The second claim in the WSE policy document is that intends to improve the organizational development of the educators. The policy indicates ways in which very good schools will be recognized and under-performing schools will be supported (Department of Education, 2001 p.1). From my point of view it is important to illuminate what organization school life is before I state what my findings are. By organization I mean the group of educators working together in a school. The school is a system comprising elements such as educators, learners, and classrooms. The important elements of the school as an organization are identity, strategy, structures or procedures, technical support and human resources. The intention of WSE is to facilitate the improvement of all of these elements. To develop the school as an organization, educators should look at the culture of that particular school. The culture of the school is a central factor when considering whole-school development. WSE aims at developing the organization through approaches characterized by partnership, collaboration, mentoring and guidance (Department of Education, 2001c p.1). I asked educators how they perceive the intention of WSE in the organizational development of Simunye Primary.

The majority of respondents see WSE as developmental. They state that in most cases, they are informed about the happenings at their school. How the school is developed is perceived to be an issue for the principal and the governing body. The respondents assert that the introduction of WSE awakens educators that they are accountable for what is happening at school.

In the interview, one senior staff member emphasizes that WSE is very developmental and promotes transparency and openness. She says:

Previously during the authoritarian times, the principal used to be autocratic when it comes to school development. The school governing bodies (SGB) were there in the meetings but the principal had the last word on the school issues.

The above response indicates that the shift from the traditional way of schooling to the new style of teaching has opened the eyes of many educators. They now appreciate their participation in decision-making for the development of the organization. The fact is that the staff was not satisfied about the way the schools were governed in the apartheid era, because they were suppressed by the regime. From the educators' responses I conclude that the intention of WSE is perceived to be developmental, especially when educators are committed and involved in all activities concerning WSE.

One senior staff member commented that, although the intention of WSE is to improve and develop the whole organization, it will not happen overnight, because development is a process. She states that, as an organization, the school has particular elements and aspects such as learning, nurturing and educating make an organization. Therefore development will take time. This agrees with Davidoff and Lazarus (1997 p. 50), who propose that organizational development is not an *ad hoc* and haphazard

approach to change. The principal comments about the issue of organizational development:

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) outlined clearly the steps to be followed when planning for the development of the organization. We need to prioritize the areas which need to be developed step by step. Then we will see the school being developed but this will happen through the support that will be provided by the stakeholders concerned.

By this I understand that every development taken step by step since WSE is a process. Informants often assert that since WSE concerns whole-school development, educators need to be supportive of individual teachers, as well as of the school as a whole. My findings are that most educators perceive that the WSE develops the organization. They say that, although it is a new approach to, improvement of schools, they have hope that all the programmes implemented in the education system will prosper, because everything is done collaboratively with other colleagues. They assist each other.

In this study the organization refers to the school. In the questionnaire I asked educators whether they see any change brought about by WSE in the development of the school as an institution. Two of the respondents indicated that there is some change and another two see a lot of change and a little change. This balance in responses implies that the average perception is that the intention of WSE is development. No educators responded that there is no change brought about by WSE. Therefore, from the perspective of the educators, WSE has brought some improvement to the organization. Change implies transformation of the old to the new. Educators felt that if the school changes, this should not be done in isolation of the transformation of educators' ways, of teaching. Educators' perceptions indicate

that organizational development and professional development are inextricably linked.

4.3.3 Training and support

In this section I focus on the type of training and support educators receive during the implementation of WSE. My findings concentrate on the different views of the interviewees and respondents concerning the adequacy or inadequacy of training, as well as the reason for inadequacy and what they suggest could make the training and support more adequate.

(i) Training

The overall response of educators in my study indicates that they received workshop training conducted by officials from the provincial department of education as well as by others within the school. They complain that most training takes place away from their working environment. This creates problems in the quality of training, for example poor report-back. This means that after the training the educators who attended the training return and train other educators. The reason for poor-report back could be that sometimes educators are too shy to report back. I deduce that they feel criticized by their peers and senior staff feels threatened by younger more knowledgeable colleagues. Furthermore, educators procrastinate about reporting back because of their overload of work. Educators have many duties to perform, e.g. planning, teaching, and assessing. Training away from the school site is time-consuming. Educators who attended those workshops were mainly SMT and SDT members rather than all educators.

The majority of the respondents indicated that on-site training, i.e. at the school, was conducted by their managers and other selected staff members. In this case the managers are principal and deputy principal and the colleagues are educators. Respondents emphasized that on-site training was more successful than sending staff away from the school for training. There are numerous reasons for the success of the on-site training. From the respondents' perspectives the training at school makes it easy for follow-up support to occur, because people who conducted the training were familiar to them to them and know their context and particular situations. Thus, the training or implementation process received assistance as and when it was needed. It is also easy for trainers to monitor progress when training takes place in the same environment as the place of implementation.

The overall response from educators was that training was adequate. By 'adequate' they meant that training was to their satisfaction. One educator found training to be good, but others found it to be poor. Those respondents who indicated that training was good were educators who attended workshops conducted by government officials. However, they complained that the approach did not prepare them for the actual implementation process awaiting them at schools. They commented that the workshops were directed more at the philosophy behind WSE and IQMS, rather than at the actual evaluation that would take place at the school.

Ten respondents criticized their WSE facilitators. They said that facilitators were unable to answer questions related to the new evaluation system, while insisting that more information would be provided in later workshops. There were also complaints that they were overloaded with too much information. Others complained that the

content of workshops was too theoretical. They found it difficult to assimilate terminology that was confusing and there was insufficient time spent on the practical part of the implementation process. The respondents do not see the WSE approach failing, yet they are concerned about time frames, especially for in-service training. They say they need time to check whether or not those who were trained understand the content of the approach before they must implement it. The time for training is not sufficient, because those who present the workshops are educators who have their own classes to teach. They agreed that the workshops should take place during weekends or school holidays, when all stakeholders, supervisors, principals and teachers, can be involved.

When the respondents were asked about the effectiveness of the training they received, one educator answered that those who attended workshops should be issued with certificates in order to motivate them. The inclusion of all stakeholders helps educators understand that there is no hidden agenda behind the evaluation and see the intention of that particular evaluation such as WSE.

Based on these findings, my interpretation is that because the education system is undergoing change, it is imperative that the personnel responsible for evaluations in schools are adequately trained to manage it. Quick-fix training strategies may fail dismally even though the change may produce some positive results. For example, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1992 p.316) say that developments fail because:

- One short workshop is ineffective compared to monthly training.
- Follow-up evaluation of educators occurs infrequently.
- In-service programmes rarely address individual needs.

- The number of programmes involves teachers from different schools and districts.

Although Fullan & Stiegelbauer (1992 p.316) refer mostly to professional development programmes, I see these reasons as also applying to how training and workshops are planned in South African schools, as part of WSE processes.

In conclusion, my overall finding is that the model of training away from the school site is more suitable for managers. The benefit when managers go away for training is that classes are not disrupted. The model of on-site training is suitable for educators. The benefit, when training is organized on-site, is that it is nearby and it is easy to refer to colleagues that facilitated the workshop. If complications occur, follow-up support can take place immediately. Lastly, I found that more training is needed for all educators in order for them to have more understanding of WSE. As one participant states:

These developmental meetings need to be done continuously, not for grade and salary progression but for us as learners. This will make us to be boastful about our profession.

The next section deals with the support educators receive during the implementation of WSE.

(ii) Support

The *Education White Paper 6* (Department of Education, 2001a) gives clear guidelines for the establishment and functioning of a Development Support Team (DST). The DST for WSE comprises educators from different schools within the school's district. Their function is to monitor and support schools in their efforts to raise standards and the quality of educational provision. Another function is to co-ordinate staff development programmes in response to educators' individual professional needs and to guide schools in the implementation of the

recommendations contained in the whole-school evaluation reports (Department of Education, 2001c p.11).

In the questionnaire I asked respondents if the support they received was sufficient and how they perceived it in relation to the intention of WSE. The overall perception is that there has been little support received from district support teams for the successful implementation of WSE. The reason is that visiting schools demands time, energy, commitment and resources. They indicated that the support from DST had been inadequate, because of the large number of the schools in the district. The other cause is that the members of the DST are merely educators and have their own responsibilities at their own schools. This implies that there is a problem when educators need support from the district level. The findings indicated that there should be structures formed to provide support within the institutions in order to prevent educators leaving their work and traveling from school to school. This would help educators to receive support immediately they need it.

The majority of the interviewees indicated that DST had not been always available to assist them due to time constraints and the number of schools within the district. With regard to the support, the overall perception was that there has been little support received from outside, for the successful implementation of WSE.

One of the informants said:

District Support Team should be more available for consultation, especially when there are 'hiccups' with the implementation.

She also said that, although the support is needed from the DST, it is unlikely to succeed because this team comprises educators who themselves need to be developed by their DSGs for their performance, as well in their respective schools. The

informants perceive support as inadequate and that there are few chances for improvement.

Most of the participants indicate that they receive support from their SDT and the principal, although there are times when they need to consult policy and guideline documents, because even facilitators have little knowledge of WSE. Respondents emphasize that more focus is on the development appraisal (DA) and performance measurement (PM) than WSE. Two respondents who were SDT members have a clear understanding of WSE.

The respondents who participated in these discussions were not from my school environment and they were articulate about their feelings and views on the range of changes taking place in South Africa. Upon investigation, the sole intention of WSE was consistent with what they had experienced under the old inspection system and they conceived it as a way to quality control and quality assurance. They perceive this authoritarian approach (inspection) as a measure of quality assurance management. Keith (1998 p.84) describes 'quality control' as a 'bolt on', rather than a 'built in' matter, meaning that it is reactive rather than proactive. This was a negative response.

Most importantly, I found that educators say that they need more support in implementing WSE. Therefore the Department of Education needs to train more staff and create more support structures in the development of policies. The school support teams need to be empowered with sufficient knowledge on the nature of support they should provide, as well as with the resources they need.

My interpretation is that educators need WSE. This is because the WSE intention is to improve schools so they can deliver the results expected by the Department of Education. The majority of the respondents asserted that WSE is crucial for improving school performance, their own educator performance, to identify in-service trainings needs and to motivate and encourage self-evaluation. The next section deals with what educators experienced in WSE.

4.4 Experiences of Whole-School Evaluation

In this section I investigate what educators have experienced during the implementation of WSE. If any change occurs, those who implement the change encounter different problems and they experience the change in different ways. The general response is that educators felt threatened by WSE when they first heard about it. The reason is that educators were threatened by the restructuring of education. I asked educators about their experiences before, during and after the implementation of WSE.

Interviewees alluded to issues such as time in relation to the implementation process. One of the respondents, who is a member of the SDT stressed that the Department of Education fails to address the issue of timing when training educators for new policy changes. The informant said:

The timing of the workshop is not good. Most of the time, as educators, we receive the information to attend a workshop early in the morning while you have other plans and then we abandon learners just like that and the implementation takes place during the instructional time. As a result at the end we left behind with our normal duties and the government complains that we are lazy. Therefore, it is important that sufficient time of at least about a month is provided for the workshops so that everything will be clear to those who attended and report back what they have understood clearly. We have many holidays and the Department of Education needs to use those holidays to

workshop educators.

This response shows that the informant experienced difficulties before and during the implementation of WSE. Educators are not happy about abandoning learners for workshop purposes. They see this as violating learners' rights to learning. They also find it unacceptable to send learners home while others are learning, or to foist their learners upon other educators because they are leaving to attend workshops.

The respondents suggest that the Department of Education needs to consider the hours that educators spend in school activities when considering implementing new policies in school. When the educators are attending workshops they sometimes send learners home, since no-one can teach their subjects or look after their classes, but this depends on the length of the workshop. Although the majority of educators responded negatively about their experience of WSE, one educator was positive about the evaluation system. She responded:

What I experienced in WSE is that I was curious and imagined my school very developed after WSE implementation. I saw my dream being fulfilled that and teaching and learning can be very effective if there can be improvement and provision of resources. I felt very challenged.

My findings reflected that the majority of educators were satisfied with the WSE system. This was because, when OBE and NCS were implemented, educators used to complain about the resources and bad condition of their schools. Through the implementation of WSE they were able to implement NCS better, because the school and classroom conditions improved as a result of WSE. Although the implementation process tended to be stressful, especially for those educators in the SDT and SMT, because they needed to deal with the implementation of WSE as well as IQMS, these educators hoped that they would become better as a result of WSE.

The majority of educators commented that they were somewhat confused about the processes. The first workshop was for WSE, followed by one for IQMS. Educators were confused about which workshop should come first. They felt that they IQMS should come first, followed by WSE. This led to confusion. Educators on SDT spent more time on the implementation activities. One of the respondents said:

There is a confusion with WSE, because I thought that only the principal will provide some written documents of what is taking place at school, as it has to do with the school improvement, but only to find that it has to do with the whole school starting from the classroom. The educators need to perform certain duties, so as to identify the school's weak points and strengths, for example 'how far has the school gone with professional development of educators, resource development, human resource skills, governance, etc.'

In most cases there is confusion when implementing a policy for the first time. In this case educators were not involved in negotiations concerning school development. It came as a surprise to them that they were to be involved in the process. This indicates that the respondent was not informed about her role and responsibility ahead of the time, but as time passed she gained clarity.

Apart from these experiences, most educators responded positively about the need for schools to be evaluated and they indicated that schools should be developed through WSE. They perceived WSE to be well-structured and relevant to help schools develop and promote a culture of learning at schools and provide schools with the support they need. The following section deals with the roles of educators in the implementation of WSE.

4.5 Roles of educators in the implementation of WSE

In the third area of investigation I sought to discover how educators understood their roles in the implementation process of WSE, because it is important for them to have

an insight into what they ought to do when implementing any change. I asked educators about their roles and responsibilities before, during and after the implementation process.

The responses from educators related to what they had read from the policy document and how they implemented it. This shows me whether or not educators had read the policy document and if they understood it. If they had read and understood it, they were likely to perform their responsibilities without any hindrances. I found that they knew their roles. For example, one educator stated:

I was very clear what to do because I started by evaluating myself, whether I have covered all the criteria given. I rated myself honestly as an appraisee. I also played a role of being a co-ordinator. I was very challenged because I had to set an example, by undergoing all the processes and follow all the guidelines, as stipulated in the document.

The above response shows me that the informant, as a member of the SDT, has a good understanding of her role. She attended workshops and training in connection with WSE and knew what to do in the WSE process.

The educators in SMT and SDT structures are knowledgeable about their roles because they attend training workshops and are familiar with the policy documents. They give themselves time to revisit the policy documents whenever they get the chance. When asked about her role in the implementation of WSE, one SMT member stated:

My role as an HOD is to monitor and provide support where the educator needs it. Although I am not the member of the SDT I understand very clear my role as a DSG member. For example, how must I assist my colleague who is an appraisee. The problem I encountered was when I have to rate the appraisee because there are some criteria that needs time to observe the person, e.g. the community-related activities. The appraisee needs to tell her DSG or give some evidence of the activities performed in the community of

which as an evaluator you might have been observe her in those activities, the question is that where can you get time for that.

The principal said:

My responsibility is to make sure that WSE is being implemented in the school. I did the advocacy and organized the workshops, together with the SDT, to train educators. As the head of the school I was the first one to be evaluated to encourage all educators to participate in the implementation process of WSE, because it is good to tell people to perform a particular activity duty but as a leader you must set an example. I understand my role very well but I was assisted by the notes in the policy document. I made sure that I provided the necessary support where it was needed.

The above responses indicate that the informants in these structures understand their roles in WSE. The principal's role, only, is outlined clearly in the WSE policy. It is a good start when implementing the change that those in management positions have a good grounding in what needs to be done as leaders of the process.

Two respondents stated that they did not understand their roles at all. One was confused and said:

I do not understand how can I evaluate and judge my colleague while I need to be develop as well. My problem is that when will I get time to do this? We should have been trained for months. Educators should also be provided with the instrument where they will monitor and record the development of other educator. It is very difficult to rate your colleague being not sure of the consequences thereafter

The above response indicates that some educators did not understand their roles in the implementation of WSE and they were negative about the WSE. They were uncertain about whether or not the summative evaluation was a way of terminating their service or to judge them for their performance. It appears that there are educators who are against the WSE, because they do not understand that evaluation is to develop and improve them. They appear to believe that WSE is concerned solely with the principal, because her role, only, is outlined in the policy document for WSE (see Department of Education, 2001c p. 12). This is evident in the following response:

The issue of the school improvement is the role for the principal and the governing body, as stated in the policy document for WSE, but my major role is stated in the IQMS.

This shows that some educators see no importance for their involvement in the WSE or improvement of the whole school. Hargreaves (1994 p.11) recommends that educators involve themselves in evaluation activities and that their involvement must be meaningful and productive. The implications are that educators need more clarity on what roles they should play in their involvement in the implementation of WSE. They felt that they were overwhelmed, frustrated and helpless and that the decisions had been imposed upon them without their being consulted and made a part of the decision-making process. Some educators do not understand that the principal alone cannot implement any change without their help. In the case of teacher involvement, Jansen and Middlewood (2003 p. 55), when referring to curriculum development, describe teachers as 'key people'. They state "of all these 'key people', teachers have the significant influence because of their direct impact on learners."

4.6 Conclusion

My findings are that educators at this primary school see WSE as the first evaluation system aimed at improving of the whole school, in terms of general resources, infrastructure and human resources.

In the first theme, namely educators' perception of the intention of WSE in their professional and organizational development, educators indicate that they perceive the intention as developmental and a way to improve the whole school. Even though a few educators perceived WSE as judgmental, they agree that in the end the improvement of education is the aim of WSE.

Secondly, I found that educators' experience of WSE is that they have unique feelings and emotions towards any introduced policy changes. Some are positive and some are negative. If change emerges, especially in the education field, where people work with human beings, there is some resistance to any change which might be perceived as a threat. I found that, even though WSE was recognized by all educators as a system to improve schools it appeared as a threat to some educators. This is consistent with what Fullan (1991 p. 19) states, namely that even when change is supported it, is still likely to be a threatening, painful and difficult experience for those engaging in it.

Thirdly, educators' understanding of their roles in the implementation of WSE shows that it is crucial that all change agents clearly understand all roles and responsibilities to be performed before the implementation starts. For WSE, the principal's role, only, is outlined in the policy document, whereas all educators are involved in the implementation process. This shows the haphazard way things are done at the Department of Education.

The training and support received by respondents was insufficient and only a few regarded it as sufficient. This may reflect the poor organization at the Department of Education. However, all the respondents see the WSE approach as aimed at improving schools.

In the next chapter I conclude by considering the implications of these findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I present my conclusions regarding the research questions of the study. The conclusions are made in the light of my findings concerning the perceptions of educators in relation to Whole-school Evaluation at their school in KwaZulu-Natal. My conclusions are based on the following themes: educators' perceptions about the intention of WSE, educators' experiences of WSE and educators' understanding of their roles in the implementation of WSE.

5.2 Educators' perceptions about the intention of WSE

In relation to educators' perceptions about WSE, I found that the principal, SMT and educators perceived WSE as one of the approaches that was put in place to improve their performance and that of the whole school. They believe that WSE is more developmental than the inspections of the past. Their perception concerning the intention of WSE is that it is the first approach to evaluate the whole school with the intention to develop not of developing and not judging. It does not focus on individual staff. They believe that this approach is very transparent to them, since everything is discussed with the appraisee before and after each evaluation. This consensus takes place in all stages of evaluation. Dimmock (2000 p.245) identifies these negotiations as 'conferences'. The purpose of these conferences is to bring clarity to the evaluatee and the appraisee about the strategies for commencing improvements on those areas that need to be developed. All three stages that is baseline, formative and summative evaluations, are the bridge to improvements and developments. They also serve to judge if the individual school or staff need to be developed. Although WSE has

support mechanisms, it serves to judge the schools' performance because schools that perform well will be rewarded and those who do not will be integrated into other nearby, good schools.

All educators, including the principal, were trained for WSE and clearly understood the intentions of WSE. Some educators felt that those educators who are lazy would relax and expect to be developed by those who are experts. They assert that more workshops are needed for educators to fully understand the core objective of the policy, which is to assist schools to realize their weaknesses and strengths and, consequently, to receive the support they need for improvement.

In WSE the baseline evaluation serves the purpose of development of individual members of staff and the school as whole. Educators are positive about it. The intention of WSE, that is improvement and development, is formative.

Negative responses among educators arose when WSE was perceived as having a summative function relating to salary and grade progression. Fullan (1991) stated that such negative perceptions are to be expected of any changes that give rise to insecurities.

5.3 Educators' experiences of WSE

I found that educators initially experience frustration with WSE. They found themselves confused by the time-frames for implementing WSE and are inadequately prepared to implement it. Educators who were required to observe lessons as DSG become neglectful of their own classes and learners during instructional time.

Educators experienced stress and tension during the implementation because of the paperwork and the rating system used for WSE.

Most educators were confused by the terminology used and different approaches to be implemented simultaneously. The WSE change brought about tension and stress, which resulted in some educators choosing to leave the Department of Education. Confusion is also caused by the issue of summative evaluations. At the beginning, educators were told that the summative evaluations would be conducted by the external evaluators, but later they were conducted by the DSGs. The findings reveal that there was general lack of coherence, co-operation and shared partnership amongst all stakeholders, due to the low involvement of the district support team, regional quality assurance structures and provincial structures.

According to the Department of Education (2001c p.1), WSE is meant to be supportive and developmental. When change occurs, people experience it differently. Some become excited and others feel threatened. Previously, educators complained that they were unable to implement policies such as outcomes-based education or inclusive education, because of the unacceptable condition of schools and the shortage of resources. Educators need to be excited about WSE, because it brings the changes they have been looking forward to. Although some educators have been inspired by WSE, some are about it and, in particular, about the support they receive during the development.

I agree with Davidoff and Lazarus (1997 p.140) who point out that the result of appraisal on teachers is fear and resentment that other people are observing their

lessons. A complete breakdown in accountability may occur. Consequently, in this study I found teachers saying that it is crucial that appraisal or evaluation should be 'owned' by them in their own schools. For this reason, it is better for educators to accept WSE as a form of support rather than to fear it, as occurred in the past.

5.4 Educators' understanding of their roles in the implementation of WSE

During implementation of WSE, educators see themselves as vital role-players. Their role is mostly in the implementation of change and improvement of performance amongst other colleagues. Although only the principal's roles are outlined in the policy document for WSE as a leader the principal and the SMT needs to be inline with the vision of the school, the vision that has been compiled collaboratively with educators, so that they understand and play their roles effectively as DSGs.

Educators in the SMT and SDT have a good understanding of their roles in the implementation of WSE. Those not in the SMT and SDT have problems in knowing how to deal with the improvement of other educators. The principal also understands her role as a facilitator in the implementation process. Although educators understand their roles, they feel that the mandatory roles, together with WSE roles, are an overloading of work. As a result they need the support staff that will assist them in their work on daily basis.

The role of monitoring is an issue for educators. They feel that it is the responsibility of the Department of Education to monitor the WSE implementation process, especially during the first years of implementation.

5.5 Conclusion

I understand that educators have negative perceptions towards evaluations in general. However, I found that they are not negative about WSE per se, since it is for developmental purposes. They distinguish WSE from other evaluations and acknowledge its developmental purposes. Their participation and overseeing of processes (mainly managers and educators in the staff development team) led to this change in attitude. Nevertheless, most do not understand their roles in it because the policy does not spell out all the roles.

My findings are that educators who experience difficulties in fulfilling their professional roles, are assisted by in-service training and counseling. I also found that the main reason for evaluating teachers is to improve the performance of some individual teachers. Other scholars differ from my findings when they say that the evaluations inform staffing decisions e.g. retention, assignment, advancement and dismissal. The most salient benefits of WSE are in the area of grade and salary progression. The effectiveness and efficiency of WSE depends largely on the implementation of both democratic and empowerment principles whereby educators become actively involved in the identification of their needs, how those needs can be met and in the policy decision regarding the running of the school.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER TO KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

49 Alexandra Avenue
P. O. Isipingo Hills
4133
17 February 2006

ATTENTION: Mr S. Alwar

Department of Education
Private Bag X 9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Sir

ACADEMIC RESEARCH: Educator's perception about Whole-School Evaluation

I am currently registered for Master Degree in Education (Curriculum Studies) at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I am a staff member of Masuku Primary School in Umbumbulu Circuit. I wish to undertake a study about **Educator's perceptions about Whole-School Evaluation** one school Umlazi District.

This study will investigate the perceptions and experiences of educators about WSE and their understanding of their roles in the implementation of this model of evaluation.

Simunye Primary School has been purposefully selected for the case study. It will be appreciated that the Principal, the Deputy Principal, two Heads of Department and all pos level 1 educators participate in this research.

This will involve interviews and questionnaires. The date and the times for the interviews will be decided in consultation with the Principal.

The information collected will be treated with strict confidentiality. I trust that this application will receive your kind consideration and time.

THANKING YOU IN ANTICIPATION

Mrs Z. N. Malimela:

.....

Note: For further information, please contact my Supervisor
Contact details: Dr. Jenny Karlsson
Faculty of Education (Edgewood Campus)
Tel: (031) 2601398/0837881433 Fax: (031) 2607003
Email: karlsson@ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX 2: KWAZULU-NATAL APPROVAL (To whom it may Concern)



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8610
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

LOKOHHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

ies:
o: Sibusiso Alwar
s:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0100/06
Verwysing:

Date:
Usuku: 27 February 2006
Datum:

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

is is to serve as a notice that **Mrs Z. N. Malimela** has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

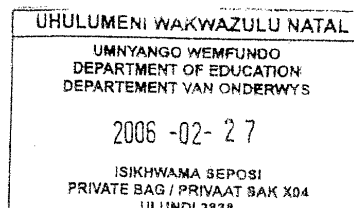
That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.

Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in. however, it must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDoe project.

Mrs Z. N. Malimela 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.

SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education



APPENDIX 3: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

49 Alexandra Avenue
P. O. Isipingo Hills
4133
17 April 2005

EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WHOLE-SCHOOL EVALUATION

Dear.....

I am conducting a study about **Educators' perceptions about Whole-School Evaluation (WSE) as part of my Masters in Education degree at the University of KwaZulu Natal**

For this purpose I am requesting you to complete this questionnaire.
I will collect the questionnaire from you on.....

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out your views and experiences of the WSE, and the extent to which you understand and perceive this form of evaluation as a tool for improvement of the school and educators' performances. Your assistance in answering the questionnaire is much appreciated, and your views may help me to improve how WSE is conducted at school level.

Please be frank in your answers. The questionnaire is anonymous so no-one will know who said what and your answers will be treated with strictest confidentiality.

If I haven't allowed sufficient space for your response, please feel free to write more on a separate sheet, which you should attach to the questionnaire. Please be sure to number these additions so that they correspond to appropriate question numbers in the questionnaire.

If you have any questions, you may contact me on 072 357 9248 or my supervisor, Dr Jenni Karlsson, on 031-2601398

Thank you very much for your time.
Z. N. Malimela
Student number: 992278259

APPENDIX 4: SIGNED PERMISSION FORM FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

PERMISSION FORM

Name of study: EDITORS' PERCEPTION TO WSE

Name of student: MRS Z. N. MALIMELA

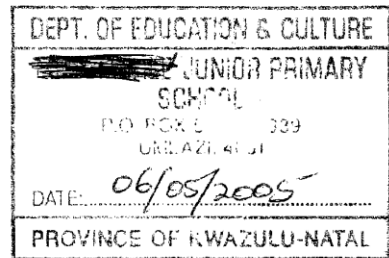
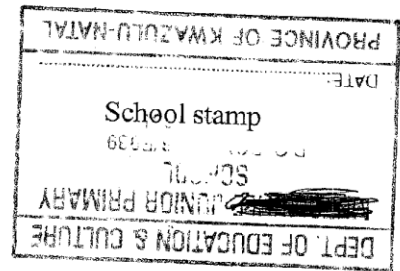
After consultation with the relevant decision-makers and people whom you wish to gather information from, you have/ ~~have not~~* been granted permission to conduct a case study at

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ PRIMARY School.

Name ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Position PRINCIPAL

Date 06/05/2005



**Delete which is not applicable*

APPENDIX5: INFORMED CONCERN DECLARATION FORM For
PARTICIPANTS (SAMPLE)

DECLARATION FORM

I, ~~.....~~ (full names of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature
of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I
so desire.

SIGN: ~~.....~~

DATE: 23/05/05

APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

GUIDELINES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

PRINCIPAL

1. How long have you served in teaching ? Do you see the need for the schools to be evaluated ? Have you ever been involved in any form of external evaluation before ?
2. Does the staff development team (S.D.T.) Function effectively in terms of organizing ?
3. Does your school have an evaluation structure in place ? If yes, how often is this structure being used in a year, with regards to improvement of the school itself and educators ?
4. What insight or knowledge of W.S.E. did you have, prior to your school having been evaluated ?
5. Did your school experience the W.S.E. process as outlined in D.O.E. manuals ? What role did you and the S.M.T. play in implementation of W.S.E ?
6. How many educators in your school have been actually observed in the classrooms and what criteria for selection did you use ?
7. Did you and your staff receive adequate training in all the progress for implementing W.S.E ? If yes, in what way did you receive training ? If no, what do you think was the cause of inadequate training ?
8. Do you think the development appraisal (D.A.) Should an integral part of W.S.E ? How do you think D.A. would impact in this manner, with regard to improvement ?
9. Do you recognize W.S.E as fair and effective system to be used to evaluate schools as compared to other previous forms of evaluation ?
10. What kind of perceptions did you have when first hearing about the implementation W.S.E ?
11. Do you think W.S.E reports should be made public ?
12. What are your views about the involvement of the S.G.B in this form of evaluation ?
13. Did you have any fears about the implementation of W.S.E regard to educators response ?
14. To what extent was your understanding of W.S.E in terms of improvement ?

APPENDIX 7: QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AND POST- LEVEL 1 EDUCATORS

Project Title: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS TO WHOLE- SCHOOL EVALUATION

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT & POST LEVEL 1 EDUCATOR

SECTION A: ABOUT YOU

(Please mark with an **X** in the appropriate box)

1. What job do you hold at the moment?

HOD EDUCATOR

2. For how many years have you been teaching?

1-5	6-10	11-15
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Other

3. Your gender status.

M F

SECTION B: ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WSE

1. Did you know about W.S.E before the first Workshop you attended?

Yes No

2. After that first workshop, did you have a good understanding of WSE?

Yes No

3. Give reasons for your answer.

.....

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.....

4. What was your initial reaction in the implementation of WSE?

(Tick the box(s) to respond to the question)

confused	<input type="checkbox"/>	exhausted	<input type="checkbox"/>
excited	<input type="checkbox"/>	angry	<input type="checkbox"/>
curious	<input type="checkbox"/>	threatened	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Why do you think there is a need for schools to be evaluated?

.....

.....

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.....
.....

SECTION C: TRAINING AND SUPPORT

1. (a) What kind of training did you received with regard to the implementation of WSE? (Please mark with an x to the appropriate box)

Short course

Workshop

In-service training

Other:

If Other,
specify.....
.....
.....

(b) How effective was the training? (circle one) /

Excellent Good Satisfactory Poor Weak

2. What support after the implementation of WSE did you received?

Teacher to teacher

Visit

District-based

Counselling meeting

Follow -up workshop

3. Was the support necessary?

Yes No

How could it be improved?

.....

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.....

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.....

SECTION D: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. What role did you play in the implementation of WSE?

(Please mark with an x to the appropriate answer)

Coordinator

Chairperson

SDT

DSG

2. How did you understand your role during all the processes?

Please comment on the following stages.

(i) Pre-evaluation

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(ii) Baseline-evaluation

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(iii) Summative-evaluation

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SECTION E: EVALUATION PROCESS AND RESPONSE

1. Was the time given for the implementation enough? Yes No

2. If no, what are your suggestions?

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6. Give some comments about the instruments /templates used for the implementation process? For example;

(a) School Improvement Plan (SIP)

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(b) Personal Growth Plan

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.....

SECTION F: ABOUT THE INTENTION OF WSE

What impact did the intention of W.S.E have on:

(Tick for your answer)

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
a) Your personal development				
b) Your professional development				
c) The quality of curriculum delivery				
d) The quality of the school site				
e) The organizational structures of the school				

SECTION G: ABOUT WSE IN GENERAL

1. What suggestions do you have for improving or refining WSE?

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2. What encouragement will you give to other educators involved in WSE?

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3. What do you think are the limitations for the implementation looking at your school situation?

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4. What do you think are the challenges for implementing WSE?

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5. Do you have any other comments to make?

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.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

Z. N. Malimela

072-3579248 / 078-9216088

Any questions, contact my supervisor Dr Jenni Karlsson on 031-2601398