Conceptualising whole school development :

Examining the approaches of non-government organisations to school development in South Africa.

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Abstract

This study attempts to provide conceptual clarification around the concept of whole school development in South Africa. It does so through examining the approaches to school development of five non-government organisations in South Africa, as well as the literature and research in the areas of school effectiveness, school improvement and educational change.

The concept of whole school development emerged in South Africa in the 1990s. It was seen as the way to develop quality schooling where individual teacher inservice programmes traditionally offered by NGOs had failed. The literature review presents two different ways of approaching school change: namely school effectiveness and school improvement. It locates the South African concept of whole school development within the international paradigm of school improvement, because it has a clear commitment to understanding the *process* of school change.

International research suggests that there is a need for school change processes to deal with school culture and not only with changing school structures and procedure. A focus on changing culture seems to suggest an understanding of change which is normative-re-educative. School development planning is the most common strategy for school development and this study suggests that it needs to be implemented in an holistic way. These themes are conceptualised as continua. After presenting the data from the interviews, the study then maps the work of the five organisations onto these continua. Common themes which emerge are that all the organisations make use of school development planning to some extent; all organisations rely on well-skilled facilitators and all acknowledge the imperative to build the capacity of teachers within the school to lead their own development process through a school development committee.

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The study ends by suggesting three principles of procedure which can be used in school development. These are that school development needs to focus both on structure and culture; that an organising framework is needed to help schools prioritise the issues and that a systemic way of approaching problems is useful. Some of the challenges facing whole school development, particularly around issues of replicability. sustainability and the role of the community are explored.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the whole of this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

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Acknowledgements

Abbreviations used

CIE   Catholic Institute of Education

ESP   Education Support Project

EQUIP   Education Quality Improvement Project

IDT   Independent Development Trust

INSET   Inservice education and training

MEDU   Midlands Education Development Unit

NBI   National Business Initiative

NGO   Non-governmental organisation

OBE   Outcomes-based education

SABINET South African Bibliographic and Information Network

SADTU   South African Democratic Teachers` Union

SBR   School-based review

SDP   School development planning

TSP   Thousand Schools Project

TIP   Teacher Inservice Project

WSD   Whole school development

Chapter 1
Rationale for the study

Background to the study

My interest in the field of school development emerged from the work I was doing with the Midlands Education Development Unit[1]. a non-government organisation (NGO) attached to the Department of Education. University of Natal. Pietermaritzburg. The focus of the Unit in 1995/1996 was running workshops for secondary school teachers in participative teaching methods.

While facilitating workshops and working with teachers. it became clear to MEDU staff that teachers found it difficult to make changes in their classroom teaching due to broader. school level issues. such as school organisation and management. lack of resources and negative attitudes towards learner-centred teaching. For example. one teacher described that when she used group work. her pupils complained to the Principal that she was not teaching them correctly as they had not been given notes to copy down. In a school where teachers share classrooms. another teacher told of how each time she moved desks to facilitate group discussion or tasks. they were moved back into rows by the teacher who used the classroom after her. Schools were also facing larger problems like truancy. late coming. violence and teacher demotivation on a large scale. Dealing with these issues seemed to be more urgent than the issue of changing teaching methods.

MEDU began shifting the emphasis of its school-based programmes to give teachers the opportunity to do a needs analysis of their school and to start identifying key issues that they wanted to deal with. We called this shift in emphasis "whole school development". At this time we were aware that there were other NGOs in South Africa. such as the Teacher Inservice Project and the Education Support Project who were making similar shifts. On an informal level we had an idea of how different organisations were implementing their whole school development programmes. but it was felt that a more formal investigation into the different approaches would be useful.

The Midlands Education Development Unit operated from 1989 until March 1997, when it closed due to lack of funding.

MEDU staff were doing research and reading in the field of school development which was mostly from an international perspective. We thought it would be useful to learn more about particular South African approaches to school development.

Whole School Development in South Africa

The concept of whole school development became an important buzz word in NGO circles when the Independent Development Trust's (IDT) Thousand Schools Project (TSP) was launched in 1995. In a discussion document, Abrahams writes: "The TSP set itself the goal of whole school development. Initial articulation of this goal was embodied in statements like 'systemic rather than component change' and 'training teachers in innovative practice without changing the environment has been shown to be less than effective' "(1995:1).

Although whole school development has become a popular phrase, there is very little systematic literature written about the concept in South Africa. A search for "whole school development" in the SABINET data base came up with no references at all. A search for "school development" revealed only two references. However there are some descriptive surveys of the work which is being done by NGOs in the field.

Surveying of the work done by whole school development NGOs in South Africa started in 1995 with the Teacher Education Audit which was administered by the Joint Education Trust. As part of a report on effective schools in South Africa, Christie and Potterton *et al.*(1997) followed up on the Audit by surveying thirteen non-government organisations which were involved in school development. They approached a number of these organisations to furnish further details on the work which they did. They asked the NGOs the following questions:

- Overall aims of the organisation
- Approach taken to school development
- Nature. length. time and frequency of your intervention
- Other organisations with which work was done.

In their report, which was published in April 1997, Christie and Potterton found that the organisation's responses highlighted the problematic nature of the term whole school development which meant different things to different organisations, although in practice they applied similar strategies (Ibid.: 37). The idea that whole school development is understood differently by various people is reiterated by an evaluation report of the Thousand Schools Project in Mpumalanga. It cites different interpretations of the whole school concept as one of the factors which impacted negatively on implementation (Haasbroek, 1998a).

The Sacred Heart Development Project's Source Document on Whole School Development did a further survey on whole school development projects in South Africa. Their selection of nine NGOs was based on information from the Teacher Education Audit, the NGOs surveyed by Potterton as well as those NGOs which have a holistic approach to whole school development (1997: 18). They also surveyed a number of Provincial departments which were involved in whole school development. This report was published in May 1997.

The idea of whole school development seems to have grown from a commonsense understanding that individual teacher INSET (Inservice Education and Training) is not sufficient to change schools. The problems facing schools in South Africa are multifaceted and extremely complex. The Report of the Gauteng Committee on the Culture of Learning and Teaching (Chisholm and Vally, 1996) states that there are a number of issues which contribute to collapse of schooling: infrastructure (school buildings, facilities and resources); leadership, management and administration: relationships between principals, teachers, students and parents and relationships with the state education departments. An implication of this research is that INSET which does not address these wider school issues is not likely to succeed in developing a culture of learning and teaching in dysfunctional schools (Sacred Heart School Development Project, 1997: 16).

Christie (1997a) has argued that the organisational failure of dysfunctional schools has led to the breakdown of the very work they should be doing : learning and teaching. This implies that organisational development needs to accompany other INSET strategies which address individual teachers. There is an understanding here that whole school development is in fact about schools undergoing organisational development.

This is also the understanding of the Teacher Inservice Project. Davidoff (1995) believes that whole school development is about changing the culture of a school through organisational development. She relates the experience of the University of the Western Cape Internship Teaching Practice Programme where it became evident that there was a strong relationship between the culture of the school as a whole, and the quality of the classroom experiences of the student teachers. In some schools, student teachers had little support, little opportunity to teach and experienced an attitude towards teaching and learning which was demotivating and disheartening. It became clear that for quality teaching and learning to be possible, it was vital to work towards changing the school culture. The Teacher Inservice Project has an understanding that the whole school is more than all its aspects: it is the way in which the different aspects of school life interweave and relate to one another and the way in which they are bound to one another.

The National Policy on Teacher Supply, Utilisation and Development (1997: 34, in Sacred Heart School Development Project, 1997: 2) agrees that there is a need in South Africa for a deliberate move towards whole school development. This document refers to whole school development as a range of interventions in schools which take as their starting point the following assumptions: that schools are complex social organisations which need sustained efforts to change and that change needs to encompass a range of activities which address the school as a whole, rather than as a set of discrete parts.

This is the viewpoint of Jerry Vilakazi (then director of the Midlands Education Trust), when he described whole school development as:

> ... an approach to school development which sees the *school as a whole* as a unit of change...the whole school is far more than what goes on the classroom. It is more than the curriculum. It is more than teachers. It is more than the management...(1995).

The way in which the Thousand Schools Project understood whole school development was to offer schools a "package" of NGO programmes which addressed various whole school needs (for example, subject-specific curriculum development, management, methodology and personal teacher empowerment). Another goal of the Thousand Schools Project was to end the fragmentation of the work of NGOs which was often disruptive to schools. There were situations where a science NGO would visit a school on Monday and an English NGO would visit on

Thursday. Through the Thousand Schools Project, the IDT offered to fund NGOs if their work was articulated with the work of other NGOs. NGOs continued offering their services as they had always done, although these were now couched in the language of whole school development.

The growing interest in whole school development in South Africa was reflected in conferences which were hosted in South Africa in the mid-90s. The Teacher-Inservice Project (TIP) and the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) in the Western Cape organised a conference to explore the issue of Whole School Development in June 1995. The Thousand Schools Project in KwaZulu Natal organised another Whole School Development Conference in October 1995.

Purpose of the study

The data underlying this study had its roots in the Education Department of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg (UNP). The Department recognised the growing interest in the area of school development and a decision was taken to find out more from other organisations in the country doing similar work. In September 1996, five organisations were selected for this study from the list surveyed by Christie and Potterton.

The organisations studied are:

- National Business Initiative (NBI) co-ordinating the Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) - KwaZulu Natal
- St Mary's School Change Project - Gauteng
- Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) - Western Cape
- Education Support Project (ESP) - Gauteng
- Teacher Inservice Project (TIP) - Western Cape

The aim of the research was to examine the different approaches to or models of school development currently being used in South Africa and to establish why these particular approaches had been chosen. The study wanted to establish if any South African practitioners had developed a particularly South African approach to school development, suited to the unique educational context.

Initially, the purpose of the research was simply to gain more detailed information about the work which different school development organisations were doing with schools. However, as the interview data were analysed and examined more closely and the literature reviewed in greater depth, the focus of the study shifted. What began as a descriptive study based on empirical data collected from interviews, became an attempt to provide conceptual clarification around the concept of whole school development in South Africa. This conceptual clarification is both empirically grounded as well as gleaned from understandings of the literature and research in the field. This study attempts to provide some conceptual clarity in the area of whole school development by drawing out key themes which are represented as continua at the end of the literature review. Chapter 3 then makes use of these continua by mapping some aspects of the school development programmes onto them.

Overview of the study

The first chapter of this dissertation has outlined why the area of whole school development in South Africa is an important one. It has established the purpose of the research and noted how, as one reads more and thinks more and analyses the data in more detail, often new questions arise and new directions emerge. In this case, there was a shift from an empirical descriptive study to one which attempts to provide conceptual clarification in the area. This meant that there was a great reliance on the literature in the field.

The second chapter outlines the literature and research published in the field of school development. It highlights two major ways of approaching quality or effective schooling, namely school effectiveness and school improvement research. The South African concept of whole school development is placed within the school improvement paradigm. International research seems to point to the need for school change processes to deal with both school culture (people's assumptions and beliefs, made visible through norms and behaviour) and with school structure (for example, management structures, procedures of decision-making, timetable arrangements). As one of the most popular strategies for school improvement is school development planning, the chapter describes this strategy and argues that school development planning can be implemented atomistically or holistically.

The key ideas of this chapter are presented diagrammatically. A series of key themes are presented as continua as a way of representing and understanding different approaches to implementing school development. These themes emerge both from the literature review and from the data analysis. They are placed before the data is presented simply because this aids the logical flow of reading. These themes are: understanding of school change; use of the school development planning strategy; emphasis placed on school development planning; focus on school change and the constitution of the school development committee.

Chapter 3 presents the work of each of the five organisations which were interviewed. The chapter draws out key issues from the interviews with a particular focus on:

- how each organisation implements their school development or school change programme;
- the organisation's understanding of a quality school;
- the organisation's understanding of school development and change (including the values and principles which underpin their programme);
- how the socio-economic context of the schools has impacted on the programme and
- the way in which they use school development planning to bring about change in the school culture.

The conceptualisation which emerged from Chapter 2 is applied to the work of each organisation. which is mapped onto the continua.

The final chapter summarises the key issues which arise from the different school development programmes. using the continua to do so. It moves on to suggest three aspects or principles of procedure which could be used in a model of school change in South Africa. Finally it looks at the constraints and challenges facing whole school development in South Africa. The study closes with some suggestions for further research in this area.

Chapter 2
Reviewing the literature

"How can it be. then. that so much school reform has taken place over the last century
and yet schooling appears to be pretty much the same as it has always been?"

<div align="right">Cuban. 1990:71</div>

Overview of the chapter

This chapter deals with topics and concepts (such as school effectiveness. school improvement and
school culture) which will be familiar to those who have read in the field of school development.
Rather than simply describing these ideas and concepts. it attempts to draw linkages between them
and in doing so. hopes to provide a conceptualisation of whole school development.

It starts by describing the school effectiveness movement and examines the strengths and
weaknesses of such an approach to developing quality schooling. Essentially. school effectiveness
research can describe the product of an effective school. but cannot tell practitioners how they
could go about changing their school to become more effective. We need to turn to research in
school improvement which describes how school development works in practice. A focus on the
process of change requires an understanding of how educational change works (which is absent
from the effective schools research). The chapter discusses different understandings of change and
suggests that the literature supports normative-re-educative approach to change. Such an
approach believes that changes in attitudes. skills and values are necessary for sustainable change.
This suggests that the school culture needs to change. Often school change processes focus only
on school structures and procedures and ignore teachers` and learners` attitudes and beliefs about
school and the process of learning.

Understanding the culture of a school is imperative to the process of school improvement. The
literature suggests that the optimal school culture is the collaborative culture of the "moving"

school. Schools need a strategy so that they can plan to change both the structure and culture. The strategy of school development planning is not a new one. This chapter suggests that planning can be done in either an holistic or an atomistic way. An holistic approach to school development planning is more likely to focus on both structure and culture and will address change in a systemic rather than a fragmented way. It would be underpinned by a normative-re-educative understanding of educational change. An atomistic approach to planning would focus mostly on the visible structures of the school and would probably be underpinned by an empirical-rational or power-coercive approach to educational change.

The chapter ends by developing five themes or continua which can be used to conceptualise whole school development in South Africa. The first two themes or continua are conceptual and emerge from the literature review. The last three themes emerge from the data analysis. During the analysis of the five interviews, common practices and understandings emerged from the work of the organisations. It made sense to present these continua before the data analysis is presented in Chapter 3, as the continua are used to represent the work of the organisations. The writing of Chapters 2 and 3 was a cyclical, rather than a linear process. An initial literature review was revised and developed as a result of understandings which emerged from the interview analysis.

First and second order change

When we look at present day schools, it is clear that schools are not disposed to change. The structure and organisation of schools now is not too much different from a century ago. Schools are fundamentally conservative organisations which do not change easily (Fullan, 1993: 4; Joyce *et al.* 1983). Despite this, schools are faced with pressures to change - internal pressures to become more effective and/or external pressures to implement central policy decisions. The plethora of educational policy in South Africa currently requires schools to change to an outcomes based curriculum, to implement more democratic school governance procedures according to the South African Schools Act of 1996 and to implement a teacher appraisal system. At the same time, schools are dealing with internal pressures, such as the need to improve standard 10 examination pass rates and to find innovative, effective ways of disciplining learners.

At the outset, it is important to make a distinction between school change which hopes to change the basic essence of what schools look like, and what they do; and school change which hopes to make schools better, more effective and more meaningful places in which to teach and learn, within the existing "traditional" paradigm. Most school improvement attempts would fall into this latter category, where there is an implicit assumption that *school* is a worthwhile institution. Abrahams (1995) believes that this is the assumption underlying the concept of whole school development.

An example of the former category would be Summerhill school established by A.S. Neill (1980) where children had the freedom to make choices about what they wanted to learn and when they wanted to learn it. In the former category are also those who strongly believe that schools as they presently exist cannot equip children for their lives in the twenty first century. The new century will have an even greater emphasis on information technology and easy access to information via the Internet. Thus, the role of schools must change from giving children information to empowering them to access and make sense of information on their own. Meighan (1998) presents a strong case that learning in the twenty first century will take place in learning centres, where learners will choose both what they want to learn, and for which courses they want to be formally assessed, rather than in traditional schools as we know them now.

Cuban makes a similar distinction between two types of education reform which he calls first order and second order change (1990).

According to Cuban, first order changes try to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of what is done. In schools, this would include recruiting better teachers and administrators, raising salaries, allocating resources equitably, selecting better textbooks, adding (or deleting) content and coursework, scheduling people and activities more efficiently and introducing new versions of evaluation and training. First order changes try to make what already exists more efficient and more effective, without disturbing the basic organisational features. Those who propose these changes believe that the existing goals and structures of schooling are both adequate and desirable.

Second order changes are designed to alter fundamental ways in which organisations are put together. They reflect major dissatisfactions with present arrangements. They introduce new

goals, structures and roles that transform familiar ways of doing things into new ways of solving persistent problems. Specific examples include open classrooms, a voucher plan, teacher-run schools and schools in which the local community has authority to make budgetary and curricular decisions. Each of these reforms attempts fundamentally to alter existing authority, roles and uses of time and space.

This literature review will focus more strongly on what Cuban labels first order changes - changes which are underpinned by the belief that the existing goals and structures of schools are sufficient and that schools need change in order to become more effective in their current form. Most of the organisations reviewed in this study do not suggest that schools change radically, but rather that they find more effective ways of educating within the current system. This is particularly relevant in the South African context currently where many schools are not effective places of teaching and learning. Many schools which are located in disadvantaged and violence - disrupted communities share a number of common features. Many of them experience authoritarian management, where teachers have little say in decision making; there are poor physical conditions and a lack of facilities and equipment; there is conflict between teachers and management; there is general demotivation and low morale of students and teachers which leads to late-coming and absenteeism and conflict, violence, vandalism, criminality, gangsterism, rape and substance abuse is rife in and around these schools (Moonsammy and Hasset, 1997; Christie, 1997a).

It is clear that such schools need to change if their learners are to receive a meaningful and quality education. There is a strong call in South Africa for schools to improve the quality of education which they deliver. This call grows even stronger when standard 10 examination results are released. In 1997, the pass rate was 47% compared with 54% in 1996 (Shindler, 1998). But how can schools go about becoming more effective in order to offer quality education? And how do we describe an effective school? There is a vast body of literature which documents the characteristics of effective schools. The following section highlights some of the key findings of the school effectiveness research and also looks at some of the critiques of this approach.

Effective schools research

It is generally agreed that the beginnings of school effectiveness studies can be traced back to the mid-1960s. In the United States, the 1966 Coleman study called *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, together with a study by Jencks *et al.* in 1972, generated a generalised finding that differences between schools (such as class size, teacher training levels, teacher experience etc.) had little effect on student achievement when compared to the family background and socio-economic status of the student (Jansen, 1995: 182). The rather pessimistic message was that there was little that schools could do that would consistently make a difference to student achievement.

In America a few years later, Bowles and Gintis (1976) expounded their theory that schools merely reproduce the inequalities which exist in society. They believed that a child's achievement has little to do with the school which he or she attends, and much more to do with the pupil's family background. Pupils from middle-class families will achieve better in school than pupils from working class families, and schools do little to reduce these inequalities.

The field of effective schools research developed as researchers set out to prove that the characteristics of the school which a student attends **do** have an impact on that students' achievement, despite the students' family background. School effectiveness studies hoped to find evidence of exactly what kind of school-level characteristics do make a difference to student achievement. Researchers wanted to find a way to separate the impact of family background from that of the school as they examined the question "Do schools make a difference?" (Stoll and Fink, 1992). They hoped to determine causal relationships between educational inputs and processes, and student outcomes. The emphasis is on using quantitative analytic techniques to determine how much of students' academic achievement can be "explained" by different school inputs (Heneveld and Craig, 1996: 9).

Generally, researchers focussed on schools which were achieving high academic results, particularly those schools with "disadvantaged" pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds. These schools were labelled effective because they were producing higher student results than other schools with a similar intake of students. Studies were then conducted to ascertain what factors characterised these so-called "effective" schools. Studies were either indepth case studies

of a few particular schools (for example, Louis and Miles, 1990; Lightfoot, 1983) or large scale studies of many schools (for example, Rutter *et al.*, 1979; Mortimore *et al.*, 1988). The research produced various lists of the characteristics which were to be found in effective schools.

There are a vast number of reports which synthesize the findings of school effectiveness literature (Christie and Potterton *et al.*, 1997; Reynolds and Packer, 1992; Jansen, 1995; Creemers, 1992; Levine, 1992; Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991; Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Reynolds and Cuttance, 1992; Purkey and Smith, 1983), thus I do not want to do so here in too much detail.

In one of the many "lists" which was produced from research in America, Levine and Lezotte (1990) have identified the characteristics of effective schools after examining numerous large- and small-scale studies in the United States. These included:

> Productive school climate and culture
> Focus on student acquisition of central learning skills
> Appropriate monitoring of student progress
> Practice-oriented staff development at the school site
> Outstanding leadership
> Salient parent involvement
> Effective instructional arrangements and implementation
> High operationalised expectations and requirements for students

> Levine and Lezotte, 1990, cited in Levine, 1992.

Similar work was done in the United Kingdom, both in primary and secondary schools. The Rutter *et al.* (1979) study of secondary schools found that factors like class size, formal academic or pastoral care organisation, school administrative arrangements and the age and size of school buildings were not associated with overall effectiveness (Reynolds and Cuttance, 1992). The important within-school factors determining high levels of effectiveness argued by Rutter were:

> Ample use of rewards, praise and appreciation
> Good working conditions in the school environment
> Ample opportunities for children to take responsibility and participate in the running of their school lives
> Good use of homework, setting clear academic goals
> Teachers provided good models of behaviour

Good classroom management - preparing lessons in advance. keeping the attention of students

A combination of firm leadership with democratic decision-making processes

There have also been a number of studies conducted in developing countries. Fuller (1987: 256) maintains that Third World research on school effects has focused on this question: Do schools raise achievement after taking into account pupils' family background? In a synthesis of the findings of 60 studies. Fuller concludes that school factors **do** influence achievement in developing countries. In fact. there is a marked difference between developing and industrial nations in the importance of school-related factors on student achievement. It seems that the quality of the school seemed to influence student achievement more in developing nations than in industrialised countries. In industrialised countries. the child's family background overshadows the school quality in influencing student achievement (Heneveld and Craig. 1996: 11).

There is also a difference between developing and industrialised countries in terms of which in-school variables make more impact. In contrast to the studies in Britain or America. where the school's social organisation and the teaching practices appear to make a difference (see lists cited above). in developing world primary schools. simple material school inputs (such as textbooks. writing materials and desks in classrooms) are related to achievement (Fuller. 1987: 257). The frequency and duration of teachers' actual utilization of these texts are influential in some settings (Fuller and Clarke. 1994: 128).

The most recent summary of school effectiveness research in developing countries (Levin and Lockheed. 1993) highlights supporting school inputs such as: instructional materials (textbooks). supplementary teachers' guides and materials and library books etc. as well as a curriculum which is properly sequenced and has content which is related to pupils' experience. These supporting inputs are usually taken for granted in research in industrial nations and thus are not included in the research variables.

Critiquing effective schools research

The effective schools research has generated lists which are helpful in providing information about what characterises an effective school. but are less helpful in shedding light on **how** schools can

become effective. For example, to use a characteristic from Levine and Lezotte's list, no school would argue against the importance of having a "productive school climate and culture", but what should it do to achieve such a culture?

Jansen summarises other critiques of the research literature as follows: sample bias; unclear and inconsistent definitions; a focus on outcomes rather than process; minimal control for background characteristics and comparing inappropriate schools, to mention but a few (1995: 187). He writes:

> In its theory, language design, methods and conclusions, the effective school literature works within a positivist paradigm which assumes that schools basically consist of interrelated units which can be 'fixed' by applying the right mix of policy and resources inputs which would result in great effectiveness (Ibid.:190).

In a similar vein, Fuller (1987: 287) warns that effectiveness research claims should be treated as a tentative conclusion. This is because sufficient specification of pupil background characteristics is a problematic task and little evidence has been collected which controls for prior achievement levels. Most of the evidence is based on cross-sectional evidence rather than longitudinal studies.

More recently he and a colleague (Fuller and Clarke, 1994:119) have critiqued those researchers (whom they call "policy mechanics") who work within the production-function tradition. These policy mechanics attempt to identify particular school inputs, including discrete teaching practices which raise student achievement. They seek universal remedies which can be applied across diverse cultural settings. They assume that the preeminent mission of schools is to raise the cognitive achievement, whereas many developing countries want to use the school to socialise children towards democracy (Ibid.: 124).

This raises the issue that what counts as an effective school is largely determined by one's values and by one's understanding of the aims of education. The possibility that there could be different aims for education does not seem to be debated in the school effectiveness research. There does seem to be an implicit belief within effective school research that a school is defined as effective if pupils achieve good marks (particularly in mathematics, science and reading). Once a school has been thus defined, then the characteristics of the school are researched.

There is a recent South African study which did not take the approach of identifying effective schools through their student output. Instead, the researchers asked individuals and educational organisations to recommend schools that they thought were operating well under difficult circumstances and which could make a contribution to the project of understanding school development and school quality in South Africa (Christie and Potterton *et al.*, 1997:5).

The strengths of effective schools research are that it clearly shows what characterises a quality school. Essentially, it paints a picture of an effective school, which schools can use as a vision or as a target for setting their own goals. It provides strong evidence that individual schools **can** make a difference to their learners (Hopkins *et al.*, 1994: 50). It provides tangible outcomes which could be useful in providing the accountability which is obviously needed in South African education.

The weaknesses of the approach are that it is too easy to use these lists as a simplistic formula for every school. Using the lists in technicist and process-reducing manner means that the complexity of education as a human endeavour is not taken into account. Schools in different contexts have different needs and different responses to problems. Effective school factors should be viewed as **potential** contributors to school quality and not as guarantors of quality (Heneveld and Craig, 1996: 12). The factors interact to reinforce one another, but it is very difficult to generalise how they do so or to say which are most important in a particular school.

Very few people would argue that schools should not display the characteristics listed in the effective schools studies. However, the question remains "**How** do schools change to develop these characteristics?" This is the question asked by researchers within the school improvement paradigm. Whereas effective school researchers are interested only in which school inputs lead to the desired output (high academic achievement), school improvement researchers are interested in what processes happen within the "black box" of the school.

School improvement research

It is generally acknowledged that the body of knowledge produced by the International School Improvement Project (ISIP) in the 1980s, forms the international foundation of the school improvement movement (Reynolds, *et al.* 1996). ISIP describes 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: 40).

Hopkins (1990: 180) explains that this definition is based on three assumptions. First, achieving change is more about *implementing* new practices at school level than it is about deciding to *adopt* the new practices. Second, school improvement is a carefully planned and managed process which happens over a number of years. Third, it is very difficult to change education in the classroom without also changing the school organisation.

According to this definition, school improvement is more than just change at a classroom level. It presupposes attention to the curriculum, the school organisational structure, local policy, school climate, relations with parents etc. (Ibid.). The key focus of school improvement research is to understand the processes of change in a school. This focus on process, on becoming effective can be related to Kelly's (1989: 88) understanding of curriculum as process. He believes that it is important to move from the search for objectives of curriculum, to agreeing on broad principles which should inform activity. In a way, this is what school improvement hopes to develop - broad principles of procedure rather than detailed formulae which can be unproblematically generalised across a number of school contexts.

Hopkins *et al.* (1994:68) explain that school improvement is an approach to educational change which has the twin purposes of enhancing student achievement and strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. They also insist that the reason for engaging in innovation and planned change is to enhance the progress of students, which encompasses the educational goals reflected by the schools mission (Ibid.: 66). This suggests a broader definition of outcome than simply the marks on tests and exams.

School improvement research generates its knowledge differently from effectiveness research. It focuses on processes and tries to describe these processes in descriptive case studies, while effectiveness research deals with measurable characteristics which are mostly correlated in statistical overviews (Bollen, 1996). School improvement research tries to show which strategies actually work in practice to change schools. There is a stronger focus on the process of improvement, rather than the output or product. Reynolds *et al.* (1993: 43) concur that the school effectiveness research paradigm has a very different intellectual history to school improvement research. School effectiveness research has been strongly committed to work within a quantitative paradigm, preferring to restrict itself to the more quantifiable and measurable.

School effectiveness research is trying to answer the question "Is the evidence for this specific correlation between a school characteristic and results valid?" while school improvement is answering the question "Does this improvement strategy work and is this intervention in these circumstances valid?" (Bollen, 1996:18).

Merging school effectiveness and school improvement

In Europe, Britain and America, towards the end of the 1980s, there was a move for a greater linking between the school improvement and school effectiveness paradigms. Stoll and Fink suggest that a new question needs to be asked: "How can the more outcome-oriented school effectiveness knowledge be linked with the more practical study of school improvement, to promote the optimum growth of all children and adults in a school?" (1992: 21). The International Congress of School Effectiveness and Improvement was created in 1990, supported by the journal *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* to work toward answering this question.

Heneveld and Craig (1996: 15) also believe that the two traditions look at the problem of how to make schools effective from different perspectives which complement each other. They have developed a conceptual framework for primary schools in developing countries which integrates the findings from both traditions.

Proponents say that there are a number of "third wave" projects which merge effectiveness research findings with improvement strategies (Stoll et al., 1996: 140). Stoll and Fink (1992: 24) describe how the Halton Project in Ontario Canada, started the process with an investigation of effective school characteristics and then schools implemented these characteristics using research on school improvement and planned change. The Project used the strategy of School Growth Plans as a systematic means of achieving growth and development in schools.

This merging of the two research traditions has not been seen much in South Africa, where most whole school development organisations appear to be using the research and strategies from the school improvement paradigm (Christie and Potterton et al., 1997: 37 - 42), and do not seem to consider the findings of school effectiveness research. This may be because the effectiveness criteria (particularly from Britain and America) do not seem to be applicable to schools in the South African context, as well as due to the various criticisms which have been lobbied at the findings (see above).

It is unfortunate that effective school research findings from developing countries seem to be seldom considered in South Africa. A conceptual framework (such as the one developed by Heneveld and Craig, 1996) which describes supporting inputs, school climate, enabling conditions and teaching/learning process could be a useful starting point for schools when they do a school audit as part of a school development plan. Such a framework provides schools with clear criteria against which they could evaluate themselves in order to ascertain which priorities they should tackle first.

If Fuller's analysis of 60 studies in the developing world (1987) is correct, then one aspect to improving achievement in South African primary schools would be to provide children with sufficient learning material which is used meaningfully by learners and teachers. A recent evaluation of the Northern Cape Primary School Workbook Project showed that the experimental group, who had used the workbooks *The Learning Adventure* for eight months, outperformed the control group on four of the seven test questions. The pupils in the more disadvantaged school benefited most from the intervention. The more the workbook was used, the greater the increase in the post-test scores (Vinjevold, 1997).

There are educational NGOs, such as READ and Molteno which do provide schools with books and develop teachers' skills in using these materials. However, they focus only on teacher development and do not take into account the broader organisational aspects of the school. Such inputs obviously would need to go hand in hand with teacher development and organisational change. Material inputs must be accompanied by change in teacher values and attitudes. This is obviously the strength of the NGOs involved in whole school development - that they do look at the whole school.

The NGO programmes in this study would fall broadly within the school improvement paradigm, because their focus is on the process of changing schools. In fact, it seems that the uniquely South African label of "whole school development" encompasses much of what is internationally called school improvement. The school improvement paradigm must encompass some understanding of educational change, because it has a strong focus on the *process* of changing schools. On the other hand, research within the school effectiveness paradigm does not have the same need to be underpinned by an understanding of change because there is little concern with how schools actually change and develop. The following table sets up a continuum between school effectiveness research and school improvement research, drawing out the key issues.

Figure 1: **A continuum of school effectiveness research and school improvement research**

School effectiveness research		School improvement research
Emphasis on product (**what** does a good school look like?)		Emphasis on process (**how** does a school become effective?)
Global generalisations about schools		Understanding of school uniqueness
Little need to understand educational change		Strong focus on education change process

The way in which an organisation designs and implements a school change programme will reflect its understanding of educational change. The next section introduces different ways of approaching planned change.

Understanding educational change

Chin and Benne (1969) believe that there are three types of approaches to planned change. The first is an empirical-rational strategy. One fundamental assumption underlying this approach is that people are rational and will follow their rational self-interest once this is revealed to them. The assumption is that people will adopt the proposed change if it is rationally justified and they will gain by the change. Many attempts at educational change have been rooted in this understanding.

Chin and Benne call their second approach to change, normative-re-educative. The rationality and intelligence of men (sic) is not denied. Within this approach there is an understanding that patterns of action and practice are supported by socio-cultural norms and by commitments on the part of individuals to these norms. Change in a pattern of practice or action will only occur as people change their normative orientations to old patterns and develop commitments to new ones. Change in attitudes. values. skills and significant relationships is important. not just changes in knowledge. information or intellectual rationales for action and practice.

The third group of strategies. power-coercive. is based on the application of power in some form. political or otherwise. The influence process involved is basically that of compliance of those with less power to the plan. directions and leadership of those with greater power (Ibid.: 34). Three decades ago. Benne and Chin wrote that "unfortunately. no viable theory of social change has been established" (Ibid.: 35).

However. writing on school change in the early 1990s seems to indicate that there is a "better" way of approaching change in schools than the empirical-rational strategy described by Chin and Benne. Fullan (1991. 1993) and Fullan and Miles (1992) believe that the application of the empirical-rational approach is exactly why school reform has so often failed. They say that rational planning models do not work for complex social change and that there is a need to think about

change in new ways. This means we must recognise that anxiety. difficulties and uncertainty are intrinsic to change. Van Velzen *et al.* (1985: 60) agree that school improvement is a non-linear process which cannot be easily understood within a technical. rational paradigm. Another reason that change so often fails is that we support the symbols of change rather than the substance. Echoing this belief. Jansen writes "The failure of education policy (in South Africa) is a direct result of the over-investment of the state in the political symbolism of policy rather than its practical implementation"(1998: 1).

Fullan and Miles (1992) maintain that there are seven propositions for successful educational reform. There must be an understanding that change is a journey and not blueprint. We need to acknowledge problems as our friends and immerse ourselves in them to find creative solutions. This understanding of change is very different from the empirical-rational understanding. They also maintain that change requires resources (time. material. staff development) as well as the power to manage it. Large-scale policy reforms are successful only if implemented at the school level. Fullan believes that what Benne and Chin call the power-coercive strategy towards change does not work in schools either. He writes that "You can't mandate what matters" (1993: 22).

Change should be systemic which means that reform must focus on the main components of the school (for example: curriculum. teaching. staff development. student support systems and management) simultaneously. It also means that reform must focus on the deeper issues of the culture of the school. Fullan reiterates this point by observing that changing formal structures is not the same as changing norms. habits. skills and beliefs. As he puts it. "to restructure is not to reculture" (1993: 49). He seems to be supporting what Benne and Chin call the normative-re-educative strategy with its focus on changing attitudes. values. skills and significant relationships. as the way in which to implement educational change. His focus on changing school culture emerges as a key point in the change process. and is a point which is reiterated by a number of other researchers.

Changing structure and changing culture

The way in which we understand the change process influences the way in which we would implement change. The different models of understanding change lead to different areas of a school being targeted for change. An empirical-rational approach and a power-coercive approach have often targeted the **structures** of the school for change. This means they have changed the structure of the management (for example, have made it more hierarchical or more democratic), or have changed the structure of the curriculum, or the length of the school day and the lessons, or have changed the number of staff meetings. In response to these visible, structural changes, Fullan and Miles suggest somewhat cynically that with many reform projects the appearance of change or the symbol of change is more important than the substance of change (1992).

Cuban (1990: 77) gives the following description of school structure:

> The structure of schools includes the formal and informal goals used to guide funding and organising activities, including such things as who has authority and responsibility for governing schools and classrooms; how time and space are allotted; how subject matter in the curriculum is determined; how those classes are organised; how the different roles of teachers, principals and superintendents are defined; and how such formal processes as budgeting, hiring and evaluating are determined and organised.

In contrast to a focus on structure, a normative-re-educative understanding of change would focus the change effort on the values, attitudes and significant relationships of teachers within the school. This indicates a stronger emphasis on addressing the **culture** of the school. The following section attempts to unravel and define the concept of school culture.

Defining the concept of school culture

Using Giddens' definition from a sociological perspective, the concept of culture "consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow and the material goods they create. Values are abstract ideals, while norms are definite principles or rules which people are expected to observe. Norms represent the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of social life" (1993: 31).

Sarason brought the issue of school culture into the foreground almost three decades ago, when he wrote that the major problem with educational reform is that many people involved in it have no intimate knowledge of the culture of the setting which they wish to influence or change (1971). He maintained that each school has a culture which defines the possible ways in which goals and problems will be approached.

Dalin (1993: 97) argues that school culture is a complex phenomenon which "appears" at three levels:

1. The transrational level - where values are based on beliefs, moral insights and ethical codes
2. The rational level - where values are grounded within a social context of norms, customs, expectations and standards
3. The subrational level - where values are experienced as personal preferences and feelings; they are rooted in emotion; are basic, direct and basically asocial and amoral.

The Institutional Development Programme (IDP) which Dalin is describing, finds that few schools are clear about their values at the transrational level. At the rational level, most schools show clear values through the norms, rules and regulations, curriculum, daily practices, customs and ceremonies. The subrational level plays a very important role because teachers' personal preferences have a tendency to be strongly expressed, but these are usually implicit rather than explicit.

Hopkins *et al.* (1994: 86) believe that the common view that the culture of the school is the rational level of procedures, norms, expectations and values of its members is not that helpful. They make use of the sociological distinction between culture and structure to make more sense of the concept of culture, believing that our understanding of culture is deepened when it is compared to structure. Structure and culture are interdependent and they have a dialectical relationship. There is a need to pay equal attention to both structure and culture in school improvement.

Hopkins *et al.* (1994: 88) expand Schein's (1985: 6) list of some common meanings of the word "culture" by adding educational examples:

- the observed behavioural regularities when teachers interact in a staff room - the language they use and they rituals they establish;

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- the norms that evolve in working groups of teachers in terms of lesson planning or monitoring the progress of students;

- the dominant values espoused by the school, its aim or mission statement;

- the philosophy that guides the dominant approach to learning and teaching of particular subjects in a school;

- the rules of the game that new teachers have to learn in order to get along in their school or department and

- the feeling or climate that is conveyed by the entrance hall to the school, or the way in which students' work is or is not displayed.

After giving this list Schein (1985: 6) continues:

> All these meanings, and many others, do, in my view reflect the organization's culture, but none of them is the essence of culture. I will argue that the term "culture" should be reserved for the *deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a "taken-for-granted" fashion an organisation's view of itself and its environment* (my emphasis).

It seems that Schein is arguing for an understanding of culture which encompasses the three levels described by Dalin (the transrational, the rational and the subrational). This is the view of culture adopted by this study. The assumptions and beliefs which support the school culture are made visible through the way the school works and the way in which teachers behave and relate to one another. For example, if teachers have a strong belief in a teacher's autonomy and individuality, this would be visible in the way in which teachers would work alone, rather than sharing ideas and materials or even team teaching together.

It would be simplistic to assume that all schools have a common culture. Values and norms appear at the individual level, the group level, the organisational level, the subculture level and the society level (Dalin, 1993: 97). Andy Hargreaves argues that there are at least five different types of teacher culture: fragmented individualism where teachers are isolated; collaborative culture where teachers support and trust one another; balkanisation where teachers' loyalties are to their particular group (eg. the subject they teach); contrived collegiality, where working together is forced by the structure of the school and the moving mosaic, where teachers can have membership of a number of groups in a flexible way (1994: 238).

A dialectical relationship between structure and culture

Hopkins *et al.* (1994) maintain that because structure and culture have a dialectical relationship, there is a need to pay attention to both. David Hargreaves (1995: 30. 31) continues in this vein:

> Institutional cultures (members' values, beliefs etc.) stand in dialectical relationship to their underlying architecture (social structures or patterns of members' social relationships). A structural change often has cultural consequences; a shift in culture may alter social structures... The impact of much externally imposed change is structural rather than cultural, since it is easier to legislate about people's work situation and practices than their values and beliefs.

Hargreaves raises an important issue here, namely that it is easier to make structural changes in schools than it is to change people's values and attitudes. In fact, it is impossible to change someone else's values and beliefs - they can only do this for themselves. This is probably why many educational policies are seldom implemented effectively in schools. Parker writes that South African education policy, such as outcomes-based education (OBE), will only work if there is both structural and cultural transformation. "There has to be a change in the values, attitudes and dispositions of teachers, learners and civil servants. Cultural transformation is a key element in implementing policy" (1997: 12). But he also says that a problem with OBE is that it assumes that the values which it aims to promote already exist in schools (Harley and Parker, forthcoming).

Other researchers also emphasise the importance of changing values and attitudes. Elmore (1995) showed that although most reformers take for granted that changes in the structure of a school (eg. changing the time table) produces changes in teaching, which in turn produce changes in student learning, this is not often true. A study of three schools which were restructuring showed that although teachers were motivated and energised by the reforms, this did not lead to changes in teaching practice, despite teachers saying that it did. He concludes that perhaps reformers need to focus first on changing norms, knowledge and skills at individual and organisational level, before focusing on changing structure.

Andy Hargreaves (1994: 254) cites an analysis by Werner of restructuring efforts within British Columbia, Canada in 1989. The focus was a fundamental restructuring of the primary curriculum

which Werner believes reflected a pervasive belief in the power of curriculum reform to secure effective change. The rhetoric was that teachers would be given power and responsibility for planning and organising the curriculum; however the ministry retained control over the curriculum through student testing and programme evaluation. The power relations changed very little. Werner argues that this was an example of politically popular structural solutions to educational change rather than the less fashionable, but more enduring cultural change.

Hargreaves (Ibid.: 255) reiterates the point that there are two ways of looking at change - from a structural or a cultural perspective. Structural changes underestimate the traditions, assumptions and working relationships that profoundly shape existing practice. The belief is that the important thing is to change the structures and then practice will conform to them. By contrast, the cultural view sees existing practice as heavily determined by deep-rooted beliefs, practices and working relationships among teachers and students which make up the culture of the school. A focus on structural change can be linked to Benne and Chin's concept of power-coercive or empirical-rational change. A cultural view can be linked to their idea of normative-re-educative change.

Stoll and Fink (1996: 84) believe that school culture cannot be examined in isolation because it is inexplicably linked to structure. Structures can be quite obviously changed, whereas culture can only be affected indirectly. However, change in structure without changes in culture will most likely lead to superficial change.

International research seems clear that in order for school change to be successful and sustainable, it must work at changing the school culture. This is certainly the message which emerges from school improvement research. According to Dalin, "To replace one practice with a new one may simply mean to replace one rigidity with another. For the school to change in the way it functions, it has to change its culture" (1993: 96).

Similarly, Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991) write: "School improvement strategies are successful only to the extent that they satisfactorily address the complexities of the school culture". There seems to be an emerging understanding that school change will not be sustainable unless there is an attempt to change the assumptions and beliefs of the members of that school. Since the issue

of school culture is vital within a school improvement paradigm (and hence a whole school development paradigm), we will look at different expressions of school culture.

Expressions of school culture

Thus far, we have looked at a definition of school culture - the underlying beliefs and values which are made visible in behaviour and ways of doing things. Although each school will have a unique culture, it is helpful to try to make sense of different types of cultures, by classifying and labelling them. It becomes clear that some types of school culture will hinder and obstruct the process of school change, while other types of school culture will assist and encourage school development.

Rosenholtz (1989) argues that the social organisation of a school affects the commitment of teachers and the achievement of students. She makes a distinction between two typical types of schools - the "moving" school and the "stuck" school. The *stuck* school experiences low consensus, teacher uncertainty, low commitment and isolation. The school is individualised and learning impoverished. The *moving* school experiences high consensus, teacher certainty, high commitment and cohesiveness. Such a school is collaborative and learning enriched.

Hopkins, *et al.* (1994: 90) suggest that most schools in fact fall between these two extremes and they have added two more "types" of schools: wandering and promenading. They map these four expressions of school culture onto a table where the horizontal axis represents effectiveness and ineffectiveness in terms of outcomes, and the vertical axis represents the degree of dynamism of the improvement process (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 : Four expressions of school culture (From Hopkins *et al.* 1994: 91)

Outcomes Process	Ineffective <	> Effective
Dynamic ^	'Wandering'	'Moving'
 Static	'Stuck'	'Promenading'

They describe *stuck* schools as failing schools. where conditions are poor. teaching is an isolated activity and a general sense of mediocrity and helplessness prevails. Blame is placed elsewhere - on the students or on the poor resources. These schools are ineffective in terms of student achievement and are static in terms of the improvement process. The *wandering* school has experienced and is experiencing too much innovation. The staff are often exhausted and fragmented. There seems to be a lot happening but it lacks coherence or a sense of direction. These schools are involved in school improvement but it is not impacting on the outcomes of the school. The *promenading* school often seems to be living on impressive past achievements. These are often successful. traditional schools with a stable staff. There is a reluctance to change because everyone is happy with the way things are. In terms of outcomes. they are effective. but they are static in terms of the process of improving and developing. The *moving* school is the ideal type of active school. which remains internally calm as it successfully adapts to a rapidly changing environment. Its outcomes demonstrate its effectiveness and its commitment to the processes of school improvement.

Hopkins *et al.* (Ibid.: 92) believe that their schematic table is useful for not only classifying school cultures. but also for providing a guide as to how to work with them. If schools fall below the dotted diagonal line. then they need to work more on their own internal organisational issues to put themselves in a position to carry out a development plan successfully. For example. "stuck" schools generally require work on their internal conditions before they can move on to identifying and resolving curriculum issues. Schools which fall above the diagonal line should focus more on addressing identified priorities.

This point about different school cultures responding differently to school reform is reiterated by an evaluation of the Thousand Schools Project in South Africa. "Research experiences ... showed that many schools were "stuck". ie. not in a position to benefit optimally from services rendered to them" (Haasbroek. 1998b: 12). Haasbroek goes on to describe different categories of schools which exist in South Africa. maintaining that each of them reacts differently to school reform initiatives. However. it seems that the five categories need to be better conceptualised in order to become a useful tool for school improvement practitioners.

Stoll and Fink (1996: 85) have developed a model which is very similar to Hopkins *et al.* (1994). Their model also plots school culture on two dimensions. effectiveness-ineffectiveness and improving-declining. Schools are plotted on a continuum of whether they are effective or not as well as on a continuum of whether they are actively seeking to improve or not. This is an interesting way of combining the school improvement / school effectiveness paradigms. as each school culture is determined both by product and process. They also use the concept of a *moving* school to describe an effective school where people are actively working together to respond to their changing context. In addition. they develop the idea of *cruising* schools which are perceived as effective by teachers and the school community. However. they are not seeking to make changes which will prepare their pupils for the changing world. rather they are marking time.

Strolling schools are neither particularly ineffective nor effective. They are moving toward some kind of school improvement but at an inadequate rate. *Struggling* schools are ineffective. and they know it and thus spend considerable energy in trying to improve. *Sinking* schools are both ineffective and the staff are not prepared or able to change. They often display characteristics such as isolation. self-reliance. blame and loss of faith.

Figure 3 : Effectiveness and improvement typology of schools

(From Stoll and Fink. 1996)

Improving   ↔   Declining

	Improving	Declining
Effective	Moving	Cruising
		Strolling
Ineffective	Struggling	Sinking
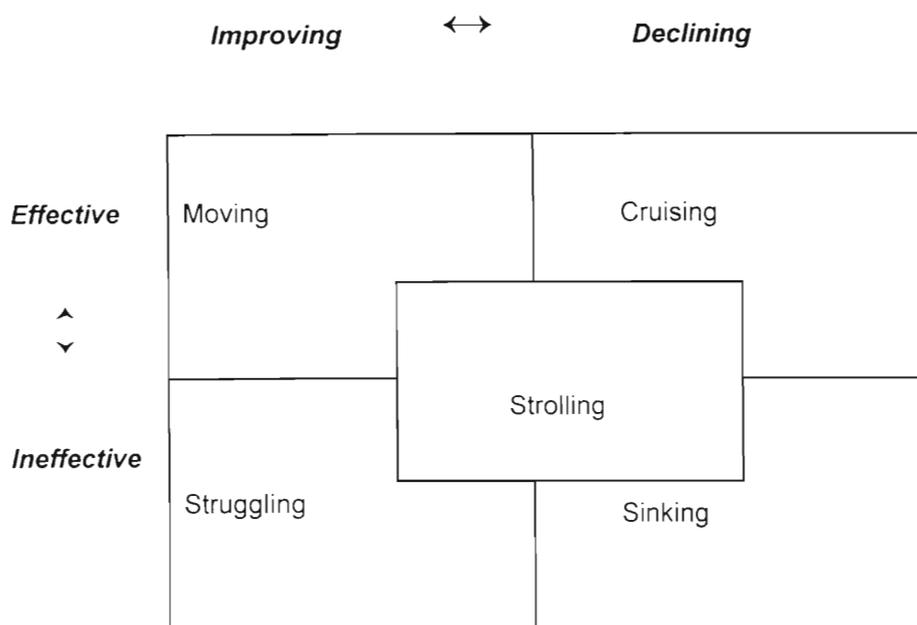
The typologies of Hopkins *et al.* and of Stoll and Fink combine both the structural and the cultural dimensions. They enable structure to be linked to culture in a conceptual way. It is clear from the work of Rosenholtz (1989). Hopkins *et al.* (1994) and Stoll and Fink (1996) that the optimal school culture is the "moving" school. In the next section Stoll and Fink provide a more detailed description of the type of norms found in a moving school.

The culture of a moving school

Stoll and Fink argue that it is very difficult to uncover the basic assumptions and values of a school. However. the norms are usually an expression of these deeply held assumptions and values. They therefore believe it is useful to look at the types of norms which appear to underpin the more successful school improvement efforts (1996: 92 -98).

Shared goals - there is a shared sense of direction which places teaching and learning at the forefront.

Responsibility for success - there is a belief that everyone can and must make a difference. underpinned by the fundamental belief that all children can learn.

Collegiality - there is mutual sharing and assistance amongst staff.

Continuous improvement - there is an assumption that more can always be achieved.

Life long learning - there is a fundamental belief that there is always more to learn and pupils can only learn alongside adults who are also learning.

Risk taking - there this a belief that trial and error and learning through failure are essential parts of growing.

Support - there is a belief that it is important that teachers and administrators make time for each other.

Mutual respect - there is a sense that diversity is a strength and there is a freedom for individuals to realise shared goals in different ways.

Openness - there is an understanding that criticism is an opportunity for self-improvement rather than a threat, and negative emotions and disagreements are an acceptable part of adult communication.

Celebration and humour - there is a belief that pupil and teachers' achievements should be honoured and celebrated.

These descriptions of the types of norms which make school improvement work can be helpful for teachers to recognise whether the lack of these norms is hindering the change process in their school. It is a list which presents a clear vision or goal for school to work toward. Schools need to work both on developing these cultural norms, as well as on implementing development projects. However, this list still does not provide schools with a practical strategy for school improvement. In this sense, it can be critiqued in the same way as school effectiveness lists. There is still a need for a concrete strategy which schools can engage in to start the process of becoming a "moving" school. A characteristic of a "moving" school is that it is involved in school development which addresses both structure and culture. The strategy used by international school improvement projects (such as Improving the Quality of Education for All in England, and the Halton Project in Canada) as well as by the South African NGOs surveyed in this study, is school development planning. The last section of the literature review looks more closely at this strategy.

School development planning as a school improvement strategy

Hopkins *et al.* (1994: 70) cite school development planning as an example of an organic approach to school improvement. An organic approach is one which suggests principles within which schools are likely to flourish. Since this is the preferred strategy used by a majority of non-governmental organisations in South Africa to achieve school change (Christie and Potterton, *et al.*, 1997: 38). I will focus on this in more detail.

The School Development Plans project in England and Wales was an attempt to develop a strategy that would, among other things, help governors, heads and teachers to take control of the process of change (Reynolds *et al.*,1993: 45). Development planning combines curriculum innovation with modification to the school's management arrangements, both with the overarching aim of enhancing student achievement and modifying the culture of the school. The key function of a development plan is that it brings together national policies, the school's aims and values, its existing achievements and its needs for development (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991).

In essence, development planning encourages school stakeholders to ask the following basic questions about their school:

1.   Where is the school now?

2.   What changes do we need to make?

3.   How shall we manage these changes over time?

4.   How shall we know whether our management of change has been successful?   (Ibid.: 3)

There is nothing really new about these questions. They are remarkably similar to the questions which Tyler suggested in his model of curriculum planning in 1949 (Kelly, 1989: 15). Tyler's product model was critiqued as being too linear and not allowing the various elements to interact and inform one another. A similar critique can be lobbied at school development planning if it is implemented in a linear and technicist manner.

These four questions reflect the four main processes in development planning:

1. **Audit** - a school review of its strengths and weaknesses. An audit involves questioning current provision and practice in a systematic way: comparing what the school is striving to achieve with what is actually happening. It clarifies the nature of a school's weaknesses and guides action needed to put things right.

2. **Construction** - priorities for development are selected and then turned into specific targets. Plans are constructed in detail for the year ahead. Longer-term priorities for the next 2 or 3 years are described in outline. Prioritising is key. A rag-bag of *ad hoc* priorities do not make a good plan. Priorities must be manageable and coherent and they must be clearly linked to achieving the overall vision of the school.

3. **Implementation** - the planned priorities and targets are implemented. An action plan is drawn up. This is a working document which describes and summarises what needs to be done to implement and evaluate a priority. Each priority is handed to a team who takes responsibility for the implementation of the action plan.

4. **Evaluation** - the success of implementation is checked. The process of implementation and evaluation are inter-connected. Implementing the action plan involves: sustaining commitment during implementation; checking the progress of implementation; overcoming any problems encountered; checking the success of implementation; taking stock; reporting progress and constructing the next development plan.

Stoll and Fink (1996: 64) refer to these four phases of school development planning as assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. They emphasise that it is vital to see these processes in a holistic way in which all the phases interact with and inform one another.

I want to suggest that school development planning (like many strategies) can be implemented in an holistic or an atomistic way.

An holistic approach

An holistic approach to school development planning allows for the uniqueness of each school. It allows for the different steps to merge, to overlap and to inform one another in a cyclical way. Hopkins *et al.* (1994: 70) interpret school development planning in an holistic way when they call

school development planning an organic approach to school improvement. An holistic approach means that the various strategies and action plans work together to reach the goal of the school. It will happen when the school understands that the process of planning is the key issue, rather than the product. An holistic approach entails a review of the school's organisational structures and culture which might result in substantial changes to the character of the school (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1994: 17).

They suggest that the organisational structure and culture of a school can be better understood by reviewing the management arrangements. There are three elements which make up the management arrangements in a school. These are:

- frameworks (largely structural): the structures in a school, such as a system for decision making and communication, mechanisms which allow people to meet and co-ordinate their activities:

- roles (both structural and cultural): the relationships between people - the expectations held by people, the allocation of responsibilities, the groupings of people: and

- working together (largely cultural): the character of the relationships, the nature of co-operation or conflict and the forms of leadership and management (Ibid.: 18).

Working on these management arrangements forms the foundation to many other innovations. In other words, if these arrangements are not tackled first, then other innovations or priorities are more likely to fail. Thus, if a school is introducing a new way of learning and teaching maths, it must ensure that the structures in the school support the change, and that staff have had opportunities to discuss their expectations, the allocations of responsibilities, as well as how the new curriculum will change the way in which they relate to one another.

Stoll and Fink (1996: 76) also believe that attempts to improve classroom teaching and learning without attention to culture are likely to be superficial and short-lived. They argue that school development planning can make a difference, but only if climate and collegiality issues receive attention. Otherwise teachers in schools which experience difficulties often show little interest in development of teaching and learning strategies.

An holistic approach to school development planning would clearly attempt to look at problems in a systemic way (Senge. 1990). There would be a focus on understanding the various causes of the problem. rather than simply treating the outward "symptom" in a linear way.

In a chapter entitled "Changing school culture though development planning". Hopkins (1991) writes that school development planning was conceived of as an attempt to develop a strategy which would help governors. heads and staff to change the culture of their school. Despite the title of his chapter. he does not give a convincing account of how school development planning can change school culture. His assumption seems to be that the strategy in itself will simply bring about change in the school culture. This may be true in that the process of planning brings teachers together to talk about their school and to think about important issues.

However. it seems to me that school development planning can be used to change school culture only if it embedded in a process which enables teachers and other stakeholders to uncover and understand their underlying beliefs. values and attitudes about the purpose of education. about the nature of children. about the way in which children learn. about roles and responsibilities of management and teachers etc.

An atomistic approach

It is easy to implement school development planning in a mechanistic and atomistic way. This way of implementing would probably lead to a focus on the **product** - the actual plan itself - rather than the **process** of development. Just as Tyler's product model of curriculum has been critiqued as being too linear because it does not allow for the inter-relatedness of the separate elements (Kelly. 1989: 15). so the same critique can be levelled at an atomistic application of school development planning. It is important to see school development planning as a cyclical process. where the various elements relate to one another in an holistic way.

It is also possible that a mechanistic application of the strategy would focus only on the outward or visible problems of the school (such as late coming. or lack of resources) rather than also on the underlying organisational issues (for example. undefined roles and responsibilities or an

autocratic managment structure which doesn't allow for innovation) simply because these are easier to diagnose. Focussing only on visible problems does not take the structure-culture dialectic into account. It can easily lead to what Hopkins *et al.* (1994) call the appearance of change rather than the reality of change.

An atomistic approach to school development planning could slip into a simple and rational listing of strengths and weaknesses without the detailed capturing and analysis of data that is required to make informed choices about what aspect in the school to change or develop first. Once schools have listed their problems, how will they know which of these problems to address first? Auditing the school should be a fairly indepth exercise which uses a particular framework which helps schools to make sense of the myriad of problems that they are faced with, and which enables them to see how the problems are inter-connected.

These two sections have described how school development planning is a common change strategy within school improvement circles. I have suggested that school development planning can be implemented in an holistic or an atomistic manner. An holistic approach would presume a normative-re-educative approach to educational change, which takes both the structure and the culture of the school into account. An atomistic approach would reflect an empirical-rational or power-coercive understanding of educational change. Planning would focus more on the structure or the visible problems of the school.

Strengths and weaknesses of school development planning

Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991: 8 - 9) believe that school development planning is better than some other school improvement strategies for the following reasons: it increases the school's control over the content and pace of change; it acknowledges the subtle nature of change in schools, because it begins with the school as a whole; the plan can be a coherent set of reforms which take the unique culture of the school into account; it offers a systematic and sustained approach to change and it assumes that change is an organic process of growth.

School change strategies need to start with the assumption that schools are at different levels of development, and are facing different types of problems. It is erroneous to assume that "disadvantaged" South African schools all face the same problems (Roberts, 1998). The strength of school development planning is that each school starts with an audit which will reveal the problems and issues which are peculiar to that school.

However, this could also be a weakness, if schools which are not at a place where they are ready to engage in school development planning, are expected to do so. Hopkins (1991) suggests that schools which already have some sense of internal coherence can best do development planning. To use the typology discussed earlier, schools which are "stuck" will find it most difficult to engage in school development planning. Many South African schools have little internal coherence and would probably need to have certain basics in place before engaging in school development planning.

Certainly the initial stages of an evaluation of the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP) in KwaZulu Natal revealed that schools which were already functioning well, were able to engage in school development planning more successfully than schools which were ineffective (pers. comm. Eric Schollar, September 1998). Similarly, an evaluation of the Thousand Schools Project revealed that stuck schools were not in a position to effectively use the resources and services made available to them (Haasbroek, 1998b). School development planning requires a fairly high level of reflective thinking and it is not certain that all staff in schools have this capacity at present. Schools which can balance the demands of development and maintenance will find it most easy to engage in development planning.

This is the conundrum presenting in school improvement: "moving" schools are better able to make effective use of the school development planning strategy because they are organizationally more coherent. Schools which are "stuck" struggle to use school development planning effectively because they do not have the organizational coherence and the supportive culture which they need to develop! These are the schools which need the most external support and focus as they begin their development journey.

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A study by Wallace (1991, cited in Fullan, 1993) on schools doing school development planning found that the required developmental planning process did not match the realities and complexities of the school. The development plan represented additional work which proved of limited value in actually supporting the changes.

Reviewing or auditing the school is the first step in a school development plan. A potential problem is that this type of school-based review is not action. On the contrary, it postpones action. It is the step of moving from reflection to action which ultimately determines the value of the strategy (Bollen, 1987:26). There is a potential danger that school development planning will focus more on the making of the actual plan than on the implementing of the action plans.

An evaluation of school-based reviews which were deemed compulsory for schools by the local education authority (LEA) in England and Wales showed that the process was not as successful as expected (Clift, 1987:60). It did not seem to have motivated teachers to make tangible changes in their working practices or to redeploy the resources available to them to any great effect. This was probably due to teachers' lack of experience and expertise in the process of school based review and perhaps to a lesser extent to their lack of commitment to a scheme originating outside their school. School based- review is time consuming and demanding, requiring teachers to divert substantial amounts of their time and energy to it from other duties. Clift concludes that it is questionable whether school-based review is an efficient means of bringing about school improvement.

Since auditing or school-based review is the first step of a school development plan, it is often given the most attention. Once a school has done the initial audit, the steps which follow are also potentially difficult. There is a danger that drawing up of clear action plans to meet the goals set by the school becomes too time-consuming for teachers, as is implementing the plans on top of the usual teaching and preparation commitments. Teachers need to be given space and time to implement development plans. Often this is a luxury that schools cannot afford, and so implementation simply becomes an added burden to teachers. It is absolutely imperative that action plans relate directly to the goal of improving teaching and learning.

Monitoring and evaluating the success of the implementation of plans is not always an easy task for those who have been closely involved with the project. It is important to have on-going monitoring of the project as it proceeds, rather than waiting until the end to decide that it did not succeed. Often problems can be identified and rectified early on during the process of implementation.

School development planning starts with an audit of the school, which may be fairly unstructured (for example, simply listing all the strengths and weaknesses of the school) or more structured according to a particular framework. For example, the Improving the Quality of Education for All (IQEA) project in Britain, recommends that schools do an audit using the following internal conditions as an organising framework: staff development, involvement, inquiry and reflection, leadership, co-ordination and collaborative planning (Hopkins, *et al.* 1994). The following section suggests that the findings from the effective schools research might provide a useful audit framework.

Using effective schools findings as a framework

The findings of effective schools research could possibly be used to help schools to prioritise which areas they should focus on first. Otherwise a school may decide, for example, that the most important action plan is to buy sports uniforms for the soccer team. While this may be important for this school at one level, it may not be the most vital priority in achieving quality teaching and learning. All action plans need to contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Recent South African research shows the following were interlocking features of resilient schools: a sense of agency and responsibility; flexible and purposive leadership; a focus on learning and teaching as the central activities of the school; a safe and organisationally functioning institutional environment; consistent disciplinary practices anchored in educational practices and personal interaction; and a culture of concern (Christie, 1997b: 4). The study had anticipated that parental involvement and school governance would feature as sources of resilience, but this was not the case.

It may be possible to use these characteristics as a way of helping schools to address their own problems. For example, if a focus on learning and teaching as the central activities of the school is a key feature of resilient schools, schools may ask themselves the question "What is happening in our school that **prevents** our school from having this focus?" Although these findings would be helpful to schools in prioritising their development foci, there would still need to be an ongoing process which enables teachers and management to reflect on and understand the culture of their school, and to see how the school culture is hindering the school's development.

School development planning can be a useful strategy for schools to begin their journey of development. It requires reflective thinking and problem-solving skills as well as a framework which will enable schools to prioritise the issues and problems which they face. It also demands time - it cannot simply be added on to teachers' current workload. Most importantly, it requires a focus on both the external structural problems and the internal organizational and cultural issues faced by the school. A school which simply designs an action plan to, for example, stop late coming without understanding the organizational and cultural issues around the problem, will be setting itself up to fail. A sustainable change process must reflect on the culture and the organization of the school.

Key themes

The following Figure 4 picks up the key themes which have emerged from this chapter and represents them as continua which illustrate different ways of understanding and of implementing whole school development. The first two conceptual themes or continua emerge from the literature review. The first theme examines different ways of understanding school change. For example, an organization may have an empirical-rational understanding of school change which focuses only on changing structure, or it may have an normative-re-educative understanding of school culture which focuses on changing both structure and culture. Obviously, as this is a continuum, an organization may fall anywhere between these two poles. The second theme is the use of the school development planning strategy. Here an organization may implement school development planning in an atomistic or an holistic way, or somewhere between these two poles.

The last three themes emerge from the data analysis. The writing of Chapters 2 and 3 was a cyclical, rather than a linear process. An initial literature review was revised and developed as a result of understandings which emerged from the interview analysis. During the analysis of the five interviews, common practices and understandings emerged from the work of the organisations.

The third theme is the emphasis placed on school development planning, where an organisation may use this as the only strategy which is used, or it may be one of a number strategies within a broader process of development. The fourth theme examines the focus of the school change. An organisation may take a strong internal school focus for change projects, or may have an external focus on the school community. The fifth theme is the constitution of the school development committee. This committee may comprise only teachers or it may be made up of a wide range of stakeholders.

It made sense to represent these continua at this point, before the data is presented, as the organisations are mapped onto these continua in the next chapter.

Figure 4: Conceptualising whole school development in South Africa

South African whole school development

Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational Focus only on structure		Normative-re-educative Focus on culture and structure

Use of the school development planning strategy

Atomistic		Holistic

Emphasis placed on SDP

Used as key strategy		Used as one strategy within a broader process

Focus of school change

Internal, school focus		External, community focus

Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only		All stakeholders

Concluding comments

This chapter has described the two major frameworks for understanding quality schooling. The first is called school effectiveness research, which has a strong focus on the school characteristics which make a school "effective". There is little focus on the process of change. This framework has little need for understanding the complexity of school change, because its focus is on the *product* of a good school. The second framework is school improvement, which focuses on how schools change most successfully. Within this paradigm there is a strong need to understand how school change works most successfully, because the focus is on the *process* of school change.

Although there are international examples of these two frameworks merging, this is not really evident in South Africa. The South African concept of whole school development falls within the framework of school improvement.

International literature seems to point to the need for school change processes to deal with both structure (for example, the management structures, the decision-making processes, timetable arrangements) and culture (people's assumptions and beliefs, displayed through norms and behaviours). Reform efforts which only focus on the structure of the organisation seldom bring about sustainable change.

One of the most popular strategies for school improvement is school development planning. I have argued that the strategy can be interpreted and implemented in two different ways: holistically or atomistically. If school development planning is to bring about a change in school culture (and not only in structure), the literature suggests that it should be implemented in an holistic way, using a framework which enables schools both to prioritise their developmental needs and to reflect on their beliefs and values.

The chapter concluded with a conceptual framework for South African whole school development which set up a number of continua, onto which the implementation of a school development programme can be mapped. These continua will be used in the next chapter as a way of representing the practice of the five organisations studied.

Chapter 3
Approaches to school development in South Africa

Background

This chapter examines five organisations which are working in the field of school development or organisational change in South Africa. These organisations are:

- National Business Initiative (NBI) co-ordinating the Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) - KwaZulu Natal
- St Mary's School Change Project - Gauteng
- Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) - Western Cape
- Education Support Project (ESP) - Gauteng
- Teacher Inservice Project (TIP) - Western Cape

These five represent a sample of the organisations involved in school development in South Africa. The first survey of NGOs involved in whole school development was conducted by the Joint Education Trust *Teacher Education Audit* (NGO sector) in 1995. In 1996, Potterton conducted a further survey for the *School Development in South Africa Report* (Christie and Potterton, *et al.*, 1997) which surveys 13 NGOs engaged in whole school development. The Sacred Heart School Development Project's *Source Document on Whole School Development and In-service Teacher Development* (1997: 18) lists nine NGOs which have a holistic approach to whole school development and seven provincial education departments who responded to their request for information. However, for the purposes of this study, it was decided to focus on five organisations to get more in-depth information.

Semi-structured interviews were held with the director or co-ordinator of each of the organisations in October/ November 1996. This chapter draws out the key issues from the interviews with a particular focus on:

- how each organisation implements their school development or school change programme:

- the organisation's understanding of a quality school;

- the organisation's understanding of school development and change (including the values and principles which underpin their programme);

- how the socio-economic context of the schools has impacted on the programme and

- the way in which they use school development planning to bring about change in the school culture.

It became clear in Chapter 3 that culture is a key element of change in school improvement. It is also clear that school development planning is a common strategy used. The analysis attempted to ascertain how the various organisations made use of a school development planning strategy. and if they did so in a way which could change the school culture.

Where possible. information was drawn from annual reports. articles written by members of the organisation and other documents published by the organisations. The Sacred Heart School Development Project's Source Document on *Whole School Development and In-service Teacher Development*. (May 1997) and Christie and Potteron *et al's* report *School Development in South Africa* (April. 1997) have also been used. Unless otherwise stated. the information on each organisation has been elicited from the interview transcript.

It must be stated that such a study does not. and cannot hope to evaluate the impact of the programmes offered by the various organisations. The impact of any programme can only be evaluated against the specific aims of that programme (Wickham. 1996). Each of the programmes described here is underpinned with different values and understandings of school development. as well as having different aims. Thus the study in no way compares the efficacy of the organisations nor judges which is the "best" way to do whole school development in South Africa. To do so would be presumptuous.

This chapter presents the data from the interviews and describes how some NGOs in South Africa are currently implementing whole school development. It then "maps" the programme of each organization onto the conceptualisation which emerged from broader research and literature in the

field. It hopes to show how the conceptualization developed in Chapter 2 can be applied to the work of NGOs in South Africa.

It should also be noted that it is the nature of programmes offered by NGOs to be flexible and dynamic as they are changed according to their perceived effectiveness. Thus the picture painted during the interviews of October/November 1996 may be slightly different from what these NGOs are currently doing in the field.

Methodology

An interview schedule was the instrument chosen to collect data from the five non-government organisations. The interview schedule was designed by two people over a number of weeks, and then circulated to a research team of three others for comment. Some changes were made, which involved mostly tightening up the meaning of questions and changing the order of questions. A member of the team then trialed the instrument with a fieldworker from a local NGO, while three other members observed the process. The observers made notes of which questions did not work well and the schedule was revised accordingly.

As a result of the pilot interview, it was felt that it would be better to begin the interview with bland factual questions about how many schools the organisation works with. This is in line with Measor's advice to start with "innocuous things" that will not cause the interviewee to be edgy or suspicious at the beginning (1985: 69). As a result, the first part of the Interview Schedule (Appendix A) dealt with factual questions such as how many schools the organisation works with, whether the programmes were certified, and so forth.

The second part of the schedule dealt with a description of what the organisation does with schools, the problems and challenges which the programme has faced and the role of the organisation in the development of the school. The third part of the interview probed the organisation's theoretical and conceptual understandings of school development and school change. The final part dealt with how the programme was monitored and evaluated.

I then conducted interviews in October/November 1996 with the directors or co-ordinators of five NGOs involved in school development. The interviews took place in the offices of the organisations and lasted for 60 to 90 minutes. This translated into 25 - 30 pages of typed transcript. The length of the interview depended on how well I already knew the programme under scrutiny. Three of the organisations were well to known to me. so I was able to go through certain questions more quickly. This probably had an adverse affect on the comparability of the interview data. The interview schedule was semi-structured with questions and specific probes. However. there was some flexibility in the order of the questions with some interviews. This was made possible because I was the only person doing the interviews and would be doing the analysis.

Gaining access for the interviews was not a problem. A letter (Appendix B) was sent to each organisation explaining the nature of the research and the ground which would be covered by the interview. The letter stated that the interview would cover four key areas: the overall aims of the organisation. details about the intervention. the approach taken to school development and the organisation's understanding of the change process. Interviewees were not given the interview schedule before hand as we did not want them to prepare answers in advance. With hindsight. some preparation may have been useful. since often the directors did not have clear cut answers to questions about their theoretical underpinnings or their understandings of whole school development.

On returning to the data for purposes of analysis. it seems that the weakness of the schedule was that it was not focused enough. Throughout the process of developing the schedule. this point had been raised and was not really dealt with sufficiently. The schedule covered a broad range of information. some of which is clearly not relevant. Looking back. there was not a need to ask about management structure of the organisation. or whether programmes were certificated. The topic of evaluation could also have been omitted as it was not possible to do justice to it at the end of an interview and it was dealt with in a cursory way. It is a large issue which should be dealt with in a different study. There needed to be a much stronger focus on why organisations made the choices which they did.

For this particular study, only some parts of the interview information will be used. Additional information was requested from the organisations via a written questionnaire (Appendix C). The questionnaire aimed to gain more information of the organisation's understanding of the concept "school culture", their understanding of the role which school culture plays in school development and how the organisation believes that school development planning could be used as a strategy to address school culture. Three organisations did not respond to the questionnaire. The information obtained from the other organisations has been included in the data analysis. As the focus of the study shifted from empirical to conceptual, it was felt that it was not imperative to triangulate the data analysis with the organisations.

Two years after conducting the interviews, my own understanding of school development has deepened and changed. I have a clearer sense of the importance of culture and process, and these are the concepts which I would focus on more clearly if I were to do the interviews again. The schedule should have focused more clearly on the *process* of development, on the principles and on the concept of how organisations understand changing the school culture.

National Business Initiative - Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP)

Interview with Koman Ramalingum, Programme Co-ordinator, Durban

The Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP) is an enabling framework for improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools. It is a concept which allows different role players - schools, local business and education departments - to work together towards this goal (Perlman, 1995: 2). The EQUIP approach to school development has emerged out of research and policy work over a period of 3 to 4 years (Sacred Heart, 1997: 22). In 1996, the programme was being piloted with groups of 8 to 10 schools in three provinces: KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape. In August 1998, EQUIP was working directly with 40 schools in KwaZulu Natal (pers. comm. K. Ramalingum). The interview was conducted with the co-ordinator of the Durban branch of NBI, and thus focuses particularly on the eight pilot schools in KwaZulu Natal.

Description of the programme

The EQUIP programme in KwaZulu Natal is run in the following way. Facilitators go into a school and work initially with the Principal of the school. Through interactions with the Principal, meetings are set up with the rest of the school stakeholders. These are heads of department, teachers, learners (Grade 7 in primary schools) and parents. Facilitators work with each of these separate groups and the outcome of the process ensures that each group elects a number of representatives, who then come together to form a School Development Committee.

This School Development Committee comprises approximately 15 people. There are usually five representatives from the teachers, five from the parents and five from the learners. The Committee participates in an intensive series of workshops which are aimed at building their capacity to participate more actively in the development of the school. These workshops essentially follow the school development planning process. The process involves the identification of specific goals

relative to good school benchmarks; the drawing up of plans to achieve these goals; the implementation of these plans and the evaluation of the plans (Sacred Heart, 1997: 21).

The workshops begin with a SWOT analysis where the members of the School Development Committee identify the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities and the threats facing the school. They identify what the schools needs are and then prioritise these needs. The Committee then translates these priorities into action plans and strategies. Tasks are allocated to various members, who will take responsibility for different strategies. Time frames are set and members discuss which is the best way in which to meet the targets which has been set.

These priorities and plans form part of the school's development plan. This is a document about the school which includes the following information: the vision and mission; how the mission will be operationalised; the teacher:pupil ratio; any specific community problems; the priorities and action plans and what they will cost the school.

These school plans then go to the EQUIP Interim Board which will be made up of 50% government representation and 50% business representation. The Board analyses and critiques the plans. For example, a school may have plans to become a technical school, but there is in fact a technical school 10 kilometres distance from this school. The Board then cannot approve the school's plan to become a technical school. The Board's suggestions are fed back to the School Development Committee by a facilitator. Since NBI is a business organisation, the plans are taken to companies that have committed financial and human resources to education initiatives. The companies then give money or expertise to the school which enables them to implement their plans.

The KwaZulu Natal Effective Schooling Project (KESP) has been facilitating the development of the eight EQUIP pilot schools in KwaZulu Natal. Their experience is that most schools strike a balance between wanting to improve their physical resources and focussing on staff development for teachers and management. Some of the needs which have emerged from workshops are: a first aid box; career guidance; in-service training of teachers; adjustment of high teacher:pupil ratios; fundraising skills; security; working toilets; classroom doors and a sporting code (Perlman, 1996: 5). One of the plans from a school had no focus on material resources - the key areas for action

were teacher and pupil motivation, a refresher course for teachers and improving the parental involvement in the school.

The process of developing a school development plan is a lengthy one. In some schools it has taken 18 months, but the NBI believes that replicating the process would be more rapid. The target is a three-year time-span. The first phase is the pre-planning phase of getting stakeholders interested. The second phase is the school development committee producing a school development plan. The third phase is the implementation of the action plan and the fourth process is the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation.

The most significant problems encountered by EQUIP are that pupils and teachers are not necessarily motivated to become part of the this kind of process. Many of them feel totally demotivated and demoralised by the educational system. The irony is that the very problems which the programme sets out to change are in fact the stumbling blocks to the successful implementation of the programme. The following example describes this: "For example, in a school in Ezakaweni, one of the pupils was murdered on the school premises. He was stabbed by another pupil. And the incident shocked the school to such an extent, that we haven't been able to successfully succeed with the process" (Interview, 1996: 12). This seems to indicate that "succeeding with the process" is not able to take the real situation of the school into account.

What is a quality school?

According to Ms Ramilingum, an effective school is one where there is a motivated teaching staff, who are able to make learning as interesting and beneficial to the learners as possible. The result of this learning would be a high pass rate and a high number of pupils utilising opportunities after school. An effective school is one which manages its finances and human and material resources well. A quality school is operated on democratic principles, where teachers and mature pupils play a role in the decision-making process. Such a school also manages to bring parents on board so that they can support their children in receiving the best possible education.

NBI's understanding of school development

The NBI believes that any approach to school quality improvement must be integrated, which means it must look both at human resource development needs as well as the physical needs of the school. NBI makes a distinction between the role of management and governance in school development and chooses to take a governance route where parents and community members are part of the development team. There is a strong emphasis on importance of partnerships, both with the school community and with business (Sacred Heart, 1997: 22).

EQUIP believes that outsiders cannot inject quality into a school, but that it is vital that the people in the school take responsibility for planning their own development. Grand national strategies to improve quality are not able to adapt to the unique needs of each classroom, school and community. This is why priorities for improving quality should be determined by the school stakeholders themselves (NBI, 1995: 1). It is vital to have the participation of all the school's stakeholders.

School development is a slow, time-consuming process, one in which there is a continual need to learn and to relook at what the approach has been. Facilitators must work at a pace and in the language that people are comfortable with. The approach to development must be integrated - piecemeal introduction of various elements will not work (NBI, 1995: 2). Monitoring and evaluation of school action plans is vital and forms an important part of successful programmes (ibid.).

EQUIP believes that partnerships are a key element to delivering quality education in South Africa. A potential five-way partnership is envisaged, involving the government, foreign donors, local companies, schools and suppliers of goods and services (NBI, 1995: 3). As a business association, NBI believes that education quality improvement is close to the heart of business because the products of the education system are nowhere near to the requirements of business.

How does the socio-economic context of the schools impact on the programme?

The EQUIP pilot schools are ex-Department of Education and Training (DET) and ex-Department of Education and Culture (DEC). They have minimal facilities and resources. The communities are low income communities where the financial capacity of parents is very limited. In one school, the pupils were able to bring only 20c as a contribution to buying a school photocopying machine.

The external evaluator of the programme in KwaZulu Natal mentioned how the programme worked out very differently in different school contexts. He said the programme has been working extremely well in a school in Eshowe where there is a cohesive community and a sense of commitment to the school (shown for example, in the fact that all learners pay the school fees). The situation in township schools is quite different (pers. comm. Eric Schollar, 06/08/98).

The parents are largely illiterate. This has had an impact on the design of the programme in terms of choosing facilitators who are fluent in Zulu. Facilitators also need to understand the local context, so that the examples which they use are appropriate. Concepts are often presented pictorially in workshops.

EQUIP's approach is about empowering the school stakeholders to take responsibility for their whole school. This is important in South Africa because there has been a situation where the opportunity to develop capacity was deliberately withheld from certain people. However, there cannot only be a focus on human resource development, because "you cannot have high quality learning and teaching taking place in a school where the toilets are not working, or there are no windows, or rain is coming through the ceiling while you are busy teaching" (Interview, 1996: 8).

Salient issues

The major focus of the programme is that schools form a development committee and write a development plan. EQUIP is the only programme of the five interviewed with such a strong focus on forming the school development committee with equal representation from parents, learners and

teachers. Other organisations seem to focus mostly on the role of the teacher in the school's development. although the Education Support Project (ESP) also has a strong community element.

It is also the only organisation interviewed that gives schools financial resources to actually implement their action plans. This is made possible through the emphasis on partnerships with foreign donors and local businesses. This is important in a time where the government resources are scarce and the majority of schools are poorly resourced. For example. the South African Schools Register of Needs conducted in 1996 revealed that 61% of South African schools have no telephone. 83% have no libraries and 24% have no water on site. Schools in the Eastern Cape. KwaZulu Natal and Northern Province are particularly badly resourced (Bot. 1997).

In answering the critical question : how is school development planning used to change the school culture? EQUIP does not seem to address the issue of school culture in a head-on way. although the school development committee workshops do lead to greater communication. understanding and tolerance amongst the committee. This is illustrated in the following anecdote:

> ...when the principal stood up and introduced himself and used his first name. there was a whole lot of giggles amongst everyone there. suddenly they realised that he has a name. he's not just a... And when he spoke about his life experiences...for the first time they saw him as a person. as somebody who has been through pain and has had difficulties in his life and feels things. he's not just this monster who is running the school and trying to keep us away from doing things that we enjoy...

This illustrates that simply by having different stakeholders from the school working together. the relationships and attitudes between them must change. However. the school development committee is only 15 members and it seems unlikely that these attitudes would easily spread to the rest of the school community. This raises the issue of how a small development committee can ensure that new attitudes. understandings etc. are filtered into the whole school. Perhaps whole school development NGOs are repeating the same mistakes which subject-specific NGOs did when they only developed the skills and enthusiasm of one or two teachers who then struggled to make changes in an unwelcoming environment. The "change agents" of the school development committees might have similar difficulties in spreading the gospel of school development to those teachers not on the committee. This is certainly a problem raised by the Catholic Institute of Education. which will be explored later.

In the description of a quality school, the focus is on effective learning and teaching, good results, democratic principles and good management of resources. There was no mention made of relationships between teachers or learners or parents, nor of the beliefs that these people hold about education and about each other.

There is a strong focus on shifting the responsibility for development to the school. If this happened it would certainly indicate a shift in attitude within the school. It would indicate a shift toward the school becoming more effective or more "resilient" to use a concept borrowed from Margaret Wang by Christie and Potterton *et al.* (1997: 10). In a study on 30 South African schools which were succeeding against the odds, they report that one of the characteristics displayed by these "resilient" schools was the ability to take responsibility and do things for themselves. While many schools wait endlessly for "the Department", resilient schools take the initiative and fix broken windows or doors themselves.

EQUIP does recognise that the culture of the school can either embrace development or can resist or reject development and change. Behaviours and attitudes that are not contributing to effective teaching and learning need to be acknowledged and sensitively addressed. A deeper understanding of the factors which affect quality of education in the school through the SWOT analysis can provide an incentive for positive changes at the school.

Mapping EQUIP on the continua
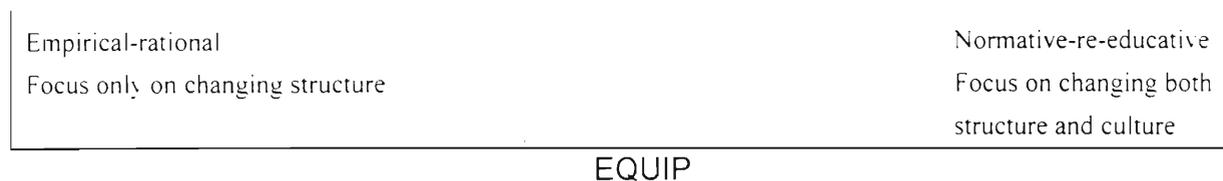
a) Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational	Normative-re-educative
Focus only on changing structure	Focus on changing both structure and culture

EQUIP

b) Use of the school development planning strategy

Atomistic	Holistic

EQUIP

c) Emphasis placed on school development planning

School development planning used as a key strategy	School development planning used as only one strategy within a broader process

EQUIP

d) Focus of school change

Internal, school focus	External, community focus

EQUIP

e) Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only	All stakeholders

EQUIP
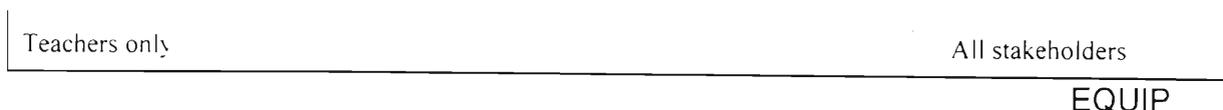
St Mary's DSG Outreach (Whole School Change Project), Pretoria, Gauteng

Interview with Sally Curren, (Director), Alex Hasset and Motswale Kanyane (Facilitators)

The St Mary's Change Project forms part of the St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls Outreach, which was established in 1987. Initially, the project played the facilitative role of getting other NGOs to deliver Inservice workshops to 14 primary schools. The Whole School Change Project was started in 1996.

Description of the programme

The Project's target for change is the school organisation. The first step with schools who are interested is that they embark on a vision building programme. A three-day workshop is run for as many staff members as possible, as well as parents or community members who want to join in. These workshops are voluntary, and sometimes only half the staff, or fewer, attend. Those who attend develop a vision statement for the school, and then examine the barriers to that vision. On the basis of this, the teachers choose a particular focus which they believe that the school should work on. For example, it may be on team building, or on improving the relationships within the school etc. They develop an action plan for one specific issue which the school wants to deal with. The aim is to integrate school development planning and the vision building.

This development plan is submitted to the regional education department, although currently there is no funding to make the plan a reality. But the Project feels that it is important that the department knows what the school is planning to do. It should become a yearly expectation that the school submits a plan. The Project would like to see the Gauteng Education Department drive the process, so that development planning becomes a priority for schools and not something to be done only if there is time.

Before the democratic elections of 1994, NGOs gained their legitimacy in the eyes of the community through being seen as separate from the state education department. Now in order to

gain access to schools and to use school time. NGOs must work closely with the department. This is becoming a requisite for funders also, who are demanding that NGOs work in partnership with provincial education departments.

Once a school has developed its vision and action plans, the Project offers support as the school implements these plans. This support might take the form of staff development workshops in the afternoon after school, or fundraising workshops, or conflict resolution workshops. The Project plans to stay with a school for three years, but is not sure is this will be enough time to see change happen. There needs to be real organisational change within the school, demonstrated by the school having structures and procedures that are different.

The problems encountered by the project are limited time for workshops and the actual pressures faced by teachers in schools.

> You arrive at a school, and the principal has been phoned by the department and has had to go to a meeting. So what do you do? You work with the staff without the principal...When you do get staff together, they want to talk around the issues of redeployment and of staff taking packages. You know, school development planning is the least...(Interview, 1996: 17).

This anecdote seems to support the contention that the situation of uncertainty and demotivation in schools can often work against rather than in support of the implementation of school change programmes. The international literature on whole school development presupposes efficient and functioning national and provincial education departments which is not always the case in South Africa. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991: 97) integrate school and local education authority (LEA) development plans within frameworks set by national policy and indicate ways in which school and LEA planning cycles can be coordinated (Schofield, 1995: 9). In South Africa, school development planning is not yet located within a broader structural support system of provincial Departments (although this is starting to happen is some provinces, such as Gauteng).

The programme is aware that it cannot continue being a pilot programme, but would need to have a viable and replicable programme that will work in other schools. This is what the NBI EQUIP programme is wanting to do - research a viable school development programme through piloting

it in a few schools and then taking the model to scale. However, there are questions around this process regarding the availability of the intensive support which schools require.

What is a quality school?

The Project believes that a quality school has a vision for itself and has functional management structures which are participatory and consultative. There should be a culture of teaching and learning as well as active involvement of staff and parents in the school activities. There should be school policy which includes a code of conduct, grievance procedures, disciplinary procedures etc. and staff development structures, such as staff development committees so that staff upgrading becomes a school-based activity or a cluster school-based activity. A good school also has self-evaluation structures and develops proactive planning strategies (Christie and Potterton *et al.*, 1997).

Understanding of school development

The Project believes that it is vital to get active participation from the communities. There is a need to work according to the new principles which underlie the new South Africa, because the country is trying to create a new democracy. The Project wants to build a relationship with the school - they don't believe that an organisation should simply run workshops and then leave. School change is a process which is different from school to school. Therefore the Project tries to avoid a "programme" approach to school change.

It is important to target the organisation of the school as the first point of change. They believe that once the whole staff has got together and has developed a vision and looked at how they want things to be different in their school, change will happen more easily.

The Project sees their role as being one of initiating and facilitating change, as well as raising awareness and building capacity. They need to support the school change project until it is able to continue on its own. The Project sees that much of what makes school development work is quite unpredictable. For example, they have found that it is easier to work in junior primary schools

than in senior primary schools and suggest that this may be because the presence of male teachers in senior primary schools is obstructive to the process of change.

Initially the Project felt that a strong and democratic leader in the school would aid school development. However, they had experiences where the strongest principals kept them out of their schools. In one school, two teachers took the initiative to get the process going. So development can happen without the help of the principal.

The Project has been influenced by the writing of Michael Fullan and Hargreaves on school change. The reason for taking the route of development planning was a "gut-feel" that this was the way to go, together with a sense that inservice courses did not seem to be the main need of the schools with which the Project had been working. There was also a sense of a new trend to approach schools as organisations. The funders like JET (Joint Education Trust) and Nedcor supported the change of focus from teacher inservice programmes to an organisational focus.

How does the socio-economic context of the schools impact on the programme?

The Project works with schools in Atteridgeville, and in the informal settlement which has grown up along side it. Atteridgeville is seen as one of the better off townships, where children have their basic needs met. The children from the informal settlement often do not have their basic needs met, since there is greater poverty within the informal settlement. Children from the informal settlement attend schools within Atteridgeville. Most of these schools are basically resourced in terms of classrooms, desks and electricity.

This means that the emphasis of the programme is not too much on the school's physical needs but more on human or organisational development. It also means that access to the schools is made easier for the Project, since all the schools do have telephones.

Salient issues

The main focus of the programme is going through the development planning cycle with teachers from a school. As with the EQUIP project, there is a recognition that support from the community is vital. However, the St Marys Change Project does not have such a strong emphasis on including the parents in school development. The idea of including community support seems to exist more at a conceptual than at a practical level. They do place emphasis on the school having a school development team which will be able to take the process forward.

There is not sufficient information in the interview to answer the question about how school development planning is used to change the school culture. On the surface, it would seem that there is very little focus on school culture. The definition of a quality school seems to focus more on structures than on relationships, attitudes or beliefs.

Mapping the St Mary's Change Project on the continua

a) Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational	Normative-re-educative
Focus only on changing structure	Focus on changing both structure and culture

St Mary's

b) Use of the school development planning strategy

Atomistic	Holistic

St Mary's

c) Emphasis placed on school development planning

	School development planning
School development planning used as a key strategy	used as only one strategy within a broader process

St Mary's

d) Focus of school change

Internal. school focus	External. community focus

St Mary's

e) Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only	All stakeholders

St Mary's
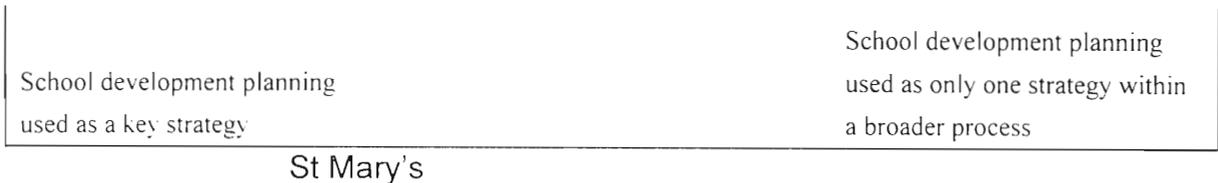
Catholic Institute of Education
Interview with Deborah Williams, Western Cape Regional Co-ordinator

CIE is running the Whole School Development and Renewal pilot programme in 10 schools in the Western Cape and 16 schools in the Northern Cape. Most of these are primary schools. They also impact on other schools through work with the Teacher Inservice Project (TIP).

Description of the Programme

The focus of the CIE Whole School Development project is on developing capacity in individual schools to understand their own needs, through a process of development planning (Sacred Heart, 1997: 19).

This is the only organisation interviewed where schools are asked to pay for the intervention. This is in order for the schools to make a commitment and to get schools to realise that they needed to take responsibility of their own development.

The pilot project which is called "Whole school development and renewal", runs in the following way. Each school elects a school development committee, and the members attend a residential course for two days and then meet every Friday afternoon. The principal must be part of the school development team, as well a mix of the staff. It is important to try to find the real leaders of the schools and have them on the team. For example, if a school has a strong SADTU contingent, there needs to be a Sadtu representative on the development committee.

CIE facilitators meet the school development teams at their schools on average once every two weeks, to plan with them, to review the process, to provide resources etc. The facilitators also work with the whole staff initially to get them to understand what the concept of whole school development means. They would do a needs assessment to ascertain what the staff see as the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Then the facilitators try to shift the responsibility of working with the whole staff to the school development team.

CIE facilitators play an important role as external agents who clarify for the staff what the role of the development team is. CIE believes it is vital for the development team to facilitate the school development process, as this will lead to sustainability of the process.

CIE says that it has taken the pilot schools nearly one year to understand the concept of whole school development. In the second year of the project, schools should be working within a framework and implementing school change project. For example, one school might decide to make changes in the curriculum, while another might focus on team building amongst staff.

CIE is trying to develop leadership within the school which can sustain development. Teachers are encouraged to look inside themselves and do some personal reflection, looking at their own values and how these values translate into classroom practice. This personal change should lay the foundation for them improving their relationships with each other. This should lead into the concept of teaching as ministry, where teachers go out and share and lead in order to give to the rest of the school.

The programme targets relationships as the first point of change. It also tries to get schools to think about their values and the kind of culture that they want in the school. There is clearly a strong focus on giving teachers the space to reflect on the values and beliefs which make up the culture of their school.

The problems experienced and reported are the victim mentality of teachers and the rationalisation and its effects on school. There is a strongly negative culture in many schools, where teachers are negative about having too many children in their classes etc. The other problem experienced by CIE is the gap between the school development team and the staff. There has often been a relationship of distrust between the staff and the school development committee. Williams says that often the wrong people have been elected onto the development team.

What is a quality school?

CIE has developed a framework for Whole School Development and Renewal which comprises five main areas. A quality school is one which is aware of and working on all of these areas.

The framework places **leadership and management** at the centre. **Relationships** are vital and there needs to be a focus on conflict resolution, team building and personal vision. In terms of **organisation and development** the school needs to focus on issues like its values and culture, its ethos and identity, it vision and mission. There needs to be strategic planning and evaluation and proper structures and procedures which allow information flow and decision making. There must be an emphasis on staff development.

A quality school also focuses on **curriculum renewal** which includes change both in what is taught and how it is taught. There is a focus on classroom management, democratising the classroom, co-operative learning, an integrated approach to learning and on language in education. There should also be parental involvement in the curriculum. The last area of focus is the **environment**. This comprises the links with the community and with the education department. There needs to be a focus on governance, fundraising and parental involvement in the school.

CIE's understanding of school development

The first thing that makes school development work is that the whole staff needs to "own" the process - they need to understand what it means, what the implications are and they need to make a commitment to it. The principal of the school and the parents must also be involved. CIE believes that every person is a leader and every person can change. Each school must have the freedom move at its own pace.

CIE sees their role in the process as being to encourage and motivate and develop the confidence of the school staff. They are there to keep the school on track with their own development process and to provide the resources and training that they need to be able to implement their vision for their school.

CIE draws a lot of inspiration from a self-renewal programme that has been run in Catholic schools in Australia. This approach has different terminology, but also works with parents and focuses on school organisational issues. CIE base their material on literature that comes from the church on leadership and Christian leadership styles, as well as school change literature by Per Dalin and

Michael Fullan. They believe that if people have a faith, then they want to relate it to their life and their work.

How does the socio-economic context of the schools impact on the programme?

The schools with which CIE works in the Cape Flats and in the townships are under-resourced. The schools in the Northern Cape are mostly farm schools, which are also under-resourced. These have a small staff of about eight teachers. This impacts the programme in that because of impoverishment, schools are almost debilitated and staff unmotivated. This means that the programme needs to be really flexible. CIE had hoped that schools would have vision statements and strategic plans by the end of the first year. But the issue of rationalisation meant that the organisation needed to shift focus and spend time doing conflict resolution training. Facilitators felt that it was important to continually affirm teachers on how well they were managing with the crisis and the transitions.

Salient issues

It is interesting that EQUIP, St Mary's Whole School Change Project and CIE all stress the importance of the school taking ownership or responsibility for the development process. However, it appears that CIE has the strongest practical focus on developing the capacity of the school development committee to sustain the process of school development. CIE takes a strong stand on this by developing the skills of a development team who should take responsibility for the process within the school. This is not without its problems as other staff do not automatically trust the development team. There is also the problem of staff turnover in schools - a development team may fall apart if a few members leave the school. This can mean that the time and energy spent in developing the team can be wasted. Unlike EQUIP, CIE does not place emphasis on parents being part of the school development team.

How does CIE use school development planning to change the school culture? It is not clear that there is a link between the school development planning strategy and school culture, but the programme does have a strong focus on changing the attitudes and beliefs of teachers. There is a focus on changing relationships and a strong emphasis on personal reflection and on spirituality.

Personal growth forms the foundation for each teacher contributing to the development of the school. This emphasis is not present in the other organisations, except perhaps TIP.

Mapping CIE on the continua

a) Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational	Normative-re-educative
Focus only on changing structure	Focus on changing both structure and culture

CIE

b) Use of the school development planning strategy

Atomistic	Holistic

CIE

c) Emphasis placed on school development planning

School development planning used as a key strategy	School development planning used as only one strategy within a broader process

CIE

d) Focus of school change

Internal, school focus	External, community focus

CIE

e) Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only	All stakeholders

CIE

Education Support Project (ESP), Gauteng
Interview with Andrew Schofield

The Education Support Project started in 1976 as an NGO which offered extra tuition to Matric students through Saturday schools. In 1996, the work of ESP was pared down as a number of key people left the organisation. At the time of the interview, Andrew Schofield was the District Development Unit Co-ordinator for the Soshanguve-Wonderboom District of the Gauteng Education Department, although he was talking about the work of ESP.

Description of the programme

The workshop programmes offered by ESP have moved away from staff support and staff skills upgrading and are concentrating on school development and staff development. Four workshops are offered to teachers in a school. The first workshop is on vision building and problem analysis, the second is on prioritising the needs, the third one is on developing an action plan, and the fourth one is bringing the action plans together to form a development plan. These reflect the classic steps of school development planning.

ESP recognised that a teacher-focussed, school-based programme was not sufficient as all problems in a school did not start and end with teachers. The focus on whole school change evolved when teachers starting prioritising the workshop on "school change" from a menu of workshops which they were given by ESP. Halfway through this workshop, the teachers said,"But we also have a problem with two SRCs who are fighting."

It became clear that there was also a need to work with students and with the broader school community. This approach was called whole school development which they defined as a programme which identifies problems in the school and uses different sectors of the school community to solve those problems. An important part of this approach is the school development plan, against which school communities can be held accountable. The plan consists of a staff development programme, a youth development programme and a parent governance programme.

The focus would be different in different schools, depending on the school's needs. One school may need to focus on students first, another school on the teachers. The access point of the programme is the school's problems. Schofield says that ESP's approach has always been a chaotic approach, rather than a linear rationalist approach. The approach is about identifying what problems exist in schools and deciding how they could work with these.

ESP is the only NGO interviewed that has moved into a more mainstream role with the Department of Education. ESP felt that they had the capacity to train and develop district officials in school development planning. They suggested to the Gauteng Department of Education that district development units were established which would become the co-ordinating structures for school development planning.

At the time of the interview, ESP was working with four secondary schools in Katlehong, Gauteng. ESP has always worked with secondary schools since they seemed to have the greatest problems on the surface, particularly with students in the SRCs.

What is a quality school?

A quality school is one with functioning governing structures, involved parent bodies, involved student bodies and committed teachers. There is a visionary leadership which is shared amongst everyone on staff and by the students. The teachers are involved in collaborative teaching like team teaching and in individual research because they are given the time to do so. The school is well-resourced by the Department. Students would be involved in a variety of learning styles. The teachers would have a good understanding of things like co-operative discipline and multiple intelligences and would be able to apply these understandings to their classrooms.

Understanding of school development

Encouraging staff to form school development committees and to develop school development plans is not sufficient to facilitate staff cohesion. More whole school development work (such as vision building, conflict resolution, problem analysis, organisation development) is needed, together with the establishment of representative community education structures. Community structures

can also serve to encourage school change processes, because school fragmentation is so severe in many schools (Schofield. 1995: 9).

ESP believes that one of the key values is to have absolute faith in the teacher's ability and the student's ability. Schofield believes that facilitators must have complete faith in the teachers' humanity and in their desire to get out of the mess that they're in.

It is absolutely vital that there is humility on the side of the facilitators, as well as an understanding of the context inside schools. It helps to have a Principal and management structure in place as well as if schools have resources like chalk and textbooks.

ESP sees their role as a collaborator and fellow traveller with the school. They use the idea of school change as a journey, or a process and when things are difficult, at least schools can say "we are on the road".

Key people who have influenced the theoretical conceptions of the programme are Michael Fullan. Per Dalin. Hargreaves. David Hopkins. Peter Cuttance and Howard Bradley from the Cambridge Institute as well as writers within chaos theory.

How does the socio-economic context of the schools impact on the programme?

The schools are all situated in townships in communities where there is 40% unemployment. high rates of youth marginalisation. high numbers of student drop-outs. high rates of women being abused and molested. alcoholism and child abuse. This context has impacted on the programme in that it has a strong emphasis on the whole community - parents. teachers and students. The programme is as interested in fixing leaking taps and building fences and encouraging grandmothers to knit school jerseys to sell. as in running staff development workshops for teachers and supporting students in forming a students' resource centre. These aspects of whole school development would be quite unique to impoverished or marginalised communities.

Schofield comments on the response of more affluent schools to the ESP approach:

"...white schools would come along and say, well, firstly, we've always done school development planning, and secondly, we don't need to train our youth in any other stuff, they don't need to be involved. And they would also say that our parents don't need this, because most of them are employed and so we just need to know what the new legislation says about governance..." (Interview, 1996: 12).

Schofield says that the majority of South African schools are in "marginalised" communities; are poorly resourced; have weak management, administration and governance structures and have fragmented staffs. He argues that before whole school development planning can occur in these schools, various forms of consensus building and organisation development need to take place (1995: 9). This reiterates the point made in Chapter 2 that some schools need first to develop their capacity before they can engage in school development planning. Thus the ESP approach to school change has always been to focus on processes within the school and to allow each school to choose its own development path.

Salient Issues

Of all the projects under scrutiny, ESP has the strongest community focus. ESP seems to have the broadest conception of what the "whole" school is - they have focussed on teacher development workshops, conflict resolution, organisational skills for SRCs and setting up community educational structures. All the other organisations remain within the school, working with teachers and some with parents. In fact, elsewhere Schofield has called the approach "sustainable school-community development" (nd). This means that the understanding of school development is broadened to include the development of the school alongside the sustainable development of the community.

How does ESP use school development planning to change the school culture? There is a strong belief that organisational development and consensus building must happen before school development planning can take place. However, there does not appear to be a strong focus on understanding the values and beliefs which exist within the school. The key focus rather is on seeing the school embedded within the context of its community and finding ways in which the school can contribute to community development and the community can contribute to the school's development.

Mapping ESP on the continua

a) Understanding of school change

| Empirical-rational | Normative-re-educative |
| Focus only on changing structure | Focus on changing both structure and culture |

ESP

b) Use of the school development planning strategy

| Atomistic | Holistic |

ESP

c) Emphasis placed on school development planning

| School development planning | School development planning |
| used as a key strategy | used as only one strategy within a broader process |

ESP

d) Focus of school change

| Internal, school focus | External, community focus |

ESP

e) Constitution of the school development committee

| Teachers only | All stakeholders |

ESP

Teacher Inservice Project (TIP), Western Cape
Interview with Sue Davidoff, Director

The Teacher Inservice Project is based at the University of the Western Cape and has been running programmes since 1993.

Description of the programme

TIP believes that the change process is a lengthy one: it probably takes a minimum of five years to turn a school around. They will usually begin by meeting a small group of people from the school. Initially the focus is on staff rather than trying to work with the whole community immediately. Their first intervention is that TIP facilitators interview all the staff members in a school to gain a deeper understanding of what they believe and perceive is happening in the school. This interview process starts to build relationships between the facilitator and the people in the school. It starts to build up trust and gives people the opportunity to talk about things that might not be raised in a workshop situation. It also gives TIP a deeper understanding of what is actually happening in the school.

TIP draws up an initial report on the basis of these interviews. This confidential report highlights the key issues that were raised in the interviews. The report also contains recommendations of what TIP believes is required for the school in order to proceed. General trends which seem to emerge are gaps between managment and the rest of the staff, a lack of vision, a lack of leadership, a lack of accountability, discipline problems with students and cliques within the school which can render the staff paralysed.

The process of vision building and the strategic planning process usually begin to address some of these issues. The vision-building process is quite a detailed process, since TIP believes that a school cannot build a vision until there is enough self-understanding in the school. Schools need to understand the values and the assumptions with which they operate.

During strategic planning the aim is to set up mechanisms for on-going evaluation. Schools need to set themselves particular goals, for example setting up an appraisal system.

TIP calls their approach a whole school organisation development approach. It is important because it gives schools the opportunity to come to some understanding of who they are and what they are.

> "When you are operating with a whole lot of unconscious norms and values which are impeding you, then you actually don't have choices, because you're not sure what's happening... This comes up so often in our workshops, we've got democratic decision-making processes in place, but none of the decisions are ever carried out, and I believe that it's because the culture of the school hasn't been addressed, and those things haven't begun to be unpacked, so that the school really understands who it is and can then begin to make choices about where it's going." (Interview, 1996: 7)

TIP sees it as vital that schools operate as coherent organisations. Otherwise, there is a little bit of Maths staff development here and some vision building there, and a little bit of appraisal. But this is not a foundation which will hold up the school. Schools need to build their organisational strength, to understand how they operate as organisations. This will build the foundation or the capacity for other interventions. If a school has that foundation or centre then it can respond to change in a proactive rather than a reactive way. This approach has aspects of the idea suggested by Hopkins *et al.* (1994), that schools first address their "management arrangements" before starting to implement particular development plans.

TIP works with about 15 to 20 schools at one time. They are both primary and secondary schools, depending on which schools request assistance from the organisation.

The problems arise largely in ex-DET schools where the culture of teaching and learning has broken down to such an extent that many teachers have lost a sense of purpose of what they are doing. Davidoff says that teachers have been thoroughly de-professionalised and so there is little commitment. Many teachers come to school late, if they come at all, and many come to school drunk and they have sexual relations with the school pupils.

What is a quality school?

There needs to be a certain level of self-understanding which allows the school to be a learning organisation. The school needs to be able to reflect on its practice and to question what the purpose of education is. A school should be able to fulfil its own purpose and vision and have the

mechanisms in place to do so. The school needs to be able to "unpack" what the underlying culture of the school is and see how this culture stands in the way of their doing what they want to achieve. A quality school has a commitment to human values, it is a place which is warm and nurturing and where relevant education is carried out. Relevant means that students come out of school with a sense of empowerment to contribute towards the kind of society we would all like to live in.

TIP's understanding of school development

TIP places school development within the context of organisation development. In order to understand a part of a school, one needs to understand the school as a whole first. Each school has a number of interweaving organisational elements. Each school has its own unique **identity or culture**. Other interdependent elements of organisational life are the **strategies** (planning, goals and evaluation), the **structures and procedures** (decision-making, accountability, information flow), the **technical support** (administration, financial management and resource control), and **personnel** (the staff, informal relationships, staff development, conflict management, conditions of service). In the centre is the important task of **leadership and management.** For a school to operate coherently and well, each element needs to be operating properly (Davidoff, 1995: 3).

TIP places a strong emphasis on the values of human dignity, integrity, honesty and authenticity. Facilitators must have the ability to listen, to observe and the openness to learn. Developing the whole person is important. The process is about developing whole human beings who have the possibility of fulfilling their own potential and have the confidence and the self-esteem to love themselves and therefore to love other people.

Good leadership and management is the crucial dimension to school development. Ownership of the process of change by teachers is particularly important. The school needs to be able to reflect upon its own practice and have the flexibility to do things differently. Development is not a linear process so we must understand the change process and the principles of development. For example, to think big but to start small. Its important to have the big picture in mind and then to map out the small steps so people do not become discouraged. It is important to do things that are manageable and contextually relevant.

TIP sees its role as one of building the capacity of school to become self-reliant. This means playing the role of counsellor, therapist, consultant and facilitator. They aim to enable the school to undergo a journey which means that the school can take responsibility for its own on-going development.

One of the theoretical understandings which has informed TIPs work is systems theory, an understanding that if one aspect of the school is dysfunctional then its going to affect the rest of the school. They have drawn on Michael Fullan's work on understanding educational change and the complexities of change. They are also connected with the work of Per Dalin - his organisation development approach is similar to TIPs approach. The programme has also been informed by basic organisation development theory as well as action research and reflective practice.

How does the socio-economic context of the schools impact on the programme?

The schools with which TIP works are working-class schools often in areas which are crime-ridden and gangster-controlled. There is violence in the family and violence in the community. Usually there is very little connection between the school and the community. This context has influenced the programme in terms of helping schools to see how they can find practical ways of linking with their communities. They are starting to work in clusters of schools, hoping to build close relationships between the schools, and in so doing building co-operative relationships between communities.

In South Africa particularly there are strong feelings of anger, frustration, impotence and lack of direction. TIP believes that schools cannot become effective until these issues are brought into the open and schools come to an understanding of who they are and what they are. When schools operate with a whole lot of unconscious norms and values, these can actually hinder the school from changing.

Often schools operate in *ad hoc* ways rather than as coherent organisations. TIP believes it is important to build organisational strength, so that the school can understand how it functions. This should create a foundation so that any other change efforts are sustainable.

TIP is aware that community development is not their brief. but they do want to build the awareness of schools in order that they will link more effectively with their communities.

Salient issues

Of all the programmes examined. TIP has the strongest and most obvious focus on changing the school culture. Their understanding of school culture is that it embraces the norms and practised values of the organisation : the unwritten rules. "the way we things around here". "Promoting real and sustainable change involves changing the culture of schools and promoting relationships between schools and communities" (Davidoff and de Jong. 1997: 5). In their most recent diagrammatic representation of the school. school culture is placed in the centre. as underpinning all the other parts. such as leadership. resources and vision. They take a strong organisation development stance and work only with teachers within a school. They do not aim to draw parents into the process. but believe that individuals schools will do so if necessary.

TIP places the strategy of school development firmly within an organisation development approach. They believe that there can only be meaningful development or change in a school if a) the culture is made conscious and b) is transformed into a more positive. consciously chosen culture. Their understanding is that school development planning cannot really address school culture because clear planning is a structural concern - structure and culture have a dialectical relationship. They believe that cultural change should. as a rule. precede structural change and not the other way round.

Mapping TIP on the continua

a) Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational	Normative-re-educative
Focus only on changing structure	Focus on changing both structure and culture

<div align="right">TIP</div>

b) Use of the school development planning strategy

Atomistic	Holistic

<div align="right">TIP</div>

c) Emphasis placed on SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

School development planning used as a key strategy	School development planning used as only one strategy within a broader process

<div align="right">TIP</div>

d) Focus of school change

Internal, school focus	External, community focus

TIP

e) Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only	All stakeholders

TIP

Concluding comments

A common thread which has emerged from the interviews with the five organisations is that the strategy of school development planning is used by all organisations to a lesser or greater extent. Some organisations use this strategy as the major part of their programme, while others see it simply as one part of wider organisational development strategies. The literature on school development planning seems to suggest that an holistic approach to school development planning is most useful for tackling issues of school culture, which is imperative for sustainable change. All the organisations were clear about the need to transfer skills to a school development committee, whom they hoped would be able to take the process of school development forward. However, it is not clear how successful this is in the long term. The more "stuck" a school is, the more external support it requires. The organisations each take a different stance on the idea of involving the community in the process of school development - EQUIP and ESP work closely with the community, while CIE and TIP start working with teachers first.

All the programmes rely heavily on well-skilled facilitators to support schools through the process of development. This is pivotal to the programmes and may be the loophole which means that the process of whole school development cannot be offered to all schools in South Africa, because facilitation is so labour- intensive and thus so costly. The complexity of the school change process means that it will be as successful as the facilitators are. This point is discussed further in Chapter four.

It is clear that there is no one "right" model of whole school development for South Africa. The unique context of schools makes this impossible. However, the work of the organisations which have been surveyed and the available literature on school development seem to suggest that there are principles of procedure which are helpful. Chapter four discusses and recommends some possible principles of procedure and also raise some of the challenges around whole school development.

Chapter 4

Conceptualising school development in South Africa

Introduction

Thus far this study has interrogated the research and literature on school change and has extracted certain key themes which can be used to describe the different approaches which various organisations take to school development. I have used these themes to set up continua and have mapped the work of five school development programmes onto these continua. This chapter summarises the main issues which arise from the different programmes, using the continua which have already been established. It then moves on to describe three aspects or principles of procedure which could be included in a model of school change for South Africa. Finally, it looks at the constraints and challenges facing whole school development in South Africa in the form of the following three questions: What role should the community play in whole school development? Can whole school development programmes be offered in every school in South Africa? How sustainable are whole school development programmes in South Africa?

Mapping the organisations onto the continua

a)   Understanding of school change

Empirical-rational	Normative-re-educative
Focus only on changing structure	Focus on changing both structure and culture

| EQUIP | St Marys | | ESP CIE TIP |
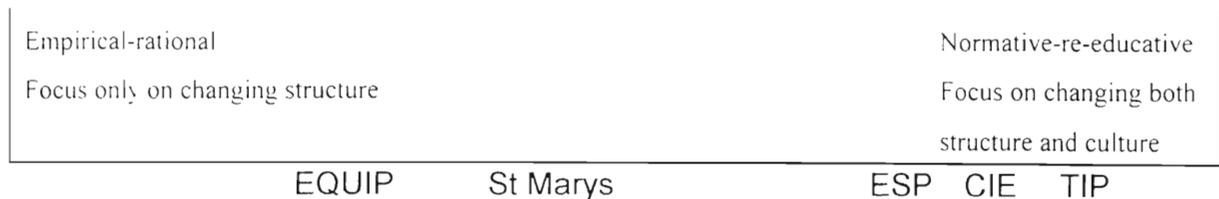
It was noted in Chapter 2 that the way in which an organisation understands school change will impact on the way in which they implement change. Following Chin and Benne (1969), there are three broad ways of understanding change. An empirical-rational approach assumes that people are rational and that they will adopt the proposed change if they can understand it rationally. A normative-re-educative approach assumes that people will only change if they can change their attitudes, knowledge, skills and significant relationships. The third group of strategies, power-co-ercive, is based on using power to make changes. This strategy was not used by any of the organisations studied.

I have linked the empirical-rational approach with a change strategy which focuses simply on changing structure. The assumption is that if the right structures (communication procedures, decision-making procedures, management structures, resources etc) are put in place, then change will happen automatically. I have linked the normative-re-educative approach with a change strategy that recognises both the importance of having enabling structures in place, and the importance of changing the underlying beliefs and attitudes (which I have labelled culture).

ESP, CIE and TIP all have a strong understanding of the need to focus on both structure and culture. EQUIP and St Marys did not seem to have such a strong focus on changing culture.

b)   Use of the school development planning strategy

| Atomistic		Holistic
EQUIP	St Mary's	ESP TIP
		CIE
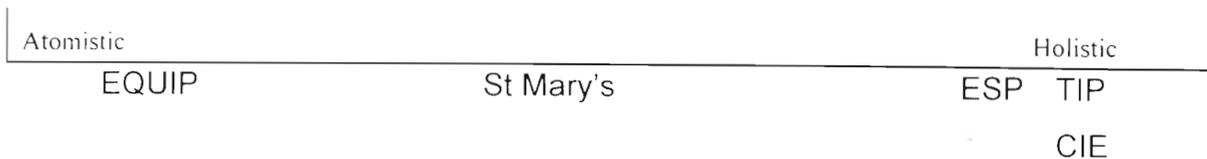
In Chapter 2, I raised the point that there are two broad ways of understanding, and thus of implementing, a school development planning strategy. School development planning can be implemented in an atomistic and mechanical way, where the major focus is on developing the product, which is the plan itself, rather then on the process of change. The various steps of school development planning would be dealt with fairly separately, in a linear rather than a cyclical pattern.

There is the possibility that an atomistic use of the strategy would focus on the outward or visible problems of the school and ignore the underlying organisational issues.

On the other hand, school development planning can be implemented in a more holistic way which allows the different planning steps to overlap, to merge and to inform one another. Here the major focus is on the process of development, not on the writing of the plan. It involves reviewing the schools organisational structure and culture, and not simply the outward problems. An holistic strategy would approach problem-solving in a systemic way (following Senge, 1990), where there is an understanding of the inter-connectedness of all the elements of the school.

The EQUIP project seems to make use of the school development planning strategy in a fairly structured way, where the aim is for schools to produce their plans which can be approved by a Board of Trustees. This is a strong focus because schools are given money to implement their action plans. They are only given the money once their development plans are approved, for reasons of accountability. On the other end of the continuum, both TIP and CIE have a strong focus on an holistic approach, where schools spend a lot of time reflecting on and understanding the organisational, cultural and relationship issues which prevent the school from becoming effective.

c) *Emphasis placed on school development planning*

School development planning used as a key strategy			School development planning used as only one strategy within a broader process
EQUIP	St Marys	ESP	TIP
			CIE
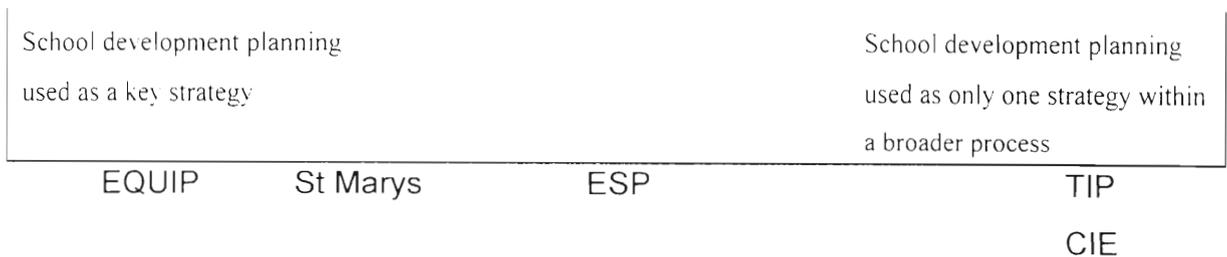
The various organisations place different emphases on the role of school development planning in their programme. This has quite a strong parallel with whether the strategy is used in a holistic or an atomistic way. For example, EQUIP's programme seems to deal only with the establishment of a school development committee and with the drawing up of the plan. School development planning is thus the key strategy used. CIE and TIP use school development planning, but it is not

the key focus of their programme. It is used as one strategy within a broader purpose of reflecting on organisational culture and understanding the relational dynamics in the school. TIP believes that schools need to understand their own culture and beliefs before they have the understanding to make changes within the school. They are the only organisation where the facilitators do a comprehensive audit of the school by interviewing teachers before they start any workshops in the school. ESP places a fairly strong focus on the planning strategy, but this is always seen in the broader context of seeing the inter-relatedness of problems between the school and the community in which it is located. They have an understanding that schools might have to go through other processes before being able to start with development planning.

d.   *Focus of school change*

Internal, school focus		External, community focus
TIP St Mary's		EQUIP ESP
CIE		

Different organisations place different emphases on where the locus of change should lie. ESP is the most strongly focussed on the community, with a strong belief that schools should contribute to community development and communities should contribute to school development. There is an understanding that what happens in the school cannot be divorced from its community. "The understanding of, and approach to, school development is broadened to include the development of the school as integral part of the sustainable development of the community in which it exists" (Schofield, 1997). On the other end of the continuum, organisations like TIP, CIE and the St Mary's Change Project have a strong internal school focus, believing that the school first needs to become an effective organisation before it is able to contribute to the community. TIP sees the internal processes of the school as the key starting point. "We cannot take on community development. It's not our brief, and it's way beyond the scope of what we can do. But we can build the capacity of schools, and build the awareness of schools to link more effectively with their communities and thereby engage in community development programmes" (Davidoff, interview, 1996). CIE says that their starting point is the relationships within the school. St Mary's Change Project says that their starting point is also the organisation of the school. The EQUIP project

includes the community in that they are vital members of the school development committee, but the development projects chosen by schools reflect an internal, school focus.

e)   Constitution of the school development committee

Teachers only		All stakeholders
TIP	St Marys	ESP
CIE		EQUIP

Whether the school development committee is comprised of only teachers and management or of a broad range of stakeholders, parallels the organisation's decision to focus internally on school development or on both school and community development. TIP and CIE work first with teachers to develop their skills and understandings of their school. St Marys expressed a desire to work with the broader school community, but for practical reason often worked only with teachers. Both ESP and EQUIP were very clear of the importance of working with representatives of the whole school community.

What can we learn from these continua?

We can see that there are differences between organisations in the way in which they implement school development planning (in an atomistic or holistic way) as well as in their choice to either focus on the school community or not.

It must be re-iterated that these continua do not aim to evaluate the effectiveness of these programmes. It would be impossible to evaluate or judge the impact of any of these programmes unless there were detailed evaluations available which used the same criteria. And this would not be possible as each programme states their aims quite differently. For example TIP's 1997 Annual Report states their Mission Statement as follows:

> "TIP aims to activate an educational movement of critical self-reflection, life long learning and a strong voice among educators in our school communities. Such a movement will encourage a commitment to building an educational environment which ensures the holistic

development of learners. TIP engages in school organisation development in order to build and motivate self-understanding and questioning so that teachers can make conscious and informed choices with regard to establishing and maintaining a culture of quality teaching and learning in schools."

The aim of EQUIP is "to help schools take responsibility for their own development with the support of provincial education departments. local communities and business" (Perlman. 1996: 2). Since the focus and aims of the two organisations is clearly quite different. it would be very difficult to compare evaluations of the two programmes.

The place that each organisation occupies on the continua often reflects a moral belief in the way in which they approach school development. For example. Schofield (1997) believes that school change is driven by moral imperatives and therefore it is both an ethical and political imperative that schools contribute to the community because they are often nodes of privilege in the communities of developing countries. For TIP. the moral imperative is for teachers to develop a self-awareness and a reflective capacity which will empower them to make choices. On the other hand. a particular focus may develop that is not linked to a grounded moral belief. but is rather due to the influence of particular individual interests. or to the context or to funding or time constraints.

Despite having said that there are no clear cut models of school development. it seems vital to try to capture some indispensable elements or principles of procedure which should form part of any approach. The next section of this chapter outlines what I believe are three key elements which should feature in a school development programme. Obviously these would have different emphases in different contexts and would be used within a broader school improvement process.

What elements should be included in a model of school development?

The way in which any organisation approaches school development will reflect their understanding of change. of development. of what good education is and of what education is for. Thus the following three elements reflect my own beliefs in systemic change. I hope to show that these are are based on a thorough reading of the school change literature and the preceding organisation's programme descriptions.

I want to suggest that there are three key elements which need to be taken into account, when doing school development.

1. Both structure and culture need to be addressed.

Research on why school reforms fail so often suggests that programmes must address issues of *both* structure and culture in schools. This has been thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2. School reform programmes which do not take cognisance of the school's culture are likely to fail. Often the culture of the school (particularly if it is "stuck", to use a concept developed by Rosenholtz, 1989) will hinder the change process. Schools which are fragmented and which lack internal coherence will struggle to implement external reforms (such as new policy requirements) as well as internal change projects. Schools need to deal with culture and organisational issues, before attempting to implement any development projects.

Schools need to be able to review which structures and which cultures are helping or hindering their development. One way of addressing both structure and culture is to use an holistic approach to school development planning. This means that while schools go through the steps of auditing and planning, they are conscious of the beliefs, attitudes and relationships which may be hindering the change process. In the action plans which are implemented, schools are aware of targeting both structural and cultural problems. Any change strategy should develop the reflexive capacity of the teachers and management within the school.

2. A framework is needed which schools can use to audit the school in a structured and focussed way.

Research and literature are clear that it is useful for schools to start a change process by doing a school review or audit (the first step of a school development plan). This audit is a vital part of the change process, as is having a framework which schools can use to analyse the information which emerges from the audit.

Such a framework has two key purposes:

(a) It can help schools to categorise and analyse their schools' structure and culture. It will enable schools to see how the parts work or do not work together. They need to be able to see how various elements of the school are interconnected. and how a breakdown in one area may be causing problems in another area.

(b) It should aid schools in prioritising their needs. When faced with a myriad of problems within a dysfunctional or ''stuck'' school. it is vital to identify the best place to start the change process. Otherwise prioritising becomes a purely *ad hoc* process. based on the commonsense understandings or preferences of the people involved. Prioritising of school needs must foreground the importance of learning and teaching. Problems need to be analysed from the perspective of how do they inhibit effective learning and teaching from happening in the school.

Christie and Potterton *et al's* (1997: 29) research suggests that any measure to improve school quality must focus centrally on teaching and learning. In the resilient schools which they studied. teaching and learning provided the central purpose for the school and also underpinned the discipline practices and organisational operating. All the organisations in this study provide services at an organisational level initially rather than at a classroom level. The organisational changes need to be made with a clear understanding of how these changes will impact positively on the learning and teaching processes in the school.

There are a number of frameworks which already exist. For example. both TIP and CIE have frameworks which they use in their work with schools. These have been described in Chapter 3. The framework of the IQEA project has already been mentioned in Chapter 2. They use the following six internal conditions as an organising framework (Hopkins *et al.* 1994: 106):

- a commitment to staff development:
- practical efforts to involve staff. students and the community in school policies and decisions:
- transformational leadership:
- effective coordination strategies:
- proper attention to the potential benefits of inquiry and reflection and

- a commitment to collaborative planning.

These elements can be used by schools to assess their current position in relation to these conditions.

It was suggested in Chapter 2 that the features of resilient schools could also be worked into an organising framework. The features of resilient schools are:

- a sense of agency and responsibility:
- flexible and purposive leadership:
- a focus on learning and teaching as the central activities of the school:
- a safe and organisationally functioning institutional environment:
- consistent disciplinary practices anchored in educational practices and personal interaction: and
- a culture of concern (Christie. 1997b: 4).

Schools could assess their position in relation to these elements.

A framework which emerges from effective schools research has been developed by Ward Heneveld (1996) particularly for primary school in Sub-Saharan Africa. He used a review of both school effectiveness and school improvement literature to identify eighteen key factors that influence student outcomes. The factors are divided into four inter-related categories: supporting inputs from outside the school. enabling conditions. school climate and the teaching/learning process. These are influenced by the context surrounding the school. Such a framework could be used as a starting point for a school audit as well as to identify priorities.

3. Problems need to be understood in a systemic way.

There is a need for schools to learn ways of deconstructing and understanding their problems in a systemic way. which goes deeper than the external symptoms to the underlying causes. Unless the underlying causes are addressed. development plans will be largely futile. For example. a common problem faced by secondary schools particularly. is that of chronic absenteeism and late coming by both learners and teachers. Often the most obvious way of dealing with this issue is for schools to increase punishment and control.

However. it might be more productive to look at the problem in a holistic way. where the underlying causes are discussed. Does the absenteeism and late coming stem from a **resource** problem? Is it because parents cannot afford taxi fares so learners have to walk to school? If so. this links into a broader sociol-economic problem. Are the reasons for late coming and absenteeism **structural** - is it because learners live far from the school and there is erratic transport? Is it because there is no accountability procedure in place and so learners and teachers are not required to account for their lateness? Are the reasons **cultural** - is there a general lack of motivation amongst learners? If so. what are the reasons for this? Are teachers absent because they are so overwhelmed by school that they cannot face coming to class? Is this because of structural or organisational issues such as an autocratic and unsupportive management structure?

Once teachers have discussed the problem from these various angles. the key causes should start to emerge. There will probably be more than one cause. and it may be the case the causes are inter-linked.

If teachers can develop the capacity to analyse the problems systemically. they will be more empowered to choose the right action plans to address the problems. It is also helpful if teachers can see where the problems appear at a school level. at a community level and at a socio-economic structural level as well as how these levels are inter-related. It is too enormous for the average teacher to try to address socio-economic issues on a macro scale. but it is useful to differentiate which problems can be solved by the school and which cannot. If macro-level problems are tackled. this may easily lead to teachers burning out with frustration.

The different levels of understanding the causes of problems is illustrated below:

Figure 5:   Levels of understanding the causes of problems

(Adapted from the concepts used by Hargreaves and Hopkins. 1994: 17, 18)

Possible cause	Questions to ask
Material resources	Is the problem caused or exacerbated by lack of material resources?
Structural frameworks	Is the problem caused or exacerbated by the decision making and communication procedures, the management structures, the lines of accountability, the time structure of the school day?
Cultural issues	Is the problem caused or exacerbated by the character of relationships, the nature of co-operation or conflict, the underlying beliefs and attitudes which underpin the norms of the school?

Challenges and constraints around whole school development

The final section of this chapter will highlight some of key questions which have emerged from this study. These are: What role should the community play in whole school development? Can whole school development programmes be offered in every school in South Africa? How sustainable are whole school development programmes in South Africa?

What role should the community play in whole school development?

In the data analysis, the role of the community in whole school development emerges as a contested one. Some organisations, such as TIP and CIE believe that the key focus should be on the school becoming a functioning organisation, while ESP believes that the community is the key to school development. EQUIP is also very clear that all school stakeholders must be included in the process. At present, we do not have the empirical evidence which would tell us if community involvement is vital to the success of school development.

However, the concept of community is becoming an important one in South African education policy discourse. There is a strong focus on the role of the community in much of the recent policy. For example, the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (Department of Education, 1998) states that

one of the six roles in which educators need to be competent, is *Community, citizenship and pastoral role*. The *South African Schools Act* (Republic of South Africa, 1996) emphasises the role that parents need to play in school governance. This is in line with the government's thinking that shifts responsibility for schooling away from the state. It indicates what Bernstein (1967) calls a move towards a society of organic solidarity which values "open boundaries" between schools and communities where parents are incorporated into the life of the school.

The term "community" seems to carry with it an inherent understanding of homogeneity, of consensus amongst the group of people who make up the community. However, the concept of "community" should not be taken as unproblematic. Recent research in the Pietermaritzburg district (School of Education, UNP, 1998) found that many schools do not have a homogeneous community. It is often the case that teachers do not live within geographic proximity to the school, so the community in which the school is located is not "their" community. In the same way, many learners commute to the school and so also live in a different community to the one in which the school is located. Thus the question is "whose community?" The study also showed that within geographically small communities there are often strong differences in political values. Homogeneous and consensual communities often do not attach value to the norms which government policy is trying to encourage in our fledgling democracy, such as gender equality.

Despite "community" being part of the new discourse, empirically it is not clear how imperative it is to involve the community in school development issues. Christie and Potterton's (1997) research on "resilient schools" found that these schools had far less community and parental involvement than they had assumed they would find. This is certainly an issue which needs to be followed up and researched. In the meantime, we need to think more critically about the strong thrust in policy documents concerning the role of school communities.

Can whole school development programmes be offered in every school in South Africa?

We do not have the empirical data to answer the question: "Is whole school development a successful approach in South Africa?" Certainly the NGOs studied here would say that it is, or they would not continue to do their work nor to secure funding for their projects. Here is a

comment from TIP on one of the schools with whom they work: "(School x) is a very tangible success story. The school has gone through a whole range of different processes and programmes linking the classroom, through the mentor programmes, through the appraisal programme, they've done a lot of self-reflection, self-examination and the whole culture of the school has transformed completely from being a demoralised, hopeless, torn apart gangsterism school to a school that actually feels proud of what its doing....In the three years since we've been working at their school, the change in the matric results have gone from 47 to something like 70 or 84% pass rate, which is..." (Davidoff, interview, 1996: 14).

We can, however, look more closely at whether whole school development is an approach which is both sustainable and replicable in South Africa. I want to examine first whether this approach is replicable. The word "replicable" seems to imply an easy formula which can simply be copied and applied to schools. This is not what is meant here, as this study has clearly shown that school development is not a simple formula, nor is it a simple case of cause-and-effect. However, we do need to look at whether whole school development can be offered and implemented within every school in the country. This needs to be possible if whole school development is going to be a preferred approach to developing quality schooling in South Africa.

The Community Development Resource Association (1998: 10) argues that the dominant development paradigm is made up of a number of assumptions and practices, one of which is "Development assumes that a successful development intervention or project is replicable...If it is not replicable elsewhere, it is lacking in value". They contest this assumption. Their contestation may be correct within rural development which has largely been understood from an economistic perspective, as the eradication, or at least reduction of poverty (Ibid.:7). My contention is not that whole school development is lacking in value. In fact, its very complexity makes it the preferred approach to achieving education quality. My question is whether it is able to "go to scale" in the way which is demanded if it is to be the preferred approach to creating quality education within a social institution like schooling.

When looking at replicability, the first theme which emerges is the **role of external facilitators** in the process of school development. The cost of external facilitators is prohibitive when thinking of doing whole school development within every school in the country.

All the programmes in this study require the intervention of skilled facilitators who come in as change agents or as a catalyst to get change moving within a school. Fullan writes that if teachers want to make a difference, moral purpose is not sufficient. "Moral purpose needs an engine and that is individual, skilled change agents pushing for changes around them, intersecting with other like minded individuals and groups to form the critical mass necessary to bring about continuous improvement" (1993: 40).

The debilitating situation within many South African schools makes it almost impossible for individual teachers to find the time, energy and courage to become change agents in their schools without any support from the outside. It seems to be vital that there is an intervention of outsiders at some stage to get the change process moving. The organisations expressed their understanding of their role in the following ways : counsellor, therapist, consultant and facilitator to build the capacity of the school to become self-reliant (TIP); initiators and facilitators of change and to build the capacity of the school (St Mary's); to encourage, motivate and develop the confidence of the school staff and to provide resources and training that are needed (CIE); as collaborator and fellow traveller with the school (ESP).

This approach of using external facilitators is supported by international approaches such as the Improving Quality Education for All (IQEA) project in Britain (Hopkins, et al., 1994), Dalin's Institutional Development Planning (IDP) approach (Dalin, 1993) and the Halton approach in Canada (Stoll and Fink, 1992).

In fact, it seems that the more "fragmented" (using Dalin's terminology) or "stuck" (using Hopkins' terminology) a school is, the more external support it will need (Dalin, 1993: 16). Schools which are already functioning well, and which have a coherent internal organisation are able to use the strategy of school development planning without a great deal of support. However, schools which are more debilitated or "stuck" will need greater support and will need to build a strong internal organisation before they can successfully embark on school change projects.

All the programmes require facilitators who have skills in leading discussions, in synthesising and analysing material, in seeing beyond obvious symptoms to underlying causes and who are familiar with the school's context. In addition, facilitators working within the different organisations would

need additional, more specialised skills, understandings and values. For example, facilitators working in the EQUIP project need to be fluent in the language of the community, as well as having an understanding of the context. Most of them have been principals within the ex-DET or homeland education system. Within the TIP project, facilitators would need to have a clear understanding of and belief in the practice of organisational development and of personal and spiritual development.

In fact, the success of all the projects depends on the calibre of the facilitators who have the skills and values which enable them to make the right choices at any given time while working with a particular school. This strong emphasis on facilitators also means that all the approaches are labour intensive and expensive as one facilitator can work properly with only a few schools (depending on how often the schools are visited, the intensity of the support offered etc.)

There are 27 188 schools in South Africa (Bot, 1997). It would take an enormous amount of resources to enable each one to have a facilitator working there for up to three years. The state simply is unable to provide these resources, and the work that NGOs do can only scratch the surface of need. So the question has to be raised: are there other viable ways of doing whole school development which do not require such intensive external facilitation?

One way is to develop materials which schools can use on their own. There are already some manuals which have been written as a resource for schools[2]. However, it is not clear whether materials (no matter how well-written) can completely replace the role of a facilitator. Anecdotal evidence and experience would suggest not. Research on the roles and competences of effective teachers (UNP School of Education, 1998) suggests that teachers who were identified as effective did not have strong reflexive competences, which are obviously vital for a successful school development process. This seems to point to the fact that outside facilitators are necessary, at the very least to start the process.

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[2] For example, a facilitator from the St Mary's School Change Project has co-written a manual entitled *Reconstructing schools: Management and Development from within*

EQUIP is the only project studied which was designed specifically as a potential model for school development which can be easily replicable within South Africa. Obviously, in order for a process to be replicated it needs to be pared down to the essentials, leaving little room for personal interpretation. This may be why the project has a strong emphasis on the four school development planning steps which should be able to be implemented by any facilitator around the country. It is interesting that, despite the apparent "standardised" process of the four planning steps, the EQUIP project looks different in the different provinces (Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal) where it is being implemented (pers. comm. Eric Schollar, 06/08/98). It seems that the external context and the internal organisation of each school will determine how the project is implemented.

The St Mary's Change Project acknowledges that they cannot continue being a pilot project but do not have strong plans of how their process could be replicated. In comparison to the EQUIP approach, the TIP intervention is a far more flexible and open approach which is heavily reliant on the facilitator. Thus it cannot be easily or quickly replicated to a vast number of schools.

If whole school development is going to be seen as a way of creating quality schools in South Africa, it will need to be a process which can be replicated in a number of schools. At present, this does not seem to be the case.

Closely linked to the concern about replicability is the fact that whole school development is **a complex process.** From literature and the study of the organisations, it is clear that whole school development is a complex process which takes time. The organisations are in agreement that the process of school development cannot happen within less than three years, while TIP believes it will take at least five years for a school to turn around. CIE found that it took some schools a year to understand the concept of whole school development and EQUIP found that it took some schools 18 months to draw up their development plan.

There is no clear formula which will guarantee successful school change. The variables are too great: each school is unique in the commitment and ability of its staff, the socio-economic background of its learners, its material resources and the context in which it is located. The closest one could get to a formula is to offer a particular strategy in the form of holistic school development planning, a framework for prioritising and some general principles and procedures

of change and problem-solving and leave it in the hands of a capable facilitator. This has some parallels with Stenhouse's process approach to curriculum planning where he says "The major weakness of the process model of curriculum design... It rests upon the quality of the teacher. This is also its greatest strength" (1989: 96) Since the most appropriate model of school development is a process model, the key to its success also rests with the quality of the facilitator.

How sustainable are whole school development programmes in South Africa?

For development to be sustained within a school requires that teachers and management and other stakeholders have developed the necessary capacity and competences to continue the process after the external facilitator has left the school. There is also the need for resources (both time and money) to be well used.

All of the programmes described in this study are certainly committed to developing the capacity of people within the school to lead the development process, so that there is less dependence on an external facilitator. For example, CIE believes that the school must develop its own capacity for change and TIP believes schools must develop the capacity to be pro-active. All of the organisations consider it vital that each school has its own school development committee who will be able to take the development process forward.

The vision of each organisation is that when they are no longer involved with the school, the school will still be able to take responsibility for its own development. It is not possible to say if this actually happens, since there are no evaluations at this stage on how schools cope once the organisation has withdrawn. Christie and Potterton *et al.* found that this sense of responsibility was a key feature of the resilient schools which they researched, and thus should be a focus for policy:

> If a sense of responsibility is a key characteristic of resilient schools, it follows that policies for school improvement need to foster this sense of responsibility, for example in working towards moving appropriate decision-making to school level. Forms of assistance that 'help' schools by doing things for them are more likely to bind them into passivity than to help them to restore their operations (1997: 12).

However, teachers driving the process of development also has its problems. Firstly, to develop their capacity takes time and skills. Teachers who are already overloaded at school can find it extremely difficult to take on the additional role of "change agent". They are also sometimes treated with suspicion by colleagues who might have greater respect for an external facilitator.

A key to sustainability is for school development to tackle the school culture and organisation. If only surface structures are targetted, change will not be sustained. This loops back to the complexity of school change. Highly skilled facilitators are needed to support schools in implementing indepth change which targets both structure and organisational culture. This is the type of school development that is needed in South Africa. To do anything less is a waste of time, energy and resources.

Concluding comments

This study started out aiming to gather more information about how five organisations were approaching the implementation of school development in South Africa. It hoped to go beyond pure description of these programmes to understanding what their underlying assumptions and beliefs about school development were. As the data was analysed and a wider range of literature was read in more depth, the direction and focus of the study shifted from pure empirical description to grappling with conceptual issues around school development. It has attempted to achieve conceptual clarification by rubbing the interview data, which described what five school development organisations were doing, up against the literature of school effectiveness, school change and school improvement.

Five key themes emerged from this process, represented as continua which can be used as a conceptual tool onto which to "map" the work of school development organisations. It was made clear throughout the study that there was no attempt to evaluate or judge the approaches taken by the organisations, nor to assess the impact of the programmes.

What has emerged from the interview data is that doing school development in South Africa is a complex and time consuming task, which is hampered by the realities of everyday life in schools. Particularly schools which are "stuck" or "fragmented" find it difficult to find the time and energy

which school development demands. These schools need maximum external support for the development process. It is in fact this need for support that makes whole school development so expensive and complex to achieve in large numbers of schools.

Although there is no absolutely correct formula for doing school development. it seems that there are some principles of procedure that can be gleaned from the experience and research and literature which has been published. The final chapter of the study tried to distil the key learnings from the data and the literature into principles of procedure which may be useful for school development programmes. This study suggests the following three principles of procedure: the school culture as well as structure needs to be addressed; there must be an organising framework for schools to use to audit the school in structured and focussed way; and problems need to be understood in a systemic way.

This study has posed a question regarding the ability of whole school development to be replicated in the thousands of schools in South Africa which need to develop. given the labour- and cost - intensive intervention required by skilled facilitators. Perhaps the Ministry of Education needs to think about developing the skills. knowledge and values of their staff who work with teachers. so that they are able to work as school change facilitators. There is a dearth of knowledge about how teachers and principals and community members can develop their own skills as school change facilitators. so as to ensure the sustainability of development work within the school. We need to know more about how school development can be sustained after the catalyst organisation or external facilitator has withdrawn.

At this time. we are lacking detailed reports of what actually happens in a school as it starts the journey of school development. The processes of school development needs to be tracked and meticulously recorded. The work of Christie and Potterton *et al.* (1997) has provided us with detailed portraits of what 32 resilient schools in South Africa look like. We need to have similar detailed case studies which would help us to understand how development processes practically work out in schools. This will help us to find clearer answers to questions like: What are the structures and culture within South African schools that make development successful or not? Who are the key players within schools which make development successful or not? What role does the community play in developing a school? Is school development planning really the most

useful strategy for starting school development?   Are there differences between school development processes in primary and secondary schools. in rural or urban schools?

Appendix A

Interview Schedule

Section A

1. a) How many schools does your organisation work with?

    b) How may are primary/secondary?. (Probe: why?)

2. How were these schools selected?
    (Probe: process. ideal scenario. contract. review? Why?)

3. Do the users/teachers/ department pay?
    (Probe: Why? cover costs. what %. teacher commitment)

4. Are your programmes certificated?
    (Probe reason: COTEP. motivation. mechanism. why not)

5. a) Does your organisation see a need to build relations with inspectors. provincial and national departments and unions? Why?

    b) If yes. what relations have you built up? What problems have you encountered?

    c) If no. why not?

6. Are any of these relationships reflected in the management structure of your organisation?
    (Probe: links with university. other bodies. etc).]

Section B

7. Could you define what you would consider to be an effective school? (School culture. results. ethos)

8. Please could you describe what it is that you do with schools (Could draw this question out by referring to submitted responses: Nature. length. time and frequency of intervention)

9. If you were to give this approach a name, what would it be? (Prompt only if necessary school reform, whole school development, school-based) Why this name? Where is it from?
    (Probe: why is this approach important in South Africa?)

10. How does your programme gain access to the school?

11. Which aspect of the school do you target as the first point of change? (curriculum development/ teacher development/ organisational development/ management)
    Why this focus?

12. Could you describe the socioeconomic context that most of your schools operate in? (resources, culture of school)

13. How has this context shaped the design of the programme? (Probe: distortion of original plan: strategic objectives)

14. Who was involved in the design of the programme? (Probe: Why? Ownership: Expertise)

15. How would you define the role of your organisation in the development of the school? (Probe: Resource base: driving force: expert: empowerer: catalyst: facilitator)

16. How does your organisation see the role of a school in its own development?

17. What are the most significant problems that you have encountered in implementing your programme? (Unit's problems) (Probe: nature of problems)

18. How have you responded to these problems?

Section C

19. What theoretical conceptions, if any, have shaped the programme design?
    (Probe: what has influenced the theory: any specific texts: writers: organisations: role of funders: visitors: strengths and weaknesses when applied to SA context).

20. What values underpin your programme?
    (Probe: Why these values: What ideology informs your practice: what are the long term goals)

21. How do you understand the dynamic of change within the school? What would you emphasise as being more important: changing the organisational structure or changing what the teacher does in the classroom. (Probe which comes **first**)

22.   What are the key principles of school development that you have learned from your experience? What makes school development work?

23.   What are the most serious barriers to change that you have encountered?

Section D

24.   Define your specific programme aims: (Draw on questionnaire - what do they hope to achieve in 6 months. one year. longer term. when do you leave?

25.   At what point would you be satisfied that your work at a school has helped achieve your goals?

26.   How do you monitor and evaluate this?

27   Do you evaluate your own performance?

28.   If yes (to 27). how do you evaluate your own performance? (Probe: strategies. frequency)

29.   If no (to 27). why not?

30.   Where do you see your organisation in **five** years time? (Probe: Why:)

Thank you very much. Would you like feedback from this interview once we have completed the research?

Appendix B

Letter requesting interview

7 October 1996

Dear

RESEARCH ON SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT MODELS

I am working on some collaborative research with the Education Department at the University of Natal. Pietermaritzburg. The aim of the research is to establish what types of models of school improvement /change are being used by various organisation in South Africa. and why they are using these particular models.

As part of the research we would like to interview the co-ordinator/director of each organisation around four key areas: the overall aims of your organisation, details about your intervention. the approach which you take to school development and your understanding of the change process.

MEDU was asked earlier this year to respond to a questionnaire sent out by Mark Potterton from the WITS Curriculum Policy Research Group and I believe your organisation also responded to this survey. I wanted to request your permission to use the information which you submitted to to WITS as a starting point for our interview. This means that we already have a framework of information about your organisation.

I will phone you in the next few days to set up a meeting time for the interview. which will probably take about one hour.

Yours sincerely

Carol Bertram

Appendix C

Questionnaire requesting additional information
June 1998

Question 1: What does your organisation understand by the concept "school culture"?

Question 2: What sort of role does your organisation believe that school culture plays in whole school development or change?

Question 3: How (if at all) does your organisation believe school development planning can be used as a strategy to address school culture?

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