

**A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION INTO COURSE
DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PREPARATION OF
SCHOOL LEADERS**

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ABSTRACT

Many schools in South Africa suffer from the consequences of bad leadership and management practices. A contributing factor to this problem is the inadequate preparation of school leaders for the wide variety of challenges facing them.

This study formed part of a three-year project to develop a preparation programme for school leaders in the Southern Cape area of South Africa. Its aims focussed on the identification of principles for the design of preparation programmes leading to improvements in practice. Twelve teachers and principals participated in the project. They enrolled for a programme in school leadership designed and offered by the University of Port Elizabeth in consultation and cooperation with the Southern Cape Learning Resource Unit in George.

Five sources were utilized for the provision of data:

- The existing literature on the development of preparation programmes
- The group of twelve participants of the programme
- The four school principals in the group who acted as a focus group
- The staff and certain documents from the schools where these four principals are employed
- Local stakeholders with an interest in the success of the programme.

Research methods typical of the interpretive tradition were utilized in order to arrive at a better understanding of the needs of participants and of those elements of programmes which have the greatest impact on practice.

Among the insights to have emerged from the study are the following:

- The fact that the preparation of school leaders is a complex and multi-faceted process which is enhanced by variety, continuous interaction between presenters and participants, flexibility to respond to changing needs and contexts, and an ongoing implementation in and feedback from practice
- The central role played in the professional and academic growth of participants by individuals and groups around them
- The importance of action research as a tool in the accomplishment of a variety of goals in the preparation of school leaders.

The main contributions of this study include:

- A framework for the development of preparation programmes, ensuring the inclusion of a wide range of elements enhancing the effectiveness of the course
- A framework for the establishment of professional networks supporting participants in preparation programmes.

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Everything happens through him;
Everything ends up in him.
Always glory! Always praise!
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

1.1.1 South African

The Government of South Africa gave evidence of its commitment to the development of educational management in South Africa with the appointment of the Task Team on Education Management Development in 1996. This Task Team has aptly summarized the current situation in South Africa with respect to the preparation of leaders and managers as follows (1996:12):

Training for leaders and managers - whether in schools, governing bodies, or administrations - has continued on a 'hit and miss' basis, and the numbers reached have been small in relation to the need. The problem is compounded by the lack of focus for thinking about education management development or for providing the necessary support.

This description applies to the various initiatives taken by a number of institutions. While no official requirements have been set for principal certification, universities, non-governmental organizations and education departments have over the years offered many different types of upgrading courses in the form of weekend workshops, short-term diploma courses, or as part of post-graduate courses in education.

Thurlow (1993:125,126) is of the opinion that the current situation with respect to training of school leaders in South Africa is characterised by a variety of short-term, uncoordinated courses offered by a wide array of providers. One of the problems with respect to such courses is that their design is often based on untested perceptions of principals' needs, rather than on a thorough needs assessment.

Two further problems according to Thurlow (1993:125,126), are the fact that the courses tend to rely too much on academic content originating in Europe and America, and that the memorization of management techniques is emphasised "rather than development of skills in analysis and problem solving".

According to the Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:134,135), a lack of coordination between various training programmes characterises educational management development in African countries. Although South Africa was not included in this survey, it is safe to infer that this also applies to the South African situation. Other problems mentioned in this report include the fact that little or no use is made of local peer tutoring and support, and the "shortage of resource material in accessible language".

The Task Team (1996:15) identifies three basic approaches to education management in South Africa at present:

- The approach followed in the past by public administration, with its emphasis on planning, organizing, guiding and control. Central to this approach is the focus on structure, the clarification of job descriptions and a concern for order and control. This approach leads to courses in which basic aspects of management are focussed upon. An example of a textbook taking this route is the book edited by Professor P.C. van der Westhuizen, titled (translated from the Afrikaans): **Educational Management: Foundations and Directions** (1986), in which the "management functions" (pp. 42-46) such as planning, organizing, guidance and control are emphasised throughout.
- In the second approach identified by the Task Team, the management and leadership functions get more attention at the cost of the administrative functions. Here the emphasis is on leadership development (with concomitant attention given to human resource development), together with "technical management skills" (1986:15). An example of this approach is the current Centres of Learning project, managed by the University of Port Elizabeth and sponsored by the Delta Foundation, in which leadership development is emphasised, together with the implementation of computerised administrative

systems.

- The third approach highlighted by the Task Team (p. 15) focusses on the broader issues of governance, policy, stakeholder participation and relationship-building, with the expressed objective of rebuilding the education system. While the Centres of Learning project in Port Elizabeth includes governance as one of its focus points, I found the management course offered by the University of the Witwatersrand a good representation of both the second and the third approaches identified by the Task Team.

The Task Team (1986:16) emphasizes the need to draw on all three approaches, and proposes a broader and more inclusive understanding of education management than has hitherto been the case.

The current South African situation requires such an holistic approach, with special attention being given to people development and relationships in the on-the-job situation. The focus should be on education development as an ongoing process, with in-service support for individuals.

Thurlow (1993:121) stresses the fact that “designing and implementing an appropriate management development programme for school principals in South Africa is a matter of fundamental importance”, while the magnitude of the task of management development in South Africa, is highlighted by the following quote from the Task Team’s (1996:16) report:

The vast complexities of our education transformation, the scale of our need, and the great variety of training providers, require that we harness all our development capacity in practical networks and nodes of cooperation. Government needs partners - in the non-governmental and private sectors, in training institutes, colleges and universities - if management development is to reach every classroom, every teacher and every student.

1.1.2 Personal

My first involvement with preparation initiatives for school leaders started during my teaching career when I attended weekend leadership development courses offered by a local university. These courses were conducted on an ad hoc basis, and focussed on broad topics such as leadership styles and development, group work, self-knowledge, planning and conflict management. The topics were presented in a workshop format, which included much personal interaction and a variety of activities that were enjoyable, but did not always include inputs which were transferable to practice.

In 1995 I attended a workshop for school leaders at a resort at the Kei River Mouth. This workshop was sponsored by the Education Department of the Eastern Cape and designed by a non-governmental organization from East London, and covered general aspects such as leadership and conflict management. While the weekend was very enjoyable in the beautiful environment of the river and the sea, with good hotel food and VIP treatment, and a host of activities in the typical workshop format, I was left wondering about the impact on practice and the level of ongoing support participants would receive. Two reasons for my concern were:

- the absence of a supporting network participants had arriving back at their schools
- the problem of participants transferring insights gained from material presented and activities at the workshop to the real school situations.

In 1995 the Faculty of Education at the University of Port Elizabeth decided that a diploma course in school management was needed for the many school principals who did not qualify for graduate study at that University. It was then that I, as lecturer in the Faculty of Education, became seriously involved: reading, attending conferences and visiting other educational institutions in South Africa and abroad.

My visit to the University of Natal in Durban introduced me to the work done by the

Commonwealth Secretariat in developing training modules for school heads in Africa, as well as the initiatives by the University of Bristol's National Development Centre for Educational Management and Policy (NDCEMP). Another important influence was the work done by the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, which introduced me to new principles, such as involving more than one staff member per school in a preparation course, which had a definite impact on my thinking about preparation programmes.

In 1995 I visited the University of Bristol and the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, and read a paper on headteacher training in South Africa at the British Educational Management and Administration Society (BEMAS) in Oxford. I then spent ten days at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto, and attended the 1995 Annual Conference of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in Salt Lake City. This conference brought me into contact with many of the prominent writers and thinkers on the topic of principal preparation programmes.

Through all of this I acquired a good overview of the work that was being done in the United States and Britain, and of strategies tested and implemented in courses that seemed to produce good results in terms of converting knowledge from theory to practice.

In 1996 I became a member of the project team of the Centres of Learning Project, initiated by the Delta Foundation in Port Elizabeth. This project focuses on an initial group of 10 schools in the Port Elizabeth area, with the aim of improving management, administration and governance. What impressed me about this project was that for the first time I witnessed a wider approach than simply the presentation of the usual topics characteristic of the behaviourist era (for a more detailed discussion of this era, see 3.1.5) such as leadership, motivation, conflict management and communication. A separate course was presented to members of school governing bodies, while selected staff members were sent on a computer course to equip them to handle the school administration.

1.1.3 George

The seeds for this study were sown as far back as 1993 in George (located in the Southern Cape region of South Africa). In that year the Director of the Southern Cape Learning Resource Unit (SCLRU) in George, together with a school principal and a retired school inspector, also both from George, started weekend workshops for school principals in the George-Mossel Bay-Oudtshoorn area. While these workshops met a tremendous need, it soon became evident that much more was required if the level of leadership in that area was to be raised. Thus, with the aim of establishing an accredited university course for school leaders at the SCLRU, the group conducted a needs analysis survey of the educational leadership and management skills in the schools in that area. From this survey, a list of topics was compiled for inclusion in a university-led school leader preparation course.

In March 1996 a delegation from George visited Port Elizabeth. This group, which included the three persons previously involved in the workshops and officials from the Education Department, met with members of the Faculty of Education, with the intention of designing a course for school leaders.

The George group, equipped with the results of their needs' survey, as well as their practical knowledge and experience of local needs, problems and challenges, met with staff members of the Faculty of Education, who could contribute their knowledge of theory and of what was being done in other parts of the world. The outcome of this workshop was a syllabus for the course, as well as a detailed plan with respect to course presentation and the assessment of participants (the minutes of the meeting and the syllabus are included in addendum B1).

The course was launched in April 1997. Twelve participants enrolled. It was designed in such a way that theoretical inputs were made once a month over weekends, and workshops were conducted in between on Friday afternoons. The participants had to complete written assignments on various topics, take part in seminars and write one examination per semester.

From the beginning I was interested in finding out whether this course made any difference in practice - whether the topics prescribed during the theoretical sessions, discussed in the workshops and reflected upon in the assignments, were implemented in the schools where the participants taught. I was also looking for ways in which ideas about presentation strategies, successfully tested elsewhere, could be implemented in the South African situation. I saw this group of twelve as an ideal opportunity to try out my ideas and get some help in finding methods that fitted in with local circumstances.

There were four principals in the group of twelve participants. During November 1997 I visited their schools to see what was happening in practice. These visits confronted me with the wide range of needs existing in these schools, and revealed staff members' inertia to do anything about existing problems. I also became aware of the many obstacles principals faced in trying to bring about change in their schools. These factors were blocking the transfer of ideas and solutions from the theoretical environment in which the course was presented to the day-to-day running of the schools.

1.1.4 Academic

Since 1990, much has been written about the management training of head teachers (Leithwood, Begley and Cousins, 1992; Millstein, 1993; Murphy, 1992 and 1993). The unbridled optimism which characterised writings in the 1960s and 1970s (Murphy, 1992) about the potential role of the training of school leaders in the improvement of schools, has made way in the 1980s and 1990s for more sobering remarks about the limitations of such programmes in bringing about change (Bridges, 1982 cited by Hallinger, 1992:x and March, 1974 cited by Murphy, 1992:10). Still, it remains a fact that school leaders play a key and determining role in schools and that efforts to prepare them continue to be an important way to address the changes that schools will face in the future (Leithwood, et al., 1992:6; Fullan, 1993:4).

The belief in the potential of leadership development to bring about change is evidenced in South Africa in the above-mentioned appointment of the Task Team on Education Management and Development. Even though the preparation of school

leaders is only one aspect of education management development, the faith which the members of the Task Team had in the potential of management development for improving education, is clear : "The Task Team is convinced that education management development is the key to transformation in education" (1996:8).

According to Murphy's historical overview of leadership preparation in the United States since the latter part of the previous century, the preparation process has gone through various stages. The prescriptive or ideological phase lasted until about 1945, and was followed by the behavioural science era (±1946-1985). Since 1985 the behavioural science era has given way to the dialectical era (1992: 17-21). The unfolding of the dialectical era coincides with the development of new thinking on the generation of knowledge and methods of research. This era represents a moving away from the positivistic mode of the prescriptive and behavioural science eras, and coincides with increasing criticism of both the definition of legitimate knowledge and the accepted ways in which it can be generated (Murphy, 1992:70).

In the behavioural science era the emphasis, according to Murphy (1992:61), was on the general acceptance of a "one best model". This was associated with an ongoing belief in predictability, in scientific certainty and in empirical data as the only source of knowledge. It also implied a growing rejection of the use of philosophy and values in the training of school leaders. The dialectical era is informed by a recognition that knowledge gained from experience (craft knowledge) should be used in a dialectical process with theoretical knowledge to generate new insights. It involves moving away from the teaching of topics from a variety of disciplines, to the integration of concepts from various disciplines around problems of practice (Murphy, 1992:72).

In my experience of training programmes for school teachers currently on offer in South Africa, the lessons that have been learnt in other countries have not been taken to heart here, and the pervasive influence of the behavioural science, and even of the prescriptive eras, still determines both what is presented and the way in which it is presented. It sometimes appears as though designers of programmes are content when standard topics such as communication, instructional management and motivation of

staff appear in their curricula, especially if these are approached in a prescriptive "how to" fashion, without taking the context or the recipient's own thinking and experience into consideration.

Many writers have written about programmes on leadership preparation in which the new thinking of the dialectical era is being implemented. Leithwood *et al.* (1992) write extensively on both content and teaching strategies, especially in Canada. Other writers like Bridges (1992), Millstein (1993), Shakeshaft (1993), and Sirotnik and Mueller (1993) write about programmes in the American context. Dadey and Harber (1991:41) represent the new approach (moving away from lecturing and prescription) within the African context, in suggesting action learning methods and the use of case studies (drawing on the experience and understanding of all group members) in training programmes for head teachers. Schmuck and Runkel's (1994) work on organisational development fits in with the recommendations of the Task Team (1996:24) about moving away from a narrow emphasis on basic management styles to issues such as leadership and organisational development. Thurlow (1993:123) emphasises the need to base developmental programmes on the "realities of the workplace and the day-to-day experiences of the principals". The Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:135) proposes that programmes "should aim to be multi-faceted, flexible and reliable".

Much can be gained in the development of preparation programmes in South Africa by building on what has been learnt through research and experience elsewhere, especially concerning the way in which content is generated and presented. This includes a new emphasis on the integration of theoretical and experiential knowledge. The key idea here is represented by Sergiovanni (1991, cited in Murphy, 1992:71), who says: "Indeed, professional knowledge is created in use as principals and teachers think, reflect, decide and do . . .".

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Having undergone the experience described above, I determined to find out how a preparation course for school leaders in a South African situation should be designed

to bring about a change in practice. This implied that I would have to find answers to the following three questions:

- What does research and experience in other parts of the world reveal about the design of preparation courses that lead to an improvement in practice (i.e. that will lead to a transfer of knowledge from theory to practice)?
- What content should be included in a preparation course for school leaders, specifically in the Southern Cape?
- In what ways could ideas and strategies about preparation courses developed and tested elsewhere, be implemented in the South African situation with its limited resources and huge discrepancies with respect to educational provision and the professional development of participants?

1.3 GOAL OF RESEARCH

The goal of the research has therefore been to develop, through addressing the above questions and with the assistance of local practitioners, a framework for a preparation course for school leaders in the Southern Cape, that will lead to a better understanding of their roles in the schools, and eventually to an improvement in their management practice.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.4.1 Preparation

Preparation is a term used in the United States to describe the formal enrichment experience of prospective school leaders, who are required to register for a certification programme to be “prepared” for their role as principal before they may be appointed. Wallace (1991) refers to the process as “learning support”, but one could also use the term “training”. Neither of these fully satisfies. The idea which I want to convey in using

the term “preparation” is that both current and future school leaders are assisted to become better prepared and equipped for their leadership tasks. The term focuses on the need to equip school principals and potential leaders with some of the knowledge and skills they will require to lead a school well.

1.4.2 School leaders

This term is used loosely. It refers to current principals, to senior staff members (deputy principals, heads of departments) and to other staff members who desire to become more effective leaders. The term therefore refers to both current and future leaders.

1.5 DEMARCATION OF STUDY

The study was confined to the Southern Cape of South Africa, and specifically the George - Mossel Bay - Oudtshoorn areas. The research focused on the twelve participants who enrolled for the course in school management presented at the SCLRU in George, who all taught at schools in the area. I worked with the entire group of twelve, but concentrated on the four school principals in the group. While the ideas were tested out in the big group, the four served as a focus group assisting me in determining the direction the course should take.

1.6 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

In Chapter 2 I explain the research framework within which this study was designed. I offer an overview of the various research traditions, and indicate where this study fits into this wide philosophical field. Of particular importance for understanding the design of this thesis is the extensive account given of action research as study method.

In addition to the exposition of the methodological background, Chapter 2 also includes an account of the various methods of data gathering and analysis employed in this thesis.

Chapter 3 is devoted to an overview of the literature I studied to gain insight into what

research and experience have already revealed about leadership preparation programmes in the United States, Canada, England and Africa.

In Chapter 4 the outcomes of the data analysis, and the insights which developed at each stage of the process of interpretation are discussed.

Chapter 5 consists of a discussion of the conclusions of this study. These conclusions developed from the combination of insights which emerged from the data analysis and the literature study. Recommendations are made about those aspects that need to be pursued further.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK OF STUDY

2.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH TRADITIONS

2.1.1 Introduction

Before embarking on a study of this magnitude, it is important to orientate one's project in terms of existing research traditions. My first objective is to present a short overview of the various traditions that have held centre stage in western academic circles over the last hundred and fifty years and up to the present time. Following this overview, I shall take a closer and more detailed look at the interpretive and critical theory paradigms in Sections 2.2 and 2.3, to indicate how the assumptions underlying these two paradigms embody the basic philosophy on which my study is based. In section 2.4 I will discuss the relevance of action research for this study. In the concluding section of this chapter I will give an account of the strategies followed in the data-gathering and analysis process.

2.1.2 The importance of clarity about the research framework

In designing a research project, clarity about the objectives of the study, as well as about the assumptions (explicit or implicit) on which the study is based, is essential. The assumptions help determine the research tradition(s) within which the study is conducted.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1994:76) say that understanding the philosophical issues in research helps to clarify the research design, which includes decisions about the basic research approach, methods to be used in the research, types of data needed, and techniques and tools for the gathering of data.

Philosophical issues confront the researcher with the necessity of thinking thoroughly and creatively about the purpose of the research before embarking on it. This enables the researcher to ensure congruence between what he/she wants to accomplish and what he/she plans to do (research intent and research design).

Even though much research is undertaken without first taking the paradigm(s) upon which it is based into consideration, it remains true that "methodologies are very much a puppet of their underlying assumptions" (Fien and Hillcoat, 1996:26). The problem of doing research without first understanding or recognising the paradigm within which it is based, is emphasized by Namenwith (1986:29), cited by Lather (1991:10): "scientists firmly believe that as long as they are not conscious of any bias or political agenda, they are neutral and objective when in fact they are only unconscious."

Electing to use a specific research tradition implies a political choice on the part of the researcher. Fien and Hillcoat's (1994:27) point is that while only the critical research tradition has an explicit political emphasis, the other traditions are no less informed by political agendas, though these are more implicit and thus remain hidden to the researcher as well as to the reader. They quote Patton (1990:3), who says:

Paradigms are also normative, telling the practitioners what to do without the necessity of long existential or epistemological consideration. But it is this aspect of paradigms that constitutes both their strength and their weakness in that the very reason for action is hidden in the unquestioned assumption of the paradigm.

Easterby-Smith et al. (1994:84) say that there are many choices to be made in designing research, and as many of these choices are closely allied to different philosophical positions, an awareness of the latter can at least ensure that the different elements of research design are consistent with each other.

2.1.3 Explanation of terms used

The term “paradigm” came into existence through the work of Kuhn (1970), who saw the development of science as a process yielding results which do not fit into existing frameworks - these results are often the products of creative and independent thinking which goes beyond the boundaries of existing ideas. This type of “scientific revolution” provides not only new theories, but results in new ways of looking at the world, and in new questions being asked. This combination of new theories and questions is referred to as a new paradigm.

Guba (1990:18) uses the term 'paradigm' to refer to a basic set of beliefs that guides action, specifically in terms of disciplined inquiry, but also in a wider sense.

According to Burrell and Morgan (1979:23), paradigms are defined by the meta-theoretical assumptions on which they are based. This implies a commonality of purpose which binds the work of a group of theorists together, especially in terms of the basic questions with which they approach social theory. Because paradigms define different views of the world, Burrell and Morgan (1979:25) see them as mutually exclusive. Changing from one to another represents a major breach with an intellectual tradition and can be compared to a “conversion” experience in terms of religious faith.

This view of the exclusivity of research paradigms is not realistic in terms of the practice of research. Lather (1991:11) indicates by quoting Atkinson, Delamont and Hammersley (1988) that this rigidity is not necessary:

While we need conceptual frames for purposes of understanding, classifying research and researchers into neatly segregated 'paradigms' or 'traditions' does not reflect the untidy realities of real scholars . . . and may become an end in itself. . . . 'Traditions' must be treated not as clearly defined, real entities but only as loose frameworks for dividing research.

Janse van Rensburg (1994:3) agrees implicitly with this view when she says that “most

of us tend to straddle different research traditions . . .". She warns, however, that because of the fact that they tend to work in more than one paradigm, researchers need to be consistent in terms of keeping their various decisions in line with their stated assumptions.

Goodman (1992:119) says not one school of thought adequately addresses all conceptual issues, and one therefore has to contemplate making a synthesis from several traditions. This is what is often called an eclectic approach (Irwin, 1998).

The terms "paradigm", "traditions", "approaches" and "frameworks" are often used interchangeably, although "paradigm" is the one that seems to be preferred. I choose to use the term "tradition" to refer to the various research approaches, on the one hand following Janse van Rensburg's (1998) use of "tradition" as a "looser type of term", not so much bound to a complete set of ideas, "a grander design than a paradigm would suggest", and on the other hand, to include the post-structural (reflexive, post-modern) tradition in the conceptual framework of research traditions, because the proponents of this tradition see it as a post-structural, post-paradigmatic approach in which discourses take the place of paradigms. It may in a sense be that my approach becomes a "post-tradition" approach.

2.1.4 The most commonly accepted western research traditions

2.1.4.1 Introduction

Many attempts have been made to categorize the various research traditions, e.g. Burrell and Morgan (1979); Popkewitz (1984); Guba (1990); Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1994); Janse van Rensburg (1998) and Smith (1998), to name a few.

Burrell and Morgan's (1979:1) work on the dimensions of social science, although published some time ago, still provides a useful framework within which to analyse various research traditions. They maintain that doing research implies making assumptions about the nature of the social world as well as about the way in which it

may be investigated.

2.1.4.2 The objective-subjective dimension

- Burrell and Morgan (1979:1-9) identify four types of questions to determine whether a study might be classified as "objective" or "subjective". These questions are:
 - Ontological: What is the nature of the phenomena under investigation or of reality?
 - Epistemological: What is the basis of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the known?
 - Human nature: Are human beings the products of this environment, or the creators of the situations they find themselves in?
 - Methodological: How should the researcher go about gathering knowledge?

Table 2.1 gives an overview of the various assumptions underlying the answers to these and other questions. It serves as an instrument to classify research as having either a subjective or an objective orientation:

Table 2.1: Subjective and objective research traditions

| ASPECTS | REFERENCE | SUBJECTIVE ↔ OBJECTIVE DIMENSION | |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 Intellectual tradition | Burrell and Morgan (1979) | German Idealism | Sociological positivism |
| | Easterby-Smith, <i>et al.</i> (1994) | Phenomenology | Positivism |
| 2 Ontology | Easterby-Smith, <i>et al.</i> (1994:80) Burrell and Morgan (1979:4) | <u>Nominalism</u> : The world is socially constructed and subjective, the product of individual cognition | <u>Realism</u> : The world is external to individual cognition, independent of the observer, made up of hard, tangible and relatively im-measurable structures. |
| 3 Epistemology | Burrell and Morgan (1979:1,5) | <u>Anti-positivistic</u> : Knowledge is relative, created by the individual, understood from his/her viewpoint. Knowledge has to be constructed. | <u>Positivistic</u> : Knowledge consists of general laws, can be transmitted. Knowledge has to be acquired. |
| 4 Human nature | Burrell and Morgan (1979:6) | <u>Voluntarism</u> : Man is autonomous and free-willed, controlling the environment. | <u>Determinism</u> : Man and his activities are completely determined by the situation in which he is located, he is controlled by his environment. |
| 5 Methodology | Burrell and Morgan (1979:6) Goodman (1992:120) | <u>Ideographic</u> : Understanding the social world by getting first-hand knowledge of the subject - analysing subjective accounts, involving oneself in the everyday flow of life. <u>Subjective</u> : The focus of social study is the meaning people give to their actions. When a researcher distances him/herself from the social world through objective methods, it becomes impossible for him/her to understand social realities. | <u>Nomothetic</u> : Using methods employed in the natural sciences, testing hypotheses, conducting scientific tests. |
| 6 Values | Easterby-Smith, <i>et al.</i> (1994:77,80) | Science is driven by human interests - values and interests guide one's inquiry. | Science is value-free. |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 7 Variants | Easterby-Smith, <u>et al.</u> (1994:78) Lather (1991:7) | Interpretive sociology, naturalistic inquiry, social constructivism. Hermeneutic, symbolic interaction, micro-ethnography | Experiments usually associated with positivistic research |
| 8 Task of researcher | Easterby-Smith, <u>et al.</u> (1994:80) | Focus on meanings. Try to understand what is happening. Look at the totality of each situation Develop ideas through induction from data | Focus on facts. Look for causality and general laws. Reduce phenomena to simplest elements. Formulate hypotheses and test them |
| 9 Methods to be used | Easterby-Smith, <u>et al.</u> (1994:80) | Using a variety of methods to understand different interpretations of the issue Choosing small samples which are investigated over time and in-depth | Operationalising concepts so that they can be measured Often using quantitative methods Taking large samples |
| 10 Role of the people used as sources of data (the researched) | Goodman (1992:119) | People are seen as active agents in the creation of social reality | People seen as passive actors, playing the part expected of them within a social framework |
| 11 Social reality | Goodman (1992:119) | People experience reality through interaction - the social world is changed and maintained through different interpretations of the world | The role of the scientist is to prove the existence of the general laws on which social systems are based, so that society can be organized in a more efficient and effective manner |
| 12 Conflict | Goodman (1992:119) | Because of different interpretations of phenomena, conflict is seen as a normal aspect of social reality | Conflict is seen as an inability of an individual to fit into the social order |

2.1.4.3 The order-conflict dimension

Burrell and Morgan (1979:11) acknowledge the fact that theorists have lost interest in the order-conflict debate, but they revive it purposefully in order to identify this dimension for analysing assumptions about the order of society. Although, according to Burrell and Morgan (1979:12), many of the elements of these two dimensions are seen by many writers as two sides of the same coin, Burrell and Morgan maintain their separateness, because of their view that they are based upon opposing assumptions about society. In the light of the objections against these terms, they prefer to identify this dimension by the terms "regulation" and "radical change".

Table 2.2 provides a summary of the assumptions of this dimension.

Table 2.2: Two models for the analysis of social processes

Dimension
Radical change ← → Regulation

| According to the radical change view of society, theorists should be: | According to the regulation view of society, theorists should be: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -concerned with problems of change, conflict and coercion in social structures -concerned with man's emancipation from the structures which limit his potential for development -concerned with alternatives to the status quo -thinking about what is possible rather than what is -focussing on questions about both the material and psychic deprivation of man -concerned about the social system which erodes the possibilities for human fulfilment -recognising the potential in people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -concerned with the need for regulation in human affairs -providing explanations about the underlying unity and cohesiveness of society -focusing on consensus - why there is voluntary and spontaneous agreement of opinion -maintaining the status quo -discussing social cohesion and integration -explaining various social relations in terms of the satisfaction of system or individual needs -assuming group solidarity and utilizing it |

Source: Burrell and Morgan (1979: 13-18)

2.1.4.4 Two dimensions, many paradigms

Burrell and Morgan's contribution lies in their concept of a two-dimensional framework

by which to analyse the nature of social science.

While the debate among many researchers remains on the level of the objective-subjective dimension, the regulation (order) - change dimension has begun to receive more attention as researchers have become more interested in the critical tradition.

Goodman (1992:119) succeeds in bridging the gap between the two dimensions when she maintains that positivism is associated with the idea that social reality is controlled by laws, and that these laws control the behaviour of people who in turn set up social systems that reflect these laws. In lines 11 and 12 of Table 2.1 it is evident that Goodman does not refer to the objective-subjective dimension only, but also to elements of the order-change dimension (change, conflict, social systems based on general laws).

Using Burrell and Morgan's two dimensions as they do in matrix form, is a convenient way of presenting the various aspects of the social sciences being emphasized. See the discussion below.

Adapting Burrell and Morgan's paradigms somewhat, and numbering the four quadrants, one can see the various paradigms reflected within the two-dimensional framework in figure 2.1. Of the four, I will emphasise the second and third quadrants, and then explain the arrow I have inserted into the model to represent the post-structural approach as not fitting into a paradigm approach at all (Burrell and Morgan's "conflict" paradigm fitted in there well). The four quadrants represent research approaches with various combinations of subjective-objective and order-change assumptions. Different writers may also use different names for paradigms representing fairly similar combinations within the two dimensions. One can place theorists like Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1994) in the debate between quadrants [1] and [2], while others like Popkewitz (1984), Guba (1990) and Goodman (1992) lift the perspective to quadrant [3], adding the social change dimension to the interpretive approach.

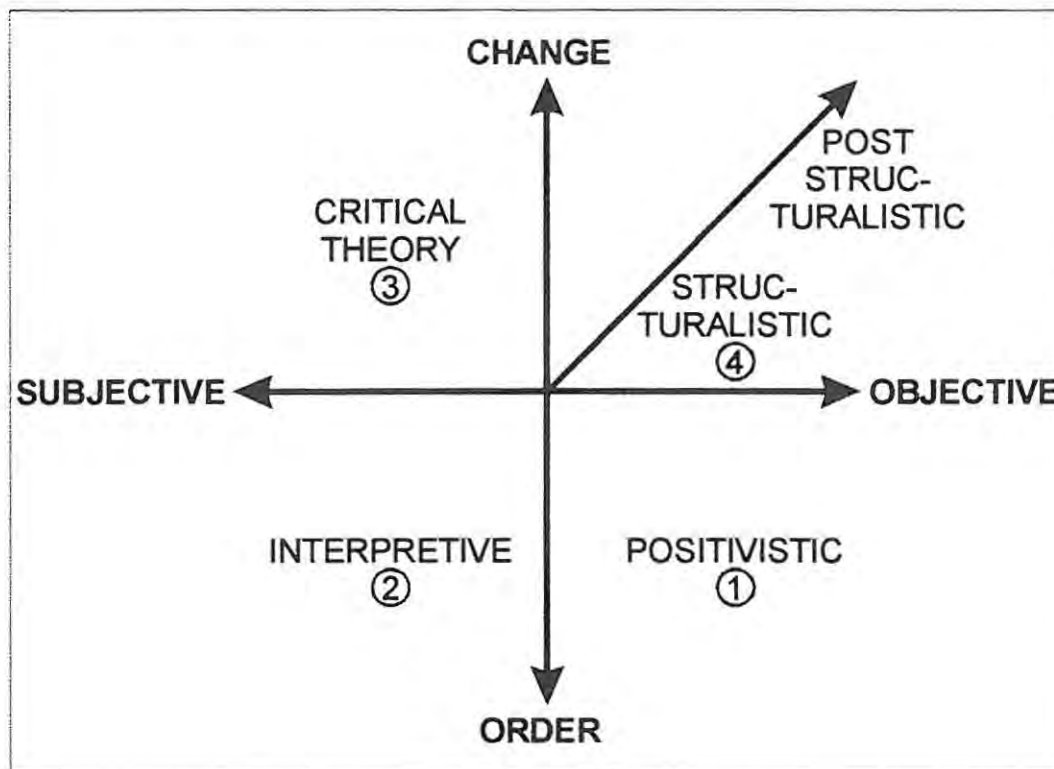


Fig 2.1: Burrell and Morgan's four quadrants and four paradigms

Source: Burrell and Morgan (1979:22)

Lather (1986, 1991) and Goodman (1992) then go further in shifting the attention to "multiple voices", the "creation of dialogue" and the "deconstruction of language", which moves the discussion beyond the framework to a new dimension of "discourses". This type of research reflects the post-structuralist approach, which sees itself as post-paradigmatic, not wanting to fit into any sort of framework or categorization - in a sense also informing or sensitizing the other paradigms into an awareness of the importance of language, "in order to break down the self-infatuation in our statements and to destroy the arrogance of our sciences" (Barthes, quoted in Smith, 1988, cited by Lather, 1991:13).

The following brief description of the four paradigms is intended as an overview of the major research traditions currently in vogue.

Quadrant 1: The positivistic paradigm

This is the term Guba (1990:20) and Easterby-Smith et al. (1994:77) use, and their assumptions closely resemble Popkewitz's (1984:36,37) description of what he calls the empirical-analytic paradigm.

The positivistic paradigm seeks to emulate the natural sciences in that it aims to find certainty, and to be objective and value free. Research in this paradigm should lead to generalisable (universal) laws, and the objective with this type of research is often to prescribe, predict or control situations. Quantitative methods in which data are analysed through statistical methods and presented in a visual way by means of tables and graphs are typically used.

Among the many assumptions Popkewitz (1984:36) identifies as being characteristic of this tradition, is the belief that the social world exists as a system of variables which are analytically separable parts of an interacting system. These variables can be identified as the causal factors behind specific forms of behaviour. This implies that the manipulation of a specific variable can produce conditionally predictable outcomes.

Quadrant 2: The interpretive paradigm

Burrell and Morgan's (1979:28) interpretive paradigm shares many of the assumptions of both Easterby-Smith et al.'s (1994:80,81) phenomenological paradigm and Popkewitz's (1984:40) symbolic sciences paradigm.

In this tradition, social life is seen as rule-making and rule-governing (Popkewitz, 1984:40). Rules governing social life are made and sustained through the interactions of people. This perspective shifts the emphasis of research to the area of human action, intent and communication. The term "symbolic" refers to the symbols people use to communicate and interpret (Popkewitz 1984:41).

The phenomenological paradigm originates from the assumption that the world and reality are not objective and external, but are socially constructed and given meaning by people (Easterby-Smith, et al. (1994:78). The key idea is that reality is socially constructed, which means that research in this tradition seeks to understand and

appreciate the different constructions and meanings people make of their experiences.

Goodman (1992:119) says phenomenologists see people as active agents in the creation of reality. Individuals do not merely respond to external stimuli - they interpret the world around them and act on these unique interpretations.

Quadrant 3: Critical theory

Guba (1990:23,24) and Jackson (1995, cited by Irwin, 1998), use this term, while Burrell and Morgan (1979:22) include critical theory under the main heading of "radical humanist".

In this tradition, the emphasis is on understanding social change, as well as on responding to social problems this change brings about, with the emphasis on social and political consequences. Critical theory wants to change the patterns of knowledge and social conditions that bring about limitations to the practical activities of people. The function of critical theory, according to Popkewitz (1984:45) "is to understand the relations among value, interest and action and, to paraphrase Marx, to change the world, not to describe it".

Critical theory aims to enable individuals to know themselves and their situation. Its purpose, according to Janse van Rensburg (1994:8), is enlightenment from a "false consciousness", in which the researcher plays an active role. However, some concern does exist about the fact that enlightenment does not necessarily lead to change in behaviour (Lather, 1991:12).

Quadrant 4

For Burrell and Morgan (1979:33,34) the fourth quadrant reflects the combination of objective and radical change. It tends to address structural conflict from the deterministic and positivist viewpoints. This approach leads them to explain change by referring to fundamental conflicts brought about by political and economic crises.

Because current thinking tends to move away from this paradigm to the post-structural

approach, I have added the arrow to Burrell and Morgan's matrix, indicating a totally new, paradigm-free development in research. This group of approaches to scientific study is best described by what they are not, e.g. as post-structuralist, post-modern, post-paradigmatic; or referred to as reflexive discourses (Janse van Rensburg 1994:8,11). Janse van Rensburg states that these discourses and practices are characterized by reflexive as opposed to realist enquiry, which implies that the researcher reflects on/deconstructs her own approaches to enquiry.

Agger (1991:112) says post-structuralism is a theory of knowledge and language, while post-modernism is a theory of society, culture and history. Post-structuralism concentrates on assumptions which are made in any text. "Deconstruction" aims at analysing the assumptions behind the text. Agger adds that there is often no clear distinction between work classified as post-structural or post-modern: "Perhaps the most important hallmark of all this research is the aversion to clean positivistic definitions and categories" (1991:12).

Goodman (1992:123) conveys the essence of this approach by saying that it is critical to employ self-reflection in efforts to interpret the social life found in schools - such reflection is necessary in order to guard against imposing meaning on phenomena rather than constructing meaning through negotiation with those being observed.

Post-structuralist research focuses on creating dialogue. Lather (1986:265) invokes Comstock in saying that creating a dialogue with the researched means that the people involved are seen as active agents instead of objects which implies that the researched become subjects of the research, empowered to understand and change their situations.

Post-structuralism refers to the tools academics have developed to analyse the present situation. These tools are needed for grappling with the contradictions in research (asking questions which the critical theorist is not asking, e.g. interrogating the very framework within which the researcher asks questions) (Janse van Rensburg, 1998).

Post-structuralism rejects the view that science can be spoken in a singular, general voice (Agger, 1991:121). This has the advantages of challenging singular methodologies and of facilitating multiple perspectives, including a variety of hitherto muted speakers in discussions about social issues. An important consequence of this is the opening of the text of science to its outsiders, allowing them to discuss and criticise what is written.

Lather (1991:14) sees the focus of the post-structuralist view as the mutual dialogical production of a “multi-voice, multi-centred discourse”. As an example of the “struggle to create a dialogical community”, Lather (1991:15) refers to Johnston's attempt to establish a collaborative inquiry project with classroom teachers. In an attempt to shift the researcher's control, a change was made in the writing of the text - teachers began to write into the text, adding, challenging, elaborating. Johnston saw this as a shift with respect to the object of the inquiry - instead of the teachers, the text became the centre of analysis.

It is clear then from the above that while Burrell and Morgan refer to four basic research traditions, many names are used to refer to various paradigms within similar traditions. In Lather's (1991:7) words: “This proliferation of paradigms goes by many names”. She presents a table indicating how all these various traditions or paradigms may be conceptualized.

Table 2.3: Categories of research traditions

| Categories of human interest | Predict | Understand | Emancipate | Deconstruct |
|------------------------------|------------|---|---|---|
| Paradigms | positivism | interpretive naturalistic constructivist phenomenological hermeneutic symbolic interaction micro-ethnography | critical neo-marxist feminist minoritarian praxis-oriented Freirean participatory | post-structural post-modern post-paradigmatic diaspora |

Source: (Lather, 1991:8)

Having spent time on the broad spectrum of research traditions, in the next two sections I will focus on the interpretive and critical theory paradigms, in order to nest my study within the field of research traditions.

2.2 THE INTERPRETIVIST TRADITION

2.2.1 Introduction

“Interpretive paradigm” is an umbrella term for a host of different paradigms which, although sharing many common assumptions, often originated from different fields of academic endeavour (e.g. phenomenology, which developed as a research method in psychology, and ethnography, originating in anthropology). Other paradigms included in this tradition are the naturalistic, constructivist, hermeneutic, symbolic interaction and micro-ethnographic approaches (Lather, 1991:7 and Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1994:78).

All these approaches share the same objective: to understand and interpret social situations by becoming part of the situations or close to the people involved with them, to listen to them and to share their perceptions and experiences.

2.2.2 A “constructed” versus a “found” world

The interpretive tradition posits the world as “constructed” rather than “found” world (Janse van Rensburg, 1994:6). Social phenomenology sees people as “active agents in the *creation* of social reality” (Goodman, 1992:119, italics mine). This implies that people do more than simply respond to outside forces and stimuli; they make (construct) their own understandings of the world around them, and then act upon these understandings.

The interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the world in terms of the experiences of people involved in it. It sees knowledge as the product of individual thinking and consciousness, constructed by individuals in unique settings through interaction with their worlds. “The interpretivist maintains that knowledge is internally constructed” (Fien

and Hillcoat, 1996:27).

Interpretivists can therefore not accept the existence of objective knowledge in the form of general laws applicable to social affairs and people's behaviour. They see knowledge as understandable only through the participant's frame of reference. This implies that a study of social life must be one in which the researcher becomes actively involved with the people who are the subjects of the research (the researched), sharing their world. He/she has to listen to and share the world and experiences of individuals who are creating their social reality through their own interpretations and actions. In Blumer's terms (cited by Goodman, 1992:120): "One comes to know social reality through prolonged and intimate participation in it".

2.2.3 "Situation-specific" human behaviour

Researchers in the interpretive tradition argue that human behaviour is too diverse and complex to be described through generalization and universal theories. Human behaviour is "situation-specific" (Fien and Hillcoat, 1996:27). Focusing on a specific aspect of human behaviour therefore implies that the results cannot be generalized and replicated. In interpretive research, the focus is on the thorough explanation of meaning in a specific context. That is why social reality cannot be neatly analysed and explained in terms of statistics, deductions and conclusions.

It seems obvious that when a researcher immerses him/herself in a situation in such a way as to listen to, to interpret and to understand the meanings individuals make of their worlds, he/she must limit his/her research to one or only a few cases. This often (not always) implies longitudinal research designs in which data are gathered over an extended period of time from a small number of cases (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1994:85).

Ethnography is a case in point, in which the researcher's aim is to become an insider over a prolonged period of time in order to discern social and cultural patterns (Smith: 1998). The possible benefits of such in-depth exposure are well expressed in an address by Cronbach to the American Psychological Association in 1974: "Intensive

local observation goes beyond discipline to an open-eyed, open-minded appreciation of the surprises nature deposits in the investigative net" (cited in Spindler, 1982:3).

2.2.4 Development of theory from interpretive research

In the development of theory, phenomenologists (according to Easterby-Smith et al., 1994:86) build on an approach known as "grounded theory". In using this term, they refer to the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967), who saw the researcher developing theory through the "comparative method", which means looking at the same process or events in different settings or situations, so as to identify trends and characteristics. From analysing and interpreting data gathered through observations in various settings, a theory may be developed which Glaser and Strauss labelled "grounded theory" (that is, developed from what was observed in practice).

Theories developed through a process like this should, according to Glaser and Strauss, meet two criteria:

- The theory should be analytic enough (various categories and trends would have had to be identified from observations in various settings) to enable some generalisation to take place, so as to tentatively apply in other situations as well.
- The theory should be developed from practice in such a way that the people involved will be able to relate the theory to their own experience.

This approach to theory development is in contrast to the way theory is developed in a positivist framework. In the positivist tradition, one starts with the theory (or hypothesis) and then gathers data to confirm or disconfirm that theory. The advantage of the positivist approach is that there is clarity about the theory to be tested before data gathering starts. In this way, the data gathering process is quicker and more efficient.

The advantage of the phenomenological approach is that it is an open process which may lead to new, unanticipated and exciting insights. It does, however, take much more time, and the researcher obviously runs the risk that nothing new will emerge from the

work (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1994:87). This ought not, however, to concern the researcher unduly, because it is the process as well as the product which interests him/her. It is also possible that new ideas and questions will emerge as the study proceeds (Spindler, 1982:6).

The generalisation of theory is often seen as a big issue when comparisons are made between phenomenological and positivistic research. It has already been mentioned in one of the criteria formulated by Glaser and Strauss (see above). Spindler (1982:8), in defence of ethnography, and making oblique reference to criteria associated with the positivist tradition, maintains that "an in-depth study that gives accurate knowledge of the setting not markedly dissimilar from other relevant settings, is likely to be generalised in a substantial degree to these other settings"; and that "it is better to have in-depth, accurate knowledge of one setting than superficial and possibly skewed or misleading information about isolated relationships in many settings".

Although interpretive data is not replicable, Fien and Hillcoat (1996:28) argue that there is still scope for general principles and themes to be transferred to other settings. It is obvious that although each situation is unique, there will be commonalities among situations in similar settings (see Spindler quoted above, e.g. staff meetings in high schools) which afford some transferability from what has been learnt in the one situation to the other. Such transfer cannot happen mechanically or statistically, and can only stimulate and inform thinking about a similar application in the other situation.

One must, however, emphasise the fact that the development of theory through interpretivist research is not as clear-cut as it is in positivist research. It is also seldom completely finished, but continues in a cyclical fashion. This is amply illustrated by the following statement by Goodman (1992:120), who is referring to research in which the researcher becomes part of the social situation he/she is researching:

This orientation allows one to meet the basic requirements of science: to confront directly the social world being studied; to raise abstract questions about this world; to discover relations between categories of data; to formulate

propositions about these relations; to organise these propositions into analytical schemes that others can understand; and to test the questions, data, relations, propositions and analysis through renewed examination of the social world.

Congruently, researchers from the interpretivist tradition are seldom as definite about the results of their research as their positivistic counterparts. In the face of the complexities of social life, however, a degree of humility is justified; it is good to remember that, as Goodman (1992:123) puts it, "All of us are simply trying as best as one can to make sense of the experience of living".

2.2.5 Social concerns and criticisms

The interpretivist tradition maintains, like the positivistic approach, a basic neutrality about social affairs, which means it does not concern itself with questions of social change. Answers to social questions can obviously be informed by themes developed from interpretivist research, but are, as Popkowitz (1984:44) puts it, "guided by other than scientific questions, such as political, social or philosophical considerations".

This does not mean that the work of interpretive scholars does not have political and practical implications, but that in the interpretivist perspective, acting on understandings arising from research is fundamentally separated from the process of research.

Popkowitz (1984:44), in comparing the interpretivist tradition to that of positivism, says that while it is the objective of interpretive research to illuminate, and sometimes to make recommendations with respect to social affairs, the approach does not necessarily serve a political purpose in seeking to give moral direction to social affairs. This implies that theory developed through interpretive research is predominantly contemplative.

While interpretive research focuses on the meanings people make of their experiences, it remains true, as Goodman (1992:121) reminds us, that social reality is not made up of perceptions and meanings only. The influence of underlying structures and social

relationships on individual perceptions should also be taken into consideration, even though the individuals concerned may be unaware of the influence of these structures and relationships.

Popkewitz (1984:44) says that the symbolic sciences are, like the empirical-analytic tradition, concerned with "what is", rather than with "why it is" or "what might be". He says further that symbolic theory shifts the focus of theory to the nature of discourse rather than behaviour. However, one should not be misled by such generalisations. It remains true that an in-depth analysis of and reflection about a "what is" question, may often generate new insights into "what might be" - insights born from the process, though not originally seen as part of the reasons for the initiation of the process. Such insights often lead to action, especially when, according to the way interpretive research is designed, an individual or group of researchers have been involved in a long, deep, interpretive relationship with a specific individual, group or situation.

The interpretive paradigm has been criticised for its emphasis on individual experiences and perceptions at the expense of focusing on the social structures which influence those experiences and perceptions. This emphasis has been the focal point of criticism levelled at the interpretive tradition, especially from the critical theory perspective (Janse van Rensburg,1994:7). Goodman (1992:122) says in this respect: "Social phenomenology generally has failed to address the way in which our own work as observers of social reality supports particular social and practical interests at the expense of others. These shortcomings raise the question of what it means to study social reality in an unjust and often uncaring world". This statement again serves to forge a link between the paradigms of the second and third quadrants of Figure 2.1, building a bridge between a subjective paradigm intent on simply understanding the social world (the interpretive paradigm), and a subjective paradigm which has social change and improvement as one of its main agendas (the critical theory paradigm).

In this study the objective is more than simply to understand and interpret, even though understanding and interpreting are prerequisites for bringing about any meaningful change in a particular situation. In aiming to prepare school leaders to improve their

practice in the school, this study does lean towards the field of the critical theorists. It does not, however, go as far as trying to address the inherent structural and social problems which play a role in the problems school leaders have to deal with, although it does focus on raising participants' critical awareness.

2.2.6 The interpretive tradition in this study

In my study a strong emphasis was placed on listening and trying to understand what participants were saying in terms of content, method and presentation structure. In trying to reach a greater understanding of them, the worlds of the participants were brought into focus through visits to schools, case studies, feedback at workshops, assignments based on the school situation, evaluation and the design of seminars. The nature of these attempts to understand clearly place the study in the interpretive mould (Easterby-Smith, 1994: 78). Another factor which contributes to this classification is that the idea of a "found world" in terms of management knowledge was continuously rejected. Participants were encouraged throughout to construct/create their own knowledge, in a dialectical interaction of theory and practice. Nowhere was theory presented as "the right way", "the ultimate truth" or the "answers to problems": it was maintained throughout that theory should only be seen as a stimulus to participants' own knowledge construction.

My role as researcher was to become close to the group, especially to the focus group of principals. We shared many hours of discussions, I visited their schools, we had social functions together and they took responsibility for some of the actual presentation.

In all these respects, my study can be seen to share the assumptions of the interpretive tradition.

2.3 THE CRITICAL CONDITION

2.3.1 Introduction

Critical theory is associated with the Frankfurt School, which comprised theorists such as Adorno, Hockheimer, Marcuse, Pollock, Lowenthal and Benjamin, with Habermas as the most important recent representative (Agger, 1991:107).

With regard to the meaning of the term "critical", Fien and Hillcoat (1996:28) cite Robottom and Hart's (1993:15,16) explanation:

Whereas critical can mean internal criticism from the perspective of analytical questioning of argument and method, it can also mean developing a conception of reality that ties ideas, thought and language to social and historical conditions; that is, social criticism based on notions of power and control - these meanings are combined so that becoming critical means:

- developing an analytic posture towards arguments, procedures and language using a lens related to issues of power and control in relationships, and
- developing an action-orientated commitment to common welfare.

Fien and Hillcoat (1996:29) go further in exploring the meaning of critical educational research, saying that critical theory provides a framework for answering ordinary questions arising from the day-to-day running of schools. Examples of these might be: Why are some pupils always late? Why do some of them never do any homework? Why are some of the teachers always out of their classrooms? Critical theory does not stop at posing the questions. As Fien and Hillcoat (1996:29) put it: ". . . even more importantly, it directs teachers towards an analysis of the causes and consequences of the questions encompassed in the questions and towards a range of possible solutions".

2.3.2 Social change

Critical theory is located, as was evident in Section 2.1, in the third quadrant in the two-dimensional scheme of Burrell and Morgan (see fig 2.1). This implies that while its assumptions support a subjective approach, the objectives of critical research go further. It cannot simply accept (or ignore) the status quo, but must look toward social change and improvement. Goodman (1992:122) says the objective cannot simply be to repeat what is observed, but must involve analysing the reality which has been observed so as to identify the various constraints that prevent the creation of a more just and caring reality.

According to Agger (1991:109), critical theorists want to change positivist thinking about reality and rationality so that social facts can be viewed as pieces of history that can be changed instead of as pre-determined realities. Critical theory challenges positivism's alleged promotion of passivity and fatalism through its emphasis on cause and effect-determinism. What is needed to replace this fatalism is, as Agger (1991:109) puts it, "a sense of dialectical imagination" which enables social scientists to look beyond the given social situation towards a new situation "what might be" versus "what is".

In contrast with the interpretive tradition, critical researchers maintain that reality is not only internally constructed (Fien and Hillcoat, 1996:28) at the level of subjective experience. It cannot only be understood within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, but is also influenced by social forces. This implies that no situation, behaviour, experience or perception can be considered apart from its societal context. Thus, in Fien and Hillcoat's (1996:29) words, "the critical perspective entails a commitment to socially transformative research for the common good of individuals within society".

2.3.3 "False consciousness"

Critical theory developed as an attempt by the Frankfurt School to explain why the

socialist revolution predicted by Marx did not materialise. One of the reasons identified by them lay in the concept of "false consciousness". Their argument was that the extent to which the false consciousness of workers and others was exploited kept them from desiring and working towards the revolution.

This "false consciousness" consisted, amongst other things, in an acceptance of the world "as it is", of the social system as both inevitable and rational. Positivism, according to the theorists of the Frankfurt School, played a dominant role as "capitalist ideology" in teaching people to accept the world "as it is" and the social system as both inevitable and rational (Agger, 1991:107). One way in which this false consciousness is demonstrated is the way in which people are drawn into buying things which in many cases they cannot afford, but which at any rate imply giving up many other freedoms in the process (Higgs and Smith, 1997:160,161). Webb (1996:49) says "false consciousness" results in people believing and acting against their own interests, e.g. working class supporters of conservative politics, students resisting group work or lecturers avoiding problem-based learning. The concept is well summarized by Fromm (1992:25) when he says: "our whole social system rests upon the fictitious belief that nobody is forced to do what he does, but that he likes to do it. . . . Force is camouflaged by consent; the consent is brought about by the methods of mass suggestion".

Fromm (1992:1) elaborates on many ideas characteristic of this tradition. He contrasts the "having" and the "being" modes and says: "the full humanization of man requires the breakthrough from the possession-centered to the activity-centered orientation, from selfishness and egotism to solidarity and altruism".

Fromm (1992: 7,8) refers to outer freedom, the domain of politics, and inner freedom, to which the church addresses itself. The important point is that man is aware of the outward limitations of his freedom, but unaware of the inner chains, "carrying the illusion that he is free". Man often tries and succeeds to rid himself of the outer limitations, but the big problem is: "how can he rid himself of chains which he is unaware of?" The realization that there are inner and outer limitations to man's freedom brings about the only realistic aim in life and society, which is total liberation, the

liberation of both the inner and outer man. Total liberation is the goal which Fromm refers to as "radical (or revolutionary) humanism".

Burrell and Morgan (1979:32) say that false consciousness is one of the most basic concepts underlying the critical paradigm which they, in line with Fromm, refer to as the "radical humanist paradigm". It implies "that the consciousness of man is dominated by ideological superstructures with which he interacts". The major concern of critical theorists is thus to change the world through a "change in modes of cognition and consciousness" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979:33), and thereby to bring about a release from the constraints which existing social arrangements place on human development.

Writers like Guba (1990), Lather (1991) and Goodman (1992) have expressed concern about the use of this term. It implies, they say, that a "true consciousness 'exists' somewhere out there", or more likely, is possessed by the enquirer or some better-informed elite (Guba, 1990:24). The task of research is then to raise peoples' consciousness to the "true" level, so that they may act to transform the world. If this is to be accepted, the next step is to prescribe to people what they should do. Many positivistic undertones are evident here, e.g. "prescription", "true consciousness existing external to the individual", and the close parallel between "transforming" the world and "predicting and controlling" it. Lather (1991:13) adds another concern: that researchers, enthused by their emancipatory intentions will "impose meaning on situations, rather than construct meaning through negotiation with participants." Goodman (1992:123) bridges the gap to the post-structuralist approach by pointing out that a way to guard against this happening is to employ self-reflection, to critically analyse one's intentions and methods.

Finally, there is the fact that new ways of thinking do not necessarily lead to changed behaviour. Lather (1991:92) refers to the concern that critical thought does not automatically lead to emancipatory action. Thought, new insights and action do not necessarily go together. This point opens up the question of transfer, especially in academic work: the problem of having a participant put into practice what has been discussed and agreed upon in theory.

2.3.4 Theory and practice

The question of a balance between theory and practical experience will be discussed more fully in Section 2.5. Referring to critical research, Lather (1986:258) explains his use of the word "praxis": "to mean the dialectical tension, the interactive, reciprocal shaping of theory and practice at the centre of emancipatory social science". This interpretation confirms the contribution of both theory and practice in critical research, in the sense that the one informs the other, in an interactive process between participants, so that new insights develop. In the case of "grounded theory" (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1994:86), theory is developed through a comparative data analysis, which means that data is gathered first, and the theory developed from that; while in the case of positivistic research, data is used to confirm theory (an hypothesis formulated before the data is gathered). In the case of a dialectical tension between theory and data, as Lather suggests, the two aspects of theory building are used simultaneously, shaping each other in a dialectical (thesis => anti-thesis => synthesis) process, which produces a totally new end result. The balance between the two is fragile (sometimes the theory dominates, and sometimes the data) and productive of a relationship aptly summed up by Goodman (1992:123, citing Lather, 1986:269): "Data must be allowed to generate propositions. . . that permit use of a a priori theoretical framework, but which keep a particular framework from becoming the container into which the data must be poured".

2.3.5 The critical tradition in this study

Even though many of the assumptions underlying my study resemble those of the interpretive tradition, the intent of the research was never solely to understand. The goal throughout was to determine what was needed to improve practice: in the research process the interaction between theory and practice was maintained with participants actively involved in seeking to change practice in schools, and looking for ways in which the presentation of the course could be improved to better facilitate this change. This means that the following basic tenets of the critical approach were consistently adhered to or striven for:

- an emphasis on change
- looking critically at ordinary problems, identifying causes and looking for solutions
- empowerment through involvement
- removing constraints through changes in cognition
- using theory and practice in a dialectical way
- facilitating a critical research attitude through involvement in action research
- finding new ways of presenting and structuring the course through negotiating with participants.

This study did not fulfil all the goals identified by Zuber-Skerritt (1996:84,85) as characterizing emancipatory action research, especially that of changing the system itself, or those conditions which impede desired improvement in the organization. Although there is a huge need to investigate social, economic and political structures and situations in order to understand and improve the conditions in many schools, this was not part of my original intent - not because such considerations lack importance, but because this study could not encompass such a wide field.

The one goal this study did strive for is the goal Zuber-Skerritt (1996:84,85) identifies as her "ultimate goal". This is the "empowerment of participants and the building of their confidence about their ability to create grounded theory, by solving complex problems in totally new situations, collaboratively".

Thus, in terms of having improvement and change as objectives, especially through the empowerment of participants, this study can, to a certain extent, be identified with the critical tradition.

2.3.6 Personal reflections

While reading about various research traditions and the way thinking about research has developed over the years, and comparing this to the experience gained from my own research, the following lines of thinking, representing the development from the positivistic to the critical theory paradigms, became evident to me.

The development of thinking from a positivistic to a critical theory approach can be seen as:

- a development from control of knowledge to dependence on people and their insights
- a movement away from the certainty with which a researcher proclaims his/her findings to a tentative sharing of new insights and strategies which may bring about improvement
- a change from the researcher as outsider making various statements (reaching certain conclusions) to the researcher listening and talking to those involved, trying to understand them, their situations and their perceptions, and thus negotiating the meaning of key aspects together with them
- a moving away from doing research to facilitating reflection
- a change from the researcher describing and prescribing from a distance to the researcher coming closer, identifying with the situation and the people involved
- a change in the reason for doing research from wanting to become more knowledgeable and to contribute to the discovery of knowledge, to that of embarking on a research journey with the aim of helping people who are the focus of the research (the researched), and thus creating knowledge
- a movement away from the researcher as the solver of problems, to that of a person enabling the researched to solve their own problems
- a change in one's expectations about the fruits of the research: a being open to and expectant of highlights during the process, instead of only anticipating outcomes in the form of conclusions and findings arrived at when the research is completed
- a new understanding of one's own role as researcher with a wider theoretical background about a specific problem or issue than the researched. To find ways to share this with the people involved so as to stimulate their thinking, and to empower them to design their own solutions and become researchers in their own right. This implies an altruistic holding back of obvious solutions, allowing time for the thinking processes of the people involved to run their full course
- a movement away from being content with one's own situation and the way things are, to a critical disposition, and to an own involvement in bringing about change.

2.4 ACTION RESEARCH

2.4.1 Historical development

Action research developed from a variety of scientific and social endeavours and groups, such as the "Science in Education movement" of the late nineteenth century, the protagonists of experimental and progressive thinking (of whom John Dewey was particularly important: his "stages of reflective thinking" represents the early thinking about scientific action research), the "Group Dynamics movement" in social psychology and human relations training, and the work of Lewin in the 1940s (McKernan, 1996:9).

Lewin, who originally coined the term "action research" (Webb, 1996:16), was of the opinion that social problems should form the basis of social scientific research, and suggested a cyclical process in which these problems could be investigated (McKernan, 1996:9). Lewin's contribution is important because of the elaborate theory he designed around action research, which made it an acceptable form of research for social scientists. His contribution included the view that if researchers really wanted to understand social issues, practitioners from the social world had to be included in all phases of inquiry (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:163).

McKernan (1996:10) agrees with Carr and Kemmis (1986:165) about the fact that, during the late 1950s, action research lost some of its attractiveness, mainly because of a growing separation of research and action (theory and practice). However, Elliot and Adelman's work on the Ford Teaching Project in Britain (1973 - 1976) led to a resurgence of interest in educational action research, with its emphasis on the self-monitoring teacher (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:166) and the teacher-researcher movement (McKernan, 1996:11).

This new prominence of action research brought about a renewed interest in the role of participants' perspectives in determining educational practices. Practitioners were placed on centre stage in the educational research process and recognised for the crucial role they have played in shaping educational reform (Carr and Kemmis,

1986:167). It was assumed that when practitioners became involved in research together with a researcher, they could then more easily become self-critical researchers into their own practices.

2.4.2 Definitions and different types of action research

While various writers have coined definitions of action research which refer to more-or-less the same elements - including Ebbutt (1985:156), Elliot (1985:259) and Zuber-Skerritt (1996:84) - Carr and Kemmis's (1985:162) version is the most comprehensive. They define action research as ". . . simply a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carved out". A couple of aspects of this definition need to be elaborated upon. Carr and Kemmis (1985:40) use the following description of a self-reflective person: ". . . he or she plans thoughtfully, acts deliberately, observes the consequences of action systematically and reflects critically on the situational constraints and practical potential of the strategic action being considered". "Participants" refers to the people involved with the problem, action or aspect of organisational life to be researched; "rationality" refers to the process of understanding and thinking about something, while "justice" has the underlying meaning of fairness.

Action research according to the definition, should have an influence on three areas:

- What participants are doing
- Their understanding and thinking about what they are busy with
- The socio/economic environment or context.

McKernan (1996:15) identifies three types of action research, namely, "scientific", "practical deliberative", and "critical emancipatory". Whereas the scientific type puts more emphasis on measurement and control, the practical deliberative type focuses on human interpretation and detailed description. This type of action research responds to the immediate situation which may be problematic, and emphasises the process rather than the outcome. Critical emancipatory research is a research method in the

critical theory tradition, which seeks to organise action to overcome social and psychological constraints. As Zuber-Skerritt (1996:85) says, "it aims at changing the system itself or those conditions which impede desired improvement in the organisation".

Elliott (1985:235) uses the phrase "second order action research" to describe a research project of his own. His research did not focus on the teaching strategies of the teachers in the classrooms, but on the actions of those facilitating discussions about the teaching strategies used. This means therefore that the real action was one step removed from the focus of the action research project.

2.4.3 Aims and objectives

Zuber-Skerritt (1996:84,85) identifies the following goals of emancipatory action research:

- more than only technical and practical improvement
- the transformation of participants' consciousness
- change within the organisation's existing boundaries and conditions
- changing the system itself or those conditions which impede desired improvement in the organisation.

Ultimately, she sees the goal of emancipatory research as the empowerment of participants and the building of their self-confidence. The focus of this empowerment is their ability to create grounded theory so as collaboratively to solve complex problems in totally new situations.

Other writers have variously formulated the goals of emancipatory action research as follows: "a way of closing the performance gap between espoused theory and theory in use" (Ebbutt, 1985:155); "the contribution to both the practical concerns of people in problematic situations and to the goals of social science" (Kelly, 1985:132); "the generation of theory from practice" (Lomax, 1994:155); "the solving of the day-to-day problems of practitioners" (McKernan, 1996:3); and "the freedom which an individual can

experience through a process of interaction with others" (Walker, 1996:44).

Lomax (1994:156, 158) reiterates Zuber-Skerritt's view (1996:84) by stating that the improvement action research is to bring about should not be limited to technical aspects only, but should also involve the critical examination of values and beliefs about the practice in question so as ". . . to lead to the development of mental powers and character for all involved in the research, particularly the researcher herself" (158). Action research should generate a living educational theory. According to Lomax it is this element which distinguishes action research from social science research, which aims to add to the body of knowledge about the social sciences, but does not necessarily intend change.

2.4.4 The cyclical process

Action research is essentially a cyclical process of planning, implementing, observing and reflecting about an intervention in a specific problem or issue. The process is ongoing until the problem is solved or the issue dealt with. Ebbutt (1985:163) refers to Kemmis *et al.* (1981) when he presents their diagram of the cyclical process of action research:

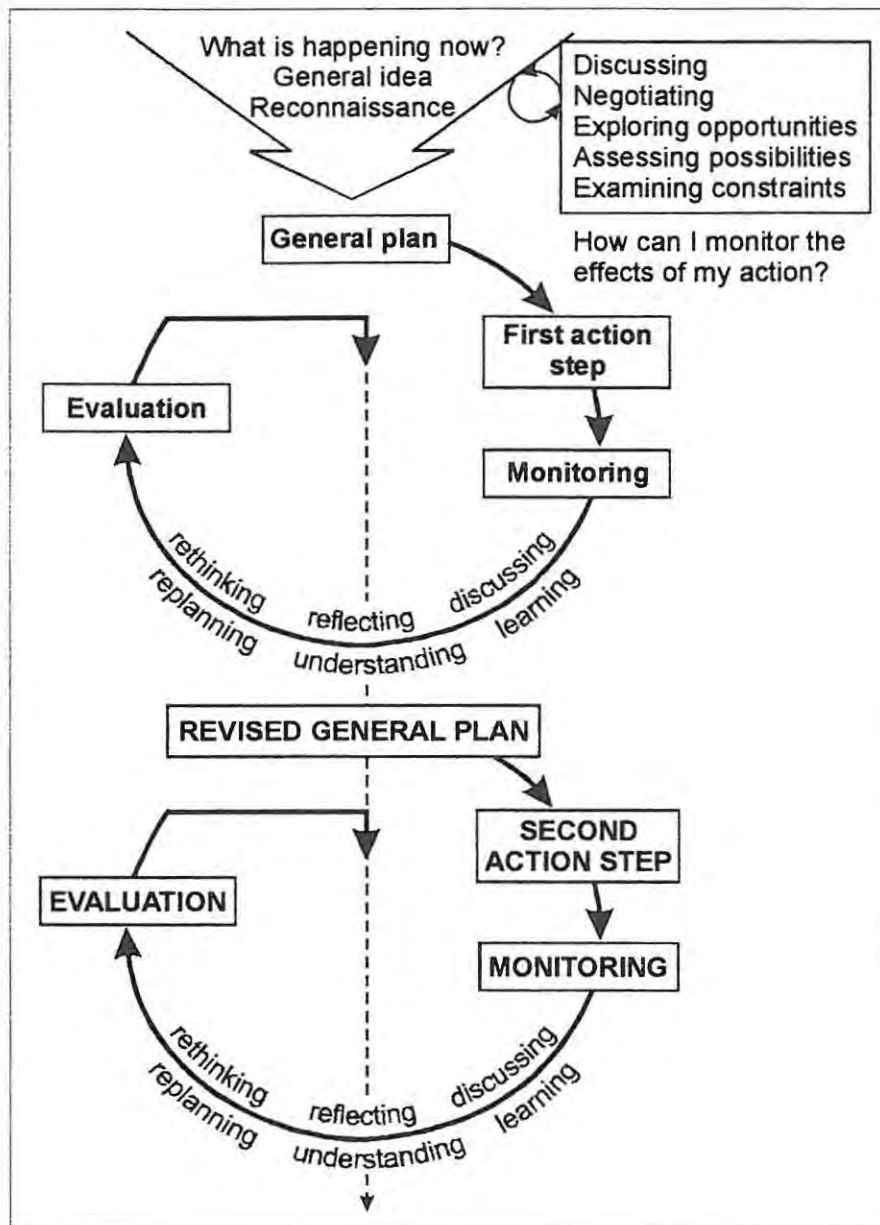


Fig 2.2: Action research as a cyclical process

Source: Ebbutt (1985:163)

It is clear that action research is intended to be more than a single intervention by an objective researcher. Lomax (1994:157) says that the intervention in each cycle is evaluated in order to inform the next stage of planning, so that technical change and

increased understanding go hand-in-hand. Carr and Kemmis (1986:162) say the basic element of action research consists of a self-reflective spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Data collected in the process of action research, mainly through the sampling of many viewpoints, are needed for further reflection as part of the action research cycle, and later as "evidence authenticating the research" (Lomax, 1994:16). The cyclical process is required to keep the research close to the action, so as to get continuous feedback from participants and to involve them in planning the next cycle.

2.4.5 Conditions for successful action research

Motivating people to get involved in a programme of action research, especially when their programmes are as full as teachers' programmes usually are, is no easy matter. A strong element in this motivational task is identifying a problem which is of real concern to the prospective participant. It is crucial to get people involved who have a real problem, and who are committed to doing something about it. Added to this must be their willingness and ability to work together closely in a group, and to be open to new ideas and to change (Kelly, 1985:146; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996:88).

Zuber-Skerritt (1996:90) mentions the following barriers to successful action research:

- Single-loop instead of double-loop learning: This implies an orientation to problem solving which does not require basic changes in values. Only technical, short-term, superficial adaptations are made with respect to problematic situations, without any consideration of basic, underlying principles, issues and goals.
- Dependence on outside help: This implies an attitude of waiting on somebody else to solve one's problem instead of committing oneself to solving the problem.
- An orientation of getting things done in minimum time, without considering longer term aspects like team building. This implies finding the quickest (and often cheapest) solution rather than spending time thinking about the causes and

possible solutions to the problem.

- A basic focus on the tangible and operational aspects of organisational functions, rather than considering strategic aspects and basic philosophical issues upon which educational and organisational change is based.

2.4.6 Interaction and collaboration as basic elements of action research

Action research is, according to McKernan (1996:11), predominantly based on the collaborative or interactive style of research which implies that each team member takes part in the design and implementation of the research. Added to this, team members contribute unique skills and expertise in a collective process. When teachers become involved, action research becomes the vehicle for their professional development.

Collaboration functions in two directions: on the one hand, the group of practitioners work together, sharing ideas and plans for implementation in a form of peer interaction and learning. On the other hand, collaboration takes place between the practitioners and outside persons who assume the role of researcher, facilitator, tutor or mentor. Carr and Kemmis (1986:203) refer to this type of collaboration as "process consultancy" in which the outside facilitator forms a cooperative relationship with the practitioners, advising them while they participate in the process of planning, implementation, observation, reflection, evaluation and renewed planning. In this type of research, which Carr and Kemmis (1986:203) refer to as "practical" action research, participants monitor their own educational practices with the immediate aim of developing their own ability to make judgements: as Carr and Kemmis say, ". . . the facilitator's role is 'socratic' . . . to provide a sounding-board against which practitioners may try out ideas and learn more about the reasons for their own actions and. . . about the process of reflection". They add another perspective: practical action research may eventually become emancipatory action research when the practitioners themselves take up the responsibility for being the sounding-board for the group, to assist them in their collaborative self-reflection. This could imply becoming a mentor or even a tutor to the group.

2.4.7 The involvement of practitioners

Kelly (1985:135) refers to the benefits of involving practitioners in the research. She says the purpose of the research should be discussed with all the participants - their ideas about implementation will clearly be more relevant than those of the researcher. The researcher can make suggestions from theory, and the practitioners will be in a position to accept these or not, based on their knowledge of the practical situation. In the end, and this is the ideal for any type of educational action research, participants and their colleagues themselves should be able to initiate the interventions in their schools. Action research is therefore, as Kelly (1985:131) says, "practitioner based". The thinking and experience of the practitioner are key elements, and the crucial objective is for the practitioners to begin thinking about their own practice.

2.4.8 Theory and practice in action research

Action research does not exclude the use of theoretical inputs. In Kelly's (1985:134) research, intervention strategies to promote teaching for understanding were developed on the basis of a previously developed framework (1985:134). She saw the research as providing an opportunity to have some of the theories tested.

The introduction of theoretical input in a process of action research should, however, be closely monitored. If new ideas are introduced too soon, they may stifle creative thinking. Introduced at the right time, however, stimulating concepts may encourage thinking and prompt new thoughts not introduced before. Kelly (1985:253) says in this regard:

One of the facilitator's roles is to mediate theoretical resources in a way which enhances rather than constrains teachers' capacities to develop their own theoretical understanding. So long as the introduction of external ideas constitutes a support rather than a substitute for teachers' thinking, it can speed up the process. . . the more a teacher generates his or her own theories via a critique of existing ideas, the more original they are likely to be.

The tension between data and theory is well illustrated in the following comment by Lather (1986:267, cited in Goodman, 1992:123), which highlights the importance of preventing one's theoretical framework from determining the research:

Data must be allowed to generate propositions. . . that permit use of a priori frameworks, but which keep a particular framework from becoming the container into which the data must be poured.

Both Lomax (1994:163) and McKernan (1996) refer to the relationship between theory and practice, but the most comprehensive contribution to this topic is made by Carr and Kemmis (1986:35); they refer to Aristotle's three-fold classification of disciplines as "theoretical", "productive" or "practical".

The theoretical discipline has as its goal the pursuit of truth, the attainment of knowledge for its own sake, and the type of thinking is mainly contemplative.

In the productive disciplines the kind of teaching is what Aristotle referred to as "poietike" (making action), which is evident in craft or skill knowledge. The Greeks described the disposition of a craftsman as "techne", which means that he will act in a true and reasoned way, in accordance with the rules of the craft. In poietike, the theory (rules) is so strong and definite that it completely determines action.

In the practical sciences, the form of thinking is called "praxis". "Praxis" differs from "poietike" in the sense that while it is influenced by its knowledge base, it also influences the knowledge base. Praxis is guided by the "phronesis" disposition, which means a disposition to act truly and justly.

The difference between poietike and praxis ties in with their relationship to their underlying theoretical understandings. Craft or technical knowledge is not reflexive - the rules are so well worked out that they remain the same whether the practitioner becomes more expert or not. The only attitude expected from him/her is to stick to the rules (techne). Praxis, however, refers to "doing-action" knowledge, which is influenced

by its theoretical background, but also influences this theoretical basis. Here action and theory remain together in tension, the one influencing the other, and vice versa. The only guiding disposition required from the practitioner is phronesis.

This type of relationship between theory and practice, which implies tension and mutual influence, is referred to as a dialectical relationship. The two elements are said to be in constructive opposition, the one being the "thesis" and the other the "anti-thesis". When the tension is resolved, and the two are reconciled, a new "synthesis" comes into existence. In praxis, action (practice) and knowledge (theory), are mutually informing and influencing one another - as action is changed through knowledge, so knowledge becomes informed, changed and adapted through action. Praxis must then necessarily be reflective, the practitioners thinking about the reasons, the goals, the methods and the outcomes of their practice, so as to continuously change or adapt their knowledge base.

The relevance of praxis for action research should be clear. Action research is neither theory only, nor is it only dependent on practice. It seeks to bring theory and practice together in creative tension, so as to bring about the creation of new knowledge on a higher level of applicability and relevance. Whereas in poietike, theory is the decisive factor directing practice, in praxis neither theory nor practice is predominant - the knowledge behind the action is just as amendable to change as the action - the only constant element being phronesis, the disposition to act truly and justly.

2.4.9 Action research in this study

2.4.9.1 Objectives

The ultimate goal of this project is in line with Zuber-Skerritt's (1996:84,85) objective of empowering participants, to become "self-reflective inquirers" in Carr and Kemmis's (1985:40) terms. In so far as this objective is concerned, I hope that the action research experience will eventually be instrumental in removing constraints which keep participants from bringing about change in their schools.

2.4.9.2 Action research involving the school principals

The four principals in the group of twelve participants were utilized as a focus group to assist me in the design of the contact sessions. This group met after each high contact session, usually lasting two to three days, to give feedback on the session and to make suggestions for the next one. This means the group operated in line with Kemmis *et al.*'s cyclical model (see fig 2.1).

These planning meetings were also influenced by theoretical insights gleaned from the literature. Many of the insights gathered from the readings were confirmed by the discussions. Sometimes the reality of the principals' experience ruled out any possibility of implementing suggestions gleaned from the literature. There were, however, occasions when ideas from the literature could be adapted to fit in with local conditions. In this way Carr and Kemmis's (1986:32-35) description of the dialectical process was demonstrated.

While we, as participants, I believe, experienced no formality and an absence of power plays in the functioning of the focus group, and everybody felt free and took the opportunity to express their views, we had clearly separated roles (Kelly, 1985:135). The principals shared the reality and experience from their schools, while I shared my insights derived from theories of principal preparation programmes. I synthesized the outcomes of the discussions and the theoretical insights in the final design of the teaching sessions, and involved the principals in the presentation of topics related to their experience and expertise. This confirmed the value of involving practitioners as co-researchers (Kelly, 1985:135). Their insights, contributions and experience proved vital to the success, relevance and acceptability of the course. I elaborate on this in 4.2.3.4.

2.4.9.3 Action research for all participants

Although not originally planned that way, the course developed a second level of action research. That is, the action research taking place in the schools was aimed at solving



problems in participants' schools rather than assisting me in designing a preparation course. In this "second order" type of action research, the researcher does not become involved in the actual action research process, other than being a facilitator, soundboard, observer and recorder.

In this study, all the participants became involved in action research projects in their respective schools. I acted as the facilitator, giving direction and receiving feedback about individual experiences in the schools. The feedback assisted me in designing the next contact session by making me more knowledgeable about the real situation in the schools.

2.5 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

2.5.1 Chronological background

2.5.1.1 Introduction

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the original course design (addendum B1) consisted of a list of topics to be covered and an implementation plan. This design was implemented in April 1997, with presentation of the first year's topics continuing on a monthly basis during weekends and holidays until the end of 1997. These presentations were made in a fairly traditional way - lecturing with group discussions. Workshops were conducted in between the lecturing sessions on Friday afternoons. A retired school principal from the area, took responsibility for the workshops, which aimed to bring the theory closer to participants' practice. This was done through case studies, problem-solving exercises and group discussions.

At the end of the year, the participants were given an opportunity to evaluate the first year of the course with reference to both the content and the way in which the course was presented, and also with respect to the measure of implementation of new skills and knowledge in their schools. The responses were generally very positive, in terms of both the content and the modes of presentation. A large percentage also indicated

that they had managed to implement at least some of the content in their schools.

2.5.1.2 School visits

During November 1997 I visited three of the schools in which the four principals in the group were teaching. During these visits, data were gathered through observations; interviews with staff members, learners and the principals themselves; and through document searches, especially of minute books of staff meetings. Interviews were recorded on tape (except for the interviews at one school where the staff members did not want the interviews to be recorded), and detailed notes were made about specific issues that cropped up in minute books. I focused especially on the ways in which problems were addressed. I also made notes in my journal, or recorded my impressions as I was driving away from the schools.

In the one school referred to above, the interpersonal tensions, in which the principal played a key role, made the staff suspicious of my visit to the school and reluctant to be interviewed. This was after I had made detailed arrangements beforehand, asking the principal to inform his staff - which he did not do. The experience taught me that the situation in a school may be sensitive, and that an outsider should approach any type of investigation in schools with caution.

What I learned through these visits sometimes came as shock to me. I found little evidence that any of the content dealt with in the course was being implemented in the daily work of the principals. The visits had the following outcomes for me:

- I became aware of the tremendous problems these principals had to deal with
- I realized how little know-how and motivation existed in these schools for the solving of problems
- I realized for the first time how unique the situation at each school was, and that principals would have to be prepared to generate their own solutions
- I was confronted by the fact that one single factor could cause the whole system of a school to come to a halt - for instance, interpersonal relationships and conflict. A key factor like this can block any transfer of learning to the practical situation.

- I became convinced that courses for principals had to be designed with the reality of participants' practical situations being taken as points of departure
- I realized anew the importance of sound interpersonal relationships in an organization

2.5.1.3 The second year's programme

Details of this programme are given in addendum A.

2.5.1.3.1 Components of term programmes

The second year's programme was divided into four terms. In each term except the fourth, the following components were included in the programme:

- **Contact sessions:** These consisted of 2-3 days during the school holidays. The programme included feedback given to participants on their assignments; theoretical inputs in the form of lectures; various activities, such as evaluations of the previous contact session, portfolio writing, participants making their own inputs, self-awareness exercises and preparation for action research projects; group discussions; and discussions of the following term's assignments.
- **Focus group sessions:** These meetings with the four principals took place after each contact session, and consisted of feedback on that particular session, and a discussion of the needs to be addressed in the following contact session.
- **Individual interviews:** In some cases members of the focus group were unable to attend the meetings. In such cases, I conducted individual interviews with them, obtaining their inputs with respect to the issues mentioned above.
- **Workshops:** These took place on Friday afternoons. Two, and in some cases three, were conducted per term.
- **Assignments:** These took various forms, but in all cases participants were required to do school-based work, utilizing the workshops as opportunities to share insights and problems with other participants, and to obtain guidance from the workshop leader. In the third term, the assignments became action research projects, which continued into the fourth term.

2.5.1.3.2 Special events

- Examinations: These were written at the end of the second and fourth terms. The purpose of the exams was to motivate participants to cover all the material in one sitting so as to obtain a holistic view of all the components, and to apply their knowledge to problems of practice portrayed in the examinations in an integrated way.
- Marketing seminar: During the fourth term a marketing seminar was held by the participants, in conjunction with the presenters, with the aim of attracting new entrants to the course. This was an initiative which grew out of the focus group meetings.
- Leadership seminar: The leadership seminar was an initiative on the part of the Director of the centre at which the course was presented. It was held during a weekend in the third term at a holiday resort near to George.

2.5.1.4 Follow-up visit, October 1999

A year after the course had been completed, I again visited George. The intention was to determine the influence of the course in the practical school situations of participants over the longer term. Data were gathered through interviews, school visits, and the completion of questionnaires by participants, and by some of their colleagues (addendums A and B16-18).

2.5.2 Data collection strategies

2.5.2.1 Variety of strategies

In this study I focused on interactive data collection strategies which were flexible enough to be adjusted and changed as my understanding of the situation and the group I was working with developed. Delamont (1993:104) includes in the “varieties of data” collected by researchers doing qualitative research, the data gathered by means of observations, interviews and document-research; while Schumacher and McMillan

(1993:374) refer to various “combinations of participant observation, in-depth interviews and artifact collection”. In qualitative research the reality is viewed as too complex for a researcher to base his/her research on a single method of data gathering. A researcher first has to immerse him/herself in the situation and allow the data collection strategies to develop as he/she continues with the process of investigation. The data collection strategies I used included observation, document research, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and large-group feedback and discussion sessions. As part of my artifact collection, I kept programmes of all the contact sessions, samples of assignments participants handed in, as well as documents and photos participants included with their assignments.

2.5.2.1.1 Observation

While I spent some time observing various activities during my visits to the schools, I did the major part of my observation during the contact sessions. I observed participants while they were discussing various topics or giving feedback on their implementation efforts in their schools. I also travelled to George on one occasion to observe the activities and interactions in one of the workshops.

In the contact sessions, I often came close to being a participant observer, particularly when the principals made their presentations. This implies that I became part of the audience, taking part in the discussions on an equal footing with the other participants. I used a small tape recorder to record the group discussions, as well as my own impressions of the sessions, and my reflections when I was driving off from a school after a visit.

2.5.2.1.2 Document research

The documents included as sources of data for this study were, in Hammersley and Atkinson's (1983) terms as cited by Delamont (1993:105), “semi-public documents” such as minutes of meetings, financial records of schools and project reports, and “semi-private documents” such as students' assignments, written for a specific teacher

to see.

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:498) refer to the need to compare “solicited” and “unsolicited” data as a means of judging evidence, while Delamont (1993:106) cautions researchers about essays written by participants as “documents written for the researcher” which should be read with some measure of scepticism and tested in their social context.

In this study, assignments written by participants were cross-referenced in the following ways:

- Personal visits to some of the schools
- Comparing the content of assignments of participants from the same school
- Making notes of remarks made by participants during tea-breaks as “unsolicited” data, which sometimes confirmed and sometimes disproved what had been said either in the group discussions or the assignments
- Enquiring about specific details in the assignments, especially at the focus group sessions
- The most important source of validation for the content of assignments, as part of the design of the programme, was the involvement of the mentor at the workshops, where participants discussed their assignments with him and where he acted as soundboard for them. The fact that he was familiar with local circumstances, and especially the fact that he became part of the assessment structure of the assignments, made it more unlikely that participants would make unrealistic or unfounded claims.

2.5.2.1.3 Interviews

While Delamont (1993:109) distinguishes between three different types of interviews, namely interviewing together with observation, formal interviewing and the life history interview, I stuck to the formal type, which implied that I made appointments with participants and met with them on an individual basis to try and work through a set of

pre-determined questions. I tried to remain flexible, allowing the participant to elaborate on issues important to him/her. I also used the group interview method in a semi-structured form, allowing the group to determine the main areas of importance. This, Delamont (1993:110) says, is a very frequently used method in qualitative research. Steinmetz (1991:58) refers to this when she, writing about the structure of the interview, says that in some cases the structure is pre-determined, while in others it is shaped as part of the process. She (p.58) cites Ely, who said: "The key is that the person interviewed is a full partner in the endeavour and often provides the surprising and useful directions not allowed by other, more researcher-centred interviews". Steinmetz (p.63) sums up this required flexibility well when she says: "To be able to swing with events and to put them to good use may be characteristic of qualitative researchers".

The focus group meetings became long sessions of reflection and interaction, in which many new and unanticipated issues were addressed (addendum A.2.1.4).

In my individual interviews with the four school principals about the course, I soon discovered that planning the next contact session was not the first item on their agendas. Although they were interested in helping me, their main need, even if they were not aware of it, was to have somebody to listen to their experiences, and maybe also to their successes. This caused me to change my whole research design, and to utilize the interviews with individual principals to identify inputs they could make in the course, rather than as opportunities for me to shape my own. This reflects the truth of Schumacher and McMillan's (1993:374) view about qualitative research as having "an emergent design, in which each incremental research decision depends on prior information".

In my interviews with staff members at schools, my questions centred on issues of problem solving. The information gathered in this way yielded me much insight into the many difficulties underlying this key aspect of school management (addendum B2).

When I returned to the area in October 1999, a year after the course had been completed, to see what the long-term effects of the course were, I conducted personal

interviews with eleven of the twelve participants, as well as with the workshop leader (addendum A5). These were the only interviews I had conducted with all the participants on an individual basis. They were well structured and produced a wealth of information.

2.5.2.1.4 Questionnaires

One of the objectives of my visit in October 1999 was to establish validation of what participants had told me about the tangible results of their endeavours in their schools as outcomes of the course. That is why I designed a questionnaire for participants' colleagues, in order to collect information from somebody working in the same school, about what had really occurred as a result of their involvement in the course. I posted these to the participants together with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaires (addendums B16&18).

I also designed a short questionnaire as a data collection instrument to supplement my interviews with each individual participant (addendum B17). I soon learned the truth of many of Schumacher and McMillan's (1993:240-250) points of advice on questionnaires. After the first two participants had completed theirs, I realized that two of my questions were open to misinterpretation, and two others were "double-barrelled" in the true sense of the word. Fortunately I was in a position to change these, and to save the other participants the confusion.

2.5.3 Relationships

Delamont (1993:121) emphasises the establishment and maintenance of "usable relationships in the field". One has, according to her, to establish rapport with as many of the participants as possible. Trusting relationships, without over-identification with any one section of the group, may enable one to collect useful and honest data. In pursuing this goal, I concentrated on the focus group members. On two occasions I invited them to a restaurant after we had finished with our meetings, and on another

occasion I provided something to eat during the meeting. I also once or twice provided extra eats for the whole group for the tea and coffee breaks, and on a couple of occasions visited participants at their homes. I sometimes visited participants at their schools or telephoned them. After the conclusion of the official course, I invited them to a function at a local hotel, where we celebrated the completion of the course and afterwards spent time together simply sharing stories and jokes about our time together. I also told them before we parted that I might call upon them to complete one more questionnaire for me, thus seeking to “keep the door open”, as Steinmetz (1991:92) puts it.

2.5.4 The “self” as instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher is, according to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:29), the “key instrument”. This implies that the self plays a key role in the analysis and interpretation of data, creating, according to Steinmetz (1991:86), “ongoing meaning out of evolving and evolved data [which means] that the naturalistic researcher must come to rely on his/her own talents, insights, and trustworthiness, and in the end, go public with the reasoning that engendered the results. . .”

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:484) say that qualitative researchers avoid prescriptions, because a “key to qualitative research is the creative involvement of the researcher”, and Garner (1991:143) emphasises that the researcher is the person who has to do the meaning-making. While this is a daunting responsibility, it can also be “liberating and powerful”. Robinson (1997:402) cites Miles and Huberman (1984) who refer to the qualitative researcher as a “one-person research machine”, which entails “defining the problem, doing the sampling, designing the instruments, collecting the information, reducing the information, analysing it, interpreting and writing it up”. They analyse various pitfalls, such as the problem of representability, which implies an over-reliance on accessible informants and on plausible explanations. This is a real problem, especially in a study like this where the group is small, and where some of the participants are not as accessible as others. What helped me, however, was the fact that all of them had to attend the lectures (which they did fairly consistently), submit the

assignments and write the examinations .

The notion of the researcher as meaning-maker proved relevant to the various situations I found myself in during the whole process of data gathering and analysis. My journal became my 'confidant', the place where, waking up in the middle of the night, I wrote down my thoughts about various aspects of the programme. I also made use of "field notes", as Schumacher and McMillan (1993:422) describe notes made during the process of data gathering "in the field"; any other reflections or thoughts which emerged in the process of analysing and interpreting the data and were written down, I refer to simply as "my notes".

2.5.5 Sampling

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:375) say that the focus in qualitative research is on small distinct groups. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993:383) argue that sampling in qualitative research is "purposive", because the researcher needs informants who possess characteristics relevant to the study. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:378) use the term "purposeful sampling" in cases where understanding, and not generalization, is the goal of the study. The researcher is, according to them, looking for "information-rich key informants . . . [who are] likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating".

I initially chose the four principals because they were in a position to judge the practicability of the course, and to give feedback. Subsequently, two more advantages of having them as the focus group emerged:

- I realized through my interviews with them that I could utilize their practical expertise as inputs in the course.
- They were the only members of the group who had the power to implement new ideas from the course in their schools and give me feedback on these implementations.

In a sense, my sample included the whole group of twelve participants, because much of my information was obtained from the group as a whole in the form of assignments, evaluation sessions, group discussions and personal interviews.

2.5.6 The role of theoretical inputs

Delamont (1993:157) cites Valli's description of research as a "dialectical process, with data and theory mutually informing one another". I found this to be relevant to my research. Having been exposed to various authors and researchers over an extended period of time, and continuing with my reading while the data collection and analysis were in process, I found a continuous interplay taking place between new ideas from the readings on the one hand, and thoughts that developed during the data analysis, on the other. The outstanding examples in this respect were the development of the role of the workshop leader or mentor, the involvement of local stakeholders, the focusing on school-based problems and the shift to action research projects.

According to Robinson (1997:405), specification of the study's theoretical framework is necessary to determine whether or not the study can be transferred to other settings. The utilizers of the research must be able to see how the research ties into a body of theory. Chapter 3 of this thesis provides details of the historical and current debates about preparation courses for school leaders. These, plus the information about our experience in George discussed in Chapter 4, open the way for consideration of the relevance of the outcomes of our project for the design of preparation courses in similar contexts.

2.5.7 Reliability and validity

2.5.7.1 Introduction

In working with a group of twelve participants, I found the reliability and validity of information presented to me to be particularly sensitive issues. In some cases I had reason to doubt the credibility of what participants were saying, and in other cases I

even wondered how many inferences concerning a situation in a school at which one was not teaching could actually be justified. I sometimes had to question the participants' honesty, as well as to compare individual responses with one another. I also found the participants particularly sensitive about anything that would put them on the spot, however distanced and seemingly innocent it occurred to me. When for instance I asked them, a year after the course had been completed, to request a colleague to complete a questionnaire on the change in their performance, they were cautious, querying whether this would provide a true reflection of their roles. A strong element prevalent in this group was their desire to please, to make a good impression, perhaps only for reasons of academic success, but most probably also because of cultural factors which emphasise courtesy and interpersonal sensitivity.

2.5.7.2 Credibility

Delamont (1993:158) refers to respondent validation and triangulation as the main strategies for ensuring reliability and validity. Respondent validation implies involving the participants in testing the inferences being drawn from the data analysis. This strategy was often employed as part of the focus group meetings, where possible misconceptions regarding participants' claims were addressed (see below). I found respondent validation particularly applicable when I made certain observations and conducted interviews with the participants a year after the course had been completed. I was also able to check my impressions of developments with regard to the workshops in my interview with the leader of the workshops. A final aspect worth mentioning was my checking of participants on views of becoming part of a future mentoring programme. I had picked up previously that the majority were positive; my interviews confirmed this impression.

For Robinson (1997:401), credibility is enhanced through the following characteristics of research:

- Prolonged involvement:

This implies the investment of sufficient time in order to become familiar with the details of the situation, the people involved and their relationships. Time can be

seen as a test for the genuineness of changes brought about by certain interventions. A long involvement also enables participants to get used to the researcher, so that their behaviour becomes natural. Mercado, cited by Steinmetz (1991:50), puts it as follows: "It can take some time before [participants'] behaviour is uninhibited by my presence".

- Persistent observation:

This characteristic of research refers to specific situations being observed over time in order to identify those issues that are most relevant to the study, and to lend more depth to the study.

- Triangulation:

Triangulation has already been referred to, as meaning the drawing of evidence from a variety of sources, as well as employing different methods of collecting data.

- Transferability:

Transferability refers to the possibility of the transfer of judgments to situations similar to the one being researched. For this to be possible, the researcher has the responsibility of providing an adequate data base, or as Robinson (1997:405) describes it "providing a thick description - a description which specifies everything a reader may need to know to understand the findings". Schumacher and McMillan (1993:394) view transferability as the measure in which the researcher makes use of theoretical frameworks and commonly accepted research strategies so that other researchers may understand and be able to continue with the research.

For Garner (1991:156), citing Lincoln and Guba, trustworthiness refers to the assurance that the research is credible, and produces results that can be trusted and are worth "paying attention to". This will sometimes imply "going back to the field". Robinson (1997:390) says on the same topic that one often needs, in verifying a specific conclusion, "an unanticipated additional wave of data collection". This was particularly true in the case of my project. After a year had elapsed, I needed to investigate how much tangible evidence of the course experience still remained in the form of participants' influence in their schools, and of the outcomes of their action research projects. I experienced the truth of Garner's view that trustworthiness becomes particularly important during the last stages of the research, when it seems that "just a

bit more information is needed”.

Robinson (1997:406) refers to another characteristic of qualitative research which enhances its credibility, namely confirmability. This concept is linked to objectivity in positivistic studies. It requires that one is given sufficient details of the particular case study to accept that the process has been adequately developed, and to assess whether the findings are supported by the data. In the process of testing for confirmability, one needs various categories of data, such as:

- raw data (field notes, documents, tape recordings)
- processed data and products of the data analysis (summaries, categories)
- process notes (procedures, designs, strategies)
- materials (original proposals, personal notes)
- instrument development information (pilot forms, schedules).

In this respect, the addendums included as part of my thesis, especially, serve as process notes and instrument development information, while artifacts such as the photographs participants included in their assignments, and minutes of meetings at which they had played a strong role with respect to raising readiness levels for change, increase the “thickness of evidence” which forms the basis of confirmability.

2.5.7.3 Negative evidence

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:498) say that a researcher should be actively on the lookout for discrepant or negative evidence, and for exceptions, because these can be useful in “making the original pattern more distinctive”. This also implies that the researcher develops an awareness of his/her own influence on the particular situation or person, which will cause the particular person to act out of character or say things to please the researcher. Steinmetz (1991:95) views the search for negative cases as an important focus that research must have in order to be seen as credible. While it is a sensitive issue to start checking whether participants are telling the truth or simply fabricating stories, I discovered at least two ways in which one could build in some

measure of control:

- Asking in depth questions about participants' responses. An example of this occurred during the second focus group session. The feedback session produced an interesting discussion about the implementation of information about meetings which we had discussed in the January contact session in schools. When we asked the members of the focus group to what extent they had managed to improve the meetings in their respective schools, we received very positive responses. While we were asking more detailed questions, the fact emerged that one of them saw any gathering of staff, whether a discussion during the lunch break, or the organizing committee planning an athletics meeting, as staff meetings: "what happens, during their lunch breaks, when they are there, they talk about almost everything . . . they keep others in line, even while it's an informal thing". This incident, totally unforeseen, opened up my thinking about the importance of evaluative discussions about participants' feedback.
- The involvement of more than one staff member of a specific school in the course. An example of this was a participant writing in glowing terms about the improvement in the meetings at his school: "Minutes of the previous meeting are always circulated a few days after the meeting, I can proudly say that through the knowledge I have gained here it is one of the best managed schools"; and "the use of an observer has made a wonderful effect in our meetings". However, another staff member at this same school wrote in his first term assignments that they did not have one fully-fledged staff meeting during that term.

In so far as researcher influence is concerned, I became sceptical of the responses of participants to the questionnaire I asked them to complete a year after they had completed the course. I sensed they may have been influenced by the fact that I would be in a position to see what each individual had written. Still, I got some valuable information from their responses. Concerning their rating the "lectures" and "contact with the lecturer" highly, I was sceptical, except for the fact that I had previously received feedback which indicated that the personal contact with presenters had been an important factor for them. This scepticism resulted in my only taking those responses

into account which had been verified through other data collection strategies (that is, through triangulation).

2.5.8 Data analysis

2.5.8.1 Introduction

Data analysis focuses on the establishment of patterns in the data (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993:495; Delamont, 1993:158). Pattern seeking consists, in Schumacher and McMillan's view, of the establishment of relationships between categories. In a sense, the identification of relationships forms the basis for the writing up of research, and determines the links between subdivisions or subsections of an academic essay. Patterns are therefore representations of the line of argument followed by the author. For Schumacher and McMillan the researcher, in trying to identify patterns, is really looking to "understand the complex links between various aspects of people's situations, mental processes, beliefs and actions"(p. 495).

According to them (p.486), the analysis and the interpretation of data are usually two separate processes, but in qualitative data analysis the researcher integrates these two processes and refers to the total process as "data analysis". Data analysis in this context is a cyclical process which forms part of every phase of the research.

2.5.8.2 Transcribing recorded interviews

Transcribing tape recordings of interviews is a long and tedious process. Still, it is a way in which the researcher's familiarity with the data increases. It helps, in Steinmetz's (1991:82) words: "to recall the experience, expand the details, and often provides a fresh exposure to the material". I took the route of transcribing the tapes of the interviews myself, and found that this prolonged exposure to the data helped me in reflecting on and obtaining an overview of it. I made many notes while I was in the process of transcribing.

2.5.8.3 Interrogating data

For Delamont (1993:155), interrogating the data means “exploring systematically what the data are saying”. This means asking questions of the data like “does this [idea, plan] represent a general perception of the group?”; and if so, “To what extent will they [the group] support its implementation?” or “How much own initiative will its implementation generate?”. In the case of my study, questions arose such as “What does the feedback on the assignments tell me about the way they are understood by the participants, or about the potential for implementation in the schools?”; “What do I learn from my interviews with the teachers and my reading of various documents with respect to the way problems are being solved in the schools?”, or “How do the outcomes of the interviews influence the basic design of my research?”

Delamont, (1993) emphasizes the reading and re-reading of the data so as to enable appropriate categories to emerge from it. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:495) say: “Pattern-seeking implies examining the data in as many ways as possible”, while Delamont (1993:157) cites Valli, who says:

I painstakingly reviewed my field notes on three separate occasions, taking notes from the field notes, and went through four or five major reorganizations before making a final organizational decision. . . [which in the end was] the most inclusive of my data and the most comprehensive of extant theories.

Even in writing this and acceding to the importance of interrogating the data, I did not fully understand the depth of the process and the prolonged exposure to the data this implied, until I did the “final” (as I thought!) analysis of the data. In this particular round I chose a chronological framework for my analysis. Only after I had sent the product of this endeavour to the supervisor, and while I was revising this present chapter to explain my “data analysis”, did the fact dawn upon me that I had only done the data collection and the ordering of the data, without seriously interpreting and displaying the data.

Interpreting and displaying the data then became for me the:

- reduction of the data in the form of meaning which had emerged while I was reading and rereading the data in my preliminary categories
- identification of both categories and the flow of argument between these categories
- identification of answers to the research questions which had emerged from the data
- displaying of these categories and answers in a format such as tables or graphs which give the reader easy access to the insights which had developed.

Interrogating the data can obviously be done in an interactive way as well. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:36) say that the interpretation of the data is done with the help of others. They express this point by saying: "Through interaction the individual constructs meaning". This became real for me in quite unanticipated (and unsought for) ways during my interactions with individual participants, in the focus group sessions and while involved with whole group discussions. An idea often struck me while I was engaged in a personal interview, or a focus group session.

2.5.8.4 Coding

A code, according to Robinson (1997:385), is a symbol attached to a group of words to classify them. Codes assist the researcher in both the organizing and retrieval of data of a certain kind. They are also useful in relating categories to each other, in other words in identifying the patterns which emerge.

After I had completed both the identification of my initial categories based on my literature review and my own experience in the field, and the coding of my notes and transcripts according to these categories, I started again, identifying categories which emerged from the chronological development of the project. I entered new codes, this time focussing on categories which could represent the integration of thoughts that originated in both the field experience and the readings.

2.5.8.5 Determining categories and patterns

The identification of categories is an aspect of the process of organizing data which Robinson (1997:385) refers to as “data reduction”. It remains an important phase in the analysis of assembled data, and assists the researcher in keeping the data manageable.

Schumacher and McMillan (1993:492,493) explain a category as an abstract name which represents the meanings of topics that have something in common, and originate from:

- the research question
- the research instruments (such as the structure of interviews)
- knowledge of the topic from own experience
- a study of the literature.

This type of category, emerging from ‘outside’ the data, is an “etic” category, while other categories emerging from the data are “emic” categories, or in Delamont’s (1993:150) terminology, “folk” categories. In my analysis of the data, I first tried the route of the etic categories, arising from both my research questions and the literature study. The literature consulted referred to many different topics which I lumped together in five categories, namely process, content, strategies, foci of programmes and outcomes or goals. Some of the topics belonged to one or more of the categories (e.g. inquiry and reflection, which are both processes required from participants as part of their involvement in the course, and envisaged outcomes of the programme). In my efforts to categorize the data, I found competing categories. I had, for instance, to decide whether I should emphasise what happened at various stages of the process such as the first or second terms, or whether the various aspects such as the processes that developed or the content that worked well should form the basis of the categories. I then decided, as an initial design, to use the chronological development of the research as a point of departure, in order to emphasize the growth and developmental dimensions, and to utilize the most prominent emic categories, such as the emerging role of certain presentation strategies, as sub-sections of the chronological categories.

In a second round, I slowly started to see how certain broader categories were taking form or “gelling”. Schumacher and McMillan (1993:495) say that “a pattern is a relationship among categories”. I began to identify patterns which bound a group of categories together. These patterns related to the original goal of the research, and boiled down to the following aspects of preparation programmes:

- the presentation of the course
- the school as home ground of participants
- outcomes
- suggestions.

In a third round of categorisation, I combined these categories and patterns with the most relevant categories identified in the literature study. This third round is reflected in Chapter 4. The above process is reminiscent of Delamont’s (1993:493) view that themes (Schumacher and McMillan’s “patterns”) and categories required for a proper analysis of data are the result of a researcher’s “recurrent reading of his/her field notes and diaries”.

One additional aspect of identifying categories which needs to be stressed, is that data reduction becomes much more refined when the categories are well defined and demarcated. It may also save one the drudgery of trying to capture all the data. I found myself going back to the raw data, to find quotes I had previously read but did not find suitable for the prevailing categories, but of which I was reminded by my sharper or changed view of issues that had emerged.

2.5.8.6 Displaying data

When the data reduction through categorizing and coding has been completed, the display of data still needs to be done. This means finding ways in which to present the data so that valid conclusions can be drawn. Robinson (1997:390) says that one way in which to do this is to present the data as a case study report “in the form of a narrative text”. This is essentially what I attempted with my first round of data analysis.

I found that, as Robinson concedes, this form has the limitation that it is sequential, with "one thing being dealt with at a time, and with information being spread out over many pages".

One can, according to Robinson, use graphs, charts or matrices to display the data, the only criterion being that these reflect the relevant data in a way that will support the drawing of conclusions. The main function of the display of data is, according to Robinson (1997:391), to "collect data in one place so you can see more readily what they are telling you".

2.5.9 Seeing the big picture

After being exposed to the data for such a long time - transcribing tapes; reading and rereading the transcriptions, notes, journal, assignments, examination scripts and completed questionnaires; identifying categories; coding; finding new categories; trying various formats on the computer to display the data; thinking about how to go about making sense of all the data; becoming depressed the one day at seeing no progress, and exhilarated about an unexpected break-through or new idea the following day - I finally, sitting in the waiting room at the dentist, realized that in the end the goal is to simply state what the data have revealed to me. I wrote the following note in my car log book, realizing that by the time I got back home, the thoughts may have been lost: "So the question is: "What do all these data tell me? What do I understand better in terms of the design of future preparation programmes? What do I need to emphasize in order to cause participants to effect changes in their schools?"

I realized that I first had to make sure that I had extracted all that I could from the data; that I had grasped all that the data had revealed to me. I had to know precisely what I had learned from my involvement with this programme and with all the people associated with it before I went back to what I had learned through my literature study.

I had accumulated two sets of data, which were not mutually exclusive, because much of what I had put into the preparation programme was based on ideas I had

accumulated while reading and listening to others. Yet, in the end, I had two sets of data: one originating from a group of people who had shared their experience in various contexts with me mainly through their writings; the other as the outflow of my experience with this specific group of people in this specific context. Before I could even attempt to join or integrate the data from the two sets, I had to get final clarity about what the second set of data revealed to me.

Later, on the dentist's chair, still meditating on how I would proceed, I suddenly saw the second set of data fitting into a bigger picture, displayed in a way in which a reader, not having been through the arduous process I had, could see the main trends and issues distilled from the large amount of data I had collected, at a glance. When this vision became clear to me, and I slowly started to see how all the main lines of thinking and development fitted together (see 4.1), I realized that I had reached the end of the journey as far as the data analysis was concerned, that the goal of an enlarged understanding through exposure to the many sets of facts and experiences, had at last been attained.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE STUDY

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

3.1.1 Introduction

The development of preparation programmes for school leaders progressed through a range of phases or eras from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although different writers call the various eras by different names, they basically agree about the identifying characteristics of each phase or era.

Campbell (1986:28) identifies the following four phases in the development of thinking about educational administration during the 20th century:

1. The era of scientific management early in the century
2. The human relations era in the 30s and 40s
3. Structuralism or bureaucracy in the 50s and 60s
4. The era of organisations as open systems from the 70s.

Campbell makes the important observation that as new perspectives became popular, the older ones did not go away, which implies that all the perspectives still influence current thinking on educational administration, and specifically the design of preparation programmes.

Cooper and Boyd's view of the various phases is given in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: The evolution of training in school administration

| Approximate dates | Role or title | Program content-background | Philosophy | Training | Degrees and licensure |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| 1865-1900 | Philosopher-educator | Teacher training, no formal training in administration | Pedagogy, classics, liberal arts, philosophy | Informal, as teachers | No special degrees or licences |
| 1900-1912 | Educator-capitalist | Teacher training and experience | Business ethos, "cult of efficiency", no administrator training | No formal training | No degrees or licenses in administration |
| 1913-1915 | Business manager | Business, techniques of accounting, graphing, and some philosophy | Mix of pedagogy, philosophy, and efficiency | Beginnings of programs in educational administration | First degrees offered - no licence required |
| 1915-29 | School executive | Administration based on rudiments of scientific management, business | Cult of efficiency and business methods | Formal, university based | Master's, some state licensing |
| 1930-1950 | Social agent | Social foundations, administrator as mediator | Social philosophy, economics, change, "democratic" administration | Formal, required, university based | Master's and license |
| - ONE BEST MODEL - | | | | | |
| 1950-1985 | Behavioural scientist | Management, organization theory, leadership theory | Behavioural, empirical | Formal, state controlled. Set credits for various licenses | Master's and Doctoral credits, building and district level, licences, state-run |

Adapted, in part, from Raymond E Callahan and H Warren Button, "Historical change of the role of the man in the organization: 1865-1950". In Daniel E Griffiths (ed), *Behavioural science and educational administration*, pp 73-92. Sixty-third yearbook of the National Society for the study of Education. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Source: Cooper and Boyd (1998:256)

Murphy's view of the various phases is given in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2: A composite picture of eras and metaphors in school administration preparation programmes

| Historical Eras | Dominant Metaphors |
|---|--|
| 1820-1900 Era of Ideology | Administrator as Philosopher-Educator |
| 1870-1885 | Administrator as Teacher of Teachers |
| 1885-1905 | Administrator as Applied Philosopher |
| 1900-1945 Prescriptive Era | Administrator as Technical Expert |
| 1900-1930 Scientific Management Era | Administrator as Business Person |
| 1900-1917 | Administrator as Educator-Capitalist |
| 1913-1915 | Administrator as Business Manager |
| 1915-1929 | Administrator as School Executive |
| 1930-1950 Human Relations Era | Administrator as Social Agent |
| 1946-1985 Behavioural Science Era/ | Administrator as Social Scientist |
| Era of Professionalization | Administrator as Professional |
| 1946-1957 Era of Development | |
| 1956-1985 Theory Era | |
| 1957-1967 Golden Era | |
| 1958-1978 Era of Diversity & Adversity | |
| 1979-1990 Era of Turmoil | |
| 1986- Dialectic Era | |

Source: Murphy (1992:20)

For the sake of brevity this historical overview I will focus only on five eras in Murphy's exposition.

3.1.2 The early years

Culbertson (1988:5) refers to Payne and Harris, who initiated and guided the development of a science of education and management during the last quarter of the previous century. They anticipated developments in later eras in so far as they felt that the inclusion of the humanities in educational administration, especially the contribution of philosophy, to be important, and that "the science of education was necessarily

linked to the broader problems of social science" (Culbertson 1988:5).

In showing their preferences they opposed both Comte and Spencer's positivistic views that the development of social scientific knowledge could best be facilitated through modes of research which approximate those applied in the natural sciences. Harris and Payne's influence was, however, limited because of the growing popularity of positivistic principles (Culbertson, 1988:6).

3.1.3 The scientific management era

During the early years of the twentieth century the emphasis shifted from concepts to the use of facts. These facts, gathered from practice, were used to develop "principles" (the term used to denote theories) which were often written in prescriptive terms such as "ought", "should" or "must" (Culbertson, 1986:14). This explains why Murphy (1992:29) refers to this period as the "prescriptive era".

According to Hoy and Miskel (1978:12) the work of scientific managers (the ideal for educational administrators as well) amounted to a study of organisational behaviour resulting from a job analysis approach. This type of research relied heavily on observations in the workplace. Murphy (1992:33) refers to this mode of research as "raw empiricism", implying the gathering of facts without any prior theoretical framework or any critical reflection.

Culbertson (1988:5,9) illustrates this well by citing Sears and Henderson (1957:59) quoting Cubberley (one of the main exponents of this tradition), announcing his intention to collect from educational institutions "half a ton of material from all parts of the United States". Culbertson also refers to this period as being a clear indication of the influence of Herbert Spencer's positivistic ideas, according to which science should limit its inquiry to knowable objects about which facts could be acquired.

Getzels *et al.* (1968:4) say the work of the administrator in this era was viewed as a type of technology - in solving practical problems, the administrator had to know and apply

rules, principles and techniques. In this type of approach, they say, prescriptions are like recipes. For each problem there are a number of prescribed steps one has to take to arrive at the desired solution. Training then implies the discovering and teaching of more effective prescriptions and techniques.

The idea of "scientific management", first propagated by Frederic Taylor (1895), was, according to Culbertson (1988:7,9,10), a firmly established concept in the industrial world. In the field of educational administration it represented a definite departure from the work of Harris and Payne, in which laws were derived from moral disciplines, to a world of deductive reasoning and empirical generalities. It was a moving away from philosophising about the "essences" of phenomena towards the study of the observable characteristics of these phenomena. The emphasis of preparation programmes in the prescriptive era was, according to Murphy (1992:29), on the technical and mechanical aspects of administration, on specific and immediate tasks and on practical aspects, without any attention being given to different ways of doing.

3.1.4 The human relations era

Towards the second quarter of the twentieth century, especially after the findings of the Hawthorne experiments conducted by Elton Mayo were made public, interest shifted to the human factor in management. Readings by respected authors like Maslow, Argyris and McGregor were incorporated into programmes for educational leaders. These writings included topics like motivation, job enrichment and personal growth (Silver, 1982:52) which are still included in preparation courses. One of the exponents of this tradition, Mary Follet, was particularly concerned with improving relations between managers and workers, and with general problems relating to personnel administration (Campbell *et al.*, 1987:43).

During this era the emphasis was on the individual and the full development of his/her potential. Particular reference was made to the employee, the development of interpersonal sensitivity, employee satisfaction and personal growth (Silver, 1982:52). The basic issues in this era are best expressed in this quotation from Dewey:

Governments, business, art, religion, all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And this is all one with saying that the test of their value is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility. (Quoted from "Reconstruction in Philosophy" by S.C. Rockefeller, 1991: title page.)

The human relations era initially had strong undertones of democratic principles, and was originally referred to as the era of "democratic human relations", but later simply as the "human relations era" (Campbell *et al.*, 1987:43). The basis of the democratic emphasis was laid by Dewey in his opposition to the techniques of the era of scientific management, and was carried forward by Lewin, Lippit and White, with their thinking on the concept of democratic leadership. Dewey was convinced that greater participation by teachers in management and decision processes would change the quality of the school's organisation and the level of relationships between teachers and administrators (Campbell *et al.*, 1987:51). Dewey's ideas were far ahead of his time, as is evident in this extract from his "Democracy and Education" (1916:99):

A society which makes provision for participation of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which introduce social changes without introducing disorder.

Culbertson (1988:11) emphasises Dewey's influence on the thinking educational administration of that time, and his introduction of ideas which are still relevant today. He refers to Dewey's view that administrators cannot treat scientific rules (prescriptions) as absolute because practice is too complex. Dewey also felt that the practitioner and the researcher should work together closely in any inquiry, and that the thoughts of those engaged in practically directing educational activities represented the final reality. The resemblance with the constructivist thinking of today is clearly evident.

Dewey and his followers' emphasis on democratic principles were gradually discarded as the human relations approach (initially designed to improve workers' performance) gained momentum. This led to educators focusing more on dealing with problems and challenges in administration than on democratising schools. The image of school leaders as factors of social change shifted to the background, and was replaced by the image of the person who is functional and ideologically neutral (Campbell et al., 1987: 59, 60).

3.1.5 The behavioural science era

This era is alternatively referred to as the "theory movement" (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:15 and Culbertson, 1983:15); or the "social science movement" (Miklos, 1983:159); and it lasted roughly from 1950 to 1975 (Silver, 1982:52). The movement or era had its roots in the logical positivism propagated by the Vienna Circle, a group of philosophers which formed subsequent to a seminar held by Moritz Schlick in Vienna in 1923 (Culbertson, 1988:15). This group of philosophers combined, according to Culbertson (1988:14), the positivism of Comte and the symbolic logic of Bertrand Russell and Alfred Whitehead. Comte had identified three stages in the development of science: the theological or *fictitious* state, the metaphysical or *abstract* state; and lastly the scientific or *positive* state (Comte, 1822:29). According to this view, each branch of knowledge must pass through these three theoretical states in its development. Of Comte's views, in opposition to modern organisation theory or the "new movement" in educational administration, Greenfield (1988:142) says: "Both advocated that science, cast in an objective, positivistic mould, could save the field from philosophers, moralists and other subjectivists".

The scholars of the Vienna Circle were, according to Culbertson (1988:4), influenced also by the ideas of symbolic logic, which for them meant the creation of "hypothetico-deductive systems", from which hypotheses could be derived and tested in the real world. The professors of educational administration had in the early years approached research from a practical point of view. Through the gathering of facts and the inductive method they formulated generalisations about what administrators had to do. They put

facts first. On the other hand, the "hypothetico-deductive systems" of inquiry propagated by the scholars of the Vienna Circle emphasised theory and deduced hypotheses empirically, using facts. Theory was elevated as the point of departure (Culbertson, 1986:19). Culbertson (1988:14) summarises the ideas of logical positivism by comparing them to the ideas of Comte, saying "they were much more deductive in character, placed higher importance on theory, strongly emphasised the quantitative, and were more structured and standardised in their conceptions".

While the emphasis in this era fell upon the scientification of educational administration, as discussed above, many other motives and ideas coincided in the social science era. Parallel to the idea of creating a science of administration was the improvement of the status of the administrator through the "professionalisation" of his/her job (Murphy, 1992:37). Administrators had to be trained as "applied, social scientists", and through programmes which had this objective, school administration as a field of study would gain the "possibility of academic respectability within the academy, on a rough par with business management and public administration" (Cooper and Boyd, 1988:260). Added to this, the field of the behavioural sciences was expanding, providing more attractive concepts for the study of human endeavour (Murphy 1992:37). Institutions like Harvard and the University of Chicago were integrating concepts and topics from the social sciences into their preparation programmes for educational leaders (Silver, 1982:52). Behavioural science topics like the study of school business and finance, school-community relations and supervision, became ingrained in training courses.

Willower (1983:180) says that, although some individuals in the academic field were uncomfortable with the direction in which things were moving, especially with the emphasis on the social sciences, there was a general enthusiasm, and "the field was alive with new ideas for the improvement of research and preparation programmes". According to him, a new organisation, the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), established in 1956, played a major role in influencing professors and preparation programmes (Willower, 1983:180). The UCEA's journal, *The Educational Administration Quarterly*, was launched in 1963, and through the years played an important role in disseminating current ideas and thinking on educational

administration (Campbell *et al.*, 1987:14).

In 1957 the UCEA held its first national seminar in Chicago. According to Culbertson (1983:15) the papers presented at this seminar represent the best source for the ideas of this "new movement", as Halpin referred to it (Murphy, 1992:38). Culbertson (1983:15) gives a good overview of the ideas emanating from this seminar: According to him, an important principle established was that practical prescriptions for the conduct of school principals fell outside the domain of science. It was held that scientific theories observe "phenomena as they are", which means they describe, explain and predict, but do not go so far as to prescribe practice. For Culbertson, this marked a change in the direction educational administration had been following since its early years, in which the aim of research was seen as to improve practice. Added to this, it was clear that theory was seen as the origin and goal of research and that hypothetico-deductive systems were accepted as prime exemplars of theory. Furthermore, it was argued at the seminar that the social sciences should be used to develop administrators' understanding of organisations and society. The last point of importance resulting from the UCEA seminar was that school administration was to be seen as part of the wider concept of a science of administration - a generic concept applicable to all types of organisations.

In stating these principles, the scholars attending the UCEA seminar aligned themselves closely with the logical positivism propagated by the Vienna Circle (Culbertson 1988:17). It boiled down to the practising and teaching of educational administration

- in a value-free environment
- based on a theoretical instead of a factual approach
- emphasising quantitative data analysis instead of qualitative data analysis
- avoiding any reference to the prescription of practice
- seen as belonging to a generic approach to administration.

Hoy and Miskel (1978:13) summarise the change effected by the behavioural science

era as ". . . a shift from democratic prescription to analytic formulation, from a field orientation to a discipline orientation, from raw observation to theoretical research, and from a narrow conceptualization to one encompassing multi-disciplinary research and theory".

In keeping with the general optimism that was characteristic of the early years of the theory movement, Cooper and Boyd (1988:252) refer to the preparation programmes developed at this time as being seen as the "One Best Model", drawing authority from social sciences such as psychology, management and the behavioural sciences. The philosophical base of this era is described by them as "an abiding belief in empiricism, predictability and scientific certainty".

In the period from the mid-forties to the mid-seventies, coincident with the era of the social sciences, the study of bureaucracy came to be emphasised (Campbell *et al.*, 1987:63). This development was influenced in part by the translation into English of Max Weber's writing on democracy. The thinking stimulated against this background spilled over into the domain of educational administration and led to numerous studies on the principles of organisations. Hoy and Miskel (1978:11) refer to Herbert Simon's (the person who, according to Culbertson [1983:15] was responsible for diffusing adaptations of the ideas propagated by the Vienna Circle into the general field of administration) work, which emphasised rational decision-making in terms of its influence on the members of an organisation. Simon's writing offers a good example of the structure of the bureaucratic and scientific thinking of the time:

What is a scientifically relevant description of an organisation? It is a description that, as far as possible, designates for each person in the organisation what decisions that person makes, and the influence to which he is subject in making each of these decisions (Simon, 1968, quoted in Hoy and Miskel, 1978:11).

Getzels *et al.*, (1968:5) compared the thinking of the theory movement to that of the prescriptive era. If prescriptions are like itineraries, prescribing a number of steps to get to a desired end, theories are like maps, which show the person which itinerary to

choose. The emphasis, they said, should not be so much on the prescriptions as on the understanding of the various complex relationships within organisations :

Administration will be improved less by empiricism (connecting empirical solutions to operational problems) than by conceptualisation (understanding administrative and organisational processes in more fundamental and necessarily more abstract forms).

For them (1968:9) hypotheses are tested in both practice and theory, but without theory the testing of hypotheses in practice may be a trial-and-error type of activity.

3.1.6 Criticism of the behavioural science era

Whereas the start of the theory movement can clearly be linked to the UCEA seminar in Chicago in 1957, its demise was sealed through a devastating attack on the movement in a paper by Greenfield (1975), presented initially at the 1974 Third International Inter-visitation Programme in England. In this paper the weaknesses of the positivistic approach to the study of human organisations were highlighted and the value of other approaches in the interpretive tradition was emphasised (Silver, 1982:56).

Greenfield (1988:141) quotes an analogy (in Campbell and Lipham, 1960) which gives a humorous spin to his criticism of social science theory. Marland compares the science-supported administrator to the bush pilot who

now finds himself in the pilot's chair of a monstrous flying machine of untold power and dimensions. The social scientist tells us that there are buttons to push, leavers to adjust, gauges to watch, beacons to reckon, and codes to decipher. He tells us that one cannot fly this craft by the seat of the pants, but that certain buttons and levers, when activated, produce specific and predictable results in the performance and posture of the craft.

Culbertson (1986:3) is of the opinion that because of the social science movement's discarding of prescriptions, of telling the practitioner what he should do, the movement itself became further removed from practice than the leaders of the field in the early years of the century. For them, the goal of research was the improvement of practice, while in the behavioural science movement the goal became the improvement of theory. Silver (1982:53) makes the ironic remark that even with all the emphasis on theory, a theory of educational administration had still not materialised.

Campbell (1986:26) emphasises the importance of viewing educational administration as a specific field of interest. This implies that researchers should exercise greater caution in borrowing concepts from other fields. The fact that topics to be included in preparation programmes were taken at random from various academic disciplines induced Schwab (1979) to say: "we continue to whore the disciplines" (cited by Campbell, 1986:26). Exercising caution would imply testing relevance and validity of the concepts drawn from various disciplines in educational settings. If this is not done, motivation, for instance, would be studied as a distant theoretical construct, and presented as such, leaving it entirely to the practitioner to decide how to implement it in practice. Campbell (1986:26) sums up the applicable priorities when he says "... we use the disciplines to inform education rather than using education to inform the disciplines".

Murphy (1992:72) agrees with this criticism of the theory movement in observing that presenters failed to integrate topics from the various disciplines so as to offer participants knowledge and skills relevant to their practice. He (1992:171) refers to Cunningham *et al.* (1963), who describe the presentation of the various disciplines to students as a macro-level approach, as opposed to a micro-level approach which would emphasise the problems of practice. Students were required to draw on the social science content presented to them in order to find (build) solutions which would suit their needs and solve their problems of practice.

For Cooper and Boyd (1988:260,263) the theory movement failed to solve the problem of what to teach practitioners. Therefore, the problem of the gulf between theory and

practice remained. Practitioners found it difficult to apply the general concepts of administration theory in a specialised educational environment. Murphy (1992:58) agrees with this in identifying the big problem of the behavioural science era as the problem of relevance. In such a practical field as educational administration, application and utilisation, rather than the production and dissemination of knowledge, would be addressing the needs of practitioners.

3.1.7 The dialectic era

Murphy (1992:70-75) identifies the era following the behavioural science movement as the dialectic era, but fails to explain why he uses the term "dialectic". He describes the era mainly in terms of what it is not, and in this reminds one of the way the post-structuralist research tradition is presented by many writers (see 2.1.4.4). For him the era is characterised by a continuing debate "about the appropriate value structure and cognitive base for educational administration in general and for preparation programmes in particular", as well as "a pattern of criticism about the definition of legitimate knowledge and the accepted ways in which it could be generalised", and the "deepening recognition that the knowledge base employed in preparation programs had not been especially useful in solving all problems in the field".

The term dialectic implies for me, as explained earlier, a dynamic process between two opposing or different elements or aspects of a specific reality, in continuous interaction, in the end producing something new and, one would hope, better. In the Foreword to Greene (1988), Gowin uses the term in the following way:

These many dialectics co-exist, run their course, remultiply, and extend. Perhaps for educators, the dialectic between the received authority of external knowledge is in tension with the constructivist view that human knowledge is a human construction. The notion of knowledge, given antecedently and independently of knowers, Maxine [Greene] rejects. In her dialectics, the knower and the known are co-present, each modifying and shaping the other.

Greene herself(1988:8) enlarges on this theme thus:

I want to break through, whenever possible, the persisting either/ors. There is, after all, a dialectic relation marking every human situation: The relation between the subject and the object, individual and environment, self and society, outsider and community, living consciousness and phenomenal world. This relation exists between two different, apparently opposite poles; but it presupposes a mediation between them . . . this is what is suggested by the notion of mediation, something that occurs between nature and culture, work and action, technologies and human minds. Always there is a type of tension, but it is not the type of tension that can be overcome by a triumph of subjectivity or objectivity, nor is it the kind of dialectic that can finally be resolved in some perfect synthesis or harmony.

In reviewing the behavioural science era, we become aware of types of interaction or tension between seemingly opposing elements, indicating a possible dialectic relationship. This is true of theory and practice; educational administration as a specific field of study or as part of a general one; a macro- and a micro-level approach; theoretical and practical or experimental knowledge. In the study of earlier eras the following tensions had become evident: research based on facts or on theory; research as seeking to describe or prescribe; an emphasis on the humanities versus an emphasis on the social sciences; factual or conceptual content; viewing the world as an objective, given reality or one that is subjective and open to reform; the researcher versus the researched, and the role of education as describing the status quo or introducing social change.

The time following the behavioural science era has also produced new viewpoints opposing the traditional ones, especially the view of knowledge as "created in use" (Sergiovanni, 1991:7) rather than given, and the view that acceptable social research can be done using a variety of research methods including ethnographic, naturalistic and cultural studies, as opposed to a positivistic approach alone (Silver, 1982:56).

All these interactions between elements relevant to educational administration are symptomatic of what Griffiths (1979) cited by Culbertson (1988:18) calls the state of "intellectual turmoil" in educational administration, and what Murphy (1997:68) characterises as the "period of ferment", or "period of transition" from one era and the next. In this era, although criticism of the way school leaders are being prepared is multiplying, solutions to these concerns have proved more difficult to achieve (Murphy 1992:69). The challenge of ongoing research, of concerned interaction with practitioner, of ongoing facilitation of the dialectical processes in anticipation of new syntheses: all these continue to confront those who are interested in finding out how the study of educational administration can best inform practice.

3.2 Current thinking on preparation programmes

3.2.1 Introduction

This section is an overview of current thinking about the preparation of school leaders. The various aspects are only described briefly, because most of them are elaborated upon later in the chapter. Furthermore, in subsequent chapters, I will show how some of these ideas were implemented in the course I am presenting at George, and in what ways other ideas from the literature were confirmed during the ongoing development of the course.

The term "current thinking" is used loosely. It obviously refers to writers and thinkers of the present time, which would roughly mean the 1990s. It is, however, problematic to categorise thinking in terms of specific historical periods. One finds thinkers in history who stand out as "prophetic voices". They tended not to be heard in their own time because their thoughts did not fit in with the popular and accepted principles and assumptions in vogue then, and were sometimes even in opposition to these. Such thinkers are often recognised later, with the wisdom of hindsight, as the heroes of their age, because their thoughts were so far ahead of their time. Their recognition in the present time results from the fact that their ideas fit in well with the assumptions and principles which are only now being "discovered".

In the historical overview given in section 3.1, the names mentioned in this regard were those of people like Payne and Harris who, more than a century ago, emphasised the importance of the humanities and philosophy in educational administration, and Dewey (1916), with his multiple insights into the value of democracy, the importance of schools' social function, the necessity of researcher and researched working together, and the way in which knowledge is constructed.

Prophetic voices do not, however, belong only to the past: the present time often has its own endowment of dissenting voices, challenging current orthodoxy, never satisfied to simply accept popular thinking. I see Greenfield (1988) as just such a contemporary voice.

The term "current thinking", then, refers to both what the majority of writers are saying today about preparation programmes, and to the thoughts and ideas of those who think differently and creatively, about the training of school leaders.

3.2.2 General design and aims

There is a wide range of opinion concerning the objectives which various training institutions pursue in their preparation programmes.

Shakeshaft (1993:213), writing about programme design at the Hofstra University, notes that their mission statement includes the commitment to prepare reflective leaders for "complex educational organisations in diverse, multi-cultural environments". Through their programme they aim to facilitate the development of agents for change and educational leaders by exposing participants to professional education courses, field-based experiences and cooperative learning opportunities and reflection. They aim to develop vision in the participants: "The ability to dream and to take risks in the sense of moving education institutions toward an imagined ideal" (1993:213). This should be accomplished through the facilitation of a dialogical process, in which the influence of individual vision on the implementation of taught skills like the preparation of budgets and the drawing up of time tables is explored. Eventually they want participants to

develop their own vision and find ways of attaining their own goals by “informed and purposeful practice”. Added to this, there is a focus on the development of leaders “as humane and ethical social critics” (1993:213).

In their description of the programme at the University of Washington, Sirotnik and Mueller (1993:60) focus largely on the process and say little about the end product envisaged. The former includes quality internships; curricula in which theory and practice are integrated and attention is given to moral and ethical issues; and a sustained and growing network of colleagues, supporting each other in their professional development. The objectives also include an emphasis on critical inquiry and reflective practice, as well as continuous attention to the improvement and changing of preparation programmes.

Even if these goals represent a somewhat skewed focus on process, one should think carefully before advocating a shift in the direction of products or outcomes. In the end, if a course can produce a growing and continuing participant network, as well as a growing number of practitioners developing with respect to inquiry and reflection, the potential for an ongoing improvement in practice has been established.

Murphy (1995:4,6) reflects some aspects of Dewey’s thinking in his emphasis on democratic leadership in the development of a collaborative culture. He explains this type of transformational leadership in terms of the leader’s willingness to give up control, to allow others to take part in decision making and in the sharing of leadership. This implies the facilitation of dialogue and the accommodation of multiple voices and perspectives. Murphy also emphasises the importance of an educational goal in preparation programmes, in which student learning should be constantly kept in mind.

3.2.3 Challenges to existing perspectives

Greenfield (1988:150), in his criticism of the theory movement, refers to the issue of power relationships, which, according to him, has been consistently ignored. The denial of a basic phenomenological reality like power relationships is, according to him,

consistent with the approach of the theory movement. This approach isolates various aspects of organisations as focal points of inquiry, while ignoring the day-to-day interactions which can only be understood through direct involvement with, and observation of, practice. In the creation of an alternative to the scientific approach to educational administration, it is a basic requirement that we understand and accept the fact that individuals' experiences, intentions, goals and values constitute the basic elements of any organisation. In order to come to grips with these individual elements, researchers require methods and instruments with which to approach inquiry on a subjective level.

Hodgkinson (1991:40) says that conflict which grows out of the self-interest of individuals is an essential element of organisational life. Conflict should therefore be seen as a permanent aspect of organisations and be managed and utilised as part of the leader's most basic challenges, involving him/her in questions of ethics as well. Greenfield (1988:152) agrees with this. He says that in the science of educational administration the image of harmony and consensus about values and goals is often seen as representative of organisational life. References to organisational culture and shared goals are often made without asking questions about the validity of such assumptions. These assumptions are easier to make when values are not considered in the study of organisations, as was the case with scientific inquiry. For Greenfield, organisational conflict has its roots in the opposing values of members of organisations. The perceptual problem lies in the accepted metaphors for organisations, which characterise them in terms of equilibrium, stability, adjustment and harmony. The power of these metaphors needs to be broken, and this can only be done through the direct observation of organisations. It is in this sense that the ethical dimension becomes important (Greenfield, 1988:152).

Chester Barnard (1968:270,271) sees conflict arising from differences in moral codes of individuals, and the quality and relative importance of these moral codes for specific individuals. He uses the example of conflict arising from the making of appointments, describing it as "a trivial matter for illustration". I will show that in the current South African situation, appointments to promotion posts is an aspect of major importance in

terms of organisational conflict.

Greenfield's (1988:153) views about the necessity of a shift in modes of inquiry towards methods representative of the interpretive tradition, with its emphasis on subjectivity and the construction of social reality, embody a rejection of the objective modes of inquiry of the scientific era (and of the positivistic research tradition). Greenfield's perspective addresses the concern of many that preparation programmes are not designed around the realities of the workplace. It also responds to the need to become aware of what is really happening in schools, so that preparation programmes can be designed to meet the real needs of practitioners and the realities of school life.

3.2.4 The involvement of practitioners in the design of preparation programmes

When the University of Utah set out to design its doctoral programmes, the co-ordinates first involved an advisory group of superintendents from local school districts to help them plan the course. This was done to ensure that the course would fit in with local needs and requirements (Ogawa and Pounder, 1993:86).

Bridges (1993:40), who has already done much work on problem-based teaching, says that consumer preferences need to be taken into account in the designing of programmes. Griffiths et al. (1988:293) concur, saying that the responsibility for preparing school leaders should be between university staff and practitioners. This view is supported by Murphy (1995:6), who feels that a learning community should be built around preparation courses. This implies all stakeholders working together in action research programmes as equal partners, and in sharing teaching tasks in the presentation of preparation programmes.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:135) emphasises the importance of utilising the "experience and perceptions of principals" to ensure "practical, appropriate, more coherent and potentially more systematic training and support for school heads".

3.2.5 Content and method

Shakeshaft (1993:210) refers to the preparation of courses at the Hofstra University, in which there was less emphasis on the teaching of various courses, and more on the actual skills and knowledge (outcomes) participants required in practice. Having identified these, the course planners tried to determine where each type of learning should take place: as part of the formal course work, practical fieldwork or community building experiences. The Hofstra University example represents a movement away from the prescribed subjects or topics which are typically presented in the preparation courses. Many examples exist of courses in which such a prescribed set of topics are either specified in detail, covering every area of school life, or indicated in terms of general areas of inquiry. In the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's (1993) comprehensive publication, "Principals for our changing schools", 21 domains are identified, grouped together in four categories labelled "functional", "programmatic", "interpersonal" and "contextual" (Thompson, 1993:XI). McNie *et al.*, (1991:11) refer to the content of various training programmes as varying from "four spheres of development" to "nineteen competencies". The National Development Centre for Educational Management Policy (NDCEMP) at the University of Bristol designed a course which specifies only four topics: self-development, school development, curriculum development and staff development. The course developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat for head teacher training in Africa includes seven modules (Combe and White, 1994:3): "self-development, educational management, personnel management, curriculum and resource management, financial management, monitoring school effectiveness and school governance".

McNie *et al.* (1991:10) refer to Lawton (1983) in saying that a course's content should comprise a "selection" from a culture, implying that the participants' context should be taken into account when decisions about topics to be included are made. This is referred to again in Chapters 3.4.5.1 and 4.2.2.2, in the course of discussion of the importance of a needs' analysis. McNie goes on to say there is always the danger of overloading a course by trying to do too much. More may be accomplished through a limited programme well done.

Bolam (1997:276) represents a total departure from the views about the content of preparation programmes referred to above. He says the so-called "contingency theorists" argue that there is no single correct way of leading an organisation, because of the distinctive, unique characteristics of organisations. The uniqueness of schools requires unique solutions to unique problems which has obvious implications for the design of preparation programmes. This is why writers like March (1974), cited by Pitner (1988:379), say no course can be designed without an awareness of what the school administrators concerned have to deal with.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:136) emphasises aspects to be included in development programmes such as "principles of management, personnel management, managing the curriculum, management of resources, financial management, the school in its community and the monitoring of school effectiveness". Thurlow (1993:128) stresses the fact that the content of a course should be "demand-driven rather than menu-driven".

On the level of method, many writers stress the importance of field work experiences like internships, clinical training and shadowing (Griffiths *et al.*, 1988:297; Pitner, 1988:282; Hart, 1993:339; and Murphy, 1995:6). Hart (1993:340) says the key aspect of the preparation of school leaders is the application of research, theory and experience to new situations, while Thurlow (1993:128) emphasises the importance of flexibility in the offering of development opportunities. In training, Ogawa and Pounder (1993:97) say participants use their schools as "field laboratories" to work on the solution of problems in the practical context. They include a course on the principles of inquiry in their programme to prepare participants for their research into problems in their schools.

In Bridges' (1993:46) programme at Stanford University, participants are required, when they do their field-based work in the schools, to build up a portfolio in which they record and keep copies of their experiences and accomplishments in their confrontation with real situations.

3.2.6 Building preparation programmes around problems from practice

Bailey (1986:218) refers to work done by Braddick and Casey (1981). They followed a problem-solving approach to facilitate learning from experience. The programme was designed as action learning, which meant that practitioners met for a full one-day session per month in which they discussed problems which they themselves had encountered. Each participant learned from the suggestions made by other participants, which were in general based on what they had learned from experience.

The programme at Stanford University applies the same principles in its emphasis on problems from practice. The course includes a practicum representing 40% of the curriculum. This part of the programme is organised around problems participants are likely to confront as future principals, e.g. dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties in the classroom. The rationale behind this problem-based learning is that it gives participants the opportunity to acquire and use the knowledge and skills relevant to basic problems dealt with in the programme (Bridges, 1993:46).

In a similar programme at the Hofstra University, a specific issue or aspect of practice is taken and analysed in terms of economic, legal, educational or equity principles. Participants are required to develop and defend a responsive government policy on various levels (Shakeshaft, 1993:216). Students from a specific area are linked to a knowledgeable person from their district, appointed as part of a group of presenters involved in "team-teaching". This person, who plays the role of mentor, has to assist participants in their fieldwork projects. His/her familiarity with local circumstances enables him/her to identify with the specific situation of the participant. Another interesting dimension of this programme is the requirement that each district should generate its own problem-based learning situations. This brings a particular dynamic to the course, because the problem-based situations generated from each district change from one semester to the next as needs and situations change.

The best example of current thinking about the link between preparation programmes and problems of practice, is the emphasis on action research as a way to bring together

theory and practice, the academic and the practitioner. Writers like McNie, Wright and White (1991), Murphy (1995) and Bolam (1997) see action research as an important strategy in preparation programmes. McNie et al. (1991:20), writing about preparation programmes in Africa, say that action research causes head teachers and their staff to recognise their responsibility for the planning, implementing and evaluation of action and problem solving initiatives in their own schools. In action research, they say, the word "training" has completely disappeared, which implies that through action research the responsibility for change shifts from the trainer to practitioners at the grass roots level. One of the advantages in their view is that this approach facilitates change "within the unique culture of each school". The principal and staff work together to generate their *own solutions* and change within *their own* conditions.

McNie et al. (1991:20) suggest further that during the process of action research, head teachers meet at workshops to share experiences, solutions and insights with each other. In this way networks are created. An additional benefit is ownership of the planned change by the people involved, ensuring its credibility and acceptance of suggestions for change. They add (p. 21) that for a program of action research to succeed, partnerships with external agencies are a necessity.

For Murphy and the 80 professors and administrators who met at St Louis in 1995, it became clear that preparation programmes should be based on issues of practice (1995:6). Problem-based action research could broaden the exposure of participants to practice-oriented activities.

This aspect is especially relevant in developing countries where the tendency is to use materials from developed countries with vastly different situations. Thurlow (1993:123) highlights the importance of basing what is provided in development programmes "in the reality of the workplace and the day-to-day experiences of the principals".

3.2.7 The problem of transfer

A key problem in preparation programmes for school leaders is the application of research, theory and experience to new situations (Hart, 1993:340). It is therefore of the utmost importance that anyone who has the responsibility of planning and implementing a preparation course should choose both methods and content in such a way as to ensure maximum transfer to practice.

Bolam (1997:273) cites Joyce, whose research has revealed that the learning and application of new skills depends on at least five conditions. These conditions correspond closely to those mentioned by Leithwood *et al.* (1992:201), which will be discussed later in this chapter, with special reference to their implications for preparation programmes. The four conditions referred to are:

- the modelling/demonstration of the skill
- the practice of the skill in a safe environment
- feedback on practice
- coaching during application in the real situation.

3.2.8 Reflection and experiential learning

Greenfield (1988:155) says the goal of research in educational administration should be to find out what administrators know, and then to assist them to gain a new and inquiring perspective on their knowledge and practice, which means assisting them to become reflective practitioners. It is important to note the goal of "an inquiring perspective on their knowledge and practice" - which means starting to ask questions about theory and practice and about the linkages between them. Sergiovanni (1991:7) says in this regard: "Knowing is in the act of practice, and reflective practitioners become students of their practice". This comes close to the relationship between reflection and the creation of new knowledge as proposed by Sergiovanni (1991:6): "Professional knowledge is created in use as professionals decide on courses of action".

Baily (1986:218/9) gives more substance to the concept of reflection in his reference to Kolb *et al.*'s (1976) experiential learning model, which succeeds in bringing together, in one model, the two dimensions of theory and practice on the one hand, and experimenting and reflection on the other. The relevance of this model for the design of preparation courses, as spelled out by Wallace, is elaborated upon in section 3.3.3. The underlying philosophy of Kolb's model is that practitioners benefit from reflection on what they do in practice.

Sergiovanni (1991:4) goes further in identifying a particular relationship between knowledge gained from practice (experiential knowledge) and knowledge gained from theory and research. Craftlike knowledge of educational administration is knowledge in which research and theory are seen as comprising one source of knowledge, but one ultimately subordinate to the experimental knowledge of the principal, "created in use". Research and theory should inform practice, not prescribe it.

Hart (1993:340) refers to many examples of research which confirm the value of reflection in turning experience into learning. This should encourage designers of programmes to develop problem- and experience-based learning. Bolam (1997:273) views experiential learning in the same way as Sergiovanni: in his view, the school (work place) becomes the "main setting for such experience based learning". Bolam also refers to Schön's (1987) ideas about effective practitioners as those who are able to reflect critically and constructively on their practical experiences. This explains, according to Schön, the importance of focusing preparation programmes on practitioners reflecting on their practice.

Hart (1993:341) says the reflective process includes four critical aspects:

- association, which implies relating new data to what is already known;
- integration, seeking relationships among the data;
- validation, determining the authenticity of ideas and feelings;
- appropriation, making new knowledge one's own.

These critical aspects have close links with contemporary information-processing theory

as explained briefly by Leithwood *et al.* (1992:174-175). I shall elaborate upon this theory, in section 3.4.3, particularly with reference to its relevance to the design of preparation programmes.

Hart (1993:342) says reflection also leads to an increase in awareness, which Fromm (1992:37-44) describes as a condition for "the art of being", and which he explains as being more than mere consciousness or knowledge - the discovery of something that was not obvious or expected. Greene (1988:21) provides a link between questioning, reflection and consciousness (awareness) when she equates consciousness with the ability to pose questions to the world, and to reflect upon one's day-to-day experience.

An important way in which reflection becomes practical for practitioners is, according to Hart (1993:342), through the use of reflective journals. Practitioners should be encouraged to keep their journals with them, and to write down even the smallest and seemingly most insignificant thoughts which occur to them with respect to their work situation, people, solutions and ideals.

3.2.9 Ethics in preparation programmes

Entering the world of ethics, morals or philosophy in the field of educational administration is like entering a minefield of diversity, controversy, and strong and conflicting convictions. One is confronted with the need and challenge to delve into philosophical thinking, as Herslep (1997:70) suggests. It is not enough, according to him, to be concerned with the ethical area of educational leadership, but at the same time to fail to understand the importance of the philosophical thought as basis of one's ethical concerns (p.78). Without philosophical thinking, arguments like those of Sergiovanni (1990) about "value-addedness in leadership" and the "importance of purpose" are without content (except for their emphasis on "effectiveness") and without a base (Herslep, 1997:78). Without a philosophical basis, words like "ethical leadership" become part of what Greene (1988:10,12) refers to as "American kitch". Yet writers continue to confuse or equate ethics in education with "popular ethics" (Beck and Murphy, 1994:79) like "caring, justice, equity, equality and the like", to which people

often respond with quickly professed commitments which are often not commensurate with real changes in lifestyle, policies or practice.

Ethics in preparation programmes for school leaders may refer to the study of a wide spectrum of philosophies, and the development of philosophical thought, as Beck and Murphy (1994) found in their survey of ethics in training programmes at leading American universities. Such an approach may lead to the course becoming an academic course in the true (and outdated) sense of the word, having much in common with courses presented in the theory movement era. These involved exposing participants to the general principles and trends within a specific field of study, so as to "empower" them to integrate these concepts into their worlds of practice.

Ethics in preparation courses may, however, also focus on an "understanding of administration in moral terms, and if this knowledge helps administrators to see *themselves* and *their tasks* more clearly and responsibly, we may then have reliable knowledge and a sound guide for action in the world" (Greenfield, 1988:153). Once administrators accept that a study of ethics may help them to look at themselves and their work in a different way, there opens up, on the one hand, the question of "values as springs to action both in everyday life and in administration" (Greenfield, 1988:132); and on the other, one of the most potent and maybe most needed areas in the field of preparation programmes for school leaders. This is a wide area indeed, and one which has the potential of changing individuals from the inside out, in a way similar to a religious conversion experience, causing him/her to look at his/her work with totally new eyes. These types of ideas and thoughts are obviously anathema to "scientific thinking", but urgently need to be explored within the continuing ferment, especially with respect to values and morals, in the context of educational administration.

Looking at the challenge an ethical approach poses to administrators to have a good look at themselves, the issues currently receiving much attention (not always strictly within the field of educational administration) include the following: "generating a dialectical process between a person's way of doing and his/her story" (Groome, 1980:185-197); considering the "antecedent factors" influencing one's actions

(Sergiovanni, 1991:11); self-awareness training (Daresh and Playko, 1995:35, and Fromm, 1992:37-44); "personal formation" (Daresh and Playko, 1995:35); real "personal freedom/liberation" (Greene, 1988:14, and Fromm, 1992:8); and ultimately the "art of being" (Fromm, 1992).

Considering administrators' views of "their tasks" in terms of ethics would confront one with issues such as "personal choice and responsibility", (Greenfield, 1988:39, and Barnard, 1968:267); the role of the leader in constructing a moral code for others (Barnard, 1968:279); features of moral agency such as "interaction, knowledge, freedom, purpose, judgement, deliberation and decision" (Herslep, 1997:68), and "caring" (Beck, 1994).

On the level of professional behaviour, Forsyth (1994:vii) says the need for ethical behaviour is especially vital in schools, because of the element of trust associated with the work of schools. Willower (1994:ix) observes that practitioners should be focused on an "array of human and humane ideals and virtues such as compassion, caring, tolerance, responsibility, liberty, equity, self-sufficiency, adventure, community and, especially in educational organisations, curiosity, reflective awareness and knowledge". According to Leithwood *et al.* (1992:98), values play a special role in school leadership, especially in directing the process of problem solving with respect to new and non-routine problems.

For Greenfield (1988:154) the need for ethical behaviour in schools boils down to the quest for new models of training - "ones that acknowledge responsibility, right judgement, and reflection as legitimately and inevitably part of administration action". Daresh and Playko (1995:36) feel that an emphasis on "personal and professional formation" in the training of Catholic priests should have some relevance for the preparation of school leaders, including aspects like "personal commitment" and "lifestyle changes". They link this goal of preparation programmes to mentoring.

Greenfield (1988:139) refers to the way in which the rationality of the theory movement, with its emphasis on a value-less approach, produced exactly the opposite of what

Daresh and Playko refer to above. According to Greenfield, this approach reduced the responsibility of administrators to come to grips with the issues underlying difficult decisions, e.g. an administrator who, in retrenching employees, only considers the health of the organisation, without being influenced in his/her decision by the implications such a step will have on the employees' families. The scientific approach provided a kind of cover for the administrator, in that "science and rationality provide the ultimately persuasive and irrefutable excuse for the abdication of personal choice and responsibility" (Greenfield, 1988:139).

Greene (1988: 15,16) takes this idea further in her reference to Jean-Paul Sartre's views about the members of the French Resistance in the Second World War. Sartre observed, according to Greene, that such people acted upon what they chose as their responsibility: "They were not compelled to do so, but they chose to 'live the war'". Greene (p. 22) regards the decision to act on what one chooses as one's responsibility as opening up "the possibility of becoming the author of one's world". This idea of voluntarily taking up a burden for the sake of a specific cause is typical of Jesus' (Matthew 10:38,39) teaching to those desiring to follow Him.

In discussing the relationship between the practical and the philosophical, Herslep (1997:72) says philosophical thought focuses on the general and the abstract, while common sense concentrates on the particular and concrete. In the case of routine problems, common sense knowledge might be enough, but ethical issues and problems which are new to the administrator require reliance on philosophical thinking, bringing general and abstract features into consideration (Herslep, 1997:81). Herslep's thinking in this regard corresponds closely to that of Leithwood *et al.* (1992:98), referred to earlier, in which the importance of values in giving direction to "problem solving in the swamp" (non-routine problem-solving) is highlighted.

3.2.10 The development of professional communities

According to Murphy (1995:6), one of the important conclusions reached by a group of 80 professors and practitioners in St Louis in 1995, concerned the need for the

establishment of professional learning communities around preparation programmes. These communities should be characterised by the time they spend on reflection and dialogue and the equal partnerships they form between academics and practitioners in their joint involvement in action research.

At the University of Utah, practising administrators were employed both as an advisory group for the academic faculty and as a support (mentoring) group for the participants (Ogawa and Pounder, 1993:90). This group was utilised in the planning and development of activities for each application course, as well as for the guidance, supervision and evaluation of students' field applications. This worked well because of the access they had to information regarding problems of practice. Ogawa and Pounder identified one problem with this employment of clinical faculty (the term they use for practising principals assisting in the presentation of the programme), viz. the development of an appropriate balance of responsibility between academic and clinical faculty (1993:103).

For Bailey (1986:220) an important element of effective training programmes is the personal contacts, which refers to both contacts with peers and with mentors or tutors, established during a training course. The importance of these contacts lies in the opportunities they create to discuss ideas, solutions and issues of common concern with other practitioners in the same area, confronted with similar problems.

The South African Task Team (1996:51) stresses the importance networking and says: "Building positive and practical links among members of the education community is an important step in promoting change".

Bolam (1997:273,274) refers to the growing importance attached to coaching as an element in training and learning. (Coaching in the English use of the term is related to the American concept of peer-assisted learning.) Bolam refers to the ingredients of an important pilot scheme for the mentoring of head teachers. These include confidentiality; the mentor acting as sounding board; and the fact that an experienced head teacher acted as mentor. Participants felt the most important benefits accruing to

them from this mentorship programme were in rank order: the support and reassurance it provided; the mentor acting as a resource and a sounding board to them; and the personalised one-to-one contacts it afforded them.

Hart (1993:342,343) endorses Bolam's idea of drawing on experienced and respected administrators as coaches to guide participants. He feels, however, that one must be on the alert for and intervene when coaches become too directive.

An important group of people to establish and broaden a professional network with, is a principal's senior colleagues (Bailey, 1986:220). When these colleagues become involved in the network, they strengthen the principal's hand in implementing new ideas and help create an ethos of change. This enhances the possibility of the school benefiting from the professional growth of the principal through the course. One big problem concerning school improvement is that it is seldom the result of one person trying out new ideas - "school improvement is the result of a collective effort by the whole of its community" (Bailey, 1986:220). Involving senior and other staff in preparation programmes will in the end lead to the professional development of all involved, and to the building of a team for change in the school.

Pitner (1988:387-388) describes a formalised network or professional community referred to as "Project Leadership", developed by the Association of California School Administrators in the late 1970s, which is a good concrete example of what has been discussed above. The programme was based on the concept of collegial support and interaction in the improvement of practice. It consisted of regular meetings of smaller groups made up of participants from a particular area. Each small group "satellite meeting" was led by an experienced administrator, who guided the group and assisted group members with their specific problems. He/she also acted as a "coach" to them in terms of their practical activities, tasks and problems. In addition, these facilitators had to plan two big state-wide meetings, involving all the satellite groups, and lasting a full day per year. These big meetings served as opportunities for members of satellite groups to take part in various learning activities, discussions and interactions.

3.2.11 Summary

The above exposition of current thinking on preparation programmes is summarised well by the Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:138) in the following guidelines for the planning of a management development programme for schools. The aim would be a programme which:

- by being multifaceted and flexible, makes best use of existing resources, and has the capacity to test innovative and cost-efficient training and support strategies
- ensures practical, appropriate, more coherent and potentially more systematic training and support for senior school staff
- by being demand-led rather than course-led, responds to and builds on the needs, experience and perceptions of principals and other school staff in setting training content, developing and designing materials, scheduling training, and using peer-tutoring and study circle techniques
- provides structure, progression and coherence in the field of management training
- incorporates good practical resource manuals and handbooks.

In meeting the above requirements, a development programme may approach the three criteria set by the Task Team (1996:37), namely those of “effectiveness, efficiency and relevance”.

3.3 ASPECTS OF LEARNING

3.3.1 Self-awareness

3.3.1.1 Introduction

The terms “awareness”, “self-awareness” and “consciousness” are often used in current literature on leadership and organizational learning (Senge, 1990; Argyris, 1992; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993; Daresh and Playko, 1993; Palmer, 1998). Authors

discussing these topics as key aspects of human behaviour address areas of wider interest than education. Yet what they have to say has great relevance for educational leadership and change.

The term self-awareness, in the sense in which it is used in the context of leadership and learning, refers to growth in understanding as a prerequisite for learning and personal growth. This increase in understanding implies the recognition of various aspects in oneself, in one's thinking and doing, which have a negative and limiting impact on one's personality, relationships, work and, in fact, on one's whole being, but of which one has been totally ignorant or unaware. An increase in awareness of these aspects, a heightened self-awareness, can therefore be a liberating experience, and the key to personal and organizational renewal and growth. It is in this sense that Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:14) say: "Without awareness, there will be no change". Fromm (1992:37), writing from a psychoanalytical perspective, sees the expression "to become aware of" as meaning "discovering something that was not quite obvious or was not even expected. In other words, awareness is knowing or consciousness in a state of close attention".

Paulo Freire (1941:44) recounts how, in adult literacy programmes in Brazil, the objective was to teach adults to "read in relation to the awakening of their consciousness". This meant the development of a critical attitude which implies "understanding causality". A critical consciousness, according to Freire, always analyses causalities, asking questions about whether the causal links of today will still be the same tomorrow. This is in contrast to a "magic consciousness" which leaves the individual with no alternative but to simply submit, and to resign him/herself to fatalism. One way to raise consciousness is, according to Freire (p. 45), through dialogue which flows from a horizontal relationship between persons: "When two 'poles' of dialogue are thus linked by love, hope and mutual trust, they can join in a critical search for meaning".

Peter Senge (1990:159), with his management and organizational learning perspective, relates the quest for personal awareness to a "commitment to the truth", which implies

getting rid of those elements in peoples' lives which prevent them from seeing the truth. This "weeding out" process implies "continually broadening . . . [their] awareness". And this broadening of awareness has an added bearing on the underlying structures which influence current events. This theme will emerge again in my discussion of Argyris's work.

Writing about teachers, Palmer (1998:4) uses the phrase "the teacher's inner landscape" to refer to that which should receive adequate and balanced attention. He identifies three aspects of this inner landscape, namely the intellectual, the emotional and the spiritual. This inner landscape requires careful exploration because a teacher needs to be energized from within; teaching ". . . emerges from one's inwardness"(p.2). Pautz (1998:30) provides a useful gloss to this point by quoting Greene (1978) in respect of the way she uses the term "landscapes": "To be in touch with our landscapes, is to be conscious of our evolving experiences, to be aware of the way in which we encounter our world."

Different authors focus on different aspects or correlates of self-awareness. Some, like Fromm (1978,1992), Greene (1988), Mitchell (1990), Senge (1990), Lambert (1995) and Palmer (1998), focus on the individual and his/her potential. Others, like Daresh and Playko (1995) and Bolman and Deal (1995) emphasize the importance of the individual's coming to grips with him/herself and his/her own identity and role in the context of the organization. Here the focus is on personal formation, with special reference to training. Authors like Argyris and Schön (1982) and Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) emphasize the importance of becoming aware of the inconsistencies in one's behaviour and reasoning as a vital precondition for any learning to take place.

In summary then, self-awareness as a key element in personal growth and learning, will be discussed from the following angles, even though such a differentiation is somewhat artificial and many overlaps exist:

- Personal awareness, which focuses on the opening up of the individual's potential, and on self-awareness as key to being.

- Personal formation, in which the spiritual aspect of professional training, as opposed to the academic and clinical, will be highlighted.
- Awareness-raising of inconsistencies in behaviour, as a pre-condition for learning.
- Awareness-raising of inconsistencies in reasoning; contrasting defensive and productive ways of reasoning.

3.3.1.2 Personal Awareness

Personal awareness refers to the recognition of one's own potential, a growing awareness of the factors which keep that potential from being realized, and an awakened determination to break free from those bonds. Greene (1988:55) uses the phrase "the power of possibility" to convey the concept of potential to be unearthed:

What is left for us then in this positivist, media dominated, and self-centered time? How, with so much acquiescence and so much thoughtlessness around us, are we to open people to the power of possibility?

The realization of this personal awareness is perhaps best illustrated by an episode in Paulo Freire's (1941:43) adult literacy work when one of the participants wrote in her twenty-first hour of study: "I am amazed at myself".

Concepts like "freedom", "authorship" and the "formulation of a personal identity" are often used to convey the basic ideas behind personal awareness.

- Freedom
Senge (1990:286) sees freedom as not being bound by "only one way of looking at the world". Greene's (1988:9) thinking corresponds to this when she describes unfree people as those "who cannot name alternatives, imagine a better state of things or share with others a project for change". She (1988:3) cites Dewey who said: "We are free, not because of what we statically are, but in so far as we are becoming different from what we have been."

Fromm (1992:7) sees people as either being bound by outer chains, e.g. political oppression, or by inner chains, e.g. the insatiable desires generated by a consumer society, or by both. People might rid themselves of the outer chains of which they are aware, but still remain unfree because they are captives of inner chains of which they are unaware. A person like this lives with the illusion of being free without realizing that he/she is not. This is why a heightened awareness of those things that bind him/her is a prerequisite for the "total liberation" of the person, which implies being freed of both outer and inner chains (Fromm, 1992:43).

The chains internalized as ideology are perhaps hardest to break. For Freire (1973:6) man's domination through the "myths" of advertising is one of the greatest tragedies of modern experience:

Gradually, without even realizing the loss, he [man] relinquishes his capacity for choice; he is expelled from the orbit of decisions. Ordinary man does not perceive the tasks of the time; the latter are interpreted by an 'elite', and presented in the form of recipes, of prescriptions. And when men try to save themselves by following the prescriptions, they drown in leveling anonymity, without hope and without faith, domesticated and adjusted.

For Fromm (1992:43), a new awareness of the truth has a liberating effect, because it frees a person from the illusions which keep him/her from attaining his/her objectives and fulfilling his/her potential. In one of his other works (1941:257) he specifically links positive freedom to "intellectual insight", a person's realization of his/her total personality, enabling "the active expression of his/her emotional and intellectual potentialities".

Senge (1990:159), as discussed earlier, relates growth in awareness with an emphasis on truth. He (p. 161) quotes the Bible, in order to indicate the link between truth and freedom: "The truth shall set you free".

Greene (1988:15) refers to individuals' involvement in the French resistance during the

Second World War. In their decision to take the initiative to challenge the situation for the sake of freedom, they had begun to “create that public space between themselves where freedom could appear”. Here the concept of freedom takes on an active meaning, where people come together out of their own free will to work for a specific cause and thus bridge the private and public spheres.

- Authorship

In listening to the “inner teacher”, Palmer (1998:32) suggests, that the teacher develops the “authority” to teach - authority therefore comes from the teacher’s inward life, and this authority relates (p. 33) to “authorship”. He puts it like this: “Authority is granted to people who are perceived as *authoring* (italics mine) their own words, their own actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from their hearts”.

I have already discussed Senge’s view which relates freedom to being able to achieve what one desires. This desire, he (1990:286) says, focuses on bringing into existence something new (which is what authorship implies), something which has significance for others .

Greene (1988:22) has this same linkage between authorship and freedom in mind when she says that the “consciousness of authorship has much to do with the consciousness of freedom”. Authorship implies individuals becoming aware that they are capable of bringing something into being, and recognizing this eventual product as their own. This would, Greene suggests, also imply their refusal to accept existing structures as given, and their acceptance of the fact that reality is perpetually emerging, open to many possibilities. The goal of writing and of teaching then becomes to “re-awaken the consciousness of possibility” (p.23).

In Fromm’s (1976:93) view, authorship relates to “non-alienated activity” in which the worker is driven by an inner motivation, and experiences him/herself as giving birth to something of value. This type of activity Fromm labels as “productive”, irrespective of whether it produces tangible results or not. Productive activity “denotes the state of inner activity . . . Productive persons animate whatever they touch. They give birth to

their own faculties and bring life to other persons and things” (p. 95). According to Fromm (1976:95), the term “praxis” was used in Athens to refer to any kind of activity born out of free will, by free persons. Freedom implies that a person can busy him/herself with anything which is significant to him/her. If someone involves him/herself in work because he/she has to, without finding any meaning in it, that person is still not free.

- Personal Identity

In their interactions with others, emerging leaders have, according to Lambert (1995:49), opportunities to find and interpret themselves. These interpretations bring about the formation of a personal identity which allows for “courage and risk, low ego needs and a sense of possibilities”, which correspond to Greene’s views on the “emerging reality” and the “consciousness of possibility”. In the formation of a personal identity, a growing clarity and conviction about the guiding values of a person’s life start to appear, and this forms the basis for his/her emerging identity. This is what Mitchell (1990:54) means when he refers to the growing self-awareness or consciousness which is “in one sense the beginning of educational leadership”. He sees educational leadership as dependent on a defined self concept which includes the values, goals and cultural traditions of the educational constituency. If this argument is accepted, the training of educational leaders should start with, and focus on, the development of a self concept. Mitchell (1990:204) refers to this aspect of leadership training as “consciousness-raising in leadership-training”, which should be emphasized because “consciousness and knowledge precede decisions, and decisions precede changes in attitudes, relationships and actions”.

3.3.1.3 Personal formation

Daresh and Playko (1995:3) use the term ‘self-awareness’ to refer to a set of skills which school principals need apart from technical and socialization skills. Self-awareness refers to a principal’s awareness of his/her personal role and his/her knowledge of him/herself. This is, according to them, a critical skill, or as they put it: “In other words, ‘knowing oneself’ is viewed as an even more critical responsibility than

knowing 'how to do the job' or 'fitting into the job'" (1995:4, citing themselves, 1994). This personal aspect of the principalship necessitates, according to them, a specific focus on personal formation in training programmes.

Palmer (1998:5) confirms the importance of self-awareness; of the individual knowing who he/she is, when he says: ". . . as important as methods may be, the most practical thing we can achieve in any kind of work is insight into what is happening inside of us as we do it." That is why, according to him (p.10), good teaching (and obviously also sound educational leadership) does not depend primarily on technique, but on the identity and integrity of the teacher (leader).

Daresh and Playko (1995) compare the preparation of educational leaders to the training of candidates for law, medicine and the catholic priesthood. One of their findings refers to the fact that while the need for training with respect to technical aspects (financial management, staff evaluation, etc.) remained vital, other aspects needed to be pursued with equal commitment (1995:3). In this sense, supporting individuals in their personal adjustments to their new roles remained very important. Personal formation is seen as a person's continuing efforts to develop into and become the kind of person who will develop into his/her professional role. This includes reflection, the consideration of one's ethical position as well as one's commitment to the profession (1995:7). The emphasis on personal formation as "a typically ignored issue" (1995:5), added to the accepted elements of academic preparation and field-based inquiry, lead them to conceptualize a tri-dimensional model for principal preparation, represented by the following diagram:

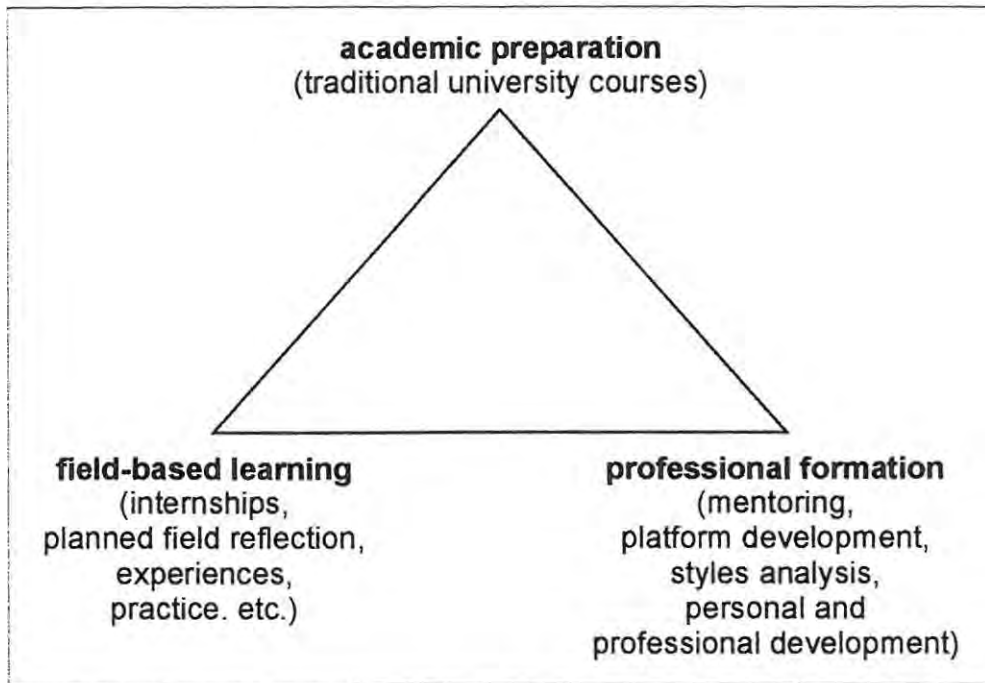


Figure 3.1: Tri-dimensional model for principal preparation

Source: Daresh: 1990, referred to by Daresh and Playko (1995:6).

Personal formation, in Daresh and Playko's (1995:22) view, is a structured process in which a participant is led through a reconsideration of his/her personal values, moral and ethical stances, attitudes and beliefs. It also involves reflection on how he/she may be changed personally in his/her job, and what his/her personal level of commitment is. It involves thinking about new ideas, and about the integration of these ideas in both professional and personal contexts.

For Senge (1990:141) the concept of personal mastery relates to the discipline of personal growth and learning. People with high levels of personal mastery are those who are growing in their capacity to achieve those goals they are truly seeking.

Palmer (1998:124-128) also looked at training in the medical profession. The changes in teaching methods and learning which became evident to him, have relevance for the training of educators. These include not focusing on the academic/technical detail only, but putting students in the real situation for which they are being trained, allowing them

to become aware of their existing capacity "in community", coming to grips with the key issues of the profession.

Bolman and Deal (1995) echo Daresh and Playko's emphasis on personal formation in their book **Leading with soul**. In their view the spiritual side is a key aspect of personal formation, and therefore important in any leadership role. Thus: "Spirit and faith are the core of human life. Without them, you lose your way. You live without zest. You go through the motions, but there is no passion" (p. 20); and "Maybe your head and hands have taken you as far as they can. Consider a new route. A journey of the heart" (p.25).

While these formulations have a decidedly religious orientation, Daresh and Playko (1995:22) suggest that the spiritual may be understood in broader terms, as important for the preparation of leaders in other roles than the pastoral.

Senge (1990:141) quotes Henry Ford, who said:

What we need . . . is the reinforcement of the soul by the invisible power waiting to be used . . . I know there are reservoirs of spiritual strength from which we human beings thoughtlessly cut ourselves off . . . I believe we shall someday be able to know enough of the source power, and the realm of the spirit, to create something ourselves.

Bolman and Deal (1995:141) share a similar perspective when they say: "Modern managers concentrate mostly on the rational side of the enterprise. In neglecting the spiritual dimension which include the personal, they overlook a powerful untapped source of energy and vitality." Foster (1981:78) refers to Thomas Kelly's view on living from the centre, which hints at a vast world of unused resources and decision-making ability beckoning all professionals hurrying along the way, and which can only be accessed through a consistent practice of quiet reflection and solitude:

We have seen and known some people who seem to have found this deep center of living, where the fretful calls of life are integrated, where no as well as

yes can be said with confidence.

Daresh and Playko (1995:23) refer to the training of Roman Catholic priests, where the focus of the formation programmes is on spiritual and personal issues. Three sources are utilized to assist with this personal formation process:

- An ongoing contact with a priest who acts as mentor. The contact between the candidate and this senior person centers on self-awareness, vocational discernment and religious conviction.
- Weekly meetings with fellow students (in groups which become smaller as the year progresses) to discuss issues like prayer and individual "faith journeys".
- Encounters with self which center on individual reflection - thinking about questions like: "Can I do the job?", "Do I really want to do the job?".

These observations of the training of priests underwrite Daresh and Playko's (1995:30) conviction that a serious gap exists in the preparation of individuals to become school principals. Aspects like role identification, acceptance that the decision to become a principal was actually the correct one, the consideration of moral and ethical issues and the testing of value assumptions are often practically ignored. Of paramount importance is the ongoing dialogue between mentors and candidates (p. 37), which creates opportunities for candidates to think about their personal strengths and weaknesses, their commitment and other important issues. One of the important conclusions of their study is that the "self-awareness of new roles may be the single most critical issue associated with the effective preparation of educational administrators".

For Bolman and Deal (1995:167) the need is particularly great for seekers "who have the courage to confront their own shadows and to embark on a personal quest for spirit and heart". For them, the emphasis should be on issues and programmes which focus on the upliftment of the spirit. To implement this in preparation programmes, they suggest: ". . . preparation programmes which include forms that are conducive to spirit, like poetry, literature, music, history and philosophy".

Added to this, individuals on these programmes should have the support of mentors who, Bolman and Deal (p.167) suggest, may be found among the elderly of the community, which obviously would include retired members of the profession.

3.3.1.4 Inconsistencies in behaviour

3.3.1.4.1 Introduction

Mitchell's (1990:204) ideas on consciousness-raising discussed earlier had as focus the participants' heightened awareness of how their perceptions of self, others and the world could be changed.

In the work of Argyris and Schön (1982), Osterman and Kottkamp (1993), and other authors who took the work of Argyris and Schön on the reflective practitioner further, a heightened awareness is again emphasized, but the focal point is shifted towards inconsistencies in individual and organisational behaviour and reasoning. In this section I will address inconsistencies in behaviour, and in the following, inconsistencies in reasoning.

3.3.1.4.2 Espoused theories and theories-in-use

According to Argyris and Schön's (1982:7) definition, the term "espoused theories" refers to the theories a person thinks and says he/she is using to determine his/her actions, while the concept "theories -in-use" refers to those theories which the person is in fact implementing in his/her actions. The espoused theory is the one a person will refer to when asked to explain or predict his/her behaviour under specific circumstances, while the theory-in-use is the theory an outsider, observing the particular person behaving under particular circumstances, is likely to construct when trying to explain or predict that person's behaviour.

According to Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:9) espoused theories have two characteristics:

- people are aware of their espoused theories
- espoused theories can easily be changed.

If one wants to know a person's espoused theories, one simply asks them. One must, however, avoid being fooled, since espoused theories do not generally determine a person's behaviour, even if that person believes that they do. Theories-in-use, on the other hand, are elusive and difficult to identify. Yet according to Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:9), they are much more influential in people's actions than espoused theories. This is the case because theories-in-use contain the underlying ideas, conventions and assumptions that influence people's actions. Their characteristics are the direct opposite of espoused theories:

- people are unaware of them
- they are difficult to change.

The way the two types of theories are formed and influence behaviour is reflected in the following diagram:

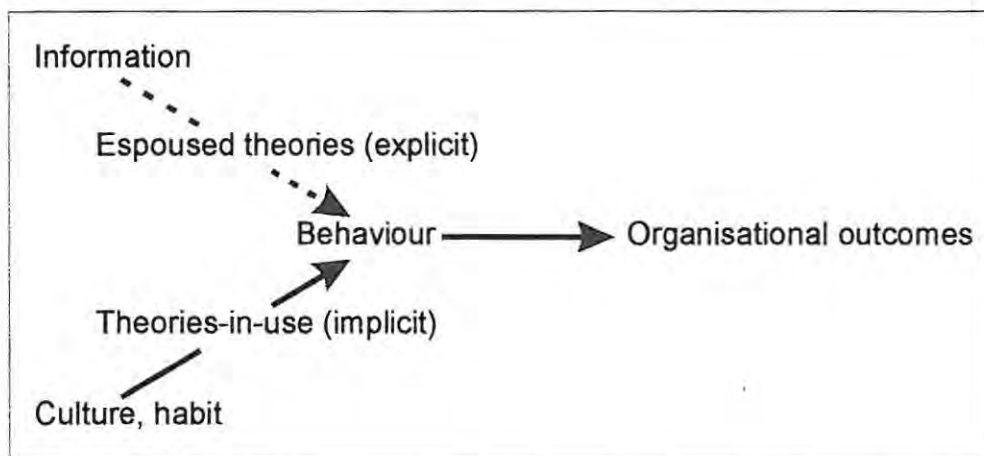


Fig 3.2: Theories-in-use and espoused theories

Source: Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:10)

As the dotted line indicates, espoused theories do not influence behaviour directly. This means that what we learn and talk about is not necessarily translated into action. The solid line between theories-in-use and behaviour signifies, on the other hand, a direct relationship between the two.

Theories-in-use develop over a long period of time, as individuals are socialized into them without even realizing that it is happening. These theories are seldom challenged, because they tend to reflect group or cultural norms.

Senge (1990: 159-161) gives an excellent example of a change brought about in his behaviour by applying these principles - even if he uses different terms. He for instance talks about "continually deepening our understanding of the structures underlying current events", using the later phrase in the same sense as Argyris and Schön intend by "governing variables". He also refers to "coping strategies" instead of Argyris and Schön's "theories -in-use".

Change in behaviour obviously requires a change in theories-in-use. Usually people think of education as the change vehicle. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:12) remind us, however, that traditional ways of teaching simply add to an individual's stock of information which influences his/her espoused theories, but leave the theory-in-use intact.

One of the central problems with respect to learning and the changing of behaviour is the fact that we are inconsistent and, moreover, that we remain unaware of the contradictions between our beliefs (espoused theories) and our actions (theories-in-use). We simply do not realize that our words and actions do not correspond. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:12) stress the fact that, without an awareness of discrepancy between a person's words and actions, a person cannot integrate new information with his/her actions. An added dimension to this problem is that while a person is unaware of the discrepancies which do exist between his/her words and actions, others who observe his/her actions and listen to what he/she says, may be overly aware of the gap between the person's walk and his/her talk, and may consider him/her to be inconsistent

and hypocritical. It is in this sense that the Johari window, developed by Luft and Ingham and referred to by Hersey and Blanchard (1969:294-302), remains an indispensable and sensitive tool in the process of awareness-raising.

A crucial element in Argyris and Schön's (1982:viii) argument is that existing theories about practice (theories-in-use) cause individuals to remain blind to the impact of their actions. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:13), concur, maintaining that theories-in-use which have developed over a long time through socialization, and are therefore deeply ingrained, block the introduction of any new action theories. This problem is worsened by the fact that the person at the centre of the process remains unaware of what is happening, even though he/she may be earnestly trying to implement a new theory. This explains Senge's (1990:162) contention that the successful stay in touch with their subconscious mind - they discipline themselves to try and hear what the subconscious mind is telling them, what Palmer (1998:31) calls "attending to the voice from within".

It is in this sense that awareness-raising becomes an important prerequisite for any teaching/learning to take place. More will be said about specific methods to bring this about when the reflective practice teaching model is described. It will suffice to mention here that the individual becomes motivated to change his/her theories-in-use through his/her awareness of the inconsistencies/discrepancies which do exist. It is only then that the new information may lead to changed behaviour. Palmer (1998:31) pursues a slightly different way - more in line with Daresh and Playko's (1995:5, see 3.3.1.3) ideas about personal formation - when he suggests strategies such as solitude, silence, meditation, reading and journal keeping (which are often referred to in religious contexts) to get in touch with one's inner world, and in so doing to recognize the discrepancies between one's beliefs and actions.

3.3.1.5 Inconsistencies in reasoning

3.3.3.5.1 Model I: Theories-in-use

Argyris(1992:26) claims that he and Donald Schön have designed a general theory-in-use model, which seems to represent or declare the behaviour of most people. They refer to this as Model I theories-in-use, which has four “governing variables”. Argyris (1992:217) describes governing variables as values that people want to attain or “satisfy” as far as possible. In other words, every action is undertaken for a reason, with a goal in mind, even though one may not always be aware of the specific goals one is pursuing. Actions bring people nearer to the attainment of certain governing variables, and further away from others. A person undertakes certain actions with certain governing variables in mind. The consequences, including the unanticipated ones, will determine whether a person continues with a specific action or not, depending how much or how little satisfaction has been attained.

The four governing variables which a person implementing Model I theories-in-use (“the actor”) will seek to “satisfy” are (Argyris, 1992:26):

- strive to be in unilateral control
- minimize losing and maximise winning
- minimize the expression of negative feelings
- be rational.

Together with this set of governing variables goes a set of behavioural strategies such as:

- expressing your views without encouraging inquiry - remaining in unilateral control and hopefully winning
- unilaterally trying to save your own face and those of others - minimizing upsetting others and making them defensive.

It is important to note that according to Argyris (1992:26) these governing variables and

behavioural strategies form a master programme stored in a person's brain influencing both analyses and actions undertaken by him/her. It may be that Model I theory-in-use is learnt through socialization. At any rate, Argyris (1992:26) says that Model I is the theory-in-use held by all the individuals he has studied.

By studying the governing variables and action strategies which make up Argyris's "master programme", it becomes obvious that defensive attitudes must develop from this main programme, or are actually an ingrained part of it. Added to this, a tendency grows to shift the blame for any failure to other individuals or organizations. To "save one's own face and those of others" will obviously imply blaming another person, or finding a reason for any failure. Because everybody has the same Model I theory-in-use, everybody will have the objective of avoiding embarrassment or threat, which implies becoming defensive (Argyris and Schön, 1974: 73; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993; 53); this in turn prevents the "public testing of theories-in-use" (Argyris and Schön, 19774:76).

Defensive reasoning is in a sense a trap, a self-perpetuating downward spiral or, in Argyris's (1992:89) words, "a doom loop". It perpetuates itself because it is built on soft data (data whose source is not known), which form the basis for untested inferences, leading to conclusions which are not publicly testable (Argyris, 1992:94). This type of reasoning takes the individual further away from learning, growth and possible solutions. Defensive reasoning, according to Argyris (1992:85), being part of the "master programme" in a person's brain, will effectively block any learning, irrespective of high levels of individual motivation and commitment. When defensive reasoning is being used, focusing on individual attitude and commitment will not be effective in bringing about change. Defensive reasoning acts as a blocking-out system, which keeps the individual from learning anything that may have a bearing on his/her responsibility.

While defensive reasoning is an obvious "doom loop", other examples soon come to mind of negative reasoning causing a downward spiral, effectively blocking all possibilities of learning, improvement and finding solutions. One such example occurs

when one person starts criticizing another person. When certain negative thoughts have been established in the person's mind (becoming the governing variables), his/her mind goes around in circles in his/her thinking about the other person, constantly criticizing, while at the same time ignoring evidence which might expose discrepancies in his/her reasoning. His/her arguments may continue to be based on untested negative evidence. In exactly the same way, a person may land in the doom loop of an inferiority complex or of a feeling of always having been discriminated against or unfairly treated. In cases like these the doom loop may start with hard evidence (a negative occurrence), but may often be sustained and perpetuated by means of soft evidence which cannot be tested, e.g. "those people do not like me" or "I did not get the promotion because he had all the contacts in the Education Department".

When a person starts to believe these negative thoughts (because he/she never tests them), he/she simultaneously starts to cut out the positive evidence which may expose the untruths contained in the negative thoughts. The crucial point, according to Argyris (1992:94), is that when a person gets caught up in a doom loop of negative defensive reasoning, a person who tries to focus on his/her negative attitudes in order to motivate him/her, will not bring about the desired effect: even putting him/her through a training course which will equip him/her with professional knowledge and skills will not be sufficient. Something else must be triggered inside each individual to get him/her out of the closed loop of negative reasoning. While I do not pursue the issues of discourse analysis in this study, the above discussion highlights the importance of an in-depth study of language and scripts in the changing of behaviour (see Harber and Davies [1997:Chapter7] and my recommendation in 5.7.2.2).

The following summaries of three of the doom loops referred to earlier may be instructive:

Table 3.3: Summary of doom-loops

| Defensive reasoning | “Inferiority” reasoning | “Unfairness” reasoning |
|--|---|--|
| Growing from success and competition, never having learnt any lessons from failure. Always blaming others. | Growing from negative experiences in the past, never learning anything from success. Always blaming self. | Growing from negative, discriminating experiences in the past, never learning anything from positive opportunities. Always blaming the system. |

3.3.1.5.2 Model II: theories-in-use

According to Argyris and Schön (1992:26) Model 1 Theories-in-use determine most people’s behaviour. Yet, this need not be the case. Behaviour can also be changed. It can, however, only be changed through the adoption of a new set of governing variables. Argyris and Schön’s Model II, provides us with an alternative (1992:85).

While Model I ends up being self-sealing, Model II seeks to be the opposite. It aims to be open, to allow for the testing of assumptions and for increased learning about one’s own effectiveness. Model II’s governing variables are, according to Argyris and Schön (1992:86-91):

- maximising valid information, including data about feelings, assumptions, etc. This is the key or basic governing variable forming the basis for the other governing variables as well as the action strategies.
- maximizing free and informed choice. Choices are based on information. This governing variable implies the freedom to pursue one’s own objectives.
- maximizing internal commitment to decisions. This implies that the individual takes full responsibility for his/her choices. He/she does that because the behaviour resulting from these choices is intrinsically satisfying. He/she will also voluntarily seek feedback about mistakes and negative consequences, looking for valid information.

The action strategies resulting from these governing variables are:

- to become involved in collaborative planning and design - thereby causing individuals to experience a sense of achievement, authorship, and own importance as part of the process.
- to make the protection of self and others a shared responsibility, instead of protecting oneself through cover-up, withholding information, pretense or insincerity.
- to speak in terms of directly observable categories when giving information, maximizing valid information about oneself and others. This brings about the possibility of exposing inconsistencies between theories-in-use and espoused theories, as well as between theories-in-use and desired outcomes.

Argyris and Schön (1974:91) maintain that the master plan which will result from these Model II governing variables and action strategies will include participants growing less defensive and more open to learning. This also implies that inferences and assumptions will be tested publicly by means of hard facts - maximizing valid information. Furthermore they say that "as individuals come to feel more psychologically successful and experience more mutual confirmation, they are likely to manifest higher self-awareness and acceptance, which again leads to offering valid information and psychological success". In discussing the reflective practice model for the design of preparation programmes in 3.4, detailed attention will be given to the key question of how to facilitate a shift from Model I to Model II theories-in-use through teaching.

3.3.2 Single and double-loop learning

3.3.2.1 Introduction

Argyris and Schön (1974) coined the terms single- and double-loop learning. Poole (1998:1) differentiates between incremental (single-loop) and discontinuous (double-loop) learning, when referring to organizational learning and change - she uses change and learning interchangeably (p.2). Tushman and O'Reilly (1997:21-37) refer to

“evolutionary” and “revolutionary” change, while Mezirow (1997:5) uses the term “transformative” to describe a conception of learning which closely resembles Argyris and Schön’s ideas of double-loop learning or change.

All these authors refer to two concepts of learning which differ in terms of the depth of change or reorientation that is involved. In single-loop learning, action theories may be changed or adapted to suit changing situations, but the basic underlying philosophy, the “assumptions” and the “governing variables”, remain untouched, while in double-loop learning the underlying assumptions and values are questioned and changed, which leads to changes in behaviour.

Different writers use different terms to refer to these underlying assumptions and values: Senge (1990:8,9,174-204) and Parker and Stacey (1994:26-28) speak of “mental models” while Mezirow (1997:5) uses the term “frames of reference”.

Similarly, single- and double-loop learning are described in many ways: Argyris (1992:9) says single-loop learning is about day-to-day issues and concerns, while double-loop learning refers to “complete and non-programmable issues and implies risk, uncertainty and possible failure”.

Joubert (1997:5) cites Wolf (1981) when he equates the total new approach required to understand the wonders of the universe to a “quantum leap” - this implies risk, the exploring of uncharted territory, the venturing onto an uncertain terrain: “We will have to take a courageous plunge into the unknown” (translated from Afrikaans).

Van Wyk (1998), while not actually using the term single-loop learning, describes the type of change implied by this kind of learning as superficial, attractive, often used to impress people, cheap, causing neither deep-seated change nor resistance, and often simply accepted because people want to “keep on living with their illusions”, or satisfy politicians or public opinion.

Marsick (1998:193) says single-loop learning “does not go beyond the level of means

and ends”, while Zuber-Skerritt (1996:86) says it focuses on technical and short-term issues. Single-loop learning is one of the elements in Zuber-Skerritt’s “A-orientation”, which describes people who are not open to change, always looking for somebody else to solve their problems, and choosing short-term solutions. She found that individuals seldom changed their basic assumptions, strategies and behaviour, and that changing from an A- to B-orientation, which involves a shift from single- to double-loop learning, was a most difficult task.

Argyris (1992:85) found highly skilled and successful people in organizations the most susceptible to single-loop learning. He believes this may be caused by the fact that their successes make them over-confident, while the little or no failures they encounter keep them from ever having to analyse and question their basic assumptions. Tushman and O’Reilly (1997:1-15) refer to this phenomenon as “the tyranny of success”.

Single-loop learning leads to defensive reasoning. When an individual’s or organization’s strategies start to fail, they either try to improve their single-loop strategies, or start to blame others. In this way, adjustments remain superficial and short term, and fail to address the real causes of the problems. In this way the opportunity to really learn and gain new insights goes to waste. March, cited by Poole (1998:1) likens single-loop change to the “exploitation of existing technologies”; in comparison, double-loop learning is “the exploration of new possibilities”.

In the ensuing discussion of single- and double-loop learning, I will not distinguish between individual and organizational learning. Furthermore, following Poole’s (1998:2) example, I will assume that learning leads to change, and therefore use the terms learning and change interchangeably.

3.3.2.2 Comparing the two types of learning

Single- and double-loop or incremental and discontinuous learning are both important for organizational health and growth, and complement each other. Still they are different, and serve different purposes. The following table offers a comparison of the

two types of learning/change:

| Double-loop learning | Single-loop learning |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implies a continuous search for new information 2. Focuses on long-term and developmental issues 3. Is often less attractive because the benefits are not immediately evident 4. Is inquiry oriented 5. Often requires a change in culture 6. Implies the unlearning of assumptions, established habits, orientations and routines 7. Too much causes an overemphasis on experimentation, and too many undeveloped ideas (Poole, 1998:2) 8. Is responsive to the influence of changes in the environment 9. Encourages experimentation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implies a limited flow of information 2. Focuses on current concerns and immediate results 3. Is much more acceptable because it deals with immediate results 4. Avoids uncomfortable questions 5. Often leads to the reinforcement of culture 6. Often leads to the confirmation of, and re-commitment to, basic assumptions, habits, orientations and routines 7. Too much causes a lower than optimal performance and an increasing resistance to change 8. Is often unresponsive to or uninformed about changes in the environment 9. Emphasizes standardization |

Table 3.4: Single and double-loop learning

3.3.2.3 Finding a balance between single- and double-loop learning in schools

While double-loop learning seems to be the preferred option for the growth of organizations, single-loop learning plays an important role in the development of institutions. In fact, when one speaks about organizational learning, one usually refers to single-loop learning, because that is the type of learning occurring most of the time in terms of the development and improvement of the normal activities of the organization. Both types of learning are important in the development of organizations, the key issue being the achievement of a healthy balance between the two.

The past five years have been a time of turbulent change in South Africa. The present moment offers an important opportunity for double-loop learning and change, especially in education. The challenges facing principal preparation programmes are both daunting and exciting.

Tushman and O'Reilly (1997:37,222) say it is important for managers to work with both short-term and long-term perspectives. This implies:

Building . . . the organization competencies to simultaneously support the multiple strategies, structures and processes, and cultures needed to be successful today and to create the conditions for discontinuous innovation in the future.

Poole (1998:21) likewise says that educational leaders need the skills and tools for both incremental and discontinuous change as complementary components of the sort of leadership capable of bringing about organizational learning.

Both types of change are important. Continuous change is necessary to reinforce that which has already been learnt, and in so doing to bring about stability. Discontinuous change, on the other hand, is important to keep organizations flexible, to support their adaptation to fundamental changes in the environment, to solve complex problems, and to keep the organization productive in the long term.

The problem, as Poole (1998:21) aptly describes it, is that educational leaders are prepared only for continuous change, for single-loop learning. Few, if any, topics presented in the average preparation courses for school leaders prepare them for, or expose them to, double-loop learning. Topics such as financial management, supervision and evaluation, and conflict management are all geared towards improving day-to-day situations and thus to single-loop learning. This is obviously important, but should not be done at the cost of not exposing students to and not preparing them for double-loop learning.

Looking at schools in general, one can easily concur with Poole (1998:7) that they are usually highly adaptive. One often sees how schools respond to needs which develop over the course of time, e.g. by providing study-classes for children whose parents work long hours, or by operating feeding schemes in poor areas. Yet the real challenge is the preparation of principals for the increasingly fast-changing world in which they have to be leaders of their schools. As Poole (1998:8) says: "Adaptive learning and continuous improvement are important and necessary skills, yet they are insufficient for managing the turbulent changes that are occurring in the environment".

In 4.3.2 I discuss obstacles perceived as preventing the outcomes of the course from being implemented in the schools, while in 4.4.2 reference is made to the personal growth of participants that did undoubtedly take place. For a preparation course to have an impact in practice, a fine balance between encouraging single-loop learning and facilitating double-loop learning must continuously be sought.

3.3.2.4 Strategies to encourage double-loop learning in an organization

A key question in the preparation of school leaders, is how to bring about double-loop learning. Not only should a school principal learn to engage in double-loop learning him/herself, but he/she should also be given the tools to enable double-loop learning to occur in his/her school.

Many writers struggle with this problem: Argyris and Schön (1982) discuss ways to bring about change from Model I to Model II theories-in-use; Senge (1992) speaks about the "development of communities of commitment"; Zuber-Skerritt (1996) sees a solution in changing from an "A-" to a "B-orientation", and Mezirow (1997) refers to the "facilitation of transformative learning".

Poole (1998:9-18) refers to five "tools of re-orientation" which I will use as a framework to guide this discussion of ways to stimulate double-loop learning in the context of an organization. In section 3.3.4, when analysing the reflective practice model, and in 3.4.3.5, when discussing the issue of raising awareness, I will return to the question of

how to bring about double-loop learning in the context of preparation programmes for school leaders.

3.3.2.4.1 Establishing and maintaining a learning organization

Here the emphasis is on continuous learning, to be achieved in a number of ways. Among these are utilizing mistakes, action research, an understanding of the principles of adult learning and reflection on and changing mental models. One would also wish to increase the flow of information (Argyris's "valid information") and encourage the questioning of assumptions and practices (Mezirow, 1997:9; Poole, 1998:9).

3.3.2.4.2 Encouraging exploration and experimentation

This implies a change in thinking about success and failure, making or creating time to explore and experiment, practising forgiveness (Senge, 1990:300-301) and encouraging and supporting creativity.

3.3.2.4.3 Futures thinking

Kaufman (1995:1-27), in discussing strategic thinking, says the three critical success factors in preparing for the future are:

- moving out of the current comfort zones to enable new possibilities for thinking about the future
- being clear about the difference between means and ends
- considering educational objectives on all levels, especially on the levels of the classroom and individual achievement.

Knowing the difference between the how and the why is, according to Kaufman (p.11), a crucial element in strategic thinking. This would imply an awareness that while a project like a school feeding scheme is a means, a self-sufficient, happy school leaver is an end.

Poole (1998:14) refers to Sander's identification of insight and foresight as two basic elements of strategic thinking. Insight involves recognising underlying forces, patterns, and interactions which determine the ways in which an organization operates, while foresight means understanding underlying currents and relationships in the system as well as emerging conditions in the larger context.

Strategic thinking has to precede strategic planning: it adds a dynamic aspect to strategic planning, viewing the present situation as a continuous flux, and understanding that strategic planning has to take the dynamics of all aspects of the present situation into consideration, to avoid being off target.

3.3.2.4.4 Collaborative reflection and questioning assumptions

This strategy will be dealt with in detail in the next section.

3.3.2.4.5 Reconstructing relationships

This strategy focuses on changing relationships in the organization which may block the shift to discontinuous learning and change, e.g. the friend who becomes the boss and then tries to stifle new and creative thinking and the questioning of basic assumptions and methods.

The strategies for double-loop learning briefly mentioned above are essential instruments for deepening the level of discourse and for reorientating members of an organization towards double-loop learning. In the teaching models for the preparation of school leaders, an adequate balance will have to be found between the two types of learning and change.

3.3.3 Experiential learning

3.3.3.1. Introduction

The importance of grounding learning in the participant's job experience has been established by many writers (Kolb, 1984; Wallace, 1991; Tate, 1992; Van Tellinghen and Kense, 1992; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993; and Whitaker, 1995, to name a few). Two cognate fields of learning theory have developed concomitantly with the thinking on experiential learning, namely reflective practice and the theory of adult learning (these are not the only terms used in this context. Furtwengler *et al.* [1995:5], for instance, refer to Oxnard who uses terms like "lifelong learning" and "self-directed learning"). These two strands are sometimes mentioned in one breath together with experiential learning, indicating how similarly they are conceptualized. Tate (1992:127), for instance, refers to the "Council for Adult and Experiential Learning" (CAEL) founded in 1974, while the subtitle of Whitaker's (1995) book, **Managing to learn**, reads: **Aspects of reflective and experiential learning in schools**. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:20) say that reflective practice belongs "within the older tradition of experiential learning", while Dirkx (1997:81) argues that to really understand the positive nature of adult learning, one has to see that learning is "embedded in the concreteness of everyday life".

It is impossible in this context to deal with these three closely related yet different topics in a way that will do full justice to the current thinking about them. I will therefore limit this literature overview to what I require to support the development of my argument in this thesis. While overlapping will occur, I will focus on experiential learning first, and then elaborate on the other two concepts.

3.3.3.2 Kolb's experiential learning model

Experiential learning is, according to Kolb (1984:38), a "process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience". In these terms, learning is to be seen as a continuous process, grounded in experience, which involves transactions

between the person and the environment, and which leads to the creation of new knowledge, unique to a particular situation.

Kolb's (1984) book on experiential learning is often referred to as a basic work on the topic. He (pp. 4-38) based his work on that of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget. I will concentrate on Kolb's interpretation of Lewin who, as was indicated earlier, supplied the basic framework for our thinking on action research.

Kolb's experiential learning model, based on Lewin's thinking, is represented in the sketch below, with the abbreviations (CE, RO, AC and AE) added by Wallace (1991:24).

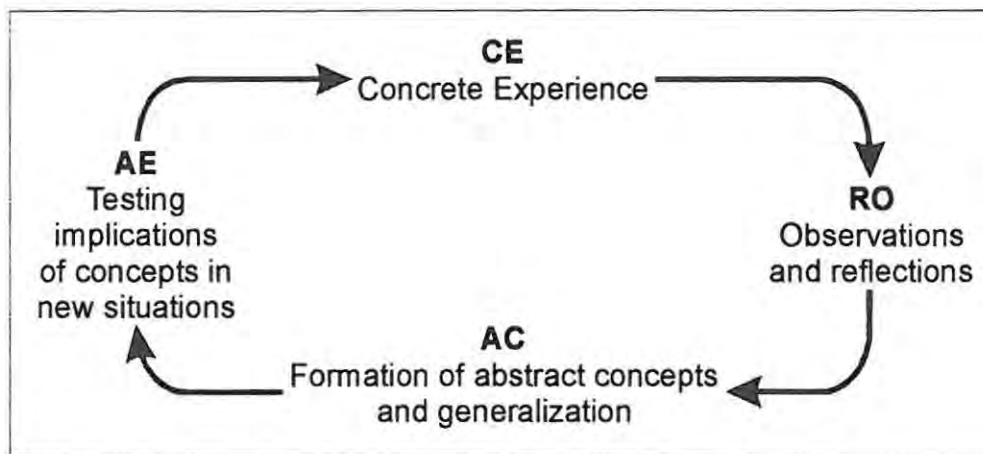


Fig 3.3: Kolb's: Experiential Learning Model

Source: Wallace (1991:24)

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:20,21) explain this learning model as a dialectic and cyclical process consisting of a concrete experience, observation, abstract reconceptualization and experimentation. For Wallace (1991:24) the process consists of observation and reflection based on a concrete experience. Observations are then integrated into a theory, which supplies the basis for new hypotheses to be formed. For Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:21) these hypotheses are alternative theories which explain the relationship between actions and outcomes better, and thus provide an incentive to start experimenting again, which implies changed behaviour. The

experimentation then leads to new concrete experiences.

Wallace (1991:25) has commented on the importance of two dimensions in this learning cycle: the concrete-abstract (CE - AC) and the reflective-experimental (RO -AE).

In the concrete abstract dimension (CE - AC), the present situation (the "here-and-now experience" as Kolb [1984:31] refers to it) has to be fully lived through while simultaneously being interpreted in terms of theoretical inputs. In interpreting theoretical inputs in the light of the concrete experience, one is simultaneously planning future action.

The other dimension is the reflective-experimental dimension (RO - AE) which involves experimentation and reflection on this experimentation. Kolb (1984: 29) sees these two dimensions as "dialectical". According to him, these two dialectics' resolution is a basic requirement of learning.

It is clear that the first dimension or dialectic can be viewed against the background of the old divide between the theories found in books and experienced reality. The basic thrust of experiential learning is to build a bridge between the two, allowing each one to inform the other.

In the other dialectic, the importance of trying out a new form of behaviour and getting feedback is emphasized. This dimension forms the heart of many of newer preparation programmes for school leaders. The different ways in which experimentation can be carried out, whether in formal training or in the informal on-the-job situation, and the strategies for obtaining feedback will be discussed in section 3.4, where the various models for preparation programmes will be analysed.

Wallace's (1991: 25) main criticism of Kolb's model is that it doesn't distinguish between the different types of experience on which the learning may be based. He suggests there is a big difference between learning based on simulated or artificial and real experiences. Learning on-the-job has a major advantage in terms of the transfer of learning to the everyday workplace. Furtwenger *et al.*'s (1995: 67) explanation of

“situated cognition” confirms this. Learning is to a very large extent dependent on the situation in which it takes place. In preparation courses for school principals, situated cognition implies that learners have to learn to approach and solve problems in *the context in which they occur* (italics mine). The fact that a learner has discussed a problem in a workshop situation, does not necessarily mean that he/she will be able to solve a similar problem in the real work situation. In terms of Kolb’s experiential learning, the notion of situated cognition underlines the importance of *where* the experience on which the learning is based, occurs. A principal learns how to be a principal in the school, not in the university lecture room.

Kolb (1984:25-38) summarizes the perspectives on learning of Dewey, Levin and Piaget on learning by formulating a few basic characteristics of experiential learning. These characteristics are:

1. Learning is first conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes.
2. Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience.
3. The process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed models of adaptation to the world.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning involves transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge.

Many of these characteristics will be dealt with in further discussion in this section. Some (especially point 6) have been dealt with previously. At this stage, additional comment on point 4 seems necessary: To see learning as a holistic process is to be sensitive to more than the cognitive; it is to see the process of learning as involving the whole person, including his/her feelings, perceptions, background and even spiritual aspects. Dirkx (1997:79-83) touches on this when he refers to “teaching with soul” (see section 3.3.5.2, and the discussion under point 4.2.1.6), while Bolman and Deal’s (1995) book, written in narrative form, demonstrates the principle of involving more than the cognitive.

3.3.4 Reflective practice

3.3.4.1 Introduction

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:1) offer a succinct definition of reflective practice: "Reflective practice is an integrated way of thinking and acting focused on learning and behavioural change". The basic objective of reflective practice is to raise the participant's awareness of his/her actions and the assumptions on which those actions are built. The process frequently reveals inconsistencies in a person's behaviour, which serve to motivate him/her to change his/her behaviour. Reflective practice need not, however, always focus on inconsistencies or discrepancies. It may also change or confirm behaviour by showing up positive elements in or underlying a person's behaviour. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993: 34) refer to the "strong positive emotional response" when a person, through reflective practice, finds his/her unrecognized assumption to be appropriate or desirable. This is the gist of an inspirational tract by Maartens (1998):

Have you ever dared to open the files
filled with information about yourself:
genes, dreams, ambitions, passions,
spiritual gifts, personality type, desires,
ideals that were buried
like stillborn children?
Millions of children never learn
to examine their inner selves
to discover who they are
what makes them special
and who they are meant to be.
You are an adult now.
You have to take care of yourself.
So: open that hidden file today.
Say: Hello, miracle! to yourself.

Reflective practice is a cyclical process that has as its ultimate goal the professional and personal development of the individual, which may lead to the improvement of the organization. An emphasis on reflective practice teaches the learner to view any experience, good or bad, as an opportunity to learn, and encourages the learner to ask questions and think about the answers; to be alert so as to keep on growing, whether it is on the professional, personal or interpersonal level.

Marsick (1988:192) refers to different levels of reflection: "critical reflective activity" refers to the probing for assumptions, values and beliefs underlying actions. She feels that not all learning requires reflection at this level - some types of learning, e.g. instrumental learning, call for a more simple level of reflection such as how to change one's actions to increase one's effectiveness, or how to complete a given task in a shorter time span.

The experience which, according to Osterman and Kottkamp (1993: 20), forms the basis for learning, is effectively only realised through reflection. They cite Schön, who describes reflective practice as a "dialogue of thinking and doing, through which I become more skilful".

3.3.4.2 Reflection on real or simulated action

Reflection can occur in formal training situations where participants reflect upon past and simulated experiences (Brookfield, 1992: 13-18), through discussion, role plays, journals, case studies and other activities (Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993: 76). It can also occur in informal, on-the-job situations, where shadowing (Barnett, 1990: 67-76), observation and video-taping (Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993: 75) are used to reflect upon real work situations.

While Marsick (1988: 192) accepts the use of reflection in formal training situations, she cites Zemke who found that 50 percent of managers' learning resulted from challenges they faced in the work situation, 30 percent occurred through interactions with colleagues, and only 20 percent was the result of formal learning programmes. This

obviously indicates that reflection about real practical situations is preferable if any learning is to occur. The importance of reflection on real situations is confirmed by Wallace (1991: 25), who says that recent research confirms that the actual job experience is a vital component of learning. "Supplementary experiences", he says, "though valuable, are no substitutes for the real thing."

Boud and Walker (1991: 19) differentiate between reflection *during* the experience and reflection *after* the experience. In the first case, reflection is an ongoing and dynamic process in which the participant must be constantly present (aware), which implies " . . . capturing the experience . . . being in continuous touch with it, being aware of all that is happening and trying to grasp the situation as it is, including the feelings that are generated".

Barnett (1990: 67-76) describes his experience with reflective practice in peer-assisted leadership, where pairs of principals took turns to shadow and afterwards interview each other. The key here was the non-evaluative descriptive feedback exchanged between the two, which encouraged reflection about actions taken. He makes the point that the shadowing and feedback generated reflection in both parties, the one observing and giving feedback, as well as the one on the receiving end.

3.3.4.3 The cyclical nature of reflective practice

Whether one refers to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model, or to Boud and Walker's (1991: 23) description of the learning experience, or to Marsick and Watkin's (1992: 11) continuous work/learning model, or whether one looks at the action research model discussed in Chapter 2, one inevitably encounters some concept of cyclical process. This seems to confirm the basic congruity of all these concepts. Marsick and Watkin's model of continuous work or learning is, in their words, ". . . a common model for reflective practice". It also emphasises two ideas that all these models share: that the process is ongoing and seemingly never completed; and that the process consists of continuous interaction between the concrete experience and reflection on that experience.

As has been suggested in the discussion of experiential learning, the importance of feedback to stimulate reflection cannot be overestimated. Wallace (1991:25) and Osterman and Kottkamp (1993: 55) mention feedback from observers/coaches, friends, colleagues, supervisors, facilitators. Marsick and Watkins (1992:12) stress the importance of peer feedback when they say: "Reflective practice is easier when people get help from their peers that help them see a situation from many different viewpoints".

Feedback is a sensitive aspect of reflective practice which requires careful unpacking. One can at this stage, however, agree with Osterman and Kottkamp (1993: 44) about the vital necessity of conditions of openness and trust for any meaningful feedback to occur. Because of its sensitive nature, feedback is sometimes easier to discuss than to practise. Joyce and Showers (1996: 121) refer to the fact that it requires much training, and may easily slip into evaluative and prescriptive comments, or may consist of "first the good news, then the bad". This is why they have omitted feedback as an element of peer coaching. Their experience simply emphasizes the fact that feedback requires negotiation and monitoring, as well as the realization that it is a powerful strategy with potential for both positive and negative results.

In the light of the cyclical nature of reflective practice, Marsick (1988: 195) suggests that individuals should be guided to develop a reflective approach in both formal and informal situations. This implies constantly probing experiences, looking for causes of disappointments with respect to outcomes. Boud and Walker (1991:32) add that learners should be prepared to deal with unexpected events or outcomes, remaining conscious of their objectives so as to be able to respond in the right direction.

Wallace (1991: 35) expresses the need for reflective practice to be an ongoing endeavour when he says it should "become a way of life". This is why, in his opinion, learning is never finished, and why reflective practice implies a "commitment to being open to surprise through reflection on the consequences of action, coupled with a readiness to act on the result of reflection". He admits that such an attitude is difficult to develop. It represents, however, an alertness which is an important element of learning as a dynamic phenomenon. In Foster (1987: 92) this alertness is a feature of

a "life of reflection" which has to be "cultivated". This implies that one not only has to listen to the news or to read the newspaper, but also to "ponder its significance". For him a life of reflection would include taking a day off to reflect upon one's goals and direction.

Senge (1990:42) associates a high level of personal mastery with people who are continually learning. He sees personal mastery not as something one can possess, but as a process in which you are engaged as a lifelong commitment ("discipline").

3.3.4.4 An example of reflective practice

Peter Senge (1990:159,160) in his book **The fifth discipline** gives a good example of what is implied by the term "reflective practice" in an individual's personal life. I am going to quote a large section of his account to illustrate the principle:

In my life, for example, I often felt that people let me down at critical junctures in major projects. When this happened, I would 'bulldoze' through, overcoming the obstacle of their disloyalty or incompetence. It took many years before I recognized this as a recurring pattern, my own special form of 'willpower' strategy, rooted in a deep feeling of being powerless to change the way others let me down. Invariably, I ended up feeling as if I've got to do it all myself. *Once I recognized this pattern*, (italics mine) I began to act differently when a colleague let me down. I became angry less often. Rather, there was a twinge of recognition - 'Oh, there goes my pattern'. *I looked more deeply* [italics mine] at how my own actions were part of the outcome, either by creating tasks that were impossible to accomplish, or by undermining or demotivating the other person. Further I worked to develop skills to discuss such situations with the people involved without producing defensiveness.

I would never have developed those skills or known how to put them into practice without a shift of mind. So long as I saw the problem in terms of events, I was convinced that my problems were externally caused - 'they let me down'. Once I

saw the problem as structurally caused, I began to look at what I could do, rather than at what 'they had done'. Structures of which we are unaware hold us prisoners. Once we see them and name them, they no longer have the same hold on us.

3.3.5 Adult learning

3.3.5.1 Characteristics

Adult learning can be viewed from many angles, and is a complex concept which is difficult to define (Cranton, 1994:3). She (p.7) focuses on the rich variety of experience and expertise adults bring to the learning situation, which they are often eager to share with other participants in the learning process.

Wallace (1991:24) refers to the self-directedness of adult education, which implies that adults have their own objectives in learning, and will pursue these irrespective of the objectives set by someone else; and the voluntary nature of adult education: because adults themselves choose to take part in the learning process, they are internally motivated to accomplish their objectives. These characteristics complement Cranton's (1994:6) emphasis on the practical nature of adult learning as resulting from adults' interest in the solution of immediate problems they are faced with. Cranton also refers to the fact that adult learning is often collaborative and participatory, with adults working together in groups as equal members.

Leithwood et al. (1992:176) refer to the fact that adult learners enter the learning process with clear and well established objectives. The implications of adult learning theory for preparation courses for school principals, are according to them:

- the importance of interaction among participants and
- the fact that adult learners should have a say in both the content of courses and the method in which the content is being presented.

3.3.5.2 Transformative learning

Mezirow (1997:11) says transformative learning is the essence of adult education, assisting the individual to discover his/her own values, meanings and purposes. In this process, according to Mezirow, critical reflection, awareness of frames of reference and participation in discourse become important elements. Dirkx (1997:79-83) adds to these with an emphasis on "nurturing soul". By this he means moving away from a narrow instrumental view of learning to include affective, emotional, spiritual and transpersonal elements in feelings and interactions. Examples of "experiences of soul" are, according to Dirkx, experiences such as seeing something beautiful such as the full moon rising, or experiencing pain and helplessness when we see a child in a hopeless situation. These experiences open up a "realm of being which is barely visible to our waking ego consciousness" (p.82). For him (p.83) "soul" is enhanced through experiences of beauty and mystery, and in things like "story, song, myth, poetry and concreteness of our everyday experiences". McFarlane (1984:113,114) emphasises the role of play in learning. He cites Boocock (1967) who says that while play hooks up with the learner's natural need, it may result in incidental learning taking place. This in my view is basic to the principles underlying "learning with soul": Participants, involved in certain activities, and exposed to new experiences, are exposed to learning they did not anticipate, and may be unaware of.

The key point is that adults learn not as a preparation for life, but as part of the experience of life itself. This encourages the adult learner to venture beyond the technical and the vocational and explore new domains of experience, encountering beauty and surprise.

3.3.5.3 The transactional aspect of adult learning

Galbraith (1991:1) mentions another aspect of adult learning which is worth noting, when he describes adult learning as a transactional process. This implies that all participants, including the teachers in the adult learning process are influenced by it, and all may subsequently think and act differently. Kolb (1984:36) interprets this

concept (referring to Dewey) as “an interpenetrating relationship between objective conditions and subjective experience, such that once they become related, both are essentially changed”. Adult learning is thus an activity with potential for creative interaction in which all participants may share in a personal growth process (Galbraith, 1991:1). This process is not automatic, as Brookfield, cited by Galbraith (1991:1), asserts: “for it to occur, all participants must understand that the key aspect of the transactional process is collaboration in which no person is to be seen as the expert; and that conflict and difference of opinion are a natural part of the process”.

3.3.5.4 The role of the educator

In the context of the transactional process, the educator is perceived as a co-learner, who acts with the participants on an equal footing, building an atmosphere of openness and trust (Cranton, 1994:128). The educator, according to Mezirow (1997:11), also acts as provocateur who challenges learners to consider their assumptions, models the critical reflective role expected of learners, and encourages participants to reflect on alternative perspectives. In the end, the goal of transformative adult learning remains the empowerment of the learners (Cranton, 1994: 128).

3.3.5.5 Needs assessment and the setting of objectives

Galbraith (1991:12, 13) says that the assessment of needs should be ongoing throughout the planning process. I am of the opinion that it should even continue while the course is running, and that both felt needs, by the learners, and prescribed needs, by the educator, should be considered.

The setting of objectives should then be based on the needs assessment, and should be an ongoing, interactive process between learners and educators. This implies that the goals could shift while the course is being presented, to adapt to the development of the adult learners through their experiences in the course. For Brookfield (1991:34), this is an important aspect of “grounded teaching”: in a course of adult learning there cannot be a continuous and unchanging pursuit of previously determined objectives;

rather, one must be sensitive to the unfolding process in which learners start reflecting upon, understanding and sharing their own real needs and problems. McFarlane (1991:104) emphasises the importance of involving the participant in the learning process, by allowing him/her a role in the planning of the agenda.

3.3.5.6 Grounded teaching

In order to be effective in adult learning, teachers should be sensitive to the feelings, experiences and opinions of learners. This, Brookfield (1991:35) says, implies that the teacher, on a systematic and ongoing basis, tries to determine learners' perceptions of the learning process. This can be done through various means like feedback sessions, personal interviewing, group discussions and journals. It not only helps the educator to keep adapting the process to important developments but also puts into practice Galbraith's (1991:17) point that the learners should be seen as partners in the educational process.

3.4 PROGRAMME DESIGN

3.4.1 Introduction

In this section I will consider some of the factors involved in the physical planning of preparation programmes for school leaders. Wallace's (1991) "handbook" for the design of programmes forms the basis for this section because:

- his work in describing various phases and elements of the design is the most comprehensive I have come across;
- I have found many of his ideas useful to implement in my own practice; and
- as will become evident in Chapter 4, many of his ideas were confirmed by what developed during the implementation of the programme I was involved with in George.

Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1992) focus on two types of preparation programmes:

those developing leadership for “the high ground” and those for leadership “in the swamp”. “High ground” refers to situations where principals are clear about the aspects of a problem they have to solve and about a possible solution. These are problems for which they have, through experience or through advice from others, established acceptable and workable procedures in order to arrive at solutions. “Leadership in the swamp” refers to situations in which the above conditions do not apply and where no clarity or precedent exists to guide those involved to a workable solution (1992:42). Leithwood *et al.*’s work is based on extensive and thorough research, and emphasizes the importance of a “coherent image of a school leader as problem solver” (1992: 167,173,15).

Van Tellinghen and Kense (1992) compare five different models for the training of school leaders. They (1992:72) find that in the majority of the models, the workplace is taken as point of departure. Their contribution (pp.72-79) lies in their emphasis on the analysis of existing needs, and the determining of corresponding objectives for preparation programmes.

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) focus on heightened awareness as the basis for learning and behavioural change. In their model, which they refer to as the “reflective practice model” (p.41), they suggest creative ways in which learners can become aware of their own “theories-in-use”, paving the way for learning and change.

While Schmuck and Runkel’s (1994) work focuses on organizational development, they say in their preface (p.vii) that their book can be used for courses on educational administration. Their four designs for organizational development: “training, survey data feedback, constructive confrontation and process observation and feedback”, together with their emphasis on five key aspects of organizational life, viz. communication, meetings, problem-solving, decision-making and conflict management (1994:28), not only help set the scene for an inquiry-based approach to educational administration, but also provide possible ideas for Furtwengler *et al.*’s (1996:521,522) concept of a “core curriculum”.

Joyce and Showers (1995:chapter 7) provide valuable insight into the design of training and the advantages of peer coaching. Their research highlights the key factors which bring about transfer of learning from the context of training to the practical work situation (pp.111-114).

3.4.2 Principles for programme design

Certain core principles underlying effective preparation programmes for school leaders are repeatedly cited in the literature. These recognise the importance of:

- The stimulation of participants' critical awareness, critical understanding, meta-cognition and willingness to engage in double-loop learning (Leithwood et al., 1992:199; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993:26)
- An awareness of a problem, or of an inconsistency between words and deeds as the basic motivational force for learning and change (Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993:21; Argyris and Schön, 1982:97)
- Theoretical inputs to escape the "pool of ignorance" (Wallace, 1991:70) created by operating within the limitations of one's own knowledge, insight and experience. Theoretical inputs can consist of reading, direct instruction and discussions linking theory, research and practice (Leithwood et al.,178)
- Acknowledging participants' expertise and experience, and providing opportunities for them to share this experience with other participants (Leithwood, et al.,182; Wallace,36)
- Designing programmes according to the identified needs of participants (Van Tellinggen,1992:72-79)
- Allowing participants a say in what and how they want to learn (Leithwood et al.,182)
- The demonstration (modelling) of new skills, allowing participants to practise these skills in a safe environment before applying them in practice, and receiving feedback on their efforts (Leithwood et al.,184-202; Wallace,14-38)
- The implementation of participants' newly acquired skills in their working environments as soon as possible after training, coupled with feedback (Wallace,

38; Leithwood et al.,184)

- Opportunities and structures for participants and colleagues to assist each other in their learning processes by either giving feedback in the training situation, or by acting as peer coaches and critical friends (see 3.4.4) in the real work situation (Joyce and Showers, 1995:115-125; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993:91,92)
- Assuring a variety in, and a suitable pacing of, activities to keep learners interested in and motivated for the learning process (Leithwood et al.,203; Wallace,38)
- The establishment and maintenance of an atmosphere of mutual trust, openness and respect among participants (Osterman and Kottkamp,44-46)
- Formative as well as summative assessments of participants' learning and experiencing of the programme so as to keep the course adaptable to the needs of the participants and to continuously test its applicability ("not only to prove, but to improve", Van Tellinghen and Kense,1992:100; Leithwood et al.,182,183)
- The utilization of experienced practitioners as co-instructors or coaches of members of action research teams (Leithwood et al.,184,185; Wallace,65-71)
- Involving key stakeholders in the initial planning of a preparation programme (Wallace,39).

3.4.3 Aspects of learning influencing the design

3.4.3.1 Cognitive processes, social interaction and adult learning

Leithwood et al.'s (1992:175-177) model is based on three sets of theories, namely:

- Information processing theory, which stresses the "goal-oriented nature of human functioning" and explains the mental structures and processes which enable the attainment of goals. An in-depth discussion of this theory is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important to note, however, is that this theory has important implications for learning which will be discussed below
- Social interaction theory in which the fact that knowledge is socially constructed is emphasized. This notion stresses the importance of interaction between participants in a learning situation

- Adult learning theory, which was discussed earlier (see 3.3.5). An aspect of this theory of significance for the design of preparation courses is its emphasis on the importance of each participant's own experience which is brought into the learning situation. When this experience is acknowledged and shared with other participants, the scope and depth of their learning is enlarged. Another aspect of adult learning theory is the fact that an adult usually has clear and well articulated goals for his/he learning. This characteristic implies that the learning process can become more meaningful if participants are given the opportunity to influence the objectives and direction pursued in the programme.

These theories imply that certain instructional strategies will be more suited to promote learning in a preparation course for school leaders than others. Some of these are mentioned by Leithwood et al. (1992:176,180) as the basis for "transactional instruction" and include:

- lecturing, reading, reflection and independent work
- demonstration of skills, with opportunities for practice and feedback
- solution of simulated problems
- interactions with peers on the analysis and development of ideas.

Wallace (1991:30,31) also touches on the aspect of mental processes when he refers to the role intuition plays in decision making. He cites Simon who, in line with Leithwood et al.'s (1992:174,175) use of the term "schemata", refers to "chunks or patterns stored in the long term memory" which represent a "sequence of automated productions". This allows "the expert to take giant intuitive steps in reasoning, as compared to the tiny steps of the novice".

3.4.3.2 Learning through demonstration, practice and feedback

The development of certain required behaviours (skills) runs, according to information processing theory, along certain lines (Leithwood et al.,1992:193; Joyce and Showers,1995:110):

- The new behaviour is modelled by an expert.
- The learner observes and a schema or pattern develops in his/her memory.
- This new schema becomes linked to existing knowledge patterns in the learner's memory, and forms the learner's first attempt at the behaviour or skill.
- This attempt generates feedback through own reflection and comments from others, which leads to the refining of the schema.
- When this process is repeated several times, the continuous refinement leads to a growing sophistication of the schema
- A well developed schema in the participant's memory, which forms the basis of skilful action, is therefore dependent on opportunities for practice and feedback.

3.4.3.3 The problem of transfer

Joyce and Showers (1995:112,114) refer to the gap between what is learned in a formal situation and what is applied in practice. Their research shows that while feedback on practice plays a big role in the transfer of knowledge to other situations, the biggest single element promoting transfer is coaching in the job situation by colleagues who have also undergone training.

Leithwood et al. (1992:197-199) differentiate between "low road" transfer - fairly automatic, not requiring much cognitive effort - and "high road" transfer - applying principles acquired in a certain context to a totally new one. Teaching a group how to complete a form would be an example of "low road" transfer, while conflict management will require "high road" transfer, the application of principles the participant has learnt in the complex and practical situation at his/her school. While "low road" transfer is promoted by practice, "high road" transfer, though fostered to a certain extent by practice, requires reflection on the generalizable aspects of the action or the information. High road transfer is also enhanced through assistance in the generating of principles of behaviour, and through direct instruction on key components of certain practices.

3.4.3.4 Learning in the context of the practical situation

Wallace (1991:3) says research shows that off-the-job training is not adequate for improving on-the-job performance. Training programmes can only be effective when they become an integral part of a wider, all-encompassing commitment to continuous, on-the-job learning. Unless a person is guided and coached in acting on-the-job, transfer of learning will be limited (Wallace, 1991:34). While simulations and other off-the-job exercises make up a valuable part of any training effort, because they allow for practice-related exercises in which mistakes do not matter, they remain incomplete tools for learning. Real experiences, where mistakes do matter, and where all the complexities of situations have to be taken into account, cause tension, fear and anger, emotions which expose personal strengths and weaknesses. These factors cannot be made part of a formal training situation.

When it is not feasible to use the school as a place for training, other ways must be sought to bring the experience of practice into the context of the formal training situation. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:37) refer to a formal training situation as a "laboratory for developing improved practice". One way in which to introduce laboratory conditions, is through role plays based on observations of practice (p.77), or on problems participants have had to deal with and solve in their own work. Individuals are then asked to act out the various roles in the role play, while the rest of the participants act as observers and give feedback. Often participants act out their own theories-in-use without realizing what is happening.

Leithwood et al. (1992:202) bridge the gap between the training situation and the practical context by first exposing participants to a problem that has actually occurred, and then asking them to discuss the problem with reference to a framework for problem solving the designers of the programme had previously developed. Then they ask those who had to deal with the problem in practice to share with participants how the problem had actually been solved. This is the case of the expert modelling the solution. The participants then discuss the "expert" solution of the problem.

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:78) also mention narratives as a way of bringing the practical situation into the context of training. Narratives are accounts of lived-through experiences which can serve as valid sources of theories-in-use.

3.4.3.5 Raising awareness

It has already been noted that reflective practice is built on the principle of behaviour-change through a heightened awareness of inconsistencies in one's behaviour, and of the assumptions which have hitherto unconsciously influenced one's theories-in-use.

Osterman and Kottkamp's (1993:34) model is based on this principle. Their model implies that change (and learning) starts with a careful analysis of individual practice, looking for possible underlying assumptions and for discrepancies between espoused theories and theories-in-use.

Daresh and Barnett (1993:141) refer to "educational platforms", which are written statements that express a person's thinking - his/her beliefs, values, orientations and goals. They (pp.142-146) believe that by requiring participants to document their authentic experiences through portfolios (theories-in-use), and compare their portfolios with their platforms (espoused theories), the objective of a heightened awareness will be easier to achieve. Portfolios represent more authentic accounts of a person's behaviour in practice than his/her acting this out in a role play.

While Daresh and Barnett combine platforms and portfolios, Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:96-98) utilize platforms together with role-plays. They ask participants to compile platforms consisting of their espoused theories. The participants then take part in role-plays. The audience (other participants), having read the platforms, are then asked to compare an individual's actions (in the role-play) representing his/her theories-in-use, with his/her espoused theories (expressed in the platform) and highlight possible discrepancies.

Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:43) emphasize the fact that awareness-raising can be

a very sensitive issue, and that it cannot really materialize outside of an atmosphere of openness and trust. This is why the social aspect of a formal training course, which allows participants to get to know and trust one another, is so important.

3.4.3.6 Learning as a social activity

The above section on awareness-raising, as well as other aspects like peer coaching, critical friendships and networking discussed below, emphasize the importance of the social aspect of learning. I have already mentioned Leithwood et al.'s (1992:175,194,195) reference to social interaction theory, which stresses the importance of social interaction during learning. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:34) emphasize the fact that habitual behaviour often results from a process of acculturation. This view corresponds to Argyris and Schön's (1978) view that people are socialized into accepting, mostly unconsciously, the governing variables of Model I theories-in-use. By implication, therefore, people will not be able to change these governing variables without some sort of social interaction and support.

In Wallace's (1991:96,97,100) framework for learning support discussed below, he refers to various activities in which one person may help another, whether it is by listening, discussing, observing and giving feedback, or by engaging in a joint project, e.g. as part of an action research team. Colleagues can also render emotional or moral support through encouragement, acting as a confidant(e), providing a source of constructive pressure and demonstrating interest in each other's progress.

3.4.3.7 Stages in the learning process

Wallace's (1991:35,37) accounts of separate stages in the learning process is presented in the following diagram:

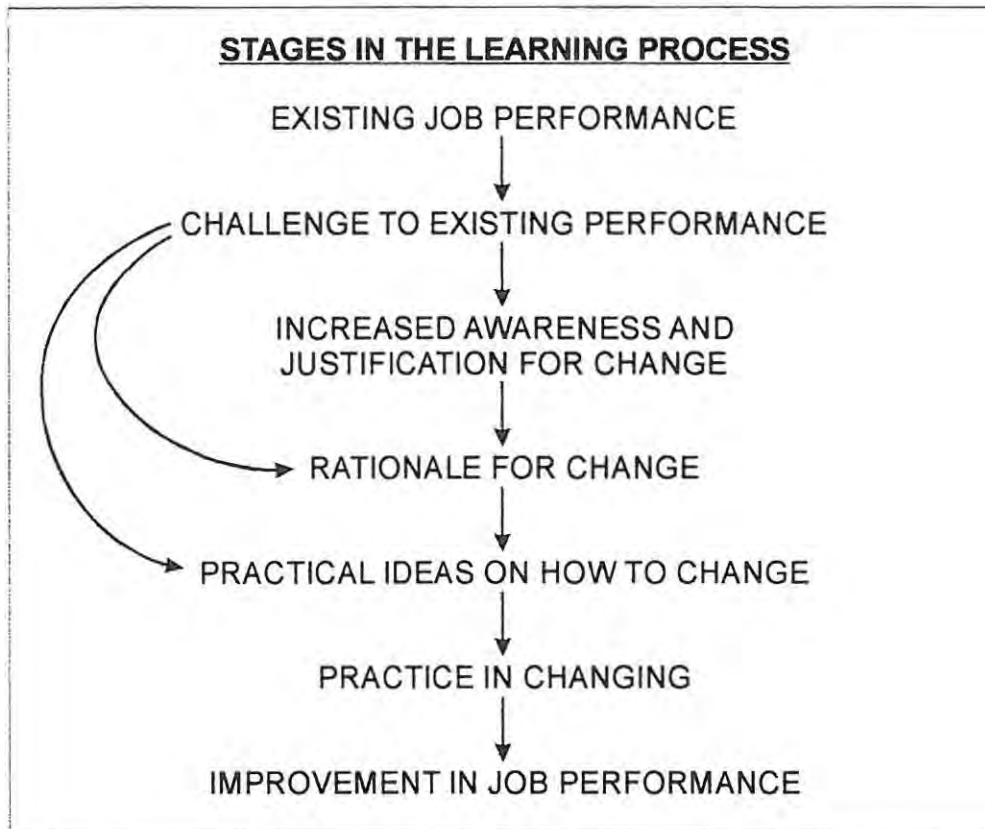


Fig 3.4: Stages in the learning process

Source: Wallace (1991:35,37)

This diagram offers a fairly accurate representation of what was said about the various aspects of learning in section 3.3. It also provides a framework within which to design a training/teaching course.

The two arrows indicate two possible bypasses in the learning process. Learning may pass over the deeper issues of awareness and reasons for change, and simply result in a technical change in behaviour. (This would be single-loop learning.) The more stages of this process included, however, the more deep-seated and lasting the resulting changes in behaviour will be (compare Poole's [1998:5] views on "discontinuous change").

Wallace uses these stages as the basis for the design of his training (learning support) programme. The various aspects of the teaching process have to fit into this learning

framework and have to bring about the various stages in learning.

3.4.4 The role of other people in the learning process

3.4.4.1 Coaching

Coaching of participants refers to the collaboration of members of staff to ensure that training results in skill development and the mastery of content, and that “personnel are skillful in the collaborative effort to transfer those products into active educational practice” (Joyce and Showers, 1995:117). It means therefore the collaboration of colleagues to help each other with the on-the-job implementation of skills. Coaching can begin in training, and continue in the workplace. An important element in peer coaching is learning to give descriptive non-evaluative feedback (Barnett, 1990:72). Garniston (1987:210) uses the term “collegial coaching”, which, he says, is usually conducted in pairs of teachers. The coach gathers information mainly through observation, helps in the analysis and interpretation of the data, and “encourages the teacher to make applications for future teaching”.

Wallace (1991:47) distinguishes between expert and peer coaching: Expert coaching occurs when a more experienced person acts as a type of mentor to a less experienced one, observing, offering feedback and advice. Peer coaching takes place when pairs of colleagues from the same institution (school), who have attended, or are still attending the same course, visit each other in their classrooms and observe, offer feedback and discuss possible improvement in the performance of the various tasks. In this version of coaching, there is less prescribing and more facilitation. For peer coaching to be successful, the focus must be on a specific skill such as the planning and leading of a staff meeting.

Joyce and Showers' (1995:121,122) research suggests that coaching may have far-reaching effects. One effect is the facilitation of “professional and collegial relationships” through the “development of a shared language and norms of experimentation”. The establishment of a system of peer coaching in a school may lead

to continuous learning taking root as a school norm. It may also cause the building of structures (in Senge's [1992] terms "infrastructure") which facilitate collegial relationships, and which may, according to Joyce and Showers (1995:122), build "capacity for other kinds of change" and lead to "improvement in multiple areas".

3.4.4.2 Critical friendship

Critical friendship refers to informal arrangements between staff members of the same or different schools to support each other in terms of comments on work done, assisting each other with ideas, the planning of work and projects, the sharing of information, and emotional support. The emphasis, according to Wallace (1991:49), is on a friendship which is at the same time functional. It may include phoning each other just to say "hello", or having an informal sharing session over a cup of coffee. The focal point should remain the work, and the "critical" aspect of the friendship should include challenging one another and being open and honest in giving feedback and support.

3.4.4.3 Networking

The concept of networking is closely related to that of critical friendship. Although the number of participants is larger, and the relationships are not quite as close as they are in critical friendships, networking is likewise an informal system of communication between colleagues with a common interest.

Lieberman and McLaughlin (1996:63,65) find that teachers tend to be enthusiastic about networking opportunities because they "afford occasion for professional development and collegiality, and reward participants with a renewed sense of efficacy". Networking allows participants to share various experiences in the course of their training and often beyond that. Participants stay in contact via telephone or electronic mail, and their interaction is often a blend of personal, professional, social and work-related issues. The social aspect helps to establish a climate of trust and support which may play a vital role in sustaining participants' motivation and commitment to continue with the course. The Task Team (1996:51) puts this well when they propagate "a web

of support and support for the web". Networking emphasises the fact that nobody can "go it alone".

West-Burnham (1997:127) gives the following indicators of the effectiveness of networks:

- effectiveness of communications
- importance attached to regular contact
- time for regular contact
- offers of reciprocal support
- utilizing the network to facilitate specific agendas
- obtaining a clear indication of individuals who can help to get things done.

The concept of involving more than the official trainers in the development of educational management as a means of making development programmes more affordable, is mentioned by Thurlow (1993:128). He refers to concepts such as "peer-group tutoring, cluster-groups and study circles".

3.4.5 Steps in the design process

3.4.5.1 Identifying and analysing learning support needs

Van Tellinghen and Kense (1992:72,73) say that the design of a preparation programme for managers should start with the identification of the problems which the training is to address. This includes an in-depth analysis to determine whether the needs are on the technical, social (including attitudinal) or organizational levels. This identification should, according to them, take place at the workplace. Without going into too much detail, it seems logical that if one wants to use the practical situation as point of departure, the schools where participants teach, or at least a fair representation of these schools, will have to be visited. By making use of the techniques suggested by Schmuck and Runkel, above, such as observation, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis, one can determine specific and local needs that might be

addressed through training. Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1997:144,145) refer to the process of determining the direction of in-service education as an "audit".

The requirement to ascertain the specific needs of educational managers who attend development programmes is repeatedly stressed by Thurlow (1993:120,123,127), as well as the Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:135,136,138). The problem is that "university lecturers who teach planning and administration are usually far removed from the day-to-day concerns of the administrator" (Commonwealth Secretariat,1992:139). The need for courses to be "demand-led rather than course-led" (ibid. 138) is emphasised.

Another vital element in the determination of needs, Van Tellinggen and Kense (1992:77) remind us, is consultation with local stakeholders like educational officials and individuals involved in local initiatives, both in the initial planning stages and later on as the course progresses.

The designers of preparation programmes need to bear in mind that needs experienced and articulated within the constraints of a specific situation are not always representative of all the real needs that exist. While the practical situation is vital for the identification of the most immediate needs, other, more deep-seated needs and less obvious needs have sometimes to be identified and interpreted for the target group. This identification and interpretation should be based on a combination of observation, research and policy.

3.4.5.2 Determining the outcomes of the programme

Once the needs have been determined, it is obvious that the objectives pursued within a preparation programme should focus on these needs. One must avoid the pitfall of pursuing goals which are too specific and do not allow sufficient room for en route adjustments as circumstances and insights change.

I agree in general with Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:32,41) about the ultimate purpose

of their reflective practice model, which aims at a change in the behaviour of participants through heightened self-awareness. This is in line with the goal of developing a mindset of continuous learning/inquiry/problem solving/action research, as opposed to merely covering a standard collection of relevant topics. An important aspect to bear in mind is that the objectives for preparation programmes include both process and product goals. To focus exclusively on a body of content to be covered entails ignoring the process goals.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (1992:133) is more specific in specifying what a principal should be able to do. This includes:

- the efficient management of the school resources
- the allocation and maintenance of the school facilities
- the management of curriculum implementation and change
- the establishment and maintenance of a professional ethos in the school.

3.4.5.3 Deciding on the content of the programme

The question of content can be approached from many different viewpoints. One would be tempted to include the accepted body of basic content which has become standardized in the behavioural science era, and which still influences the design of current programmes. The list, such as the one designed by the National Policy Board publication (1993), includes topics like motivation, conflict management, interpersonal relationships, communication, etc. Another option would be to choose a specific image of the school leader, such as Leithwood *et al.*'s (1992:8,9) view of the school leader as problem solver, and select content material accordingly.

Schmuck and Runkel's (1994) approach to organizational development is to focus on a group of five core functions - meetings, conflict management, decision making, problem solving and communication. This ties in well with Furtwengler *et al.*'s (1996:521,522) idea of a "core curriculum with flexible components based on authentic problems of practice". Their "core curriculum" centres on the study of administrative

theory, decision making, organizational change and leadership, while the rest of the curriculum is determined by problems encountered by participants in practice. One can also consider using the “frame concept” popularized by Bolman and Deal (1991) and elaborated upon by Louis et al. (in press). These authors suggest a framework consisting of the following metaphors, with the popular accepted meaning in brackets: Compass (purpose), architecture (structure), legislature (politics and policies), brains (learning and reflection), fire (personal identity and commitment), garden (leadership) and tribe (culture).

Wallace's (1991:28,90,91) approach is to establish a framework for the main task and process areas of school management to guide the design. The final selection of topics is then determined by the identified needs of participants, the aims of the programme, knowledge resulting from research, and educational policy.

3.4.5.4 Planning the structure of the programme

The term “structure” is used here to refer to such aspects as the duration, frequency and spread of the contact sessions, provision for practical work in schools, as well as the arrangements for feedback sessions. Van Tellinghen and Kense (1992:81) discuss the phasing of training, which depends to a large extent on the type of training envisaged. The training of skills, for example, necessitates a practical period in which skills can be practised in between theoretical sessions.

Leithwood et al. (1992:169,200,203) refer to two types of structures for preparation courses, depending on whether they are aimed at “high ground” problem solving, or at problem solving “in the swamp” (see 3.4.1). The course on high ground problem solving consists of three sections: two instructional sessions of 25 hours each at the beginning and end of the programme, with a practical session done at schools in between. The programme for problem solving in the swamp consists of a four- to five-day residential programme.

Dadey and Harber (1991:41) suggest a modular structure. They refer to a training

course in Uganda in which the content was presented during three school holidays, with opportunities to apply what had been learned in between the holidays.

Wallace (1991:101-105) proposes a modular structure in which the course is divided into modules or units, each focusing on a specific topic (e.g. financial management). Each module consists of:

- A preparatory stage done while the participants are still at their schools, in which they prepare for the contact session by gathering data, discussing the topic with colleagues and reading the prescribed material.
- A residential stage consisting of feedback from the preparatory stage, various activities like lectures, sharing of personal theories, practice under guidance and the planning of the follow-up activity in the school.
- An implementation stage in which the action plan is implemented with feedback and coaching by peers.

An important aspect to emphasize is that in each module all the stages of learning should ideally be covered, which also implies including as many as possible of the teaching components (see 3.4.5.6).

3.4.5.5 Involvement of colleagues and others

Much has already been said about the social aspect of learning and ways in which staff members can play a role in their colleagues' learning. A fifth step in the designing of a programme is to consider ways in which colleagues can be drawn into the process and utilized. Wallace (1991:100) does not say how this is to be accomplished, except by referring to possible induction activities.

While the possible role colleagues can and should play in training is acknowledged, one also realizes how many constraints would make this difficult to implement. One of these is the problem of motivating colleagues to become involved in somebody else's learning. More will be said about this important aspect of the planning process when the

actual implementation is discussed.

3.4.5.6 Planning the teaching components

Wallace (1991:92) sees the teaching process (which he refers to as the learning support process) as consisting of five components, each with certain key dimensions or sub-components. The components are:

- diagnosis
- critical understanding
- practical information
- skills
- integration into practice.

Each of these components brings about transitions between two or more stages in the learning process. Moreover, each relates to certain specific teaching activities (see 3.4.5.7). In designing a preparation course, obviously one cannot confine one's attention to the content of objectives only, but must also give careful consideration to how these are to be got across. In planning the teaching part, one has to realize that the number of teaching components included in the design plays a decisive role in determining the amount of learning which will take place in the end.

Wallace's (1991:93) diagram is included to illustrate his view of the link between the components of learning support (teaching) and the stages of learning (see 3.4.3.7).

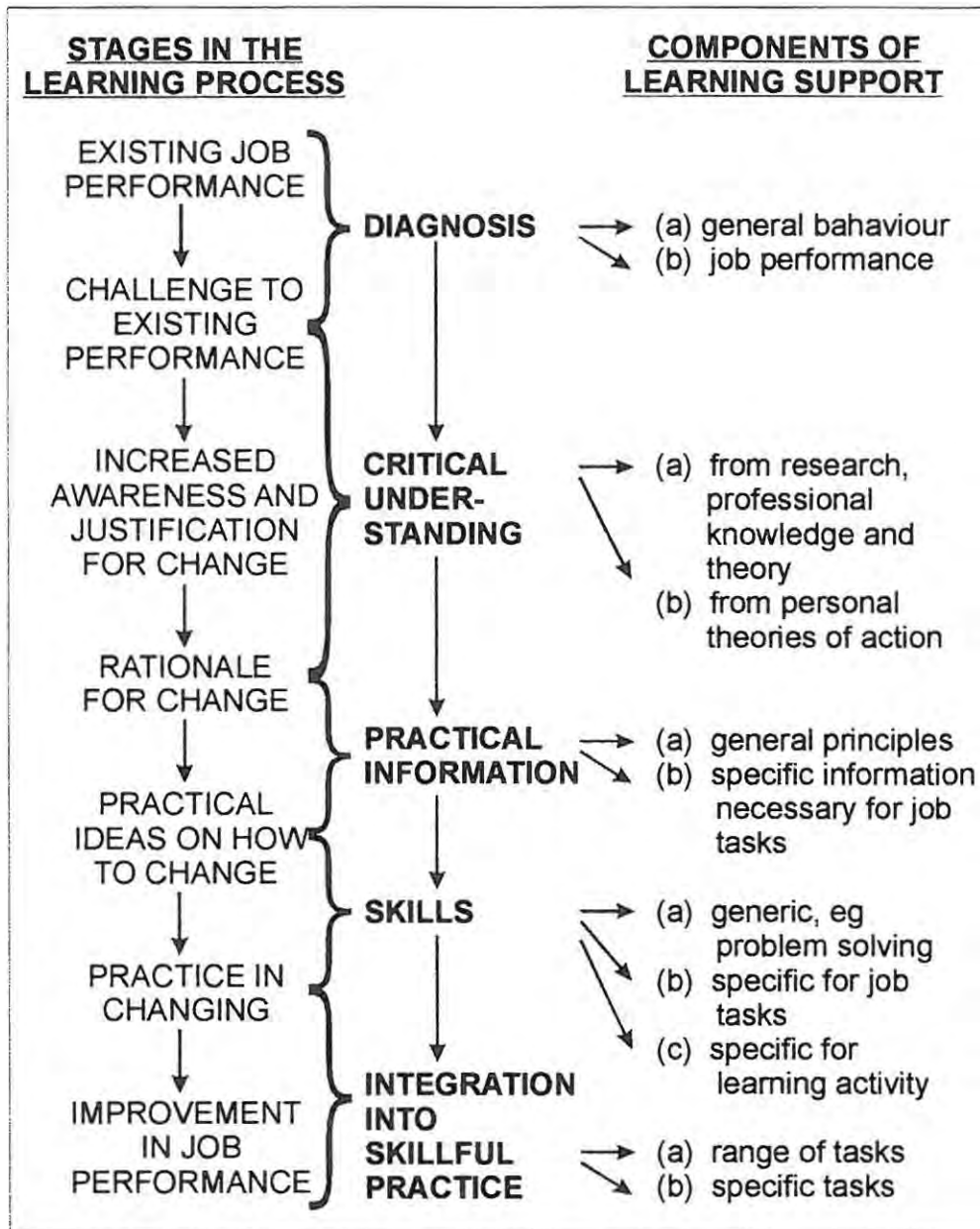


Fig 3.5: Components of learning support

SOURCE: Wallace (1991:93)

3.4.5.7 Activities to promote the teaching components

Bowring-Carr and West-Burnham (1997:60) cite the Hadow Report's view on curriculum, which fits in well with the emphasis of this section: "The curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired

and facts to be stored". Wallace (1991:96,97) mentions a wide variety of activities which may be used to effect the requisite learning. Some of these activities, like lecturing, distance learning, training courses, role plays, simulations and skills training are important in the teaching process, and will remain the responsibility of the presenters. However - and this is a key point which represents a major shift in thinking about the respective roles of lecturers and students - it is clear that the majority of activities should eventually become the responsibility of the learner as an individual or as a member of a group (cf. Wallace's emphasis on experiential learning). These activities might include the writing of personal journals, the conducting of case studies, critical friendships, self-development initiatives, shadowing with feedback, peer coaching, private study, networking and action research. Dadey and Harber (1991:41,42) also refer to activities which emphasize the role of the learner and bring the practical situation into sharper focus. Their list includes action learning, case studies, simulation exercises, role plays and internships. The lecturer or facilitator has to teach (model) these activities to the learners, and then give them opportunities to practice them.

It becomes clear that, in the designing of preparation programmes, the designer has effectively to shift the emphasis from content to method. It is this priority which informs Mulkeen and Tetenbaum's (1990:14) advocacy of the former in each of these pairs: "activity versus passivity, change versus entrenchment, dynamic decision versus static information, process versus product, people versus structures". Teaching or supporting the learning of participants changes from supplying them with content to teaching them methods and activities to find out the content for themselves. Wolf (1995:214) puts it like this, in describing the effects of a certain book: "Perhaps most important is that the authors, rather than telling us what to do, invite us to become action researchers, treating what we do as an inquiry in our own settings . . .". Schmuck and Runkel (1994:378,379) emphasize the inclusion of activities in training which satisfy various individual motives like the need for affiliation, achievement and power.

In the design of a programme, activities have therefore to be carefully selected in order to promote the various components of learning support for each stage of the learning

process.

3.4.5.8 Planning the evaluation of the course

Leithwood et al. (1992:182) emphasize the need for both formative and summative evaluation of a preparation course. Summative evaluation is required both to hold the designers accountable for the outcomes of the course, and to establish the impact of the course on the practice of participants.

Formative evaluation serves two purposes:

- Modification of the course on a continuous basis. Feedback of participants as adult learners reveal their preferences and the extent to which their needs are being met in the course of the programme. That is why Leithwood et al. (p. 202) suggest a daily assessment with immediate feedback.
- The promotion of participants' reflection on the impact of the course on their thinking and daily practice.

Evaluation needs to be planned along with the planning of the whole programme, as an integral part of the whole process. This implies feedback loops from participants on a continuous basis, utilizing a variety of instruments, so that adjustments to the programme can be made timeously.

3.4.5.9 Summary of the design process

The design process discussed in this section can be summarised in two ways, namely by means of a diagram and in terms of certain steps to be followed in order to complete the planning of the preparation programme. In drawing on the work of Wallace (1991), I drew the following diagram in order to present the process in visual format:

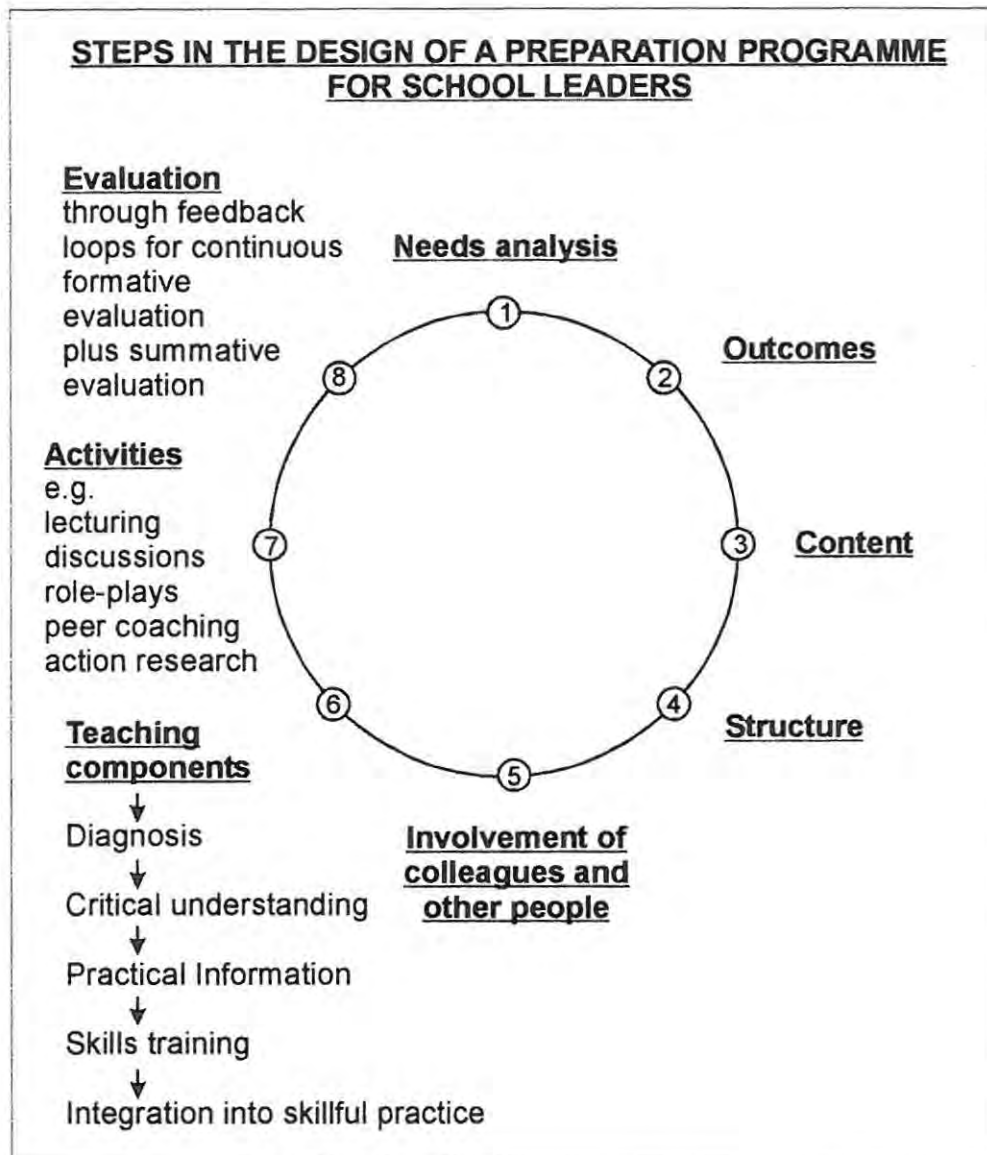


Fig 3.6: Steps in the design of preparation programmes

The design process can also be summarized in the following eight steps:

- the identification and analysis of training needs
- the determination of the programme outcomes
- decisions about the content of the programme
- the planning of the programme structure, e.g. short term workshops or a long term course with a modular structure
- the identification of other staff members who will support the learning process of a colleague

- the planning of the teaching (learning support) components, which consist of diagnosis, critical understanding, practical information, skills training and integration into skilful practice
- the design of activities to promote the teaching components, i.e. teaching methods
- the design of feedback loops for continuous formative evaluation, as well as the planning of summative evaluation to assess the attainment of the outcomes.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In considering preparation programmes for principals, the two major domains to take into account are the course itself (the “sending end”) and the school (the “receiving end”). Both of these are complex and need careful consideration, and unless their complexities are taken into account, the course cannot really succeed in accomplishing the objective of bringing about change in practice. Between these two major components lies a third area, the interaction between the teaching of theory and the exercise of practice, the space which forms a bridge between the course and the school. Schematically, the three domains can be presented as follows:

Table 4.1: Three domains of preparation programmes

| 4.2 THE COURSE: THEORY | 4.3 THE SCHOOL: PRACTICE |
|---|--|
| 4.2.1 Presentation strategies | 4.3.1 The practical situation in schools |
| 4.2.2 Content | 4.3.2 Obstacles to implementation |
| 4.2.3 The human element | 4.3.3 Ways to improve transfer |
| 4.2.4 Processes | 4.3.4 Role of schools in transfer |
| 4.2.5 Course structure | 4.3.5 Mentoring and peer-coaching |
| 4.2.6 Action research | 4.3.6 Solutions unique to the school |
| 4.4 OUTCOMES: SPACE OF INTERACTION | |
| 4.4.1 Practical relevance | |
| 4.4.2 Personal growth of participants | |
| 4.4.3 Tangible outcomes in schools | |
| 4.4.4 Outcomes based on data collection or research | |
| 4.4.5 Processes developing together with programme | |
| 4.4.6 The development of professional communities | |

All three domains play determining roles in the success of a preparation course. If, for instance, there are no outcomes, the course is a failure, even though it might have incorporated brilliant teaching strategies and content, and fostered good relationships among its participants.

4.2 THE COURSE: THEORY

4.2.1 Presentation strategies

4.2.1.1 Introduction

The term "strategies" covers many aspects of the presentation process such as assignments, readings, activities included in presentations, and the raising of self-awareness. These are distinguished from the other two key aspects of the course, here designated as the human factor and the content.

In my ongoing involvement with the course, obtaining feedback in various formats, I pondered ways of improving, developing and adapting strategies to meet the needs encountered. I also experienced a growing frustration at the apparently small impact of the course in the schools, and a concomitant desire to break through what presented itself as an academic curtain or barrier. I use this expression to refer to the perception which I often encountered in the feedback from students, that academic work means giving back correct sounding terms, as evidence of "knowing" the work, and that success and expertise is proved by displaying this ability.

Some strategies came about as spontaneous outflows from ongoing involvement with the project over an extended period of time. For instance, when I was visiting the schools and thinking about my preparation for the next contact session, the idea to do a case study simply emerged (addendum B4). Other strategies developed through encounters with relevant literature - when my thoughts were triggered by the reading of accounts of strategies employed in preparation programmes in other parts of the world.

The result was that a variety of strategies was employed in the programme. In the following section I give a brief overview of these, together with short comments, my own reflections and remarks made by participants. The “comments” are the result of my own thinking as I am writing this chapter, informed by the perspective afforded by access to all the data and by the efflux of time since the completion of the project. I use the term “reflections”, however, to refer to my thinking at the time I was busy collecting and categorizing the data, that is, while I was still immersed in the process, without the benefit of hindsight or a total perspective.

| 4.2.1.2 Case study (refer addendum B4) | |
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| Description or comments | A case study based on the real situation in the schools where participants teach enables participants to identify not only with the situation, but also with the solutions generated in the group discussions. This type of case study helps to bring about the application of theoretical insights to the practical school situation. |
| Reflections by researcher | What struck me about the suggestions put forward by participants as solutions to the problems identified in the case study, was that the majority of these came from either the content of the readings, or the group discussions. This was encouraging, since it indicated that participants were responding to both the theoretical inputs and the suggestions made by others in the group. |
| Quotes from participants | <p><u>Suggestions by participants about the role of the of the principal in the case study:</u></p> <p>“He then must work with his management team, he has to open up to them, and get them on board in his office, or even in the deputy’s office.”</p> <p><u>One of the principals, having applied the above advice from the group, described how his staff had responded to his initiatives, and then thanked the other participants:</u></p> <p>“A lot of bad things were said about me. After I enrolled for the course, I sat down in my office and said to myself: “Let’s make use of what I’m getting from you - that is why I’m thanking you a lot because of what you did - telling me what to do as we were discussing the case study.”</p> |

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| <p>(Using the participants' own words I have throughout quoted them verbatim, except in cases where the grammar /spelling was such that the meaning was obscure)</p> | <p><u>Reflections about the impact of the discussion two months later:</u></p> <p>"What I like about what Y said was that he was empowered by the course - by us all."</p> <p><u>Another participant said:</u></p> <p>"The principal should use literature to introduce new ideas and then workshops to bring about change in the practice of meetings, communication, problem solving, decision making and the management of conflict."</p> |
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| <p>4.2.1.3 Cooperative learning</p> | |
| <p>Main points</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased involvement • Collaborative work • Transfer of method to school |
| <p>Comments</p> | <p>The cooperative learning strategy facilitates a bigger involvement of participants, a moving away from lecturing, and greater exposure of students to readings.</p> <p>This method is especially useful to cover a book written in the narrative mode, because each group of participants prepares different chapters, and then shares their part of the story with his/her fellow group members</p> <p>The learning activities around the case study were based on the jig-saw model of cooperative learning, which implies that each member receives one section or paragraph of the material, which he/she then, after consultation with those who received the same paragraph as he or she, has to teach to the other members of his/her group. The method was also utilized to cover Bolman and Deal's (1993) story on mentoring. Participants were asked beforehand to read the chapters sent to them, and then to reflect upon certain questions.</p> |
| <p>Quotes from participants</p> | <p>"The sub-groups worked wonderful. The whole group was involved. We all referred to our own situations and that made it more relevant."</p> <p>"It was a kind of joint effort in the counterpart groups. Questions I did not even think of asking were asked in these groups."</p> <p>"When I sat there I thought: You can do this in the school too with your children. Give them a chapter to work on and they can do it on their own."</p> |

| 4.2.1.4 The narrative mode | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of own experience of relationships with that represented in the story • Identification of key aspects of mentoring • Implications for school leaders |
| Comments | <p>The narrative mode had a strong impact on the group discussion we had about mentoring. It seems justifiable to say that the story format in which the relationship between Brenda and Rodriques was portrayed in Bolman and Deal's (1993) book enabled the participants to understand and identify with key elements (see addendum A.2.1). It brought to the fore the issues of close relationships between the participants, the need for a person to have a mentor, and the characteristics of mentoring. This was also an attempt at "learning with soul" (see 3.3): utilizing the narrative mode to bring participants onto a different level, to steer their responses away from the purely cognitive to the affective, and thus to encourage reflection.</p> |
| Reflections by researcher | <p>Participants' reading of the story of Rodriques's mentoring by Brenda brought out, amongst other things, an awareness of the importance of relationships. Participants said things like (first day of contact session, 30 March): "What I picked up from the reading is that in a school situation there is a sort of a bond between the people who are there - we are like a family of some sort, and the family is the most important, the one needs the other".</p> |
| Quotes by participants | <p>"As I was reading this morning, coming to this course, I was starting to count the faces of the people I meet here . . . and I felt we're becoming a family here on the course - that taught me the importance of the family."</p> <p>"How can we build on what we've got here, so that we don't say this is the end?"</p> <p>"Brenda [the mentor in the story] never gives him advice before the time, she listens to his story and even after that she waits once again, she first lets him say what he's going to do - then she will help him."</p> <p>"After one has been in contact with your mentor, you will also need to come down to your staff - after Brenda had empowered Rodriques, he had to go back and take his staff with him in the process."</p> |
| 4.2.1.5 Teaching with soul | |

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| Comments | <p>The teaching strategies which were most fruitful could often be linked to various authors' views on "teaching with soul" (Dirkx, 1997). A good example was teaching in the narrative mode, with participants reading the story of Brenda and Rodriques (Bolman and Deal, 1993). This resulted in participants reflecting about possible mentors for themselves, as well as committing themselves to becoming mentors for staff members enrolling for the course. Another example of teaching with soul was teaching through the case study based on the actual practical situations at the participants' schools. This resulted in principal Y having an in-depth session with his staff, handling the conflict that had been simmering for close on a year.</p> <p>Another example was when participants were given extracts from their exam scripts and assignments to discuss during the June session. They were required to evaluate these with respect to the basic orientation which they represented. Even though nothing tangible resulted from this, a deep discussion took place during this session, in which the quotes were defended by their original authors (unknowingly giving themselves away, revealing long held assumptions). The exercise set in motion the process of developing participants' thinking into more independent patterns.</p> <p>The highlight of this aspect of teaching was the leadership seminar held in September, in which many unanticipated elements conducive to learning emerged. Of specific value, as became evident from the participants' references to the beautiful surroundings and the atmosphere of togetherness, was the confirmation of Dirkx's (1997:79-83) emphasis on "nurturing soul" (see 3.3.4: "transformative learning"). Repeating what I wrote there, soul experiences imply the sensing of a deeper level of living while we are busy with the here-and-now . . . going beyond the technical and the vocational - exploring new experiences of beauty and surprise, in which unexpected (and unexplored) things occur. The fact that so many of the participants referred to this seminar as one of the highlights of the course when I interviewed them more than a year later (see below), is a clear confirmation of Dirkx's contention.</p> |
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| <p>Quotes from participants</p> | <p><u>Response by principal Y on participants' commending of the way he approached his staff (second term contact session):</u></p> <p>"I'm not trying to preach, but there was a time when Jesus had to wash his disciples' feet."</p> <p><u>Comments by participants about the leadership seminar:</u></p> <p>"The things I enjoyed were the experiences and jokes shared. The togetherness and caring."</p> <p>"I felt that everything that I have learned about the entire course was consolidated and then used to take me to a higher and deeper level of thinking. I feel I was able to concentrate on the presentation of the lecturers without the distraction of my demanding family at home."</p> <p>"It was spiritually fulfilling and I really enjoyed being with my fellow students and lecturers."</p> <p>"I want to make a special thanks to the UPE staff for relating education with outings. I would never had such an opportunity to stay in such a beautiful, quiet place. The atmosphere made me to communicate with my colleagues, which maybe would not happen at our lecture room. Oh, the food, delicious. Thanks for the wonderful experience - for the first time in my life I came on board a canoe."</p> |
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4.2.1.6 Emphasizing self-awareness

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| <p>Main points</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness-raising is an ongoing process • Many factors play a role in this process • In the designing of a preparation programme, one has to be aware of the complexities of this process • One has to bear in mind that little learning takes place without due attention given to this element of learning |
| <p>Comments</p> | <p><u>Key to learning</u></p> <p>During the course of this programme I have become convinced of the fact that self-awareness is a central aspect of meaningful learning, and that little real change will occur in a person's thinking or behaviour unless he/she becomes willing to question his/her own hidden and often unknown assumptions.</p> |

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| <p>Comments</p> | <p><u>Awareness-raising</u></p> <p>I have come to realize that in some cases, awareness-raising occurs naturally as part of individuals' exposure to new ideas and discussions with co-participants. Still, the designer of a programme has continuously to bear in mind the importance of this key aspect of learning. Certain activities such as confrontation with disturbing facts or current realities, and reflection on one's typical behaviour, are vital before presenting new content. One will, however, also have to understand that the changing of long-cherished assumptions, which are often the fruits of socialization, and of which the individual is mostly unaware, is a lengthy and profound process, which includes reflection on one's own story (Groome, 1980), the changing of the discourses (Harber and Davies, 1997) and being exposed to different socialization patterns (Argyris, 1992). This may imply a long and difficult commitment for a teacher, seeing that such learning takes place mostly on the interpersonal level. In this light, mentoring relationships acquire a completely new dimension of significance.</p> <p><u>Expose participants to many experiences</u></p> <p>Being confronted with the production of correct "academic talk" without anything changing in practice, on the one hand, and various authors' views on "self-awareness, authorship, espoused theories and theories-in-use", on the other, brought me face-to-face with the fact that "teaching is more than telling". I realized that, in trying to bring about a change in practice through teaching programmes, one needs to be much more humble in terms of one's expectations. One will also have to realize that learning is a life-long process, that the presentation of content is but one aspect of the teaching endeavour among many others, that one needs to expose participants to as many experiences as possible, and that one will continually have to be on the lookout for unconventional methods to facilitate participants' encounter with their own realities.</p> <p><u>Learning is a complex process</u></p> <p>I also realized that one sometimes will have to wait for the whole teaching process to have been completed before expecting results, because increased self-awareness will not necessarily come about as a result of one carefully constructed exercise: it may often require exposure to many different experiences before a type of "aha-erlebnis"</p> |
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| Own reflections | In my journal (11June) I wrote:“Of all the training he [referring to one person in particular] has undergone, <u>nothing</u> went home. This shows the importance of doing something on self-awareness - of letting someone reflect on what he is doing and how he sees his responsibilities. Without an awareness, many inputs become useless. It reminds me of the readings I did concerning the issues of personal freedom, responsibility and self-awareness - do these topics have anything to say to this participant? I should test them out. I think I’ll write a case study of two school principals taken from the examination scripts - one positive and enthusiastic, the other negative - let them read these together with a few quotes from the readings on self-awareness and responsibility. Let them discuss the question of how one changes from being a negative to a positive principal/teacher. A person who writes like this needs a confrontation with himself before anything else can change. This should take place within the context of Zuber-Skerritt’s (1996:90) ‘conditions for successful action research’.” |
| Quotes of participants giving evidence of increased in self-awareness | <p>“Now that I’ve gone through this course, they cannot ignore me anymore.”</p> <p>“I actually became a force at school.”</p> <p>“Since I’ve been on this course, I do not dodge responsibilities anymore.”</p> <p>“When I became the principal, I thought I was the boss - since I’ve been involved with this programme I’ve discovered that I am only in charge.”</p> <p>“I used to be a toughie - a hard nut to crack. Now the staff members tell me: ‘You’ve changed - you kill fires - what’s happening?’”</p> |
| 4.2.1.7 | Readings |
| Comments | <p>Participants used readings for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference purposes for assignments, group discussions and implementation of changes in their schools • as resource material for colleagues in implementing change <p>Readings were therefore important for participants. Yet they had problems when the readings were too long and complicated. Therefore the readings have to be relevant, not too long and should not contain too much abstract theory. Notes and readings should be included in one study guide to avoid the possible confusion of participants.</p> |

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| <p>Quotes from participants</p> | <p>“Later on, some people became scared [because we were taking turns at being the chairperson], and then I said: ‘O K, I’ll give you some notes [from the course]’. Now they start to show me my mistakes when I’m chairing the meeting.”</p> <p>“If we had a book especially prepared for us, it would have been much easier than reading this pile of notes which are sometimes confusing.”</p> |
| <p>4.2.1.8 Assignments</p> | |
| <p>Comments</p> | <p>Our thinking about the assignments changed dramatically during the time I was involved with this programme. At first the main objective was to get participants to become more involved with the content; to know and understand the content, and to be able to explain how it could be implemented in practice. As time went by we realized that the assignments were the link between theory and practice, the bridge between the course and the school. I will say more about this in section 4.4.</p> <p>In the development of our thinking, the emphasis shifted from academic content to the actual problems in the schools, from the work a person had to complete in order to receive a diploma, to an exercise involving the participants’ colleagues with the purpose of solving real problems at school. The question changed from “What does the participant know?”, to “Which changes have been accomplished in the school?” This change in emphasis eventually led to the assignments becoming action research projects in the schools.</p> |

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| Comments | <p>These changes in emphasis coincided with - some would say resulted from or even caused - the changes in our thinking about the guidance participants needed in order to do the assignments well. It became clear that we needed to assist them in reaching the objectives we had in mind with the assignments. This guidance eventually included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining the instructions for each assignment with a mark sheet clearly showing the participant every detail of what he/she was required to do (addendum B10) • Utilizing the workshops as opportunities for participants to receive advice from each other and from the workshop leader with respect to their assignments • Allowing participants more opportunities to improve their assignments, based on the feedback they received from the workshop leader (now being referred to as the mentor). This implied that they were allowed to redo or change their assignments after the initial formative assessment, and submit them for a second round of assessment • While I initially did the assessment on a summative basis, the mentor now played a much bigger role, and in the end I did the moderation. <p>Our thinking about the assignments developed in the direction of requiring basic outcomes from participants, and giving them space to reach the goals implied by these specified outcomes.</p> <p>While I started the course thinking mostly about the content to focus on and the way in which to do the presentations, I gradually came to see that, in a course like this, the assignments are the key aspect, because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are the link between theory and practice • determine to a large extent the immediate success of the course • put pressure on participants to perform • can be used as a channel to involve others in the tangible outcomes of the course • can be seen as the start to any school-improvement efforts which may result from the course • provide participants with opportunities to tailor the contents of the course to fit the context of their own schools. |
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| <p>Credibility of assignments</p> | <p>An issue which created problems for me, and also showed me the importance of requiring that more than one staff member from a specific school attend the course, was the testing of an individual's credibility in terms of what he/she dished up to me in his/her assignments. In one case, the claims made by a participant in his assignment were completely disproved by what his colleague described in his assignment.</p> <p>In considering ways in which the returns on assignments can be validated, the discussion we had in the focus group on 1 April struck me as of much value (see addendum A.2.3.2). Such a discussion clears up misconceptions as well as inconsistencies. At the same time, it creates another opportunity of confirming certain theoretical concepts.</p> <p>In analysing the tape recording of that particular meeting, I made the following note (April 1998): "Maybe one will also have to change the format of the assignments, requiring participants to bring along proofs of implementation such as documents, tape recordings, comments of staff members."</p> <p>The focus group meeting of 1 April therefore opened up three things for me:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that one should utilize evaluative feedback sessions as opportunities for the pinpointing of inconsistencies in participants' claims and work. Such sessions will make it clear to participants that not anything goes and will be accepted. It will also clear up inconsistencies in participants' feedback and work of which they are unaware • The importance of building into the design of assignments specific requirements (such as the assembling of a portfolio) which will furnish proof of participants' claims of events which had actually taken place as a result of their implementation efforts • The opportunity which feedback sessions create for teaching - for rectifying gaps in participants' understanding as demonstrated by their feedback. |
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| <p>The development of assignments into an action research format</p> | <p>What is of special interest about one assignment done in May is that this participant, without having had any previous exposure to action research, implemented her assignment in a cyclical way very much in line with the format of action research.</p> <p>A similar development was described by one of the participants in the June examination scripts:</p> <p>“We saw this as a need after the area manager came to the school to ask records of the matriculants for the whole year - not a single teacher could produce his/her information. One teacher even said he does not have any computers to keep all the records. After drawing up a plan of action we sat down and drew up student record cards which looked like this:[rough draft included]. We took the draft forms to the staff - adaptations were made and approved. Afterwards one of the teachers put all the information on a computer. Now we are trying to collect information on all our assets. We also want to start working on testimonial forms for the matriculants, even by that to lighten teachers' loads”.</p> |
| <p>Own reflections</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A source of frustration for me was the fact that solutions were often written in the format of what “may or can be done”. • The May assignments showed a marked improvement on those of the first term. Not only was tangible evidence included (e.g. forms designed for managing information), which raised the level of credibility, but participants also reported about interviews and cooperation with colleagues not participating in the course. A major development was the emphasis on real school development, which had only occurred in one case in the first term. The participants showed a marked improvement in terms of their attention to the key details of the assignments, which may well have been a result of the detailed mark sheets, as well as of the discussions held and feedback given in the workshops. • In one of the May assignments, a participant wrote as introduction to what she actually wanted to share: “I went to the principal. . .” For me this is an important phrase to come out of a course like this. He/she is not saying what the theory spells out, but what he/she actually <i>did</i>. |

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| <p>Quotes of participants about the outcomes of the assignments</p> | <p>“Something just happened in the school.”</p> <p>“In the end it was clear to all of us how important it was to have a clear, well managed system for keeping pupils’ records.”</p> <p>“After the deliberations and the code of conduct, the teachers’ behaviour changed drastically.”</p> |
| <p>Conclusions with respect to assignments</p> | <p>When reading through participants’ assignments, I started to think about the requirements I usually spelled out to them regarding academic standards, such as the requirement that assignments should give evidence of their having read the material and obtained some understanding of it.</p> <p>I realized that even though academic understanding is important, if a person can logically come up with workable solutions, he/she should receive credit for that. He/she should also get credit for sharing some of his/her ideas with and getting feedback from colleagues, and especially for getting things done, bringing about tangible changes in his environment on account of his/her exposure to the programme. In grading aspects such as assignments, one should give at least equal weight to content, process and product.</p> <p>Obviously participants should be encouraged to read, analyse, interpret and apply ideas and suggestions picked up from various authors, but they should also be taught to trust their own thinking and experience, and how to integrate these with their readings.</p> <p>Therefore, in determining whether a candidate should pass a course, the academic content should be taken into account, together with his/her ability to use his/her own experience and thinking to create new ideas, interpret other ideas, integrate contributions from all sides and apply the resultant outcomes in his/her own context.</p> |

4.2.1.9 Conclusions

It became clear to me that the following should be emphasized in the planning of **presentation strategies**:

- The variety of strategies employed increases the amount of satisfaction participants gain from the course, and may positively affect the development of various

unplanned processes

- Strategies focussing on the affective levels of human behaviour should be developed and employed
- The programme should include strategies which confront participants with relevant discrepancies in their thinking and behaviour or in current situations they are experiencing
- Strategies which facilitate participants' reflection should be generated and employed
- Strategies should include those requiring participants to do research (data collection) with respect to real problems
- Strategies should increasingly focus the attention on the situation in each participant's school
- The programme should include strategies which provide feedback to participants on work done in the practical context
- Assessment of work done by participants should take content, process and product into account.

4.2.2 Content

4.2.2.1 Introduction

In the case of a topic as wide as school leadership or school management, the question of what to include and what to leave out is an extremely difficult one to answer. One also has to decide about the level at which to present each topic. Both questions become even more difficult to answer if the course has to cater for a group of participants with very diverse backgrounds and contexts.

In thinking about these questions, one comes face-to-face with the issue of the goals of a preparation course for school leaders. In my struggle with these questions for more than three years, I have grown in my understanding of what is important to take into account, even though I've also learned that the questions are never fully answered or the problem finally solved. In this section, I propose to give an overview of the process I went through, as well as some of the solutions I am implementing in similar

programmes I am currently teaching:

| 4.2.2.2 The importance of a needs analysis | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting schools where participants teach • Identifying bottlenecks • Ensuring relevance • Obtaining material with which to write relevant case studies • Identifying characteristics of processes which participants can identify with • Ensuring realism for presenters with respect to implementation possibilities • Maintaining the process of needs analysis throughout the duration of the course |
| Comments | <p>In designing a course, it is essential to have first-hand knowledge of the practical situation in which participants work, in order to determine what the course should include, and at what level topics should be presented. It is also necessary for the designers and presenters of a course to understand the factors at play which cause problems in the implementation of course content.</p> <p>I paid further visits to schools and individuals in February subsequent to my initial visits in November of the previous year. I also maintained contact with the everyday worlds of participants through focus group sessions, individual interviews and feedback through assignments. One thinks differently about the topics to be included when one realises that a school does not even have records of staff meetings, or any financial transactions, or that they have not had a single staff meeting for close to a year.</p> <p>The low level of participants' knowledge about basic issues was sometimes astonishing. It is therefore imperative to establish at which level and what issues you should address. Although certain basic topics will always apply, one needs to visit a representative number of schools of participants to become sensitized to the current situation.</p> |

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| <p>Reflections and quotes of participants</p> | <p><u>First-hand knowledge of situations at school with respect to problem solving</u></p> <p>One group of participants took the list of characteristics typical of problem-solving processes prevalent in schools I visited in November (addendum B2) and compared these with the situation at their own schools. The following was said after this exercise: "We found out that we fulfilled all the criteria [characteristics] of problem solving" (meaning that their problem-solving processes looked exactly the same as the problem-solving processes in the schools I had visited). This emphasized for me the importance and relevance which examples from the practical situation have for a teaching activity.</p> <p><u>Importance of getting feedback from participants for ongoing decisions concerning the course:</u></p> <p>At my meeting with participants on 25 February, participants expressed their views about the way the assignments had been formulated (addendum B5). They felt that they did not want to consider the assignments as consisting of four discrete topics, but as one integrated whole. Reflecting on theory about the teaching of problem solving through an integrated approach (see Murphy, 1995), I realized that this was a valid concern, so we changed the assignment to consist of only one integrated topic.</p> |
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| <p>4.2.2.3 Selecting topics</p> | |
| <p>Comments</p> | <p>I had been given a basic curriculum through the process of negotiation described in Chapter 1 (addendum B1). This curriculum directed my choice of topics in the first year, and I basically adhered to this framework during the course of the second year as well. Still, my visits to schools in November 1997 had an important effect on my thinking of what to emphasize and at which level.</p> |

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| <p>Reflections and Quotes</p> | <p>On 27 March, I wrote the following in my journal: "I've been busy preparing notes for my presentations in George next week - reading about equity, discipline, information management, educational law, educational policy and designing assignments for the drafting of a constitution for the Governing Body. Wonderful topics, but, am I really convinced that these topics will lead to an improvement in practice? And how on earth can one course equip a person in all these knowledge fields?"</p> <p>On 28 March, my thinking along these lines continued:</p> <p>"Reading about the various topics I'm to teach in the next session, I still feel: 'what the heck'. It sometimes feels like a dog chasing a bus. There are just too many topics, too much deep and professional knowledge needed about which I, as presenter, have to guess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what will be needed most • what level will be high enough to be interesting, yet not too high to be unrealistic (irrelevant to the participants) • the right mixture of needs in the group of 12 <p>In a sense, this is a hopeless situation - a fallacy when we present a body of material (the same for all) for a group of diverse participants."</p> |
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4.2.2.4 A common nucleus of topics

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| <p>Comments</p> | <p>In my visits to schools, I found an almost total absence of basic knowledge about problem solving and meeting procedure. This experience made me take the route prescribed by Schmuck and Runkel (1994), in terms of concentrating on 5 basic process goals (meeting procedure, conflict management, problem solving, decision making and communication) as the basis for organisational development efforts. In addition to these I found that I had to include financial management as a key topic for principals in the South African context.</p> |
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| References/ Quotes | <p>In my journal I wrote on 21 March:</p> <p>“While reading through the various Government documents, it became clear to me that one should move away from a type of topic-driven curriculum to a more practical issue-based one (such as current problems like re-deployment of teachers). The reason for this is the fact that the topics are interwoven (e.g. policy, equity, financial management, governance, educational law).</p> <p>The basic goal is the improvement of practice, not the accumulation of knowledge. One obviously needs a knowledge base, but not as the final goal, but simply as the means to an end.”</p> <p>On 28 March I continued:</p> <p>“No, this [presenting the same body of material for all the participants] is not our job, or not the whole story. Obviously a common nucleus of knowledge for a specific type of work does exist, and a principal should know that. But in order to change practice, it seems highly unlikely that a set of notes, together with a couple of case studies, role plays, and group discussions will be sufficient.”</p> |
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4.2.2.5 Financial management

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| Comments | <p>Financial management is a crucial topic in schools in South Africa today. I believe this is the case in schools world-wide, but in this country current government policy allows, under certain conditions, school governing bodies to exercise control over the state-allocated funds. This implies that many schools from disadvantaged areas will now have to organize the purchase of text books and all their other requirements on their own. On the one hand, in many of the schools represented in the group I was teaching, financial management seemed to be either non-existent, or firmly established in the principal’s hands. Apart from the technical know-how that is lacking, many power-related issues also cloud the way in which finances are handled, and the staff are given no insight into what is going on. On the other hand, the group also included participants at whose schools fairly advanced systems had already been developed. With such diverse needs, one cannot possibly attempt to meet all participants at the level at which they are functioning.</p> |
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| Comments (continued) | <p>I do not see another way than to go the way suggested in the following reflections:</p> <p>While the course can open up the topic, such a specialized field needs to be addressed on an individualized basis, geared to the needs and expertise available in a specific school. It is a fallacy to imagine that one can teach a group of participants who have registered for a general course in school management a specialized subject such as financial management, as part of a range of other topics. One should rather introduce the group to the broad principles such as those included in budgeting, financial control and fundraising, and challenge participants to have one or two staff members who have some accounting background to attend a full course on financial management in schools, also taking current government policy into account.</p> |
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4.2.2.6 Governance

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| Comments | <p>The topic of governance is as wide as that of financial management, and as important. Governing Bodies have been given the role of overseers of the school, of seeing to it that the school is run well and that sound financial and management practices are followed. Making recommendations about staff appointments is another of their central responsibilities. This is often the source of much conflict in a school. If one understands that many illiterate governors are elected, and that governors are often manipulated for personal gain, it becomes clear how big and important the task is to equip them for their task in the schools.</p> <p>I've learned, especially from feedback we received from participants, that one does have to address the issue of Governing Bodies in a course like this, even if it again implies, as was the case with financial management, touching only on key aspects such as meeting procedures, the drawing up of a code of conduct for the school, financial management and appointment procedures. What did happen in this course is that participants utilized their newly-gained knowledge, together with the notes from the course, to organize workshops for governors on topics such as meeting procedures and financial management. This is, as far as I am concerned, the goal to be pursued through this course: to equip participants to share their knowledge with others in their school communities. The complete training of a school's Governing Body does not, however, fall within the target area of this particular course.</p> |
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| Reflec- tions and quotes | <p>When I, at the focus group session of 1 April, asked the principals about areas of interest they wanted us to focus on in the course, two topics emerged: That of parent involvement and the management of Governing Bodies. Principal X said: "Coming to the issue of looking at the whole school, there is one area I'm very much interested in. It is because of my historical background, where I know there has never been any active role played by parents in the school - this is something I've always been concerned about. Without the involvement of parents, without getting them committed to the school, we are definitely not going to get there - I don't know how this course can align itself so that area is also taken into consideration. In fact, we should also go into governance. Schools are still run by the teachers - you have all the policy that actually favours the parents running the school, but in reality that does not take place."</p> <p>Y responded by saying: "We will have to do something on the training of people on the Governing Bodies. We got that book on the Schools Act. It is written in English which is difficult for Governors to understand. I asked my secretary to help me translate that book into Xhosa. They do not know when they should call a meeting - I have to call a meeting for them - actually I have to run the whole show. There is nothing they do unless I tell them, so I feel that we still need to have a workshop for them." W then said that they did organize a workshop on interviewing for their Governing Body, run by a circuit manager(of education) from a neighbouring circuit.</p> |
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| 4.2.2.7 Emphasizing the "how" instead of the "what" | |
| Comments | <p>In the light of the overwhelming needs to be addressed in a course for school principals, as well as the diversity of these needs, it becomes clear that one will have to concentrate on generic skills which are applicable in any situation. Deeper than the skills, however, lies the level of attitudes, demonstrated by the quotation below, which should, difficult as it is, be a focal point right through the course.</p> |

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| Reflections /Quotes | <p>At the January session, while the inputs on meeting procedures were being discussed, one of the principals said: "Our people need to be taught how to take notes at the meeting. The minutes have to be distributed directly after the meeting - we're lacking equipment with respect to producing those". The group responded by stressing the utilization of local expertise, asking for example the secretary of the local chamber of commerce to teach them the basics.</p> <p>In this example, one sees both types of thinking in terms of Zuber-Skerritt's (1996) distinction between "dependent" and "independent thinking": One feels the principal is saying: "somebody has to come and train us". This is exactly what this course should guard against. The programme should rather teach participants to find their own solutions (as was illustrated by the responses of the other participants).</p> |
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| 4.2.2.8 Objectives | |
| Comments | <p>Being confronted with the level of needs among managers in schools, I realized early in the process that one would have to have a very clear idea of what goal the course is to achieve, or at least aim at. If this is not given careful consideration, one will simply drown in the magnitude of the problems one is confronted with in attempting to bring about change in schools through an academic programme. One way to go about it is to see one's role as that of an advisor or recipe giver, presenting participants with a variety of "how to" readings. This is on the level of prescription, and provides much security for participants. Depending on the level of knowledge of participants, I believe one has to build some aspect of this into a preparation course, even if it is only intended to give participants some reassurance, and to supply them with "tools" with which to start intervention strategies in their schools. One should not, however, fall into the trap of seeing this as the final goal of the course.</p> |

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| Comments (continued) | <p>The key point towards which the designer of a course should strive, I believe, is to motivate and enable participants to take the initiative, collect information, interpret results and, together with colleagues, find or create solutions relevant to their specific situations. That is why I cannot see a better goal than that of enabling practitioners to become action researchers in their schools. It doesn't really matter what terminology one uses - one could also say you should teach them to become organizational developers or problem solvers - the important point is that one should strive through the course to bring about a willingness in participants to become involved as change agents in their respective schools.</p> <p>In my work with this group, I found this to be the most satisfactory aspect of the course: action research becoming the vehicle for involving other staff members and for bringing about improvement in the practice of the school.</p> |
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4.2.2.9 Conclusions

In deciding on **content**, one should consider the following:

- the practical situation in the schools where participants teach. This can be accomplished by visiting some of the schools to gain first-hand knowledge about them. Information gathered could be utilized in case studies and in the design of assignments and examinations
- a set of basic topics such as those included in Schmuck and Runkel's (1994) "process goals" in organizational development. This list includes topics such as meeting procedures, problem solving, communication, decision making and conflict management. Financial management should also be included as a key factor in the growth and development of schools
- the most obvious needs of schools which become evident in the school visits and in the assignments
- the feedback of participants with respect to their expectations
- a problem-solving skill such as action research
- a focus on the professional attitudes and approach of participants.

As a final remark concerning suitable content to include in a course like this, I should

add that we made available an optional course in computer literacy to participants. Because of the low level of knowledge and skills present among them, participants required a full computer course if it was to be of any help to them. That is the reason why we did not include one module of information technology in this course - it would not have given us enough time to meet the existing need for a general management programme.

4.2.3 The human element

4.2.3.1 Introduction

The impact that the human element has on a programme like this can hardly be over-estimated. "The human element" refers to the various inter-personal relationships that develop, the interactions which take place, and the general role which human contact plays in making this type of course design different from a distance-teaching design. This factor takes time to develop, and consists of many incidents and nuances.

The interactions occur in many directions: From the lecturer to the participants; from participants to the lecturers; from the workshop leader to the participants; from them back to the workshop leader; among participants; between participants and the staff of the schools where they teach, and sometimes between the lecturer and the staff members or principal. The inter-relationships among group members are made more complex when group members come from different cultural backgrounds, which implies in the South African situation also from very different school systems and school cultures.

While many of the inter-relationships in this course developed because of the specifics of design (especially the workshops, and the utilization of a centre which previously had won the confidence of the community), some relationships, especially the networks among participants, developed spontaneously. These relationships became important for the completion of certain tasks, such as the assignments, for the development of inter-personal trust and for the effects of the course to be ongoing (even after the

course had been completed). Negative interpersonal relationships, such as those between certain participants and some of their colleagues in the school, had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the course. More will be said about this factor in section 4.3.2.

In this section, I will focus on those aspects of interpersonal relationships that, according to the data, made a positive contribution to the outcomes of the course:

| 4.2.3.2 Contact with presenters | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with the mentor • Contact with the lecturer • The experience of being treated as equals |
| Comments | <p>There can be no doubt about the importance of personal contact with the presenters. While it is difficult to determine its concrete contribution, the personal factor must be seen as part of the total process. Numerous incidents and remarks can be listed and quoted which show that participants viewed it as meaningful.</p> <p>In the rating done a year after the conclusion of the course, this was rated as the factor which contributed most to participants' changing their way of thinking and doing.</p> |
| Quotes of participants | <p>"Dr Aubrey Douglas, a most sympathetic teacher, has played a major role in my development as a student, teacher and person. True to his word he was always available both night and day to respond to queries and be my sound board."</p> <p>"The fact that we felt part of the FDE [Further Diploma in Education] management team was a positive factor. There was no emphasis on who was to lead and who was to follow, we were all leaders and followers."</p> <p>"The atmosphere and the people you are working with must be understanding. We respected each other as if we knew each other quite a long time: You and us, and us students among each other."</p> <p>"The way you approached the course, your sense of humour. You never came across as our superior, you presented the lectures in an understandable, simple way. That made things easier for us."</p> |

| 4.2.3.3 Involvement of local stakeholders | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local role model whose example can be emulated • The availability of local stakeholders who care about the project • The fact that participants have confidence in the presenters coming from their community • The knowledge of local circumstances enabling co-designers to make informed inputs • The willingness to put the infrastructure of the centre at the disposal of all • The symbolic value of presenting courses at a local community centre |
| Comments | <p>From the beginning, with the execution of a needs analysis among school principals in the Southern Cape, the development of the curriculum, the marketing of the course, the involvement of Dr Aubrey Douglas as presenter of the workshops and mentor, the utilization of the Southern Cape Learning Resource Unit as venue, the continuous involvement of Mr Andy Lamont in the creative thinking about the course and the finding of sponsors for participants, and in the development and presentation of key aspects (especially the leadership seminar in September 1998), the involvement of local individuals committed to developing the best possible course was a vital element in the success of the whole project. I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that without the pro-active involvement and support of the local stakeholders, the project would not have acquired the relevance and impact, nor the trust and the goodwill of the participants, that it did. In terms of logistics, of creating a "home and meeting place" for participants, local support and involvement are absolutely indispensable. There were times when I wondered whether the project would run its full course. In those days of crisis, when the responsible University staff were simply too far away, the key stakeholders were on the scene to do what was needed. The fact that the participants knew the local people involved with the design and presentation of the programme, as well as the fact that these individuals had been involved in the local schools and had acquired knowledge about the problems the schools had to deal with, created much trust. It is not without significance that participants often referred to them.</p> |

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| Quotes | <p><u>Personal feedback by a participant:</u></p> <p>“Mr Andy Lamont, whom I thought I knew personally, revealed a whole new world to me and demonstrated through activities that if one has an honorable vision which contributes to the improvement of a community, it takes knowledge, hard work and resilience.”</p> <p><u>Interaction in focus group:</u></p> <p>The Director of the Centre responded to a suggestion that we have a seminar for governors of School Governing Bodies by saying: “If this centre wants to render a service to all prospective managers of schools (principals) I think it can only benefit yourself and the school and the community outside ultimately if you feel that you have five or ten members on your staff and would like to come here and present to them a workshop on let’s say financial management as an example. We will provide you with all the facilities, accommodation, the works, we would see that as part of our commitment to your training.”</p> <p><u>Group discussion:</u></p> <p>X, in another discussion said: “I enjoyed it the more I got involved with the course. I was always forced to think of what has been happening at my school, because quite a number of issues that came up in this course could have been used directly in my school - the relationships between myself and the teachers, between the teachers and the students, and a number of other issues. The problems I have at school, Mr Lamont knows about some of them . . . ”.</p> |
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| 4.2.3.4 Utilization of expertise in the group | |
| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizing local expertise • Utilizing the knowledge and experience of practitioners • Adapting the course to the local situation, making it relevant for participants • Giving participants a meaningful part to play • Giving participants the opportunity to share some of their hurts and failures |

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| <p>Description and comments</p> | <p>Involving some of the participants in planning and presenting the course has numerous advantages. Their key contribution to the course lies in the knowledge and experience they have gained while doing the work of school manager in the area. This means introducing practical know-how into the group, and giving group members the opportunity to test their adult teaching skills. Utilizing the expertise available in the group to teach some parts of the content is a key aspect in making the course relevant and in creating a positive and open atmosphere among participants.</p> |
| <p>Reflections</p> | <p>One thing that became clear to me is that there are certain things which I cannot teach the participants - I cannot teach them how to organize incoming and outgoing post, and how to keep track of it. I cannot teach them how to motivate kids in their situation or context. A principal who is in this situation daily, who is forced to think about problems and to find solutions in order to survive, can, and my task is to find him or her and facilitate his/her sharing his/her solution with the group. Allowing this to be a valid approach does not diminish the responsibility incumbent on recipients to adapt the inputs to their own situations and construct their own solutions. One may thus initiate a network in which the other participants recognize this person as a source of information on this particular topic, which may be utilized long after the course has been completed.</p> <p>One of the principals mentioned his need for guidance on the writing of funding proposals. I asked Andy Lamont to oblige: his centre survives on donor money, which means that he has considerable experience in the writing of funding proposals. He prepared an excellent presentation, and as a follow-up we asked each of the participants to develop a proposal for his/her school as an assignment. Quite a number of them approached him afterwards for assistance with practical details.</p> |

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| <p>Quotes from interviews</p> | <p><u>Principal Z after he had done his presentation on discipline:</u></p> <p>“Participant D yesterday took my telephone number - he wants to talk to me about our discipline set-up. I have to fax certain things to him - if he gets stuck with things, he wants to contact me, phone me and ask me how I experience this and why he cannot implement this in his school. He says he will need me in future.”</p> <p>“I believe this experience of sharing from own experience and receiving feedback and affirmation from the group played a major role in the development of interpersonal trust and openness which became one of the hallmarks of the group’s interactions.”</p> |
| <p>4.2.3.5 Relationships among participants</p> | |
| <p>Main points</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors contributing to the development of strong ties • The development of inter-cultural understanding and acceptance • Participants coming into contact with, and learning from other groups • The establishment of informal networks among participants • The support between two participants coming from the same school • The importance of mentoring • The importance of keeping in contact after the course has been concluded |

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| Comments | <p><u>Development of strong relationships:</u></p> <p>The fact that strong bonds were formed was one of the unexpected bonuses of the course. It is difficult to say what caused this, but I think the following factors contributed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long hours we spent together: 2-3 days at a time, plus the workshops every fortnight • The tea and coffee supplied by the centre, which facilitated many discussions • The fact that humour occupied a fairly central position in our meetings • The informal atmosphere which prevailed • The positive role played by the workshop leader • The long road that many of the participants had shared with the director of the centre, which had led to a strong and trusting relationship between them • The leadership seminar, where participants could work and relax together in beautiful surroundings. <p><u>Inter-cultural acceptability:</u></p> <p>This was a point which was often raised by the only white participant, in that acceptance by the others was a key objective for him. His own perceptions of the other participants' attitudes toward him, the feedback I received from others and my own observations confirmed the fact that he indeed achieved this objective (see quotes below).</p> <p><u>The advantages of a group of participants from various cultural backgrounds, as well as from schools with various levels of development:</u></p> <p>On various occasions I was struck by the obviousness of the above. Not only did the mix serve to sensitize participants to the circumstances of other participants which were often totally foreign to their own experience, but it also had the effect of providing a variety and freshness of ideas that participants benefitted from. While I initially thought it might create a negative reaction among participants from the disadvantaged schools to see and listen to what is happening in the advantaged schools, the general feedback (which came spontaneously) on this issue often surprised me. For instance, in the focus group session of 1 April, the principals said that for a course like this one white participant is actually not enough, and another referred to the way in which the mixed group involved in the course had enriched them.</p> |
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| <p>Own reflections and quotes</p> | <p>An outflow of the deepening of relationships among participants, as well as of the acknowledgment of the value of different elements of expertise available within the group, was the identification of the need for, and the establishment of, informal networks among participants. What struck me as of particular importance was that the need was sometimes triggered by a presentation by one of the members, which resulted in some of the others approaching him/her for more information afterwards. The quote from my interview with one of the principals referred to in 4.2.3.4 is a good example of this.</p> <p>My response to his mentioning of the reaction of the other participant was as follows: "The fact that he asked you if he could phone you, is exactly what I had hoped for. Through your lecture he was exposed to another way of doing. Now he has a contact for that other way which enables him to build up a network. He is bound to phone you. This is a role you can play, even if it is a giving role - it is tough on you, but on the other hand, it is a meaningful role in which you can show him alternative ways of doing. In other words, you can actually play a mentor role, and this is how I view the future of this course. When you say the course should not end here, it seems to me a mentoring relationship should develop, not forgetting that there are others too who can do the mentoring work, such as W, who had such a good idea about the collection of school fees".</p> <p>The possibility of cross-fertilization between participants was emphasized for me when he responded by saying: "Yes, I tell you in his idea lies my future. I told him yesterday, you will have to explain that to me again, because in that I see something for myself - next term we are going to develop entrepreneurship at our school, and in our community there are also many unemployed people and also many who do not pay the school fees, and I want to involve those who are not paying. I won't do it in exactly the same way as he is doing but . . ." (He then started explaining what he would do: a whole set of new ideas triggered by the thoughts of the other participant, and suited to his particular circumstances).</p> <p>"At first they attacked me, especially one individual, who said: 'You see it like the whites and you come from a model C (formerly white) school'. Now he is much more accepting, and yesterday he wrote down everything that I said."</p> |
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| References or quotes | <p>A discussion about the cultural diversity of the course participants received extensive attention during the focus group discussion on 1 April. The opinions expressed were very positive, and included views like the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I think the fact that we are individuals from different backgrounds really enriches us during this course - that we could get to know the cultures of Dukashe, or Swart, I think that is of the utmost importance. We can now go back to our schools, and tell our teachers that we can use the different cultures of the children in our schools to enrich our school. Instead of coming to this course trying to eliminate the different cultures, we must now in this course understand it - in a discussion it comes from different persons: 'This is what we do, and this is how we can apply what we believe in our school'." • "Another principal said: "In fact, I'm just thinking how fortunate we are having Chris [the white participant] with us, and the relationships that have developed with all the changes happening in education. If only we could get more Chrisses - it would change education much faster." • "Having a school that is so high up compared to the others does not count because we are preparing the future of the country. So if my school is better than the other school it does not matter - I'm not preparing the children for that particular community, I'm preparing the children for the whole of the country which means that the interrelationships that should actually happen between the schools is very important now." • "The time I spent here meant that I got to know people and their worlds, and it even may be the most important thing which I've learnt, and something which I will take with me in my future - I now have the boldness to reach out to any person here saying: 'Can you help me?', because there is trust." • "Looking now at us, this group and the way in which we relate to each other - the bond that is becoming to develop amongst us - you know the situation at our schools is not the same and - we are fortunate now because we are getting this information [information about what happens and is being done at other schools], we are now equipped as principals - we can run our schools now at least in a better way than we used to." • "The best of the whole course is that you can share with somebody else in his experience - we should not break up, even if we come together in six months' time to ask: How are things going?, How much could you implement?" • "The interaction amongst us: It made you feel like sometimes it was tough and it was quite a lot of work, but because of the way in which it was done, it made you to say: 'I am going to finish this'." |
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| 4.2.3.6 The role of the workshop leader | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of a local, trusted person • Accessibility of such a person • A father-like figure, available to listen to participants' problems and to give advice |
| Comments | On various occasions mention has been made of the importance of this element of the teaching model. Participants found the leader of the workshops the ideal person to discuss their work with and to give them advice. An important aspect was that he was a well-known and respected person familiar with local circumstances. |
| Quote from the workshop leader | "The fact that I am close by made me extremely accessible. Some of the participants even came to see me at home. Added to this is the fact that I know the local circumstances and the local people. I could also discuss participants' personal problems with them - when one participant's husband was not appointed as principal, we discussed that, also the way in which a person who deserves a position is sometimes rejected in favour of another less deserving person." |

4.2.3.8 Conclusions

The following aspects of the **human element** contributed to the outcomes and ongoing processes attributable to the programme in George. These should be encouraged and planned for in the design of a future course:

- The involvement of local persons who care for and have a personal interest in the success and meaningfulness of the programme
- The motivation of participants to present those sections of the course in which they have built up expertise in the everyday practice of their schools
- Planning the programme in such a way that participants can spend much time together in the form of:
 1. formal discussions as part of the lectures
 2. informal discussions in a type of workshop environment
 3. informal contact in assisting one another with assignments
 4. social interaction at coffee breaks and retreats

- A mentor who is accessible can act as a soundboard, give feedback with respect to assignments and school situations, and be available to listen to their personal problems
- The involvement of a diverse group of participants
- Participants and presenters spending much time together

4.2.4 Processes

4.2.4.1 Introduction

As the development of this course was part of a research project, and because it required a big investment in terms of time and human involvement, it created many opportunities for the development of certain processes. By this I mean that aspects of the course which could not have been planned developed to a certain extent spontaneously, and became part of the total experience that was the course.

Of particular importance for me was the way in which presenters became sensitive to the needs of participants, the process of feedback in both directions between presenters and participants, the development of warm, trusting interpersonal relationships, the changing role of the workshops, the evolution with respect to the assignments, the personal growth and development of participants, and the way in which various processes gradually became integrated.

Although it is difficult to determine which factors encouraged the development of processes, I would say that in the case of this course the factors that played decisive roles were:

- The fact that presenters and participants spent much time together
- The long time frame for the presenting of the course
- The fact that the presenters were allowed a bit of flexibility so that they could respond positively to participants' suggestions
- The fact that, this being a research project, the researcher was eager to find out and understand what participants were saying. This sensitivity to participants'

suggestions and ideas, as well as to the situation, created the space for the development of various processes

| 4.2.4.2 The developing role of the workshops | |
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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workshops were at first seen as opportunities to do content-related group exercises designed by the facilitator • This developed into participants taking more initiative in designing their own case studies • Eventually the workshops became group sessions where participants shared their insights and frustrations concerning the implementation of assignments with one another, and tested their ideas with the workshop leader • The role of the workshop leader became that of a mentor, especially when the assignments took the form of action research projects • His role with respect to assisting with and assessing assignments also changed drastically |
| Comments | <p>The workshops grew in importance as the course unfolded. They often became the place where real-life teaching took place, because of advice given in response both to initiatives already taken in the form of assignments, and to problems experienced by participants. This implied that the workshop leader 's role changed radically to that of a mentor and facilitator, rather than that of a teacher or the organizer of workshops.</p> |
| Quotes | <p>In my interview with Dr Douglas, he described how, in the development of this role of mentor/workshop leader, he initially utilized the workshops to help participants to apply what they had done in the lectures to their own practical situations. Later on:</p> <p>“it became something broader, no longer focusing on a particular situation, so that management came to be seen as not being applied in a compartment, but happening in all facets of life, always being prepared for the unexpected, e.g. applying the principles of democracy in all facets of the school life, not only in trying to solve a conflict situation.”</p> |

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| <p>Quotes (continued)</p> | <p>When I asked him about his role in assisting participants with their assignments, he explained to me how this put him in a position to help guide participants' thinking: "The key issue was not the final mark the student obtained, but the process of guiding the student's thinking into more productive channels".</p> |
| <p>Developing insights</p> | <p>On 11 April, it seemed as if all my thinking about the assignments and the workshops came to a head, and I made the following notes:</p> <p>"When reading through the assignments of the first term, I observed that the participants were sometimes missing crucial instructions with respect the completion of the assignments (e.g. referring to theory, explaining what ought to be done, giving an account of discussions with colleagues). It was these observations that made me realize that the participants needed more than simply an description of the requirements for the completion of the assignments - they needed a detailed framework of how each assignment is going to be assessed. Moreover, the assessing of these assignments should be formative so that the participants get a second opportunity to improve the assignments or add any aspects that had been omitted.</p> <p>I also realized that the tutor or workshop facilitator is in an ideal position to assist participants with discussions and feedback on what they were planning to do or had already done on the schools in order to satisfy the requirements of the assignments. The tutor would then become a tutor in the true sense of the word, indicating to participants where they went wrong, and helping them to improve their end products. They would then be in a position to provide participants with feedback which is emphasized by various authors as an important tool for the transfer of knowledge (see 3.3.3.2 & 3.4.3.2).</p> <p>In addition to his/her functions of assisting students and assessing assignments, the tutor then has to facilitate discussions by participants about insights developed through their attempts to complete and implement the assignments in their schools. This implies an opportunity for participants to learn from each other (peer-assisted learning).</p> |

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| Tangible changes | <p>These thoughts were spelled out in the letter I wrote to Dr Douglas in April (addendum B9).</p> <p>The changes implied the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That I as presenter of the course would have to design a mark sheet for each assignment that I give to the participants (addendum B10). • That these mark sheets would be given to the participants to help them focus their assignments on the key elements of the assignments. • That the workshop leader (facilitator) would then assess the assignments according to the criteria on the mark sheets. • That the participants would be allowed a second chance to do (or change) their assignments, with the completed mark sheets as guides for their second efforts. • That the programmes of the workshops would be changed from activities designed by the workshop leader and based on the content of the previous contact session, to discussions between participants and between participants and the leader about the assignments. The workshop leader's task would therefore change from that of the "leader" to that of a facilitator or mentor. |
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| 4.2.4.3 The processes developing with respect to transfer to practice | |
| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about application in own context • Being open to other participants' contributions • Developing a team approach • Sharing ideas with colleagues |
| Comments | <p>The programme generated many processes which all played a part in obtaining the end result of effecting change in schools. Some of these were reflected in what participants experienced and told me, others in what they wrote in their assignments and examination scripts.</p> <p>From the following quotations one gets a picture of the complexities attending the translation of knowledge into practice, of the role personal interaction plays in stimulating processes of transfer, and of the time and space needed for these processes to run their full course.</p> |

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| <p>Quotes</p> | <p><u>Personal feedback during an interview</u></p> <p>“Maybe one could’ve learned all the various elements of conflict later on, but in the course, and in being together, we took all these things together - I sat there and thought by myself: How can I handle conflict in <i>my</i> situation, how can I utilize communication - I always brought it back here. I designed my own version of P’s school fees collection model, with reference to my people, my context - I had to give it my structure.”</p> <p>”Everything I experienced helped. When we discussed the issue of a staff member under the influence of alcohol, I said to myself: I do not have a problem like that on my staff, but I have somebody who is always late - even today, I still use things I received on the course. I sit down and think and say to myself: This person said that”</p> <p><u>Comments made in the assignments</u></p> <p>“We dealt with late-coming and put a strategy in place - it’s working, you can see everybody is trying to be on time. This is not something I did, but what we as a team did.”</p> <p>“I did not keep the knowledge to myself. We (the two deputies and I) had a strategic planning session. We discussed aspects of communication and stress management. We also discussed listening skills. They also need this in their dealings with the heads of departments working under them, and they were also able to share this with them. The course enabled me to speak with authority, not based on my position as principal, but on account of my knowledge. I know what I am talking about.”</p> |
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| <p>4.2.4.4 Developments regarding assignments</p> | |
| <p>Input from participants regarding the formulation of assignments</p> | <p>In 4.2.2.2 I referred to a suggestion by the participants that we change the way in which the assignments were formulated. Our response reflected our general approach to the course, as was demonstrated in the case of the marketing seminar when we changed the whole programme on account of participants’ inputs. In the case of the assignments, the request to change the format into a more integrated one represented a closer reflection of reality, in the sense that one cannot separate aspects of management into separate boxes. It was acknowledged that the changed format would make the transfer to practice easier.</p> |

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| <p>Role of the workshops</p> | <p>In the design of the assignments for the first term of 1998 (addendum B5), the emphasis already had shifted heavily to the practical situation of the school, together with the utilization of own insights and those of colleagues and other participants. I had also changed my thinking about the role of the workshops. On 15 April I wrote in my journal: "As we [members of the focus group] were discussing the assignments, it suddenly dawned upon me that if they [the participants] really got their teeth into this [the January format of the assignments], they did not need extra activities at the workshops to make the theory practicable for them - <i>these assignments</i> were the activities, and the workshops could be utilized to help and guide them in their practical endeavours. In fact, in the light of both Leithwood <u>et al.</u>'s (1992) and Wallace's (1991) emphasis on the critical importance of immersing participants in real situations, requiring them to do things in the day-to-day running of their schools and giving them feedback on their efforts, one could view assignments as bridges between the teaching and real every-day-situations. Then the workshops, with an ex-school principal as facilitator, become the ideal opportunity for sharing experiences and giving feedback. Even when we cannot provide opportunities for internships as part of the course (due to the various constraints of the South African educational situation such as, especially, the limited financial resources and the huge number of principals needing more preparation), this type of arrangement can come near to the objectives pursued through internships."</p> |
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| <p>Feedback given in the workshops to participants about the assignments</p> | <p>The feedback was in most cases verbal, with participants coming to the centre and receiving feedback in person from Dr Douglas. At one stage Z could not attend (he stays in a town quite far from George). He sent his assignment to George, and Dr Douglas returned his comments by fax. Reading through this fax convinces one of the soundness of the system, and of the much improved support this offers participants. The comments were made in Afrikaans, and therefore I repeat a couple of the paragraphs in English to give some indication of the quality support this represents:</p> <p>In the assignment it must be made clear that the notes supplied, as well as any other source which may have been consulted, have been worked through and understood well. For that reason you have to refer to the source you obtained your information from. It will be positive if you consult some or other expert and refer to him/her also.</p> <p>The criteria for the assessment of the assignment require (see numbers 1 and 2) that you indicate clearly why and how you decided on the specific aspect of financial management that needs improving. You must also explain why you chose Ms Burger as "sound board". Did she experience problems? If yes, briefly describe them. Added to that, you have to give an account of her comments and inputs.</p> <p>Please read points 3 and 4 of the criteria carefully - in the design of a new budgetary system you must refer to the notes or the inputs of an expert.</p> <p>If you have implemented the new system already, report briefly on the process. Refer to both the positive and the negative aspects and indicate where you can improve the process. Include the forms you have designed for the new system as part of your addendum. Please make the necessary adjustments and send it back to me as soon as possible.</p> |
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| 4.2.4.5 The preparation of principals: a divergent process | |
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| Skills training is a convergent process | <p>On 26 April I recorded the following reflections on the preparation of school principals:</p> <p>“What is training? I understand training to be an activity in which one person shares his/her skill(s) with another so that the other may acquire that skill.”</p> |
| <p>Convergent vs divergent teaching programmes</p> <p>Convergent aspects of principal preparation programmes</p> | <p>The process works something like this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I share the theory with you (I tell) • I show you what to do (I show) • I do it for you to see (I model) • I let you try to do it (I empower) • I let you know what you did right and what you did wrong (I give feedback) • I let you try again and again (I mentor) <p>If the skill is riding a bicycle, the training is convergent, which means that you eventually reach a point where I can say: “The training is over, there is nothing more to teach you. We do not need to discuss your bicycle riding again, and after a certain stage it does not matter how much experience you get - it is not as if your bicycle riding will improve, or need to improve - you can ride a bicycle, and that is the end of the matter.” This implies, therefore, a convergent process, a task that can be ticked off as having been successfully completed.</p> <p>What then would one say about the training of school principals? In the training of school principals, it seems as if the process described above applies only to a small number of aspects of the principal’s job. One may say it applies to aspects like the running of meetings, the drawing up of a budget, the designing of a filing system and the organizing of the student and staff records. In the case of these examples, the steps outlined above will apply, so that a day may arrive when I will be able to say: “Your financial system is in place now, your filing system supports your work and you run your staff meetings well”.</p> |

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| <p>Convergent aspects of principal preparation programmes (continued)</p> | <p>While I may be saying this on the grounds of certain objective criteria, this may not be what is actually required. In the end, the final assessment will have to be done by you: You will in the end have to be able to say: "Now at last I'm satisfied that my filing system works well for me, or I'm happy with the smooth way in which the meeting functioned". It may even be that you get feedback from a colleague, and let him/her tell you what went well and what can still be improved upon.</p> |
| <p>Principal preparation predominantly divergent, on-going, a life-long process</p> | <p>The point, however, is that the preparation of school leaders is not a convergent process. The process of getting you ready for your job implies much more than training you to be adept at a skill, it involves preparing you for a complex professional task. The work of the principal is very divergent. Added to that, it functions on many different levels and in many different contexts. It is often a test of a person's maturity and wisdom.</p> <p>Nevertheless one can still say that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the preparation of school principals implies much more than mere skills training • the academic side of a preparation course is essential to stimulate participants' thinking • it is essential for participants to be alone sometimes in order to do some reflection • the preparation of principals includes the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. <p>Anyone who wants to learn about becoming a principal, should realize that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is a growth process that takes time and is never completed • the responsibilities are much more complicated than what any book can prepare you for • it implies a process that a person has to go through together with other people, and therefore changes every day • it is dependent on how you work with and relate to other people • it is dependent on feedback from others who work with you • it is a continuous and cyclical process. |

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| 4.2.4.6 Integration of various processes | |
| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various processes play a role • It is difficult to isolate one aspect of a programme as having a determining influence • Some aspects which are not typical conventional elements of teaching emerge • Sensitivity to various aspects of the process is important |
| Comments or description | <p>In considering the events described in addendum A.2.1.3, which referred to the contact session in April where Principal Y shared his experience with respect to conflict management with his staff, one is struck by the complexity of certain processes, the unexpectedness of certain outcomes, as well as the importance of allowing time for processes which do not represent conventional elements of teaching.</p> <p>In the preparation of school leaders, it seems to me that one will have to consider various new approaches, which may have as their most important component spending time with individuals and with the group, waiting for the unexpected to emerge, and then “going with the flow” in the sense of being sensitive to emerging issues and needs, and trying to steer the process accordingly. This surely will require a very open and flexible programme, but also one that will be responsive to crucial, teachable moments. It will also require a changed perception of the lecturer’s role. I would not like to use the term “facilitator”, because this term is sometimes associated with the function of simply steering what is already happening. Much more will be required from this person:</p> <p>He/she still needs the theoretical knowledge about what types of inputs are required. Furthermore, he/she needs to understand the importance of knowing what is going on in the schools where participants teach, as well as the value of their inputs. He/she also needs to be willing to postpone or even cancel his/her agenda if and when the situation requires that, and to play second fiddle and become a follower at crucial stages in the process. In other words, the person responsible for the teaching part will have to know when to take a strong lead in order to make inputs and to steer the process, and when to allow the “energy fields” (Costa and Liebmann, 1997) present in the situation to determine both direction and content.</p> |

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| Quotes or reflections | <p>The interwovenness of the elements of a teaching programme was again accentuated for me during the interviews with participants in October 1999. Participants had problems identifying specific aspects of the course which were the most meaningful with respect to outcomes. I wrote in my field notes on 7 October 1999: "The outcomes are the result of a total process within which aspects like the workshops, lectures and relationships are important components. However, to try to identify one or two specific aspects is maybe trying to find something that is not there".</p> <p>One participant felt it was unfair of me to expect her to list the various aspects of the course in terms of their influence on her thinking and doing.</p> |
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4.2.4.7 Conclusions

While it is difficult to determine what one should do to create space for various **processes** to develop, I think it is fair to say that the following aspects of the course did play a role:

- A programme structure which allowed for ongoing feedback from participants
- A flexible programme. We had the freedom to change our planning in order to adjust to new insights and emerging needs
- The fact that presenters and participants spent much time together in various contexts, including interactions on an individual basis
- A team approach, not only between presenters, but also between presenters and participants, with the absence of any hierarchical structures
- An openness and sensitivity to the needs and varied backgrounds of participants, on the part of the workshop leader and among participants themselves
- The fact that the atmosphere was created and time was allowed, for, reflection
- A willingness on the part of the presenters to sometimes suspend their own designs and plans in order to accommodate unanticipated developments and suggestions. This means in a sense a willingness to "go with the flow", even if that implies the sacrifice of designs or plans which had cost the presenters much time and energy, and about which they have a feeling of personal accomplishment
- The fact that the preparation of school principals is viewed as a lifelong process, which implies that a programme such as this one should be seen (and planned)

as part of a longer term process.

4.2.5 Course structure

4.2.5.1 Introduction

In working with this group over a two-year period, I - together with the group of participants - tried various ways of structuring the course so that everybody could be accommodated in the best possible way. Considerations which were taken into account included the fact that participants' programmes were full, and that some had to travel quite a distance to attend the lectures. After a year's trial and error it was decided that the model which suited the group best was one that made provision for lectures during the four school holidays, with workshops on Friday afternoons during the school terms.

My own thinking developed in such a way as to accommodate participants' preferences, while simultaneously seeking a structure that would bring the readings, lectures (contact sessions) and the school situations into closer proximity to one another. The following quote gives an indication of how my thinking about this aspect developed:

| 4.2.5.2 Determining a structure | |
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| Own reflections | <p>As I continued my reading, I gained many new insights which I could still implement. Two such insights are reflected in my journal of 6 March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A contact session should be structured in such a way as to allow for a preparation, action and follow-up phase. In order to accomplish this, participants should receive their readings well in advance, and they should be guided through their readings to make a diagnosis of the situation in their schools with reference to the aspect to be focused on.• The follow-up part (assignment, task) should be structured in such a way that participants are required (compelled) to work together with a colleague from their own school. |

4.2.5.3 Conclusions

The structure which emerged was a lecture period of three days during school holidays, preceded by a time of reading and data gathering in the schools, and succeeded by a term of implementation, with workshops in between to guide the process of applying theory in the practical school situations.

4.2.6 Action research as a central strategy in a preparation programme

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| 4.2.6.1 Introduction | |
| Teaching principals to become action researchers themselves | <p>Having been exposed to various authors' thinking on what a preparation programme should actually be aiming at, I came to place particular emphasis on concepts such as "change agent" Fullan (1993) and "problem solver" Leithwood <i>et al.</i> (1992). I wrote in my journal on 19 February 1998: "If the practitioners could learn how to do action research with me, they could be motivated to do the same with their members of staff - then all will become truly change agents or problem solvers. Maybe this is worth more attention. If principals could learn, from being involved in action research with me, how the process works, they might become enthusiastic, and want to use their expertise to give their staff the same type of experience. This, then, could put into practice what McKernan (1996:12) refers to when he says: 'Action research is a realistic professional development strategy'."</p> <p>As my reading progressed, I realized that the concept was a sound one that fitted into my thinking, no matter by what name it was called. One can represent the same idea of a dynamic objective, representing an involvement in practice with the aim of facilitating change, with the terms "transformational leader", "change agent" or "organizational developer". However, the term "action researcher" made most sense to me, perhaps for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The emphasis is on data gathering before any intervention takes place• Action research is seen as a cyclical process• Action research seems to be more generally accessible, not requiring a set of personal traits such as that which the image of "transformational leader" conjures up, or a body of knowledge such as one anticipates when the term "organizational developer" is employed. |

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| Teaching principals to become action researchers themselves (continued) | <p>My thinking about this is reflected in a comment I recorded on my tape recorder as I was driving away from my interview with principal Z on 27 February 1998:</p> <p>"If I, through this course, can teach a person to be an action researcher in his/her school, and he/she can report back about his/her insights, experiences and results to the group, this could become a major part of the course."</p> |
| Action research as a key aspect of a preparation course | <p>On 8 May, I had another related thought:</p> <p>"I am realizing more and more that the central goal of a preparation programme should be as Zuber-Skerritt (1996:91) puts it: 'a shift in people from single to double-loop learning, from dependent to independent thinking, from efficiency to effectiveness orientation, and from an organizational to a strategic approach to organizational development'."</p> <p>In order to accomplish this goal, teaching alone is insufficient. But if participants could be motivated to start an action research programme in their schools, there would be more hope of success.</p> <p>It is in this sense that I believe action research can play a role in assisting participants to realize that when they register for a preparation programme for school leaders, they are actually embarking on a road that leads to life-long learning and development.</p> |
| 4.2.6.2 Action research as a process | |
| Main points | Comments, reflections and quotes |
| Identification of related problems and becoming committed to solving the problems | <p>One comment made in a November examination script about the process involved in action research went like this: "During the process other problems surfaced which needed to go through a similar process [of action research]; we had to remain focused on the original problem and inform the manager to get another group to solve some of those problems." Also: "The researchers must own the process. The group eventually volunteered (rather insisted) on carrying out the action of their collaborated plans."</p> |

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| The bonding of participants | The way in which action research is carried out can bring participants closer to each other in collegial relationships. This was emphasized by the following statement by a participant in an assignment: "There was no hierarchy in the process [which they followed in implementing their action research project in the school]. I knew that I had to sit back and wait. Each member contributed in different ways, but each enjoyed the same status. Communication was open and symmetrical". |
| Inter-personal trust | One participant stressed the importance of trust as a prerequisite for action research to take place: "It took us some time before they could trust us. Trust is one of the things that I learned when doing this action research. If a person does not trust you, he/she will never open up". |
| Stimulating reflection | <p>One of the participants said:</p> <p>"Action research teaches those involved to look at the whole project critically. It is also essential that one obtains everybody's cooperation, because without that the whole project will be doomed to failure. It taught me that one needs to continuously reflect on the whole process, and each phase of the project - this led in our case to individual development through self-evaluation and participation in the problem solving processes."</p> <p>This participant felt strongly about both the staff and organizational development role which action research can play. He adds to the above by saying:</p> <p>"By means of action research one will be able to identify barriers or obstacles to change which prevent the solution of problems. In this way action research can contribute to the establishment of a new type of organization which is decentralized and non-hierarchical, and this will lead to not only the success of the organization, but also to the growth and development of its members. Through action research it becomes possible to tap individuals' commitment and capacity to learn to the advantage of the organization."</p> |

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| <p>A process resulting in participants owning the solution, having also obtained the support of the staff for its implementation</p> | <p>The possible spin-offs of an action research process are numerous, and often unanticipated. The advantages for the individuals taking part are often not to be found so much in the solution of the problem they had set out to solve (the task) as in the process of reaching that solution. Through being part of the process, participants learn new things about themselves, and change old, unproductive habits or thought patterns. One of the participants said the following after she had completed her assignment: "While writing the minutes of this meeting for the group to approve, I thought back to last year. I felt desperate then but now I do not. Much of what has materialized used to be wishful thinking which I transformed into goals. Much of this meeting's results exists in many institutions, it could have been so easy to use their systems (implying we could have simply took over the solution worked out by another institution). Instead, it has taken almost a year to get a 'group decision' that the staff will support and commit themselves to. The reward seems so small when compared to the hours and effort that has gone into achieving it", and "The group has expanded to five members. All we had to do was to propose a procedure. Instead, we have five members who now want to carry out the procedure . . . they feel that they own it."</p> |
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| <p>Implementation of the process of action research</p> | <p>Participants showed clearly that they were able to implement and adjust the process of action research to suit their own situation. One put it like this in his summary and evaluation of the action research process she had just gone through:</p> <p>“Although the project was supported by all the stakeholders (learners, educators and parents), it required a continuous reflection on and evaluation of the whole process. This resulted in extra cycles (loops) followed in order to complete the programme. In looking at the whole project, one can say without fear of contradiction, that a complex problem could be solved through the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders. Everyone had the opportunity to make a contribution in his/her own way.”</p> |
| <p>4.2.6.3</p> | <p>Outcomes of action research projects</p> |
| <p>The involvement of participants</p> | <p>One of the most important consequences of an action research process is, to my mind, the involvement of the participants. This was an outcome in many of the projects, for instance, one participant said:</p> <p>“Other participants showed a change from no involvement, no talk, no work and no commitment to enthusiasm and involvement. Everyone around us wants to know what we are doing and when they will be told about it.”</p> |
| <p>The involvement of other schools</p> | <p>Another positive outcome was reported by one of the participants in the November examinations:</p> <p>“What I have also learnt was that the primary school in the township also started with afternoon classes after they saw what we did. They saw it was a good thing in helping the learners to perform better. They said that their learners’ academic performances improved tremendously after that, just like our learners’ performances too.”</p> |

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| <p>The development of creative problem-solving strategies</p> | <p>In an action research project in which one of the participants and some of her colleagues investigated the disappearance of school fee money, she tells of how she suspected that some of the teachers had not recorded their receiving of the money and has misappropriated it. However, she did not want to confront them, fearing the conflict that would ensue. She then writes:</p> <p>“However, through stopping to correct the error, my colleagues and myself discovered innovative ways to attempt to solve the problem. This also lead to discovering loopholes in the system we would never have been aware of. The experience had given us the opportunity to reflect and discuss the problems and present possible solutions which will serve as a starting point to modify the process of controlling income of learners. Hopefully it will contribute to such an irregularity not happening again.”</p> <p>She then, in the minutes of the meeting, includes a list of 7 recommendations for a new system for learner registration and the fees collection.</p> |
| <p>The influencing of other subsystems in the school</p> | <p>One participant, thinking about the effects their action research project had had, as well as the possible wider consequences it might have had for the whole school, writes the following in her assignment:</p> <p>“Through action research other subsystems in the organization are proven to be inadequate too. It makes those affected by it to rethink and replan the way things used to be done. I am hesitant to say this, but I think that if action research is implemented in solving one problem in a subsystem, it could have a ripple effect and contribute to the restructuring of the school organization. In our case, it has sped up the modification of registration, improved the financial management of school fees and revised the process of collecting personal information of learners. Many hours will be saved through preventing the repetitive collection of certain data pertaining to learners.”</p> |

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| <p>Unsuccessful attempts</p> | <p>Not all action research projects were successful. At Y's school, where I had picked up the existence of interpersonal problems during my visits to schools in November 1997, the project focused on "team building". After many meetings of both the action research and the management teams, many problems still existed. Y's final paragraph of his report is telling:</p> <p>"At least now I can boldly say in general terms about my school, there is light at the end of the tunnel. But there are still issues of concern which need to be addressed such as the unprofessional and negative attitude of teachers especially when they relate to each other. The impression one gets is that a fight, physically, is imminent, hence we are striving for unity" [sic!].</p> <p>It amazed me that participants were open about both their weaknesses and their successes. This was especially true in Y's case. The problems at his school really seemed to me very difficult to solve, and again emphasized the seriousness of interpersonal problems in an organizational context. While he comes across as a very humble and softly spoken person, it was obvious that at least some of these problems had to be ascribed to aspects of his own management style. This again emphasized the need for ongoing mentoring networks outlasting the formal teaching period during which the course took place.</p> |
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| <p>4.2.6.4 Participants' reflections on the value of action research</p> | |
| <p>The value of action research</p> | <p>The general comments by participants in the November examination about the value of action research for themselves and for their schools were very positive. Opinions expressed included the following:</p> <p>"Action research is absolutely essential for any school. Next year I am going to teach both the Council of Learners and the School Governing Body to use the action research method wherever applicable. The important principle is to keep on with the action research process until you find a model which is suitable for your school. The advantage of this process is that all participants cooperate and that all know what the objectives are. It is not a case of the principal telling everybody what should be done, but rather of 'we want to do this in a particular way'."</p> |

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| Fostering commit- ment | <p>One of the participants said the following about the way the action process in her school developed :</p> <p>“We soon realized that once we start with the process we have to remain committed to the process. It was so important to stop and reflect on yourself and the actions implemented. While reflecting on myself I experienced a change in my own practice and had a better understanding thereof (an unknown part of my nature was revealed to me).”</p> |
| Encoura- ging team work | <p>At one school the action research focused on the high failure rate of pupils. The project included an analysis of the June examination results. The person involved with this project wrote the following comments in the November examination: “What I learnt from the project was when we at school as a team want to do something, we do it no matter what or how difficult it is”.</p> |
| Generating new insights | <p>The participant who was involved in the project concerning the high failure rate, said in her reflections about the project (quotation taken from her November examination script):</p> <p>“I also learnt that parent involvement is very important. Our mistake was that we never informed the parents and that made the situation quite difficult. We saw our mistake and we are going to call all parents in early next year so that we can all work together to eliminate the high failure rate at our school.”</p> <p>One of the participants, in reflecting on the effects the action research process had had on her, said the following:</p> <p>“Myself, I have learned through action research, to become more patient and to slow down to think things over (‘reflect’) before letting my enthusiasm get the better of me I tend to be assertive and can become quite angry when things don’t go my way. Action research has had a temperance on my latter vice. I always <i>said</i> that I was not in charge but now I really <i>feel</i> I belong to the group.”</p> <p>She also described how members of the action research group changed, e.g. an autocratic type of person who had “changed his attitude and talks about a team strategy”; or another who previously “hardly ever made a contribution in staff meetings, but now participates actively and enthusiastically take part in the group”.</p> |

| 4.2.6.5 Own reflections | |
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| Individual roles and relationships | <p>On 15 January 1998 I wrote in my journal the following reflections on individual roles in action research:</p> <p>“One should build into an action research design something which assigns a special task to each participant, and ensures that a way is found to test the way each one has performed that specific task (they will have to know this in advance). Maybe a better way would be to reward each individual for every aspect accomplished in his/her task, and let that be added to the group reward.”</p> <p>On 26 January I again picked up on that theme when I wrote in my journal:</p> <p>“I truly believe that a basic pre-requisite for accomplishing some of the above is a genuine sense of equal partnering between the lecturer and the participants. The message should be clear: ‘In this endeavour, there are no high platforms or low ones, no single authority with all the answers and miracles tucked up his/her sleeve, no consultant who can give you the know-how that will save your organization’. Each one must clearly understand his/her role, as well as the fact that every single role is important. In this sense, we are working together, each with a different but equally important role to bring about change for the improvement of the organization.”</p> |

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| The choice of topics for action research projects | <p>What struck me when reading through the action research projects was the variety of topics and problems addressed. Topics included irregularities with respect to the collection of school fees; fund raising; high student failure rates; high dropout rates; staff unity; computer lessons; lateness of teachers and learners and vandalism of school buildings.</p> <p>It became clear to me that the projects engaged with problems which the schools were either already facing, or would have had to address at some stage anyway. This meant that the projects did not involve participants in something separate from their everyday existence.</p> |
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| <p>Fulfilling the requirements of adult learning</p> | <p>The action research projects provided participants with a space within which, and a structure with which, to solve problems that they would have had to solve anyway. The fact that they had to submit something tangible may just have added that extra incentive to take more trouble and to work towards a real solution. In this way, their involvement in the course and their work in the schools were fused.</p> <p>Two additional aspects which emerged from the accounts participants gave of the processes involved in their projects were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the fact that colleagues became enthused through their participation in the projects, and • the non-hierarchical nature of the groups. <p>This accords with the principles of adult learning discussed in 3.3.5, especially with aspects such as adults' interest in the solution of immediate problems they are faced with, and the fact that adult learning is often collaborative and participatory, involving learners working together in groups as equal members.</p> |
| <p>Combining action research projects with current problem solving processes in the school</p> | <p>The tying in of projects required for the completion of the course with the current needs and problems of the schools where participants teach, needs to be considered closely, and its potential fully utilized in in-service courses. In the case of the preparation of school leaders, the implementation of this principle could obviate the need for internship programmes, especially if it could be supplemented with a mentoring programme led by a local (retired) practitioner.</p> |
| <p>Feedback from participants</p> | <p>Participants interviewed in October 1999 felt strongly about the relevance of the course for their everyday lives in the schools. Many of them referred to the fact that they could implement what they had learned in the course. Of particular importance was the fact that the assignments (including the action research projects) stimulated them to do things they (especially the principals) ought to have been doing anyway.</p> |

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| <p>What action research may bring about</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active involvement of more staff members • A heightened sense of self-awareness • A new way of solving problems • A process by which new problems are continuously brought to the surface and dealt with • School-wide, tangible outcomes • A renewed enthusiasm among teachers for educational change • A search for “hard evidence” (Argyris, 1993) • Collaboration between colleagues, and a structure within which to co-operate • The hope that some change, the solution of a problem, is possible • Recognition that “we” can make a tangible difference |
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4.2.6.6 Conclusions

Shifting the emphasis of a preparation programme from content to **action research** implies changing from a product- to a process-oriented approach. It implies substituting for the goal of increasing participants’ knowledge that of influencing their level of commitment and involvement; it implies also changing participants’ objectives in doing the course from achieving high marks (grades) to doing something tangible in practice. It means changing one’s view about the role of content from being the end one should aim at, to that of the initial spark which generates confidence in participants to attempt to bring about school improvement.

Apart from the tangible outcomes, action research became the aspect of the programme in which one could witness a change in the attitudes and commitments of those involved, and even those of participants’ colleagues in the schools. For me this meant progress towards the goal of increased self-awareness among participants, summarized by Zuber-Skerritt’s (1996:91) view of the goal of emancipatory action research as “a shift in people from single to double-loop learning, from dependent to independent thinking, from efficiency to effectiveness orientation”.

4.3 THE SCHOOL AS PRACTICE GROUND FOR PARTICIPANTS

One of the major developments in my thinking about preparation programmes centres on my recognition of the determining influence which the schools where participants teach have on the effectiveness of these programmes. This influence includes, on the positive side, the fact that the school provides the space, and the support, for participants to test out their new-found skills and knowledge. On the negative side, the school and its inhabitants can also be instrumental in blocking the transfer of any new ideas or initiatives to the school, thereby effectively negating the potential for change and improvement inherent in a staff member's involvement with the course.

The literature abounds with evidence of the impact which implementation in the real workplace can have on the amount of learning that takes place. Kolb's (1984) views on experiential learning, as applied to the field of preparation courses for school leaders by Wallace (1991), emphasise the every-day situation as crucial to the learning process, and focus on feedback from colleagues as vital for the confirmation and adjustment of attempts at implementation. Unless the school is considered an indispensable ally in the development and (especially) implementation of preparation programmes, all the good ideas and sound planning may in the end simply be wasted, bearing no fruit for the improvement of practice. While much trouble is taken with the design of the course, with the planning of teaching strategies, content processes and various interpersonal dynamics, these will be of little avail unless the other side of the coin, the school itself, is considered and prepared with equal care.

It must be stressed at this stage, however, that this study did not attempt to investigate all the relevant factors. On 21 April I recorded the following reflections in my journal:

"It is important to note with respect to the limitations of this study that many factors having an important influence on the transferability of knowledge, such as physical circumstances and provision, cultural, personal and political factors have not been taken into account in trying to improve the implementation of knowledge in the practical situation. Factors which this study did focus on, relate to didactic, cognitive and social

factors such as aspects of adult learning and the socialization of school leaders.”

In this section I focus on elements I encountered in schools which caused problems in the implementation of participants’ new ideas and initiatives, and on suggestions as to how to overcome these obstacles in future, from the side of the course (presenters), and from the perspective of the school. In the next section (4.4), I will refer to instances where participants’ implementation efforts did work, and brought about outcomes in the form of personal growth in participants and tangible changes in schools, as well as processes which developed simultaneously with the programme.

4.3.1 The practical situation in schools

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| <p>4.3.1.1. The magnitude of problems schools are confronted with</p> | <p>On the fourth of April, I wrote the following general observations in my journal about the context which the assignments pointed to: “Immense problems exist in 80% of the schools in which the participants teach. These are problems which the staff have little or no control over, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1900 pupils in a school built for 1200 • 45 teachers of whom 22 are temporary • Principal and administrative staff all temporary • Very poor community • Illiterate members of both the PTSA and the Governing Body • De-motivated teachers because of uncertainties with respect to posts • Shortage of human and material resources • Tremendous population growth • Interpersonal tensions among staff members • Power games - teachers aspiring to become the next principal want the acting principal to fail • No or little involvement of staff in the addressing of problems”. |
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| <p>The magnitude of problems schools are confronted with (continued)</p> | <p>On 15 April, having been busy transcribing the tape recordings of the interviews at the schools in November, I wrote in my journal:</p> <p>“After having listened to the recording of one interview at this one particular school, and having again been exposed to the magnitude of the problems they have to deal with, I actually do not know what to say. My question is: Do I have anything to say to these people?, and can I condemn them for not doing anything about some of the most basic needs in the school, while they already are so much involved with the needs of the learners? They literally have everything against them.</p> <p>One topic of the course is on human resource development, but how can this take place in the absence of everything else? What should my job be? Can I ignore this, the total imbalance in educational provision in one town?</p> <p>Though I know these issues are beyond the scope of this project, they do have a crucial effect on the impact of the course in practice. A designer of a programme should therefore, as has been discussed earlier, not attempt to design a programme without visiting a representative number of schools his/her students are teaching in”.</p> |
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4.3.1.2 Conclusions

The **problems** which schools have to deal with highlight two aspects of preparation programmes referred to earlier:

- The importance of visiting a representative number of schools where participants teach before deciding on the final format and content of the programme
- Employing a local person, who is familiar with the local schools' circumstances, to act as mentor to participants.

4.3.2 Obstacles to the implementation of course outcomes in practice

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| <p>4.3.2.1 Two basic causes</p> | <p>After having gone through many assignments, examination scripts and personal interviews, and having visited some of the schools on a couple of occasions, I think it is valid to confirm the following observation I wrote down in my notes on 7 June 1998:</p> <p>“I witnessed the following two obstacles in terms of transfer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad interpersonal relationships, resulting from factors such as mistrust, conflict, gossip, power struggles and experiences of feeling threatened • A lack of self-awareness - of taking personal responsibility, of willingness to become the ‘author’.” <p>In the following discussion of the various factors hindering implementation, it will become evident that the majority of these are related, in one way or another, to one of the above causes.</p> <p>It must also be stressed at this point that, for the majority of the cases where the level of implementation was disappointing, the causes for this were beyond the control of participants. In two cases in which I felt like blaming the participants involved, I also noticed certain cultural factors which might have contributed to their seeming failure to implement what the course had aimed at, and which I was not in a position to judge.</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.2 An autocratic principal</p> | <p>One aspect which struck me throughout, was the measure in which the current situation at a particular school played a role in determining what participants could do to facilitate change. A fairly common example of this is the presence of an autocratic principal (obviously in cases where the participant is not the principal). In reading through the assignments of the first term, it struck me that in every instance where the participant was not the principal of the school, the assignments made mention of problems experienced with the principal!</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.3 The realities of the South African situation</p> | <p>When one participant made the remark that a record-keeping system would “never work for them because the teachers are not interested”, it again underlined the stark reality of the local situation which has to be borne in mind throughout. In some cases the lack of motivation among teachers played a decisive role in the transferability of knowledge to the workplace.</p> |

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| <p>4.3.2.4 Inability or unwillingness to change</p> | <p>In two of the schools where participants are the principals, I did not see much evidence of change. My interviews with them also did little to allay my fears that the status quo had more-or-less been maintained. When I asked them about specific issues that had been discussed earlier, such as acquiring the assistance of an outside person to help them with the school's financial management system, or utilizing the school's strategic location to attract funding, I received disappointing answers. Looking at one of the schools' newly built section where two years ago the principal showed me the problem of dust being blown underneath the one outside door because the door did not fit properly (requiring only a rubber/aluminum strip to solve the problem), nothing had been done to change the situation.</p> <p>I wrote in my field notes:</p> <p>"I honestly do not know how I can change his mind set". Afterwards I wondered whether I had the right to suggest that my mind set was better than his, and whether I did not just look at different things from what he did, or from a different perspective. What struck me often was the total ignorance or 'blindness' of participants with respect to the role they themselves could play, while they at the same time were so vocal about the responsibilities of others. The last quotation in this section is a good example of this phenomenon. I will say more about this when dealing with the issue of the complexities one is confronted with when different cultures are involved in efforts to bring about change. The following responses give some indication of the situation at two of the schools (my comments and questions are given in square brackets):</p> |
| <p>Quotes/ reflections</p> | <p>[I asked about the state of financial management in the school]:</p> <p>"Things are bound to change, because the Department now gives money to the schools to cover all running expenses, so we will now have to deal with a couple of hundred thousand Rand. It means that we will have to be audited, which forces proper financial management". [significant that the external factors force them while the course and the knowledge gained had no effect].</p> <p>"I requested the area office to send us an expert as far as this is concerned so that he can sit down with me - I'm trying to get more skills from the outside for this one." [looking for outside help to solve problem]</p> |

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| <p>Quotes/ reflections (cont.)</p> | <p>[I again suggested (as I had done two years ago) that they put up billboards on the school grounds facing the big road going into the township in order to raise funds by renting out advertizing space. His response:]</p> <p>“They will be putting up a new school shortly at another site”. [I tried to convince him that even if they were to start building straight away (which would be very unrealistic to assume), it will at least take another year, in which the boards could be utilized, but he did not respond. He said:]</p> <p>“Oh, one needs a very strong Governing Body. Everything is a problem these days, it seems”. [With that, he left to take one of the parents to a nearby clinic.] [At the other school, speaking about financial management, I reminded the principal that he had said the previous year that he would get somebody from his church to assist him. His response:]</p> <p>“We still need that person to come, it is only that he didn’t have the time. We are now trying to push through the Governing Body that the Deputy Principal be made the treasurer of the school - there were people who felt that the treasurer should be on the Governing Body, but I said ‘no’ - In the end I’m the person who is accountable for the school finance, so that I need to be given that chance to choose the person who handles the school’s finances. Fortunately he is a very talkative and strong person, and up to now he is handling everything, so there are no problems”. [It seems very much a situation of centralizing power in the hands of two members of the management team.] [My question: Are the finances done according to some sort of bookkeeping system?]</p> <p>“I told him, as the new treasurer, he must come up to me with proposals for new policies - I, as the school principal, am supportive of him.”</p> <p>[Have you got some way of controlling? Is there a committee around him?:]</p> <p>“We need to have a committee unless we can get somebody who can tell us the policies they have at their school. So at this stage it is only him, and he works with the management team. One of the Governing Body members is also a member of the school’s management team, so both of them are with me, and they are influential when it comes to the school - he is now about to prepare a financial report. That report will first of all be presented to the teachers for their approval and then it must be taken to the parents. So at least I am safe now from the people saying the principal knows about the money”.</p> |
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| <p>Quotes / reflections (cont.)</p> | <p>[My comments, field notes, 9 October 1999: “Little of what we did with respect to financial management is being implemented here. The only criterion for the person to do the job of financial management is to be “talkative and strong”! Still there is a small indication of some accountability with respect to the teachers and parents. One also wonders whether more goals are being pursued than simply “being safe from the people”.]</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.5 Senior staff members feeling threatened</p> | <p><u>Interpersonal tensions:</u> This factor seems to be the single greatest hurdle to change being introduced by the course participants. Five of the participants I spoke to had experienced problems in this respect. More specifically, it seems as if the greatest single problem, as perceived by participants interpreting the responses to their initiatives, was that senior staff members felt threatened by their newly acquired knowledge. Participants put it like this: “Even in a meeting situation, when we raise our hands and ask one question, they immediately shelve that point and say: ‘Let’s leave this point’, or ‘we’ll come back to this point’ or ‘Let’s adjourn the meeting’. They are just very threatened. This was so especially when we did this thing [assignment] about the parents and the Governing Body. We came upon the issue of them using the Governing Body for their own benefit - when we try to bring out those things (e.g. bribery for posts) they just became very very angry - They said we were trying to undermine the uneducated community, which is the parents”.</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.6 Participants not allowed to try out their newly-found skills</p> | <p>The fact that participants were going back to their schools equipped to bring about improvements, but were not being given the opportunity to even try, was in most cases a tragic phenomenon. This was apparent in an interview with two participants teaching at the same school: “That’s why we think our school is collapsing, just like a boat sinking with the people inside. We know we can rescue the people in this boat including ourselves, but we are not allowed to”.</p> |

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| <p>4.3.2.7 Participants' knowledge ignored</p> | <p>Another problem is that participants knowledge was simply ignored, clearly for the same reasons as above. One example of this type of behaviour was when one school, where two of the participants are teaching, received ten brand new computers as a donation. On the staff of thirty teachers, eight are computer literate. What happened then was that the room where these computers were installed:</p> <p>" . . . was locked since March [the interview took place in October] - they, say the installation is not completed yet. Even if we want to practice for the course [they are currently registered for a computer course], we have to come here to the center, and we come almost daily. They are even scared to ask us to help load the computer software for the administration programme. That's why we could not get the positions. That is when we became the threat. Sometimes, when people see you are clever, they try to silence you - we call it the 'PhD (Pulling him/her Down) degree'!"</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.8 Relative age of participants and staff members</p> | <p>The relative age of the initiator of change is a factor linked to the problem of relationships in the implementation of new ideas. This may also have strong cultural undertones. One participant, who is still fairly young, and has already been promoted to head of department, told me how he challenged one of the ladies on the staff when she transgressed a rule they had all agreed to. His account of the incident went like this: "I told her, 'you know, you shouldn't be here, you should be in class, so please, go to your class'. She said: 'You must also understand that you are younger than I am - you cannot just say anything at any time in any way'."</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.9 Appointments in senior positions</p> | <p>When one enquires about the situation in schools, one is often overwhelmed by the role played by appointments in creating mistrust and a negative atmosphere. The following example is a particularly sad one, because the two persons involved accomplished much together in their efforts to bring change to their school:</p> <p>One participant of the course told me how appointments had caused a problem in their school. She and the deputy principal attended the course together. They had developed a fairly close relationship, working together to bring about improvements in their school. They often went to see the principal to make suggestions. She then applied for the position of second deputy, but then somebody else, who was a friend of the deputy, was appointed.</p> |

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| <p>Appointments in senior positions (continued)</p> | <p>Her comments:</p> <p>“That broke the relationship, and made a lot of things fall apart. After that they [the principal and the first deputy] were scared of me. I said to myself ‘I’m going to keep a low profile. I think next year, I will change; I’ll go back to be myself’. I’ve accepted it, it’s over now. I and the deputy are picking up slowly, so we’re kind of OK” [and then she laughs].</p> <p>Apart from highlighting the importance of relationships in bringing about educational change, the above account emphasises the fragility of change and the need to nurture it carefully. It also points to the importance of having more staff members than one or two on the course, in order to make the implementation of change less dependent on a few persons.</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.10 People resisting change</p> | <p>It seems that people often block any transfer of knowledge, for various reasons. The traditional approaches which teachers have grown used to are always a factor preventing change from happening in schools. This was verbalized by the young participant who is also a head of department:</p> <p>“There is still this problem whereby you’ll find that you do not see things the same way, and then they [the older staff members] would say: ‘No, we used to do things this way and nothing came wrong of it’ - sometimes it makes me laugh, but sometimes they say this meaningful, when they are resisting change.</p> <p>This is not to say, maybe one forces change, but the way you see things, they ought to be this way seeing the challenge at the time that it comes - but people do not want actually challenges. People do not want to see change because of the challenges or to act in such a way, because they are used to do things their way.”</p> |
| <p>4.3.2.11 Cultural factors</p> | <p>A factor which without a doubt influences one’s thinking about the success of a programme like this is one’s own idea of the role of the principal, as well as one’s conceptions about what an effective school should be like. Both factors are deeply embedded in cultural and even local patterns of thinking. I wrote the following in my field notes on 6 October:</p> <p>“The cultural factor is an important one to allow for, and maybe never to be understood by an outsider”. This fact was brought home to me in a discussion I had with principal Y: He was talking about the fact that people were not trying to solve problems on their own, but were always trying to get others to do the work for them (the irony of the matter is that that</p> |

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| <p>Cultural factors (continued)</p> | <p>was exactly what my impression of him had become!). I reminded him of Zuber-Skerritt's (1996) A and B orientation (which we did in the June session, see addendum B12).</p> <p>My next question focused on the question of what he as principal could do to change that, and if there was any hope of changing a person's orientation from A to B. His response to that was the following:</p> <p>"I would never say there is no hope. It's a challenge to me and everybody. I think the principal has to create trust in the community. People must feel that 'if I go to the school with my problem, it will be solved'. I've got a lady waiting for me - I have to take her to the social worker. I want to show the people, even if it's a personal problem, I'll solve it for them. The reason I'm taking this lady is that she has got a child here at school - if she do not get any assistance, I may not be in a position to demand certain things from her child".</p> <p>Trust building and strengthening relationships, then, seem to be the key ways in which to change people's orientations, and to win parents' cooperation. When he had left, I was left wondering about our different conceptions of a principal's role. He clearly sees his task as a social one, and he may be right. It may be the only way to survive as school principal in that community. Still, if that is the only factor to be emphasised, it may not accomplish the required results in his context (which is to improve teaching and learning), and it may keep him from the basic tasks and responsibilities associated with his principalship. This could remain a major stumbling block to the implementation of the basic inputs presented during the course.</p> |
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4.3.2.12 Conclusions

A number of the above problems experienced with respect to the transfer of theory to the everyday lives of the schools, are beyond the control of designers or presenters of the programme. Even though these factors sometimes seem to be paramount, it occurred to me that what goes on in the minds of participants is the crucial or predominant factor in determining transfer. That is why the element of self-awareness, and its stimulation in participants, becomes critically important for the eventual success of the programme. I deal with more specific strategies below.

4.3.3 Ways of improving transfer of theory to practice

4.3.3.1 Introduction

Many conditions exist for the transfer of theoretical inputs to the of the schools' practice. Many of these consist of measures to curb the negative factors mentioned above. It is important to realise that one needs to *do* something; that teaching the course in the isolation of the lecture room is not enough. I was pleasantly surprised when, a year after the programme had been completed, participants had many suggestions about this aspect of the course, which they obviously had had time to consider since they returned to their schools as qualified "educational managers". Some of the insights in this regard which have developed in discussions with group members or through individual reflection are discussed below:

In this section, the role which the presenters of the course should play and the strategies they should follow, are emphasized. In the next section, attention will be given to guidance for the school on how to support participants in their implementation attempts.

| 4.3.3.2 Implementation strategies for course presenters | |
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| Strategy | Comments, reflections and quotes |
| Involve more than one staff member from a school in the course | Early in the year I had already become aware of the need to have more than one staff member from a specific school on the course if any meaningful transfer to practice was to take place. This condition was confirmed over and over again through the course of the year. It was again emphasized when I went back for a follow-up visit a year later. I wrote the following about transfer in my journal on 18 April 1998: "I picked up two things about transferability today which do not have anything to do with content or the way the content is being presented, but with the fact that only one person from a specific school attends a course like this". |

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| <p>Involve more than one staff member from a school in the course (continued)</p> | <p><u>Support for the principal who has attended the course:</u></p> <p>On the one hand, a principal who becomes enthused, empowered and enlightened through the course, may want to go and implement those things that had struck him/her, and which he/she knows will make a vast difference in his/her school. Y said:</p> <p>"But then, when he/she goes to his/her school alone, there is no one to support him/her - remember I'm coming from a culture where they will say the principal is a spy of the Department even if you are bringing something good for them".</p> <p><u>Putting pressure on the principal who does not implement what he/she has learned:</u></p> <p>On the other hand, transfer may also be limited by a principal who does very well in the course, and says many things about his/her school and the way he/she is implementing all these things, without a word of that being true. In this case, the principal gains much knowledge and seems enthusiastic about it, but does not do anything in practice.</p> <p>In both cases, transfer may be stimulated or enhanced by having more participants from one school doing the course. In the first case, a group from the school attending the course together can go back to the school and refute the suspicion that the principal is coming with his/her own agenda. In the second case, if the principal attends the course together with a group of his/her staff, he/she will not be allowed to say that aspects have been implemented when they have not been. Also, when staff members attending the course agree about the need to implement something in their school, they will collectively exert pressure on the principal to get going if he/she is not motivated to do anything in practice.</p> <p><u>Forming a pressure group</u></p> <p>This is an aspect which has cropped up on numerous occasions. In talking to some of the participants in October 1999 it surfaced again:</p> <p>"I am trying to tell the principal that he must take the course. There are many ladies who have done the course through other universities. Two of us did it through UPE. If the principal can also do this course then we will be a good team because he is a very strong person".</p> <p>This was also emphasized by one of the colleagues who, completing a questionnaire, wrote:</p> |
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| (continued) | <p>“If this course reaches the majority of educators there can be effective changes. It is very difficult for one or two persons to make visible changes in an institution.”</p> |
| Needs analysis | <p>Much has already been said about the necessity of doing a representative survey of the schools involved through their participants, to ascertain that the content and level of the course will not be irrelevant and unsuitable. In addition to establishing the required level and content of the course, visiting a representative number of the schools gives a presenter insight into the type of situations or contexts in which participants have to act out their knowledge, as well as about the existence of key problems such as interpersonal conflict which will play a determining role in terms of any change taking place as a result of staff members’ involvement in the course.</p> <p>On 16 April I recorded the following in my journal:</p> <p>“It just seems crazy to try to teach participants to manage their schools better unless one visits at least some of the schools participants are coming from so as to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know and understand the situation and limitations better • know what are the most relevant topics • build case studies which are worthwhile. |
| Prepare participants for their roles as change agents | <p>At least three of the participants felt that persons who enrolled for future courses needed to be prepared for the sensitive role they would have to play when implementing or suggesting change in their schools.</p> <p>When I thought about the interviews I had conducted with them and others during the week in George, I remembered at least six participants who were frustrated because their contributions were not acceptable to their senior colleagues. I thought about the tremendous odds that young, enthusiastic teachers were up against when they challenged an establishment in their schools which viewed remaining in control as its prime objective, and how schools wasted tremendous opportunities to capitalize on these “energy fields” at their disposal.</p> |

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| <p>Prepare participants for their roles as change agents (continued)</p> | <p>I also thought that these young converts might sometimes return to their schools with a “holier than Thou” attitude, being themselves the cause of not being given space to test out their ideas or of not being heard. I also recalled how many negative things were said about their colleagues, and the stories they told of how they had actually endeavoured to get things done, sometimes not in the most diplomatic ways imaginable. I thought of the inscription in my field notes of 5 October, after an interview with one of these participants. I had written the following about her:</p> <p>“Through her way of talking, I noticed a certain anger, maybe even a venom against the principal. This is surely not a positive factor for bringing about change in the school. I wonder about her social skills to win people over, to be able to build up and bring about change without breaking down many other things such as interpersonal relationships”.</p> <p>I found the following response of a participant relevant to this issue. Asked the question “What were the main obstacles in the school that prevented you from taking action?”, he replied: “My insensitive approach to sensitive issues”.</p> <p>It seems therefore vital that one includes a module on ‘bringing about change in a hostile environment’ as part of the preparation programme for school leaders. This would start participants on the way to developing tact and perseverance in becoming change agents in their schools, without becoming negative elements, causing more harm than good.</p> |
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| Specified outcomes | <p>In the light of my experiences concerning the implementation of a financial management system in the schools, and the fact that participants who went through the course wrote impressive assignments but did nothing to implement their ideas, I wrote the following reflections in my field notes (6 October 1999):</p> <p>“I am starting to think that, in order for a person to pass this course, one should institute a couple of benchmarks, for him/her to be measured against. By this I mean that instead of allowing him/her to choose all the problems they will investigate in their action research projects themselves, they should be given some compulsory tasks to complete in order to pass. These will then have to be formulated in terms of outcomes that have to be met before they can qualify. In terms of financial management they should for instance be required to design or describe a fully fledged financial management plan for their school, co-signed by a financial expert such as a local bank manager.</p> |
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4.3.4 The role of schools in transfer

4.3.4.1 Introduction

In the account given in the box below, a particular participant recounts how, through her initiative, first the principal and then the whole staff got involved in new thinking about the financial management of the school. This is obviously a significant outcome for a course like this, and indicates the attainment of a key goal, a change in practice. A couple of factors seem relevant in bringing this about:

- The fact that this topic was referred to as a key issue (problem) in the school at that particular time
- The fact that one participant was willing (and encouraged) to discuss his/her newly-gained knowledge with somebody else, especially with the principal
- The fact that the principal was open for new suggestions, and willing to be taught by a “junior” staff member
- The fact that there were two staff members attending the course, the one being able to confirm what the other was saying, and therefore strengthening the case
- The accessibility of the notes, in the format of a very basic “guide”.

One of the participants tells the following story about how it had occurred to her that the school's financial management needed attention, and how she then approached the principal: ". . . and we had a lengthy discussion about budgeting. With all his skills (he has a B Comm degree), he told me that he never thought that budgeting was really a financial problem, but as I was explaining to him he understood my concern".

The point to note here is the fact that the two of them actually *discussed* the issue. The way the assignments were designed "forced" the participant to share the topic with a colleague, and that in itself was already a positive development.

The account continues:

"Having done the research, I thought of the way I budget for myself. I showed him what we have learned about financial management and when he saw the notes, he was quite impressed. The principal asked me to call the deputy who is also doing the course and the heads of departments. It was quite easy for us to realize that budgeting is a real financial problem. We took the matter to the whole staff and worked according to the stages in the budgetary process of our notes. Everybody were given the notes on financial management. The staff were given two days to go and read the notes and after that we met again to further the process. Because the budgetary process was now transparent, the teachers were motivated to do fund raising.

We (the three of us) discussed the urgency of training the whole school Governing Body in all the aspects of financial management with the chairperson of the Governing Body [here she includes all the topics we did in the course)]. I realized these people could not be taught all these skills at one time. At a joint staff and Governing Body meeting it has been decided that the sooner the new financial system is implemented, the better for us all. In order for us to see that it is workable, we must implement it. The road is still long, but only dedication will see us there".

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| <p>4.3.4.2 School visits</p> | <p>If schools want to gain the maximum advantage from their staff members attending the course, they should be prepared to act as “practice ground” for these members. Participants interviewed a year after the course had ended emphasised this, perhaps because they had had such negative experiences in this respect. They felt that if colleagues in the schools knew what the participants were being exposed to during the course, they would be in a better position to utilize their knowledge. Another reason why they felt schools should be informed is that the school management should understand that participants need to “practice” the skills they learn. Andy Lamont said: “Each participant needs a place to practice”. And the school is the only place where this can happen. One participant put it like this (being a principal himself): “The ideal is that the lecturer (or somebody else) informs the principal about this participant and what he is doing, telling him that the person may come with certain new ideas, and asking him whether he would be willing to support him by giving him opportunities to practice. There is a difference knowing person X is studying, and the lecturer personally involving the principal in the process - telling him about what they are going to do, and asking him/her to give the ‘student’ a chance to practice what he/she had learned.”</p> <p>These plans on how to involve the school will have to be carefully worked out with each school principal or management team before the course starts, being an important aspect of the “preparatory visit” to the school by the presenter of the course .</p> |
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4.3.5 Mentoring

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| <p>Participants mentoring each other, principals or members of management teams mentoring participants</p> | <p>In the discussion about the developing relationships among participants, mention was made of the importance of participants mentoring one another. This “tool” is especially relevant in schools where more than one staff member attends the course. Participants assist one another in a natural way, in completing assignments and in trying to implement newly acquired skills. Wallace (1991:47) uses the term ‘peer coaching’ for this type of mutual assistance.</p> |
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| Mentoring (Continued) | During my visit to George in October 1999, one of the principals said that he had four young teachers who had recently been appointed in senior positions whom he would want to encourage to register for such a course. This implies that he would act as their mentor in the school, which could become an excellent model for school improvement. |
| Quote of a participant | One of the principals, referring both to the story on mentoring we had discussed in the second contact session, and to the relationship between himself and one of his staff members who also attended the course, said the following: ". . .and he is able to understand my position (even if he criticizes me) - it creates a space whereby teachers and principals more-or-less understand each other - that's what I've come to like about this course". |

4.3.6 Generating solutions unique to the school

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| The challenge to schools, which is also a natural outflow of action research | <p>That schools have to be encouraged to work out their own solutions to problems should be emphasized over and over again. This came out from the group discussions about the case study when one group pointed out in their feedback that even though other schools might have a similar problem, the solution which worked in one school would not necessarily work everywhere: "Solutions must be unique to your school".</p> <p>The validity of this principle was demonstrated when participants started on their action research projects. These projects also confirmed what one group had emphasized during the case study, namely the importance of determining the central problem on which the solution of all the other problems depends.</p> <p>Such a central problem could be interpersonal relationships or the bad state of the buildings.</p> <p>Academic training is often accompanied by the temptation to translate directly theoretical principles or advice into rules of practice, with lots of frustration and little practical improvement. When preparing a school to receive the full benefit from the inputs tried out by staff members, the challenge of using the new ideas and concepts to stimulate one's own thinking, should be emphasized.</p> |
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4.4 OUTCOMES: SPACE OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Introduction

While this area can certainly be seen as a grey one, not clearly distinguishable from the other two, and containing many overlaps with the sending and the receiving domains of the course, it represents in my mind the middle ground, the area in which one can say: it is not immediately clear whether this aspect belongs to the one domain or the other, it is influenced by both, and influences both, but still has a life of its own. Elements in this field could go both ways, becoming more closely linked either to the teaching aspect or to the area of practice, or they can go elsewhere, influencing the life of the individual or the group in terms of their individual personhood or in terms of life in the community. In this sense, this domain represents the grand goal of all teaching: the growth of the individual and the well-being of society. It is also in this area that the effects of a course involving the upgrading of school leaders must have an influence and become meaningful.

I will deal with various aspects of this domain as they unfolded to me while being exposed to the data, and will try to show each aspect's relevance to the overarching issue under consideration: the developing of a preparation course for school leaders. Unless participants can see the link between the course and the school, the course loses its meaning. The space of interaction in a sense then determines the practical relevance of the course, or is being determined by it.

4.4.1 Practical relevance

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| The bridging of theory and practice | Participants often spoke about the relevance of the course for their everyday lives in the schools. Many of them referred to the fact that they could implement what they had done in the course. Of particular importance was the fact that the assignments stimulated them to do things they (especially the principals) would have had to do anyway. These sentiments are reflected in the following: |
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| <p>The bridging of theory and practice becomes the thrust behind the course, the factor which keeps it alive, attractive and worthwhile to participants</p> | <p>“Our work was not theory based, it was most practical”;</p> <p>“The discussions really opened up things for me, and then through reflection you came to a point when you said ‘maybe this is my problem’ and then you would test this in your own school. Then you find out it had been a problem.”;</p> <p>“For me, the most important thing was: I could not wait to get back to the school to start implementing. The action research assignment also, provided the stimulant for us to get the security project started”.</p> <p>When I asked one participant what had made the course special for him, he said:</p> <p>“The fact that practice was emphasized. We started with something, then we considered its practical aspects in a workshop - you looked at it from all sides.”</p> |
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4.4.2 Personal growth of participants

| Main points | Comments, reflections and quotes |
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| <p>Personal growth of principal acknowledged by the staff</p> | <p>One principal told me (1 April) how the staff came together after the assignment on motivation, and discussed their problems:</p> <p>“After this”, he said, “one of the staff members came to me and said: ‘You know what? You’ve changed a lot! In the past you fought with me, but in terms of interpersonal relationships you are so different’.” He went on to say: “This is what the course has taught me, and made a tremendous impact on me - to acknowledge each person - know him and respond to him accordingly. Previously I treated everybody as if they were the same person. I’ve changed completely. It touched me when she said that, and I thought: You are right, it is important to me.”</p> <p>Another principal said:</p> <p>“You can sympathise with people, and act strongly. The course equipped me, that is why the University of Port Elizabeth’s photo hangs on my wall” (he shows me his graduation photo in his office).</p> |

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| <p>Growth in self-confidence, dedication, perseverance</p> | <p>Colleagues of participants who completed questionnaires about them often referred to this aspect when responding to the question about personal changes in the participant. Examples of what they said are:</p> <p>“During the course of the last two years B has undergone a significant change with respect to her work and her colleagues. She approached everything with greater self-confidence, dedication and perseverance. Her colleagues sometimes became impatient because she was so determined to share her point of view”.</p> <p>During the interviews with participants, participants’ growth in self confidence as a result of their involvement in the course was a theme that emerged constantly. This became evident through the fact that they developed the boldness to say things they would not have said before. This boldness grew from a sense that they had acquired knowledge which their colleagues did not have, and for the young principal, the fact that he felt equipped for his task. Participants said, amongst other things:</p> <p>“I feel now as a person who is confident to speak out - I used to be a person who was scared of talking, but now at least I have the guts to tell someone: ‘No, this is wrong’, at the same time also being advisory - which is something that I couldn’t do some time ago. Also, I was scared of talking in a group - at least at that level it [the course] developed me. Looking maybe from the perspective of the school, initiating things, I can say: ‘People, how about we [the management team] start earlier, in order to do the day’s planning so as to avoid something you could’ve discussed earlier, so that the day runs more smoothly’ - it makes, at that level, me a person who can think ahead”.</p> <p>“I feel my involvement will change the situation - as far as conflict is concerned, I’ll be able to solve it. In so far as change is concerned, I started to put in effort after the course. An example: We didn’t even have a school policy. I stood up and said: ‘we can’t go on like this’.”</p> <p>The course started to open my mind, but I also felt I do not only lead at school. I can lead outside.”</p> <p>“I grew in confidence for my task - one knows what to do, time management has become relevant for me [he showed me his term plan-something he said, which did not exist previously]. From my confidence grew a new enthusiasm for my job.”</p> |
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| <p>Growth in self-confidence, dedication, perseverance (continued)</p> | <p>"I feel so much more at home in what I'm doing. Before I would say something and people would simply squash me, because I did not know how to express myself or the idea that I had, or what I really meant on their level. The course brought me confidence to address issues and do things at my school - I grew in self-confidence."</p> |
| <p>Enhanced professional orientation</p> | <p>A colleague gave this testimony of the participant (a post level 1 teacher): "He is trying to make an impact on the way things are being done at the school, e.g. organization, management and planning as well. For instance, if there will be a meeting he would insist on procedures to be followed i.e. agenda and before the start of the meeting would like the minutes of the last meeting."</p> |
| <p>Participants became positive and better organized</p> | <p>An outstanding characteristic mentioned by a colleague was the positive manner in which participants approached their work. One deputy principal commented on one of the young participants who he said had been "fairly radical, but now he uses his energy towards the upliftment of the school. He is now concerned and stick to the dates of submission of his work for moderation and schedules as well", while a head of department at another school said:</p> <p>"She has accepted the transformation process with a positive attitude, and views obstacles as challenges. She is always willing to assist in any activity where she can apply her newly found knowledge".</p> <p>A head of department said the following about the changes he witnessed in his principal:</p> <p>"Strategic planning became more structured, with regular meetings, workshops and correct organizational procedures".</p> |
| <p>Overcoming personal hurts</p> | <p>Participants revealed how they had grown through the disappointments of not being heard and not being given credit for their inputs. Responding to my question about what the course had meant to them personally, they said:</p> <p>"I try now [after having been overlooked for the post of deputy principal] to be positive - I saw that, if I don't change, the school is going to fall apart because in a way - I am the eldest lady in the school - they have a lot of confidence in me.</p> |

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| <p>Overcoming personal hurts (continued)</p> | <p>I must change so that things can go the right way - we have to sit down and work things out, for a lot of things are going wrong. It is the institution and the children's future - so we have to work on that, we have to put our differences aside. I was very much hurt that time, but I got over it."</p> <p>"Instead of saying we are flourishing, because of the problems that took place in our schools, we are still at the same place, but we became a threat because we know quite a lot of things. Personally it made us feel great and confident. There was a time when we felt we were going to give up on education, but because of the course it makes us strong and more confident. When we did the course, we were in deep trouble - emotionally disturbed. The course tamed us - there were stages when you felt very wild (angry) - there are things that are happening like taking out a gun and shooting, (maybe we should have done them, maybe to our colleagues), but because of the course we now say: 'these people are jealous of you - we have the knowledge and they are taking the positions of the posts that they have'. They know nothing, but on the other hand, it's frustrating again - you can see that the school is going down, and there are some things that you could've done if you were given the chance - if you were in the leading part of the school. Even if you want to help, they do not want to give you that gap, because they feel that you are a threat, you want to take over their job. Because of the course, we ended up seeing things in a positive way, because the course showed us that if a person is ignorant, they do not want to accept these changes - we are not angry any more".</p> |
| <p>Developing a wider perspective on their involvement in the course</p> | <p>What amazed me, was the development of participants' motivation for doing the assignments, and their reasons for taking and persevering with the course. This was reflected in comments such as the following:</p> <p>"I became more flexible and accommodating. I realized that you are working with different individuals, and that you have to keep them with you. Therefore, I became more open for negotiation. In the beginning I simply wrote an assignment to finish the course so that I could get the qualification . Later on I realized that it is not the qualification which is the big issue, but that the course includes things that are meaningful, that I can utilize such as the discipline system which I am still using today.</p> |

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| <p>Developing a wider perspective on their involvement in the course (continued)</p> | <p>That is why, towards the end, I put in as much time as I possibly could into the assignments, even if it was during a very difficult time for myself. I saw in the assignments, more than something to be handed in, but I came to see them as opportunities to design something which I could utilize in my practical situation of everyday".</p> <p>"I came into this course for self-interest: financial benefit. That was my intention. And what happened? I went through the course no longer caring about the money - I moved from a person not caring, to one that did not have a choice but to care. Whatever was put into you: what you read; the lectures; the experiences with the groups; the exchange of ideas - there was no way out. Anybody who came out of this course and said they did not change must have been made out of stone. You were growing all the time. Your feelings, you became more sincere, things started bothering you. You did not want it to bother you - I mean, what do I care if the children did not bring in their school fees - it does not affect my wages in any way - and now, it does bother me".</p> |
| <p>Involving colleagues, and trying to motivate them</p> | <p>"I do not care about my name anymore - I used to. I want people to think they have come to those conclusions themselves. If I can stimulate their thinking, even if it is by a mere question, that's fine, as long as they feel good at the end of the day, and I get to the result I want".</p> <p>"One of the results of the course is that I try to get the teachers on board with everything I intend to do. In the past I could not approach somebody, and now even if somebody is doing something wrong, I will say 'if you are the principal, what would you do?', and then one will laugh, and then one would get a positive response from that".</p> |
| <p>Changes in leadership style</p> | <p>"Then there is my role of leadership - sometimes I would confront things, now I do consult, which was not like that before. People will make appointments with me - not all of them - but then sometimes we would start with a prayer in this office So with our relationships, people now at least can come with their ideas. They can see things and discuss it with me, and , I said, at least I am now approachable. I have also learned that I have to do my own introspection, asking what it is that I want. I want to have a good school".</p> |

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| Changes in leadership style (cont) | <p>Comment by a staff member about the principal:</p> <p>"He has become more open for criticism and responds positively. He is also more democratic in way of taking the lead".</p> |
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4.4.3 Tangible outcomes in schools

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| General | <p>Many positive changes brought about in schools during the time the course was running were mentioned to me, both by participants themselves and by their colleagues in their responses to the questionnaires. While one can obviously not establish a direct link between every change and the inputs made in the course, it seems fair to say that the course at least brought about changes in participants' mind sets which were conducive to change. What was important to me when I visited them in October 1999 was the question of how many of these initiatives were still bearing fruit after a year had passed. Some of the participants showed me the tangible proofs of what had been started during their action research projects, while others shared with me outcomes (such as minutes of workshops) or told me about changes in their schools which they related back to their involvement in the course. The extracts which follow represent some of the responses of participants and their colleagues to the question about which changes occurred as a result of their involvement in the programme:</p> |
| Colleagues' responses | <p>Colleagues writing about the tangible outcomes directly attributable to a staff member's involvement in the course mentioned various aspects like the following:</p> <p>"Changes in the registration process of learners; centralization of learner information; an increase in the payment of school fees and suggestions offered at a workshop towards school improvement",.</p> <p>Writing about school-wide changes, the following comments were made by individuals completing of questionnaires:</p> <p>"Structured financial budgeting e.g. proportional allocations to various societies or clubs at school, making money available for staff training, liaising more with deputies, H.O.D.'s and staff, depending on the issue."</p> |

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| Participants' accounts | <p>"We had a workshop here on school policy which S [his junior colleague, who also attended the course] facilitated".</p> <p>"Our disciplinary system is in place" [he showed me the updated files, with the records for each learner].</p> <p>"Tomorrow we have our first market day. Remember P's model to collect school fees? We do not have exactly the same format, we designed a different format. We use this also to foster entrepreneurial skills."</p> |
| Staff seminar | <p>One participant had a long discussion with me in October 1999 about initiatives she had become involved in order to bring about improvement in the operation of the school in which she is teaching (see her account of a staff seminar in the block below). She also told me about initiatives she had undertaken, which were confirmed by a colleague completing a questionnaire about her role. This same participant, when I asked her how her experiences at the school were related to the course, said:</p> <p>"These initiatives come purely from what we have learned in the course. There was nothing I did where I couldn't go back and say: 'I've read about this, or this is what we learned today, or this is how things should be done, you know'. Two years ago I would not have had the courage, or the ideas".</p> |

"When the principal would not budge, we took the way of the small group in which we are more than productive. We got together 19 of the 33 teachers in a workshop, in which we highlighted the key problem areas of the school and had as theme: 'Making the school work for us'. One of the objectives that came out of this workshop [a copy of the minutes was given to me] was as follows [quoted from the minutes]: 'The aim is not to identify individuals as problems, but rather to start a process of investigation, dialogue and strategy building in order to accomplish unity, quality education and a happy school community'. [Further objectives discussed were:]

- to discuss issues concerning our place of work
- to empower ourselves through exchanging ideas and information
- to work out a strategy to approach our challenges and successes and to build on these.

[The following challenges were mentioned and spelt out in detail:]

- workloads of staff
- planning
- management

- relationships among staff members
- relationships of staff members with parents and members of the School Governing Body
- learners
- physical amenities
- finances

The minutes she gave me a copy of reflect the details of what participants thought could be done about each of the challenges facing them. It also includes many tangible suggestions for the improvement of the school, and is a remarkable initiative by a group of teachers. She said she used her knowledge obtained in the course as input with respect to content, as well as the method used in the workshop.

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| <p>A student record system: Bringing about real improvement in the schools</p> | <p>Some of the participants produced assignments which pointed to real improvements in their schools. The following is an extract from an assignment, which illustrates how the intervention with respect to student records brought about school-wide change:</p> |
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"In the end it was clear to all of us how important it was to have a clear, well managed system of keeping pupils' records. . . . The teachers decided on my name as a Head of the Department, to manage the system, ensuring that everyone was doing the work well and reviewing procedures to find ways of improvement.

My school is now running so smooth, that nobody at school can believe that we just started this system this year. It is so easy to trace any pupil and his/her progress even if he/she was at school since last year, because we started the records and back dated for last year, i.e. 1997.

The pupils' performance has changed drastically and the parents are coming forward to assist about their children's education. It is even more easier to call the parents' subject meetings because each and every pupil has his own records, so it is easy for the teachers to communicate with parents concerning their children's behaviour and discipline is also improving, because pupils are aware whatever they are doing is going on the book and it may count against them when they have to be promoted to the next class".

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| Upgrading of the school's security system and infra-structure | When I visited principal W's school in October 1999, he took me on a tour of his school, showing me all the changes which were made to the school building to upgrade the whole security system. This was a massive project. He told me how, when he had to decide on his action research project, he wanted to do something that could get representatives of all groups in the school community involved. This was what they had decided upon, and everybody, including parents and learners, participated wholeheartedly. |
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4.4.4 Outcomes based on data collection or research

More and more participants grasped the fact that unless they first gathered some information about the current status of certain issue in their schools, there was little hope of success in trying to improve anything. The following quotations from the May assignments illustrate this development:

"The first move I took was to check the senior primary mark schedules of the past three years. I did this so as to check on various things, e.g. which subjects are failed mostly; whose subjects are failed mostly, and any improvements as the year progressed. I then identified factors that contributed to this state of affairs, e.g. that no effort was made to recover lost time".

"I had questionnaires ready for the teachers to say why the results were so bad. I got information from the students and parents as well. We sat down to work on the information, step-by-step: 1.Organizing, 2.Analysing, 3. Summarizing and describing, 4.Presenting.

After analysing, there was no way we could run away from the truth - all fingers were pointing at us, the teachers. Parents did not understand that they also had a role to play in the education of their children. We presented the information at a meeting to which we also invited members of the community. From the members present at the meeting, we formulated [sic] different committees like the disciplinary, fund raising, progress etc. Step 5 is the description of the new system of keeping student records."

4.4.5 Processes developing simultaneously with the programme

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| <p>The involvement of colleagues in discussing and doing assignments</p> | <p>Another development which I found positive and in line with the emphasis on the development of professional communities (3.2.10); participants using their schools as “field laboratories” (3.2.5; see also Ogawa and Pounder, 1993:97); and the “involvement of colleagues and others” (3.4.5.5), was the fact that the participants developed a growing tendency to consult with their colleagues in trying to improve their schools (and obviously in completing their assignments!). The quotation from a May assignment illustrates this:</p> <p>“I asked Miss Peter’s advice [the author was busy with his assignment on problem solving in the school, and a requirement for this assignment was that they discuss their assignments with one or more of their colleagues] - she is a veteran with lots of experience. She came up with an idea of starting supervising teachers. This is a mechanism for starting the sharing of responsibility and making principals out of colleagues. We drew up a roster for extra-mural activities and a register to control teachers’ involvement during school hours”.</p> |
| <p>Contact among participants’ schools</p> | <p>A very interesting development which I did not foresee or even try to bring about, was that participants either invited each other, or were invited by neighbouring schools, to help with workshops or information sessions (see below). This highlighted two important spin-offs which are worth noting. In the first instance this development lent credibility to the notion of the building of a “professional community” (3.2.10) and “networking” (3.4.4.3), while secondly the fact that participants’ increased knowledge was beginning to become known made other teachers look up to them, and increased their potential to become mentors to teachers at neighbouring schools.</p> <p>One of the participants reported in his May assignment that he and two of his colleagues had organized a workshop on the drafting of a code of conduct. This was a team effort, in that three colleagues worked together to arrange the event. They invited the staff, the Parent Teachers’ Association as well as the non-teaching members of staff to this workshop, at which they also discussed the topic of financial management. This initiative, important as it was, had an even more</p> |

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| <p>Contact among participants' schools (continued)</p> | <p>important element: the organizers invited two other participants of the course to be the facilitators of this workshop.</p> <p>In a similar development, one participant said in her assignment that they drew up a code of conduct. She says: "After all the deliberations and the formulation of the code of conduct, the teachers' behaviour changed drastically.... The other primary schools around us were so curious to know what have we done to change those situations. We agreed to serve as their mentors (sound boards) should they need us".</p> <p>Another participant wrote in his/her June exam script : "My school is now running so smoothly that nobody at school or outside could believe - now we are operating as mentors for surrounding schools".</p> |
| <p>The development of inter-personal relationships</p> | <p>In my interviews with participants a year after the course had been completed, the importance of trusting and caring relationships developing among participants was stressed over and over again. Participants viewed this as sometimes more important than the actual content of the programme, because it engenders the crucial element of support and encourages the development of supporting networks: ". . . people have to grow together, asking how we can help one another". It also puts into practice ". . . the central aspect of teaching today: listening, acceptance of your staff, care and trust". One participant put it like this:</p> <p><u>Mutual acceptance:</u></p> <p>"The mutual acceptance of group members is maybe more important than content, theory or practice. The group have to come to know each other. It took us quite some time. We came right especially during the second year, in which the leadership seminar made a big difference - people have to grow together in terms of acceptance and understanding."</p> <p><u>Inter-cultural bonding:</u></p> <p>Another participant expressed herself in the following way:</p> <p>"We were just open - we are naturally joking. The groupwork made a big difference. We grew up like children in the same family. We did not feel as if this one is black or coloured or white - in the workshops communication was flowing among us."</p> |

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| <p>The development of interpersonal relationships (continued)</p> | <p><u>Diversity of viewpoints:</u></p> <p>Some of the other participants also referred to the multi-cultural composition of the group which allowed for a diversity of viewpoints to be heard as well as enriching everybody's experience.</p> <p>I wrote in my field notes after one of the interviews on 7 October:</p> <p>"We again agreed about the importance of having a group representing all the different groups in the community in order to get insight into each other's problems and culture".</p> <p><u>Atmosphere:</u></p> <p>Another participant stressed the importance of the atmosphere which characterized the meetings of the group. She said the following:</p> <p>"Even those people that are naturally quiet or reserved in that group - everybody felt at home. Discipline was there, but you did not feel as if you were in a class - you felt so open."</p> <p>Somebody else put it like this:</p> <p>"The course was presented in a relaxed manner, and it created a type of comradeship among us - we almost became inseparable" .</p> <p><u>A closely knitted group:</u></p> <p>The workshop leader confirmed this when he said:</p> <p>"They were a very closely knitted group. I think they grew closer together. Their closeness helped them to act with confidence, but also to rely on each other when they needed support. The way we handled both the lectures and the workshops helped them to grow together, the two complemented each other."</p> <p><u>Understanding and trust:</u></p> <p>One participant said:</p> <p>"Later on we started understanding and trusting one another - that you will not get in an ordinary course - the personal interaction. If you do not experience this in a situation that we had, it will not have the same effect on you. It will stay with me my whole life - the idea that we have to care for one another and that you should be able to trust each other."</p> |
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| Ongoing networks | <p>When I asked a participant how many of the other group members she maintains contact with, she immediately replied: "All of them!" Then she went on:</p> <p>"The relationships - a big bond was created between us - even now, U stops in the main road, half of his body out of his car, and he shouts: Hello B! D has just been nominated as deputy principal - we knew his portfolio was not good, you see, the principal portfolio worked! We did the whole thing over."</p> <p>Another member of the group told me how one of the principals assisted him in a dispute he was involved in at his school. There was no question that the relationships which developed during the time spent together were continuing and were still meaningful to the participants.</p> |
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4.4.6 The development of professional communities

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| Main points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants willing to mentor colleagues when the course is presented again • Presenters setting up a formal network of graduates, paying them a small honorarium to keep them involved and to thank them • Developing a professional network in which mentors are empowered to become tutors and presenters, giving the course an ever-increasing local content |
| Comments | <p>From the discussion on mentoring during the second contact session on 30 March 1998, the idea emerged that participants would recruit members of their staff for the course and commit themselves to mentoring them. They said that they knew what the course was all about and that therefore the staff would be able to come to them for advice. We had a long discussion about this, and we as presenters even suggested that we might try and find sponsors to assist us in paying these mentors a small honorarium to recompense them for their services.</p> |

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| <p>Comments (continued)</p> | <p>This discussion started a process in which our thinking developed in the direction of formally setting up a network consisting of those who had finished the course, to canvass and assist colleagues for the following round of the course. This network could even develop into a situation whereby some of these mentors became tutors and presenters of the course in a further round.</p> <p>When I visited them again more than a year later, everybody I interviewed expressed the desire to be involved in mentoring roles when the course is presented again.</p> <p>The principle of having colleagues with more experience in a given field acting as mentors for others still learning how to master certain skills and play various roles, is one with an extremely high potential for personal and professional growth on the one hand, and organizational development on the other. In terms of utilizing the school as practice ground for the implementation of concepts and skills learned in the course, this is certainly an aspect which needs to be investigated and developed in collaboration with the school. In a developing country such as South Africa, with no funds for expensive internship programmes, the development of mentoring capacity is a viable alternative.</p> |
| <p>Quote from a participant about the idea of her becoming a mentor for incoming participants</p> | <p>“The staff can come back to you and say: ‘We have this assignment, what do you think about it?’ By that one starts to build up a network of senior staff (not in terms of position, but in terms of experience and insight).”</p> |

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Looking back along the road travelled in this study, certain ideas stand out as particularly pertinent to the basic goals identified at the start. As stated in Chapter 1.3, the central goal of this research was “to develop, with the assistance of local practitioners, a framework for a preparation course for school leaders in the Southern Cape, that will lead them to a better understanding of their roles in the schools, and eventually to an improvement in practice”.

My involvement with the group of participant school leaders, together with my thinking and reading about preparation courses over the past three years, have - I believe - brought me closer to achieving the above objective. In this chapter, I give a brief overview of the insights which have emerged, and the conclusions I have reached with respect to the development of preparation courses for school leaders.

5.2 GENERAL INSIGHTS

5.2.1 The human element

It has become clear to me that people play a vital role in the success of preparation courses. People enter the activities of the programme from various angles: there are those on the giving end presenting the course, and those on the receiving end in the school, reaping the benefits of the teaching, such as the participants themselves, their colleagues, and the management of the school. One may even consider a third category, somewhere in the middle, belonging to neither of these groups, or to both, such as the participant who facilitates another participant's learning by giving feedback and advice, colleagues acting as soundboards, critical friends, peer-coaches, mentors, and partners in initiating changes in the school; other colleagues who work together

on an action research team, or a principal or a retired person acting as mentor.

These people create learning spaces, within which various and often unanticipated, and even undetected processes occur. These spaces generate “energy fields” (Costa and Liebmann, 1997) and must therefore be nurtured and exploited. The more people are included meaningfully in the process, the more potent the learning spaces become. The presenters of the course have the responsibility of giving form and substance to each role within their reach, and of supporting these roles by means of contact, support, recognition and reward.

5.2.2 Strategies and activities

Obviously, a more formal type of learning space is created by actual presentation elements of the course. Again, the bigger the variety of inputs, the more energy fields come into being, the more potent the space becomes. Furthermore, the course activities:

- should include many elements which are not traditionally linked to teaching programmes, especially elements associated with the affective domain;
- should gradually shift responsibility for learning to the participants, so that the changing over into practice is a subtle process, sometimes even unnoticed by both participants and presenters - such as the activities associated with action research.

While clearly the content of the course remains important, its impact has to be considered together with the roles played by many other factors such as the methods of presentation, various activities and processes, the structure of the course and, especially the various forms of interaction between different role players. There is also the important role played by the school where the outcomes of the course will, it is hoped, become evident.

If a programme is to be successful, one needs to employ as many elements as possible in the design and presentation of the programme, and continuously to be on the

lookout for new and creative ways of facilitating progress towards the involvement of participants in educational change. Thus it was that I found the strategy of involving participants in action research projects in their schools the most productive one in changing their thinking, attitudes and ways of approaching the practical situations in their school environments.

5.2.3 Self-awareness

There is a third element, without which neither of the other two will have the desired effect. This is the matter of what takes place inside the individual participant. It can be seen as a sort of kick-start, a confrontation with self or with reality, leading to a new self-awareness, a kind of revelation or "aha-erlebnis". It embraces notions of "authorship", the "power of possibility" and "personal identity". It is this type of experience or realization which must be sought, created and nurtured.

The basic goal of preparation programmes is to change participants' mind-sets, to cause them to shift from being spectators, critics or consumers of the educational system, to being active participants, problem solvers and producers. It is in this sense that the generation of a sense of self-awareness or authorship is central to the objectives to be pursued in the design and presentation of preparation programmes. Daresh and Playko's (1995) ideas concerning "personal formation" are relevant here, as well as other authors' ideas about experiential, double-loop, and discontinuous learning discussed in Chapter 3.3.

I have come to realize that in some cases, awareness-raising occurs naturally as a result of individuals' exposure to new ideas and discussions with co-participants. Still, the designers of programmes have to bear the importance of this key aspect of learning in mind continuously. Certain activities such as confrontation with disturbing facts or current realities, followed by reflection, are vital before presenting new content. One must, however, also understand that the changing of long cherished assumptions, which are often the fruits of socialization, and of which the individual is mostly unaware, is often a long and gradual process, which includes reflection on one's own

story (Groome, 1980), as well as the changing of the discourses (Harber and Davies, 1997) one engages in. For the real teacher, this may imply a long and difficult commitment to an individual, since such learning takes place mostly on the interpersonal level. As such, mentoring relationships acquire a completely new dimension.

When viewed in the light of the above, preparation courses for educational leaders must be seen as comprehensive and multi-faceted, playing a part in the ongoing process of adult education and educational change.

5.3 REPORTING CONCLUSIONS

I will use three frameworks within which to present the conclusions emerging from this study. Each of these enables me to approach similar issues from slightly different angles, to summarise the complexities involved, and to highlight the many facets that should be considered in the design of a programme of this nature and magnitude.

- I will briefly refer to the historical eras discussed in 3.1
- The basic ideas which emerged from the data will be linked to the principles for the design of preparation courses discussed in Chapter 3.4.2.
- I will then focus on ways in which these principles could be incorporated into the actual design of programmes. This will be done by discussing my conclusions in terms of the steps in the design process explained in Chapter 3.4.5.

5.4 HISTORICAL ERAS

5.4.1 The scientific management era

In trying to bring about change through a preparation programme for school leaders, one cannot disregard the role played by common prescription: telling and showing participants how to accomplish specific developments in their schools. Participants often follow these slavishly. This is not negative, as long as the process does not end

there. In fact, the “how to” part of preparation programmes should be seen as the ice breaker, the way to build participants’ self-confidence with which to launch them into their own orbits of self-exploration, fact finding and discovery.

5.4.2 The human relations era

Moving away from the technical and mechanical typical of prescriptions, a preparation course for school leaders should put a high premium on human relations - not only in terms of the teaching of topics such as interpersonal sensitivity, communication, motivation and conflict management, but also in terms of the structuring of the programme itself. In this structuring, various forms of interaction between participants, participants and presenters, and between participants and others outside the programme such as colleagues and school management teams, should be designed and treated as vital and integral aspects of the programme.

5.4.3 The behavioural science era

Preparation programmes for school leaders should retain the emphasis on the scientification of educational administration pursued in the behavioural science era. This emphasis on scientific endeavour should be on keeping alive the spirit of inquiry, or as Joubert (1997:6) says, “seeking as the way we were made, as part of our conscious existence” (translated from Afrikaans). Scientific activity in the context of preparation courses for school leaders focusses on the gathering and interpretation of facts from an individual’s practical situation. Action research could be a way to accomplish this ideal.

5.4.4 The dialectic era

As the term “dialectic” refers to the dynamic interaction between two opposing elements of reality, action research fits well into this era. Action research represents the dialectical interaction between theory and practice, and in Greene’s (1988:8) terms, between “living consciousness and phenomenal world”. Action research also opens the

way for individual knowledge construction, which fits in with the constructivist view of knowledge creation typical of the dialectic era.

The following two lines of thinking emerging during this “period of ferment” (Murphy, 1997:68), are also relevant for preparation programmes:

- In doing research about the development of preparation programmes for school leaders, methods typical of the interpretive tradition allow the researcher to come close to the realities of the workplace and to understand the differing needs of practitioners in various contexts.
- Preparation courses have to include a philosophical dimension. This refers not only to the content such as ethics, but also to the way programmes are structured so as to facilitate participants’ reflection. The philosophical dimension includes many aspects such as trying to motivate participants to think on the level of values and attitudes, as well as sensitising participants to possible discrepancies between their words and deeds. It also introduces elements in the design of the programmes which focus on participants’ personal development and growth, and emphasises the potential role the individual can play in bringing about change. Philosophical considerations influence behaviour, and the inclusion of philosophical elements in a preparation course is often motivated by the goal of change in the practice of school leaders pursued by the designers of courses.

5.5 PRINCIPLES FOR THE DESIGN OF PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

When comparing the principles for the design of preparation programmes revealed by the literature study and discussed in Chapter 3.4.2, to the conclusions generated by the data and discussed in Chapter 4, it becomes evident that the data coincide with and confirm a high percentage of the findings of various authors.

The principles discussed in 3.4.2, may be grouped together in terms of the three areas identified above, namely, the human element, strategies and activities, and self-awareness.

5.5.1 The human element

In discussing this factor, the following five principles (3.4.2) are taken into account:

5.5.1.1 Acknowledging participants' expertise

Acknowledging participants' expertise and experience, and providing opportunities for them to share this experience with other participants, is a sound principle to put into practice, especially with respect to programmes for school leaders. Not only are school leaders forced by necessity to create solutions to the problems they grapple with in their daily work, but they are also familiar with the local circumstances. This familiarity enables them to think out solutions and adapt concepts to fit the local context. The involvement of participants in sharing with other participants some of the experience and expertise they have accumulated, introduces an element of relevance, and helps to break down the traditional divide between lecturer and participants.

5.5.1.2 Allowing participants a role in the design of the programme

Ongoing communication between the presenters and participants does more than enlarge presenters' understanding of what and how participants want to learn. It also creates an atmosphere of trust, openness and mutual cooperation between presenters and participants. Although subtle, the indications are that these elements are important for the generation and maintenance of various processes, such as enhancing the modelling role of the presenters.

5.5.1.3 Helping participants to assist each other

Participants may assist each other either by giving feedback in the learning situation or by acting as peer coaches in the work situation. While this can be established through the way the programme is structured, for example, through group discussions, through requiring participants to discuss assignments with colleagues, or through action research projects, such opportunities are sometimes created by participants

themselves when they feel sufficiently at home with one another. This aspect forms part of the developing processes which one cannot engineer, but for the unfolding of which the right atmosphere is important. It is in this respect that opportunities for social interaction and getting acquainted are important.

5.5.1.4 Establishing mutual trust, openness and respect among participants

While it is difficult to determine what brings this about, it may be related to the way participants are treated, especially by local persons spending the most contact time with them, as well as to the inclusion of humour in the interactions between the relevant groups. Other important factors include for instance that trouble is taken to ensure that presenters and participants spend informal and social sessions together, that the queries of participants relating to administrative problems are dealt with promptly, and that issues concerning the payment of course fees are handled with sensitivity.

5.5.1.5 Utilizing experienced local practitioners

A person playing this role should preferably be a member of the local community who is familiar with the circumstances of the participants, and occupies a certain position of trust in the community. Such a person can be a major resource, conferring many additional benefits. Apart from helping to create openness and trust among participants, he or she can be a mentor, assisting participants with personal professional problems.

While the South African context does not allow for internships as advocated by especially the American authors, arranging for the mentor to give advice and feedback on the action research projects in the local schools, represents an important factor in adapting preparation programmes to the South African situation.

5.5.1.6 Involving colleagues and others

This is a vital principle in the design of a preparation programme, which will assist designers in obtaining a clear idea of local circumstances and objectives. The involvement of stakeholders ought even to continue beyond the planning stage. There is an ongoing need to have local persons with a personal interest in the success of the programme involved over the longer term. One needs someone who can serve the interests of the programme while interacting with members of the local community, and who can be contacted in times of crisis.

5.5.2 Strategies and activities

5.5.2.1 The importance of theoretical inputs

In the design of a preparation programme, one can become so enthused with practical, tangible strategies such as an action research programme or school-based problem-solving activities, that the importance of theoretical inputs is ignored or forgotten. One should also decide on a "core curriculum", representing basic content.

5.5.2.2 Taking the identified needs of participants into account

No one should attempt to design preparation programmes for school leaders unless he or she has had personal contact with the practical situation. The ways in which such contacts can be established will be discussed in 5.6.1.

5.5.2.3 The implementation of new skills in a safe environment

To a limited extent, this principle can be implemented by allowing participants to present their skills and expertise to the whole group of participants. The most natural place for this to occur is in a workshop atmosphere where time is specifically allocated for trial runs coupled with feedback. These trial runs are mostly in the form of giving an account of their implementation efforts as required by the assignments. Feedback is

given by both the mentor and other participants.

5.5.2.4 Implementation in the work environment

This principle can be observed through action research projects done in collaboration with colleagues. Feedback happens as a natural outflow of this process. Another way in which this could be accomplished is by the involvement of the school principal as mentor to the course participant. I elaborate on this in 5.6.5.3.

5.5.2.5 Ensuring a variety of strategies and activities

This principle emerged as an important factor in stimulating processes to bring about various and often unanticipated outcomes. It became clear through both the literature study and the practical experience that content, though important and indispensable, represents but one element in a whole array of factors playing a part in the growth of participants and eventual improvements in their practice. Detail is given in 5.6.6 and 5.6.7.

5.5.3 Self-awareness

5.5.3.1 Stimulating participants' critical awareness

The stimulation of participants' critical awareness, critical understanding, meta-cognition and willingness to engage in double-loop learning has become one of the central issues for me in the design and presentation of preparation programmes. Various strategies must be employed to encourage the development of these aspects in participants. If this aspect, which may be a time consuming one, is ignored, or if one loses patience in trying to facilitate this, it may happen that the course is reduced to a straight forward academic exercise, with little impact on practice.

5.5.3.2 Designing strategies to encourage double-loop learning

An awareness of a problem, or of an inconsistency between participants' words and deeds, can be seen as a basic motivational force for learning and change. This principle ties in with the one above. Through becoming aware of an inconsistency in his or her behaviour, a person becomes motivated to learn how to remove the discrepancy, a process basic to the attainment of a heightened self-awareness.

Various teaching strategies were employed to confront the person with the gap between his/her "espoused theories and theories-in-use" (Argyris, 1993), and these will have to be considered in the design and implementation of a preparation programme.

5.6 STEPS IN THE DESIGN PROCESS

5.6.1 Needs analysis

The identification of needs should take place on four levels:

- In the first instance, it is crucial that designers and presenters of programmes visit a representative number of school where participants teach in order to determine the basic needs and bottlenecks which, if left unattended, will prevent any other inputs from being assimilated and utilized.
- On a second level, it remains important to get continuous feedback about the course in the form of discussions, workshops and written work to determine needs on an ongoing basis.
- In the third instance, one should remain sensitive to the unexpressed and sometimes unknown needs of participants and schools, in so far as these can be determined through research, observation and the consideration of policy.
- Lastly, the insights and opinions of local persons should be sought and considered in the final identification of the needs to be addressed in the course.

5.6.2 Determining outcomes

Identifying the envisaged outcomes of an educative programme must necessarily include consideration of both the knowledge to be accumulated, and the changes in behaviour to be effected. I found that aiming at the improvement of participants' knowledge with respect to a group of basic organizational processes such as meeting procedures, met a real need in the schools this group of participants were teaching at. One objective should therefore be to equip participants with knowledge about the basics of such aspects of organizational life.

A second, and more long-term objective of a preparation programme should be a change in behaviour. This goal requires a change in participants' attitudes to be brought about by a heightened self-awareness. In considering both the literature and my experience with this group, my conclusion is that one should plan the outcomes of the course to register a tangible change in participants' ability to solve problems in practice. While some authors accordingly see the goal of preparation programmes as that of converting participants into problem solvers, I prefer to view the objective as the development of participants into competent action researchers in their schools. This is a process goal which is closely linked to the process goal of heightened self-awareness.

Beyond these lie various product goals, such as the establishment of a financial management system in participants' schools, or an improved communication network among the teachers. The specific product goals to be achieved will vary from school to school according to local needs and situations. The programme should therefore focus on empowering participants to do action research in the school, thus allowing them to determine the specific product goals themselves, in accordance with the needs of their schools. In the case of the course I was teaching, participants became involved in various projects, including that of raising pupils' achievement levels. They also discovered how addressing one problem confronted them with other problems as well. When participants become established in their use of action research as a tool, they also become equipped to address any problem in their schools, and this is what I

believe a course such as this should be aiming at.

5.6.3 Deciding on the content of the programme

This step in the design of a programme ties in with the previous one. Designers of programmes should ensure that the basic organizational process goals have been achieved before embarking on other more exciting ventures. This emphasizes again the necessity for a needs analysis before the content of a programme is finalized. I found that a problem such as conflict existing among the staff members blocks out all other inputs, and needs to be resolved before any meaningful change can occur.

According to Schmuck and Runkel (1994), the basic content to be covered includes meeting procedures, communication, conflict management, decision making and problem solving. To this list one might add the important need in the current South African context for financial management skills. The list then exemplifies Furtwengler *et al.*'s (1996:521,522) concept of a "core curriculum with flexible components based on authentic problems of practice".

Additional content to be covered can be determined by other factors such as:

- Needs expressed by participants
- Expertise available in the group of participants, gained through their exposure to typical problems of practice
- Suggestions by local stakeholders

When discussing the question of which topics to include in a programme, the first reaction of a designer is often to start naming the usual topics, which are a legacy of the social sciences era. This may lead to arguments about the relevance of certain topics, or about which topics are more important than others.

In my opinion, the way to go about it is, when the core curriculum referred to above has been covered, to equip participants to do action research, and then leave it to them to

determine the problems they want to investigate in their own schools. In this way, the problem of what to include and at what level is solved in a natural way: each participant decides for him/herself, according to his/her own circumstances.

While the list of relevant topics one could include in such a course is virtually limitless, it remains one of the key criteria of programme design to include suitable content in terms of scope, depth and number of topics covered. In the light of the above, I would dare to say that in general, it is better to aim at a small rather than a large number of topics.

5.6.4 Planning the structure of the programme

While the basic planning of a timetable for the duration and spacing of the contact sessions and other meetings should be determined by the circumstances and preferences of the specific group of participants, the sequence of reading literature and investigation in schools, followed by a contact session and then succeeded by a time of implementation and feedback, is a sound one, which allows for the meaningful integration of theory and practice. The structure should allow for preparation and diagnosis before the contact time, as well as for implementation and feedback after the lectures have been presented.

5.6.5 Involvement of colleagues and others

5.6.5.1 Introduction

This facet of preparation programmes, previously referred to as the human element, has increased in importance for me as a result of my involvement with this project. While authors referring to this element of preparation courses usually focus on the “supply side” of participation in the course (the presentation aspect), it was only through my involvement with this project that I realized the importance of those people at the “receiving end”. I use this term to refer to the persons in the school where the newly acquired knowledge has to be implemented. The people who have to respond

to new ideas and who play a determining role with respect to their implementation, have to be carefully prepared and nurtured if the programmes are to have any influence in the daily practice of schools.

5.6.5.2 Neutralizing negative interpersonal factors

The preparation and nurturing referred to above must sometimes be interpreted to imply overcoming negative sentiments. In the implementation of inputs from the course, colleagues of participants, and especially the senior members of staff including the principal, can play determining roles with respect to the effect the course has on practice. While the designers and presenters of the course cannot do much more than visiting the schools and encouraging the other staff members and the principal to give participants space, the participants should also, as part of the programme, be sensitized to their role as agents of change, so as to play this role in a diplomatic and sensitive way.

5.6.5.3 Utilizing the human factor as a positive force

There is a whole array of people who could, through their involvement, play positive roles in the "delivery" of the course. It is important that designers plan the course around such people. The most obvious of these are:

- local stakeholders familiar with the circumstances and able to play a supporting role
- local experienced persons playing a part in the presentation of the course, as presenters, leaders of discussion groups and mentors
- experienced participants, offering their expertise as part of the course
- participants acting as soundboards for other participants and members of discussion groups
- participants becoming involved in networks supporting each other and sharing insights and knowledge, even continuing with this after the course has been concluded

- participants teaching at the same schools forming support groups and acting as peer coaches for one another.

Colleagues in schools not participating in the course could also play meaningful roles as peer coaches, while principals could, if they are positively inclined, act as mentors.

Another possibility in this respect is for persons who have graduated to act as “marketers” of the course, encouraging colleagues to register for the course. They could then act as mentors while their colleagues do the course; This is a role that principals could play in a most effective way, creating the opportunity for staff growth and organizational development.

5.6.6 Planning the teaching components

I have learned much from Wallace’s (1991) exposition of the role played by the various teaching components. The following factors are important to consider when planning the teaching process:

- A teaching session or the teaching of a specific topic should be introduced with some type of confrontation with one’s own thinking or with reality. This is in line with the emphasis on awareness-raising, on “shocking” participants into reflecting on their assumptions and beliefs.
- Teaching should also include a form of diagnosis, in which the basic elements of the topic are scrutinized, and in which the participant does some data gathering and analysis with respect to the topic in his/her own environment.
- The presenter’s task is to supply the participant with the basic information and knowledge with respect to the topic.
- In addition to the “what” of the topic, the participant should also be taught the “how”, the skills associated with the topic under consideration.
- It is important to provide opportunities for practice, together with feedback.
- It is important to keep participants’ contexts continuously in mind. Presenters have always to be on the lookout for new ways of forming “bridges” to the world where

the theoretical knowledge is to be implemented. Unless presenters specifically plan for ways in which learning can be meaningfully integrated into practice, the learning process may be short-circuited before it bears any fruit.

As far as the imparting of the knowledge is concerned, the more components of teaching one includes in one's design, the richer the process becomes, and the more possibilities are generated with respect to possible outcomes.

5.6.7 Designing activities (teaching strategies) to promote the learning components

With regard to teaching activities, the following points need to be emphasized:

- The wider the variety one can build into the course, the greater the potential for various outcomes, effects and benefits emerging from the course. In planning the activities, one should be guided by the list of teaching components above.
- Activities have to allow for experiences on both the cognitive and affective levels, including the unconventional ones that some authors refer to as "nurturing soul".
- Activities should be structured in such a way that the emphasis gradually shifts from the presenter to the participant, who steadily assumes more responsibility for the particular assignment or action. Action research meets this criterion well.

5.6.8 Planning the evaluation of the course

Both formative and summative evaluation should be emphasized in a course of this nature. The formal assessment done when the course has been completed supplies designers and presenters with useful information and advice when they do the re-planning of the course. Evaluation done as part of the ongoing presentation of the course on the other hand, is a vital tool to stay in touch with, and keep the course attuned to, the real needs of participants.

While it is useful to do a formal evaluation of the course at different stages, other forms

of feedback exist which can be utilized in this regard. Much feedback can be obtained through participants' assignments, and through both formal and informal discussions with participants.

An important criterion for formative evaluation is whether enough flexibility exists to adjust the programme midstream. This not only ensures the ongoing renewal of the programme, but also allows participants to make tangible inputs into the programme, thereby enriching it.

Allowing for the involvement of participants in this way brings about many extra benefits such as the establishment of a team approach and concomitant closer relationships between presenters and participants.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.7.1 Introduction

In considering the insights gained from this research, one immediately starts to think about the implementation of a new programme which incorporates what has been learned. This implies the identification of areas in which further research is required, as well as the conceptualization of a possible future model for the presentation of the course. Therefore, when I use the term "recommendations", I am not attempting to prescribe how such courses should be run - I am in a sense talking to myself, saying: "When you ever implement this course again, see to it that you design the course according to the following guidelines, or that you at least consider the following recommendations".

5.7.2 Areas needing further investigation

5.7.2.1 Mentoring

The idea of utilizing participants who have completed the course both as marketers of

the course and as mentors for colleagues who register for the course, was one that surfaced early on in the development of the programme. In the discussion on mentoring in the contact session of 30 March, participants expressed themselves available as mentors for newcomers to the course. When I, in returning to George a year later, asked them individually whether they were still available after one year, they all agreed that they were still ready and eager to be involved.

This idea was not really developed further during the course. In order to implement this in the next presentation of the course, I need to do more research on what mentoring in this context would actually imply, and on how this could be implemented on various levels, including that of the principal of the school, colleagues assisting the participant to test out ideas in practice, co-participants of the course who are also colleagues, other participants, and also co-presenters of the course such as a retired local person managing the workshops.

Further thinking and research also need to be done on how to prepare individuals for the role of mentoring, and how to establish and maintain an ongoing interaction between the mentors and the presenters.

In an application to a foundation in Cape Town (Sept. 1999) for funding to develop a system of mentors, (I referred to them as peer-coaches to differentiate them from the mentors running the workshops), I proposed the following:

This group will consist mainly of individuals who have already done some courses in educational management, and who are colleagues of teachers who have registered for the course. Their main function will be to give feedback to the participants on projects they implement, or skills (e.g. chairing a meeting) they try out in the school situation. They will have to attend two mentoring sessions of one hour each per month, during which the mentors will listen to their experiences and problems and give them advice in guiding the participants they have taken responsibility for. They will also be required to attend the mentoring workshops for the participants so as to stay informed

about their problems, as well as to learn from the mentors.

One will no doubt learn much in the course of implementing this system, but I feel that I still need to do more reading about mentoring in order to set up the teaching and preparation programme.

5.7.2.2 Discourse analysis

In Harber and Davies (1997:Chapter 7) I found a useful description the utilization of discourses and scripts in the teaching process. This helped considerably in developing my understanding about the problems I experienced with respect to raising self-awareness and changing behaviour. It was, however, too late to include the material in the programme. This is a topic needing further investigation before it can be meaningfully integrated and implemented in the programme.

5.7.3 The development of professional communities

5.7.3.1 Introduction

Beyond the notion of mentoring, lies the idea of a type of framework within which, mentoring and cognate activities can take place. Such a framework would be informed by many aspects referred to in the discussion in 5.5.1 about the importance of the human element.

5.7.3.2 A framework for the development of professional communities

The following framework provides an overview of the structure of the programme as it developed over the course of the two-year period in which the programme was implemented. It also represents the culmination of my thinking about a format in which the preparation programme could become the driving force behind a programme of whole school development involving an extended number of schools in a specific region.

The framework given below also formed the basis of the funding proposal referred to above (5.7.2.1). In this application I explained the basic format as follows:

The project is due to start in July 2000. It consists of the presentation of a B Ed degree in Whole School Development, at four centres, for a total of 60 candidates from schools in the Southern Cape.

This project is the outflow of a research study which started in 1996 and is at the moment in its last stages of completion. This study consisted of the development of a programme for the preparation of school leaders, and revealed basic criteria that have to be met for an in-service training programme to be successful. Basic elements include the utilization of local expertise, the importance of practice in the workplace with feedback, the importance of others (such as mentors and peer coaches) in the transfer of learning to practice and the effectiveness of action research as a tool in the teaching process.

One of the vital elements which increases the viability of this project, is the fact that two individuals who played a key role in the previous project (one as co-developer, and the other as mentor), are available to be involved again. Another factor is the fact that twelve participants who have already completed the course, have declared themselves willing to be involved as mentors for their colleagues.

The course will run over a period of two years. The University will be responsible for the training of the lecturers, the provision of study materials, the administration and marketing costs, and the remuneration of one lecturer for his/her lecturing. The request for funding is for those aspects and elements which the ordinary university course cannot cater for, such as: The duplication of lectures at various centres to make the programme more accessible, the elements of mentoring and peer teaching, the visits by the project leader to schools to prepare them to utilize and benefit from the knowledge of the staff

members who are attending the course, and the subsidising of the class fees to enable the potential participants with financial limitations not to be left out.

The programme will consist of the university lecturers teaching the local tutors, who will then be responsible for duplicating the lectures at the various centres. The strength of the model lies in

- the involvement of local expertise
- the fact that it provides for the expansion of the programme through the growing involvement of participants on higher levels
- the involvement of peer coaches in the practical situations where participants teach
- the provision for continuous feedback to keep the programme relevant to the needs of participants and participating schools
- the course presenters' active preparation of those schools where participants teach so as to involve them as stakeholders and important role players.

In the diagram below (Figure 5.1), the terminology used refers to the following role players:

- Lecturers: university staff responsible for the development of the modules, the preparation of the tutors, and the visiting of schools where participants teach
- Tutors: local individuals presenting the modules at various centres, and running workshops where participants can get feedback and ask advice on their assignments, as well as on their efforts to implement theory in practice
- Mentors: principals of schools where participants teach, as well as graduates of the course who declared themselves available to act as mentors for their colleagues doing the course
- Critical friends: participants in the course, teaching at other schools, assisting co-participants in the course with advice and feedback
- Peer coaches: participants' colleagues who are also participating in the course, who assist each other in implementing new ideas in the school where they are

teaching.

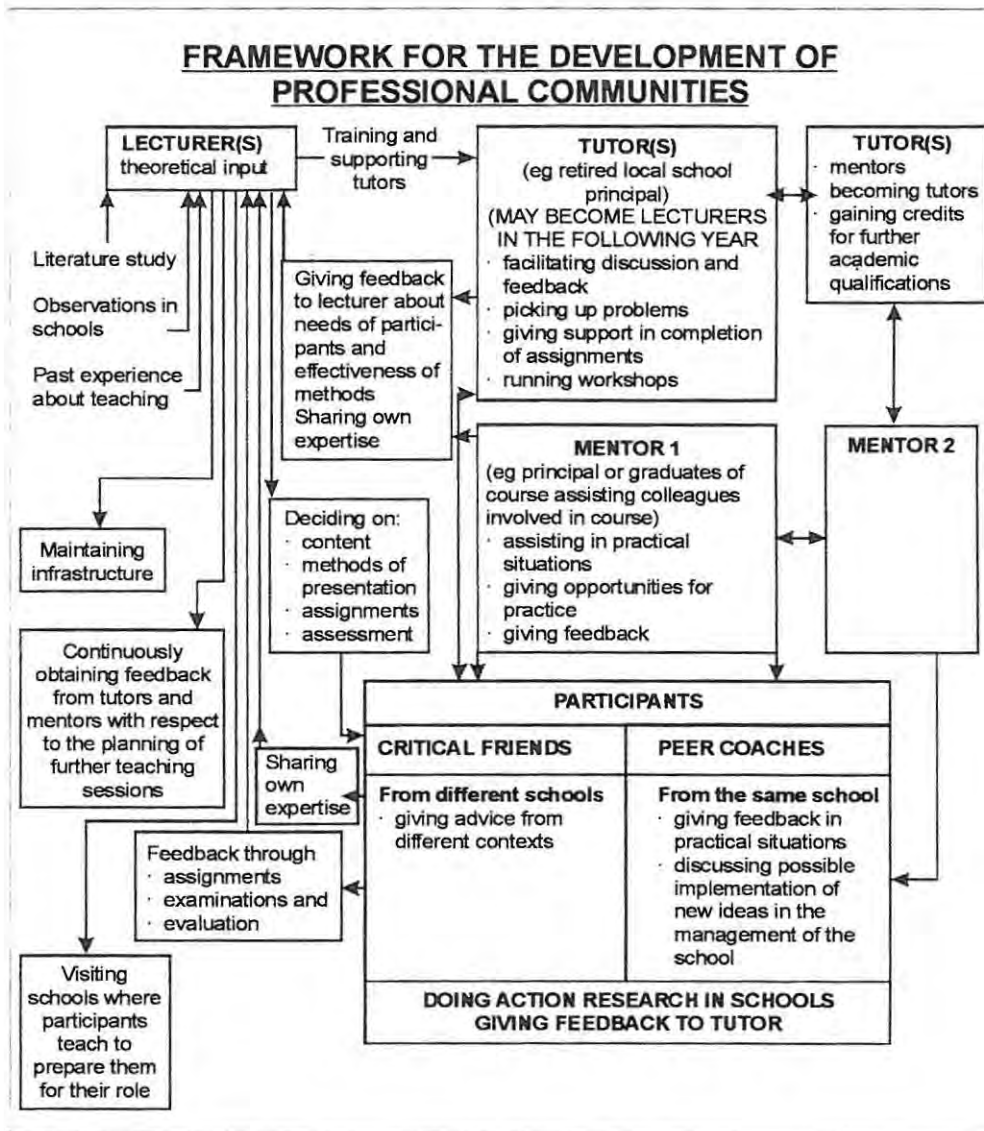


Fig 5.1: Framework for the development of professional communities

5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In summary, this study resulted in the following outcomes which could be of assistance in the development of future preparation programmes for school leaders:

- an overview of the development of thinking with respect to preparation programmes for school leaders in other parts of the world

- the elaboration of Wallace's (1988) framework as a guide in the development of new preparation programmes, ensuring the inclusion of a wide range of elements aimed at bringing about changes in practice
- the emphasis on action research as a vital instrument in the achievement of various objectives central to the preparation of school leaders for practice
- the development of a framework for the establishment of professional communities around preparation programmes.

Teaching is a complex process. The accomplishment of more than simple transfer of knowledge from the lecturer to the student requires the investment of considerable energy and continuous reflection in the design of teaching programmes.

Finally, the teaching of adults should not be seen as separate from everyday life, but rather as an integral part of, sharing the same richness, variety and surprise, and requiring the conscious endeavours of everybody involved.

ADDENDUMS

ADDENDUM A

CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COURSE

A.1 1998: FIRST TERM

A.1.1 Contact session (for programme, see addendum B3)

A.1.1.1 Content

The content concentrated on four of Schmuck and Runkel's (1994) five "focuses for effective work groups" in organizational development, namely conflict management, meetings, problem solving and decision making. This was done because three of them did appear in the curriculum (see modules PKR 201&202, addendum B1), and because I became convinced during my visits to the schools that conflict management was a vital skill in the management of schools in that area (at one school, which had excellent new buildings and a well developed infrastructure, I saw how everything had simply ground to a halt because of interpersonal conflict).

A.1.1.2 Activities

A.1.1.2.1 The jigsaw model

The activities of this session centered around a case study (addendum B4) which was developed from the insights gathered during my visits to the schools (addendum B2). The learning activities were based on cooperative learning principles, which implied that each group had to study one of the topics and apply the knowledge gained in these to help address the problems reflected in the case study. When this had been done, the participants had an opportunity to reflect on the activities and content of the session and to give feedback to me.

The jig-saw model of cooperative learning implies amongst other things that each member receives one section or paragraph of the material, which he/she then, after

consultation with those that received the same paragraph as him/her, has to teach the other members of his/her group.

A.1.1.2.2 Feedback on case study:

An important suggestion with respect to the role of the principal in such a conflict situation was that the principal should meet with his/her management team and open up - apologize to them and take responsibility for the critical situation in the school.

A.1.1.2.3 Ideas about problem solving

Relevance of inputs from practice: One group took the list of characteristics of problem solving processes developed after the November school visits (addendum B2) and compared these with the situation at their schools. The following was said after this exercise: "We found out that we fulfilled all the criteria (characteristics) of problem solving" [indicating that their problem solving processes looked exactly the same as the problem solving processes in the schools I had visited]. This emphasizes the importance or the relevance which examples from the practical situation have for the teaching activity

A.1.2 Assignments

Four assignments were given to the participants (see addendum B5). The emphasis was on:

- Solving a problem in the participant's' school
- Utilizing theoretical inputs
- Making use of own insights
- Getting input from other participants and colleagues.

A.1.3 Workshops

During 1997, the workshops were seen as opportunities for participants to do content-related group exercises designed by the facilitator. These worked well, and the participants enjoyed them. The workshops provided participants to get to know each other's circumstances and to acquire new insights through solutions developed in colleagues' schools. In 1998, the emphasis slowly shifted with participants taking more initiative. This meant in the first term that they designed their own case studies (based

on the one given to them as part of the contact session in January) and that they used the workshops to discuss these and tried to find solutions for each other's problems.

A.1.4 Focus group session

A.1.4.1 Composition of the group

The focus group initially consisted of three principals. When I started the group, the fourth person was not included for two reasons:

- He was initially only an acting principal and I wanted to be able to justify the inclusion of every member of the focus group to the other members of the group
- He was the only white person in the group, and I felt initially that the situation at his school would be so different from that of the other schools, that the problems he was struggling with, would not have been relevant to the others.

I changed my mind because of the following reasons:

- I realized that he was the de facto principal; he at any rate was appointed in the post some time after we started
- He assumed a positive leadership role in the group, and had so many new ideas which he shared with the group, that I realized that he could be an important source of workable ideas for the group.

The group consisted in the end of two black principals, one coloured and one white person, and this proved to be a good mix.

A.1.4.2 Meetings with individual members

The first focus group session was conducted in two phases: I tried to see the participants individually in their schools, mainly because I wanted to see how they were doing their financial management (which was on the agenda for the second contact session). This brought about a couple of surprises to me: In the first instance, the one principal who was part of the focus group, refused to let me come to see his financial system. He even lodged a personal attack on me, implying that I had to carry the blame for him being unable to show me his statements (saying that I had not given him long

enough notice). The other principal not only showed me his statements, but also shared with me an ingenious plan they had developed at his school to get in a bigger percentage of the school fees. I did not want to put the third principal under pressure to allow me into his school because of the experience I had there in November of 1997.

Principal Z received me very enthusiastically. The interview with him taught me an important lesson: I realized soon after we had started with our interview that he felt a great need to share some of his/their accomplishments with me. This implied that my questions simply did not get through to him. I suddenly realized that the very things he was discussing were worked-out solutions that had worked for his/her him/her or peers and that these were much closer to being good solutions than anything I could work out or read about in books. These solutions also had grown out of the practical situation, and were therefore possibly much closer to the real needs of practitioners in that area, than any neatly formulated academic ideas that I could come up with. This implied that I had to incorporate the ideas and solutions discussed by these principals as part of the content of my course, while they themselves could present these to their peers.

A.1.4.3 The first focus group meeting

This first meeting was eventually attended by myself and two of the group members. The three of us spent time discussing the previously concluded contact session. I wanted them to help me plan the next contact session, but my experience with principal Z was more-or-less repeated. They clearly saw these meetings as opportunities for them to share with each other and with me. They did, however, express some of their needs to me. Of particular interest was their need to be better informed about fundraising.

A.1.4.4 Presentations by members of the focus group

In an interview with one of the focus group members on 26 Feb 1998, this principal (Principal W) shared a brilliant plan he and his colleagues had devised to raise the level of school fees payments with me. The plan basically meant that the school gave a parent R10 to start a "business" with, and allowing the parents who registered for the scheme to sell their stuff on the school premises. A certain percentage of each term's profits had then to be paid to the school, until the full amount of the school fees had been covered. After this, the parent was allowed to continue with his/her business for

the rest of the year, with no further responsibilities towards the school. According to this principal, this scheme had pushed up the percentage of school fees paid by a considerable margin, even though the school is situated in a very low income, squatter area.

Sensing the potential this scheme had to create jobs and generate funds for the school, as well as the relevance this solution had for the other participants, I asked him whether he would be willing to share this plan with the other participants. He immediately agreed. I also realized that this was a type of solution that could only have been generated by the pressure created by a real problem in a real situation. No author of any textbook would have been able to generate such a context-specific solution to the problem.

I had similar experiences with my interviews with two of the other principals that same afternoon and the following day. Principal Y had just gone through a very deep experience of conflict resolution with his staff. He initiated the conflict management process after the group exercise during the contact session in January. This group exercise was based upon the case study we did during the first contact session. He wanted (and justifiably so) to share with me the experience he had. His experience centred around the fact that he took the initiative to, after individual consultations with staff members, to publicly apologize for the mistakes he had committed. This brought about a tremendous reaction from his staff members, and was the beginning of a healing process in the staff. When I asked him whether he would be willing to share his experience with the rest of the group, he immediately agreed. He even said: "If I do this with the other participants, I will be empowered to do this with my own staff"!

I wrote the following in my journal that same evening (26 February): "It is virtually impossible to establish a research group ethos/dynamics from this group because of the fact that:

- They are not as interested in presenting a good course as I am
- There may be implied power inequalities among them which may hamper the interpersonal dynamics (It struck me how quickly the principal of the one school which had made more progress in terms of organization and management than the other, started telling the other principal what they should do and be doing)
- The full programmes of the principals do not allow them to spend as much time as I need on designing a programme."

During my interview with principal Z, he wanted to share the plans they had devised for dealing with discipline issues and information management. We only had 45 minutes to talk, and there was no way in which I could bring him around to discuss my objectives, unless I obviously forced the issue. Like the other two, he was only too willing to come and share what he had learned with the others in the group. As it happened, I became to recognize a pattern, sensing that I had identified a source of energy which I should utilize.

The main ideas that came to me after my initial frustration, were:

- Certain aspects of school management can only be determined or generated and known and taught by insiders - by those who were forced through necessity to develop their own systems and solutions. Insiders can tell you what their needs are with respect to specific aspects of topics they are working with.
- In most cases, a practitioner who has developed a new system, or thought out a good plan, is usually more than willing to share this with other participants or colleagues. They are usually pleased to share with others what had worked for them, which provides evidence of their professional endeavours and dedication.
- If the principles established here can be applied to what has been said about involving participants in action research, then it means that if participants take a real problem in their schools and find a good solution to this problem, they will be willing (and proud!) to share this solution with others as well.

A.1.4.5 Research design

After some reflection on my experience with three of the four principals, I recorded the following thoughts in my journal on 2 March 1998:

My experiences with the three principals put me on a completely new track. It changes my original ideas about the way in which the action research should be conducted. The changed format would imply that:

- I supply the theoretical framework and structure for the course.
- I determine the basic topics (from my readings, observations at the schools and feedback about the needs of the participants.

- I suggest possible presentation strategies.
- The participants identify aspects about which they have already done some thinking and developed tangible strategies/solutions. They get the opportunity to present this to the group as part of the content included in the course.
- I add the wider theoretical framework with respect to this particular topic, as well as those aspects not covered by the participants.
- I offer a basic course in action research. Each participant identifies an aspect of management about which he/she can do action research in his/her school(one topic per term, maybe rather per semester).These topics are chosen from the list of topics which are still to be covered in the course.
- Each individual is allowed 15 minutes at the next contact session to give feedback on his/her project, while I again cover the wider issues concerning the specific topic”.

A.2 1998: SECOND TERM

A.2.1 Contact session

A.2.1.1 Preparation

In thinking about mentoring, I came across the book by Bolman and Deal (1993), which gives an excellent description in narrative mode of mentoring in practice. I realized, after being exposed to the book by Daresh and Playko (1993), that an ongoing mentoring relationship was the only hope for the survival or some of these people once they became principals. I also realized that they needed to reflect on this concept before they attended the contact session if any transfer was to take place. In order to accomplish this, I sent them a letter (addendum B6) with details about the required preparation as well as some reading material.

A.2.1.2 Content (see addendum B7)

A.2.1.3 Outcomes of contact session

In order to encourage the development of supporting networks, participants were asked to discuss their thinking about, and experience of mentoring. In addition to this, and as an attempt to bring their reflection closer home, Brown and Irby's (1997) suggestions

about portfolio writing were discussed and participants asked to develop their own portfolio's.

The following topics were considered and discussed as a result:

- **Mentors for new participants**
From the discussion on mentoring, the thinking developed into participants recruiting members of their staff for the course, and committing themselves to mentor the participants from their schools. They said that they knew what the course was all about and that therefore the staff would be able to come to them for advice.
- **Integrating the processes of feedback on case study, feedback on inputs in practice, inputs by participants into the process, personal story telling and affirmation of participants by participants**
This became a truly remarkable session with many things being said and experienced in the group. The fact that individual group members took part in the presentation of content, resulted in some of them sharing some of their experiences at their schools, as well as ways in which they have dealt with deep problems that had cropped up.

The one outstanding example was when principal Y, in whose staff there had been so many interpersonal problems, gave his input on conflict management. His modus operandi consisted mainly of personal interviews with individual staff members, finding out from them where he had gone wrong, summarizing what they had said, meeting with his management team to see whether they agreed with his interpretation, and eventually meeting with the whole staff, confessing his mistakes and asking their forgiveness. Some of his ideas of how to resolve the issue came from the group discussions in the January session about the case study (which had been based, amongst others on the situation at his school).

The sharing of his experience with the other participants led to a discussion which included his sharing of some aspects of his personal story with the group, personal affirmations by the rest of the group, references to the role both the group and his involvement with the course had played, the sharing of some religious beliefs, the emerging of some elements of self-awareness, and even some humorous moments. I believe this experience played a major role in the development of interpersonal

trust and openness which became one of the hallmarks of the group's interactions. The following quotes give some reflection of the process which took place:

Participants' responses after he had shared his experience

"If the administration staff sets the example it does improve the situation"

"Exposing oneself leads to pain, but that pain is short - you have to go through it, but it is going to be much better afterwards. Teachers and principals are sometimes desiring the same thing but cannot get to it. Then it is up to the principal to make the first move".

"This is wonderful! If you were my principal, you would be wonderful in my eyes. I appreciate this. But tell me, how was your role before this? How did you see yourself as a principal before doing this?"

To this question, Y responded as follows:

Before, to be honest with you, it was not good, I didn't feel O K. In the mornings I could only say: 'Molweni!' (Good Morning!), and then it ended there. Now I can say on a Friday afternoon before I go home: 'You have a nice weekend!'. Such things, now they are there, they were not there before. I don't want to say to you we've reached the end, there are still people from my staff who do not understand what is happening. A lot of bad things were said about me. After I enrolled for this course, I sat down in my office and said to myself: 'Let me make use of what I'm getting from you'. You see, that was actually what drove me to do that because things were not right with me. That is why I want to thank you a lot, because of what you were telling me as we were discussing the case study.

One other thing that lead to my situation is that I like to pray - I pray a lot. Sometimes when I get into my office I will close my door and just say a short prayer and then go out. We've got a beautiful thing at our school which says: 'With God you will always succeed'."

That's why I said to them: 'Here I am, sorry for what I did - some of the things I did, I really thought that I was doing right, but in the same way, I was offending you. Please, I am your principal, please do accept me'. The result was that somebody even made a comment saying: 'I was not aware that we have the TRC (The Commission for Truth and Reconciliation) at the school!' whereupon

somebody else said: 'Where is Bishop Tutu?'[much laughter]. That's what came to my mind - there is something wrong, but let me go to them, and if there is something wrong you can come to my office and say: 'I don't like this what you said but at the end of the day I need you, and I also believe that you need me'."

A.2.2 Assignments

As part of their programme for the second term, and as follow up to the second session, participants were given four assignments on the topics covered during the session. The shift towards more school-based work which was started with the assignments of the first term, continued with the assignments for the second term (see addendum B8 as example).

A.2.3 The focus group meeting

The second meeting of the focus group was held straight after the contact session, and ended in a buffet dinner at a nearby hotel. Many positive things were said as feedback on the previous term's work as well as on the way they had experienced the contact session:

A.2.3.1 Involvement of local stakeholders

The focus group meeting of 1 April was attended by three of the four principals (one had another appointment, and so I had a separate interview with him early that day), Andy Lamont (the Director of the centre where the lectures were presented, who was involved right from the start), and myself. Mr Lamont started the discussion, also identifying with the aims of the project, by saying:

We should think from an angle where we say to ourselves - did we bring a new dimension to what we're doing? We should also look at aspects of what we've covered and ask other areas that we must look at to add to new dimensions to the curriculum. This is quite important to us because this was the first programme, not only with respect to the contents, but also in the way it is being presented in the rural areas - it is a unique system and we are of the opinion that it is working at this stage, but we are not the people to judge - your input would therefore be very important.

A.2.3.2 Discussion of implementation

The feedback session produced an interesting discussion about the implementation of information about meetings which we had discussed in the January contact session in schools: when we asked the members of the focus group to what extent they had managed to improve the meetings in their respective schools, we received very positive responses. When we started asking more detailed questions, the fact emerged that one of them saw any gathering of staff, whether it is a discussion during the lunch break, or the organizing committee planning an athletics meeting, as staff meetings: "what happens, during their lunch breaks, when they are there, they talk about almost everything. . . they keep others in line, even while it's an informal thing." In response to our discussion about formal and informal meetings in principal 4's school, Mr Lamont made full use of the opportunity to clarify possible misconceptions by saying: "I appreciate what you are saying, and what you are saying is a vital aspect of your communication, but the use of a meeting is, in being formal, an important opportunity for people to prepare - it is not sort of incidental, and you have a structure by which what is being said, is recorded - those two things, to prepare and to have feedback are very important, and that does not happen in informal discussions." This incident which was totally unplanned, opened my thinking about the role of such evaluative discussions about participants' feedback.

A.2.3.3. Feedback on content

When I asked the principals about areas of interest they wanted input on in the course, two topics emerged: That of parent involvement and the management of Governing Bodies.

A.2.3.4 The organizing of a workshop for members of management teams and School Governing Bodies

The discussion then turned to exposing members of Governing Bodies and management teams to what we were doing in the course.

From this the discussion went on, developing the details of a programme to allow for visitors to attend various topics on a rotational basis. We decided that I will prepare a draft programme and present this to the full group at our next contact session.

A.2.4. The role of the workshops with respect to the assignments

A.2.4.1 Developing insights

During the term I was in Pretoria on study leave, the participants sent their assignments to me for assessment. I experienced various frustrations in reading through the many pages they had written. Some assignments were excellent and included good responses by participants to the challenge of doing some research in their schools and to consult their colleagues in the completion of the assignments, but others simply stuck to the theory (which implied that they rewrote that!). Various insights developed as I was marking.

I wrote the following in my journal (11 April 1999):

In reading through the assignments received so far, I was struck by the fact that many of the participants did not fully understand what the assignment topics required of them. Many simply wrote pages and pages, little thinking/considering whether they are actually meeting the requirements. In order to solve this, I realized that they needed a detailed framework of the requirements, and of how the assignments were to be assessed. While busy designing such frameworks, it occurred to me that such a framework needs to be discussed with the participants, and that each assignment then had to be assessed against the background of its framework. This process would enable participants to understand beforehand exactly what needs to be done, and therefore would be able to produce better assignments.

How could this be accomplished other than through the workshops? And who would be in a better position to do this than the workshop leader, who would then really become the tutor? In this way assessment could truly become formative instead of summative.”

I then wrote Dr Douglas a letter (addendum B9) explaining my developing thoughts, and to ask him to consider implementing these.

A.2.4.3 Tangible results with respect to the workshops

After discussions between me and the workshop leader (now being seen as the “mentor”), we agreed to follow this route and the participants were informed

accordingly.

During May the process got underway. This was a success right from the start, and I do contribute much of the improvement in the assignments to the changes in the process with respect to assessment forms, discussions and feedback and the opportunity to redo assignments with the comments of the workshop leader as guide. For this to work, the person running the workshops plays a determining role. The fact that we had a retired school principal and inspector, who is knowledgeable with respect to local circumstances, and who is sympathetic towards the participants, made a tremendous difference. This was, in my mind, one of the key aspects in the design of this course

A.3 1998: THIRD TERM

A.3.1 Contact session

A.3.1.1 Prior reflections

In my thinking about the June contact session, I was influenced by a couple of factors which I will just touch on briefly here in order to put the content of the session in perspective:

- Ever since my first visit to the schools in November 1997, I was intrigued by the fact that some of the participants had all the correct answers, yet did not seem to have any understanding (or motivation?) about implementation.
- The saying that talk is cheap was again emphasized for me as I read the participants' assignments and examination scripts. In some cases, I had more than one participant from a specific school, so that I could compare their accounts of what was happening at their specific schools.
- Apart from participants saying things which I knew (or suspected) they did not actually manage to implement in practice, I also detected some ways of reasoning corresponding to certain types of "discourses" referred to by Harber and Davies (1997) that effectively blocked any new insights from influencing practice. This was similar to Zuber-Skerritt's (1996) view of "A" and "B" (see addendum B12) orientations which refers to differences between the ways in which people approach their problems (eg. whether they usually looked to other for help out of a difficult situation, or whether they were inclined to look

for solutions themselves)

- Added to Zuber-Skerritt's views on different orientations, her reference to "emancipatory action research" made me think of action research as a way through which one may start moving from an A to a B orientation and as a format in which assignments could possibly be done.
- My readings introduced me to many concepts such as "consciousness, self-awareness and awareness" (see 3.3.1.1); "espoused theories" versus "theories-in-use" (3.3.1.4) and "reflective practice" (3.3.3.3) which in various ways are related to bridging the gap between a person's thinking and practice.

A.3.1.2 Challenges: Lack of self-awareness

I sometimes experienced deep frustration with some of the responses of participants. Being confronted with the examination scripts of one or two of the participants who did not seem as if the course had made any difference whatsoever, I really started to despair about the effectiveness of any conventional teaching methods. I wrote the following in my notes on 11 June:

Of all the training he has undergone, nothing went home. This shows the importance of doing something on self-awareness - of letting someone reflect on what he is doing and how he sees his responsibilities. Without an awareness, everything else is useless. It reminds me of the readings I did concerning the issues of personal freedom, responsibility and self-awareness - do these topics have anything to say to this participant? I should test it out. I think I'll write a case study of two school principals taken from the examination scripts - one positive and enthusiastic, the other negative - let them read these together with quotes from the readings on self-awareness. Let them discuss the question how one changes from being a negative to a positive principal/teacher. A person who writes like this needs a confrontation with himself before anything else can change.

A.3.1.3 Information for participants

In the end I sent the participants a letter with readings for them to prepare for the contact session (addendum B11). I also designed an exercise based on Zuber-Skerritt's A and B orientation, based on quotes from participants' assignments and examination scripts (see addendum B12).

In my thinking about ways to design a programme which would bring about maximum transfer (3.4.3.3), I decided to ask the participants to do an action research project in their schools as a final assignment (see addendum B14).

A.3.1.4 Content (see addendum B13)

A.3.1.4.1 Activities

Two activities were different enough from the usual to warrant their mentioning here:

- The exercise on self-awareness worked well in the sense that participants could identify types of statements (which were not unfamiliar to them!) that reflected either an A or B orientation. The way in which individuals defended the statements they had made (I could remember which statements came from whom) even though the statements were given anonymously, was absolutely intriguing (and also, I may add, very funny!).
- The activity to get the action research projects from the ground, brought some positive surprises, in the sense that the majority preferred to do their projects in their own schools, and not in the relative safer environment of the group of course participants.

A.3.2 The marketing seminar

This event took place on 15 August. It was now a much scaled down project compared to the one originally envisaged. Still, it gave the participants an opportunity to say publicly what the course had meant to them.

The event which was born during the focus group session on 1 April, (see 5.4.3.4) took place on 15 August at George. As we decided at the meeting of the focus group, I designed a tentative programme for this seminar according to the ideas expressed by those present. Presenting this to the full group of participants, I met with unexpected criticism. What I had thought would be a fairly straight forward decision, because we (the members of the focus group, together with Andy Lamont) had thought it such a good idea, became a full morning session during which participants expressed their views. The main thrust of these was that participants doubted whether teachers, already overburdened with work, and receiving little incentive for furthering their studies from the Education Department, would be willing to come and spend a Friday

and a Saturday attending this type of promotional event.

I had the experience of seeing my carefully designed plans (based on a long and inspired discussion with the focus group) slowly being wiped off the table. I realized that I simply had to take the views of the majority into account, and even if this was painful, the end product had to have the backing of the whole group. After a long and difficult session, we had a new, much scaled-down plan on the table. The core of this plan was to continue with the seminar on the Saturday morning from 9 -12, and that each participant would share his/her experiences of the course with the guests. We would also serve refreshments.

The interesting part of this experience for me was the fact that one of the participants approached me afterwards, sharing with me how much he had learnt about decision making from my handling of the group during that session. Again I was intrigued by the potential of the processes to provide "teachable moments".

When Saturday 15 August arrived, I saw the wisdom of the group decision: the people who came, took part in the discussions, and afterwards we had a social session with refreshments where we could discuss details of the programme as well as other courses which were on offer by the University, but then the guests were in a hurry to leave. In retrospect, I believe we had been too ambitious in thinking that we'll get a big turnout for such an academic event. I realized again how important the opinions of the people on ground level were.

A.3.3 The leadership seminar

A.3.3.1 Introduction

Mr Lamont, the Director of the centre where the course was presented, took the initiative to obtain funds for a leadership seminar which was not part of the original planning, but which he had been dreaming about from the start. The idea was to offer the participants an out-of-the-ordinary experience as part of the course, which would bind them together as a group and expose them to a different setting for learning. This materialized in September at a river holiday resort near to George. This was a really tremendous experience for "students" and lecturers alike, and again emphasized the importance of various "intangible aspects" of adult education referred to in 3.3.4. The fact that many of the participants referred to this seminar as one of the highlights of the

course when I interviewed them more than a year later, is a clear proof of what Dirkx said. Some immediate responses were:

A.3.3.2 Participants' feedback

- "First of all I did not expect that I was coming to a place like that. We even made a comment that when we arrived here we were thinking about a holiday, but when we saw the lecturers we knew we were here to study."

"The atmosphere has been conducive for the improving of group relationships. It has given us the opportunity for understanding our lecturers. The peace and tranquillity was reigning over this place."

"The course [of the weekend] made me sit still and reflect. I saw the weekend as a summary of what we have been busy with the last two years. My thinking was focussed positively. I now see clearly what leadership is all about and how it can be implemented. The weekend increased my self-confidence, and made me positive. I also liked the boat trips on the river, the food and the accommodation."

"The course has been relevant in the sense that the topics dealt with will ease the present condition at the school eg. power which is a problem in schools. The negative side of power, the follow-up on leadership. I want to make a special thanks to the UPE staff for relating education with outings. I would never had such an opportunity to stay in such a beautiful, quiet place. The atmosphere made me to communicate with my colleagues, which maybe would not happen at our lecture room. Oh, the food, delicious. Thanks for the wonderful experience - for the first time in my life I came on board a canoe(!)"

"I felt that everything that I have learned about the entire course was consolidated and then used to take me to a higher and deeper level of thinking. I feel I was able to concentrate on the presentation of the lecturers without the distraction of my demanding family at home. Because the other members of my group remained in close proximity after the lectures we could talk about and have fun with the new thought provoking sessions and information. In this environment my stress levels were low and I feel I remained focused. It was spiritually fulfilling and I really enjoyed being with my fellow students and lecturers. "

A.3.3.3 Evaluation of programme

We utilized the opportunity at the leadership seminar to let write participants share their thoughts about the course with us. The following were some of the issues

addressed in participants' feedback:

A.3.3.3.1 Aspects rated positively

Participants felt positive about the following aspects of the course:

Quality of course content, quality of presentations, relevance of content and the measure in which they were able to apply aspects of the content in the everyday practice of their schools. Participants said things like the following:

"The content is adequate, varied and informative, and it helps at school, it is also based on real situations." "The preparation was well done, and the presentation was done in an honest friendly manner." "The content is stimulating thought-provoking and encourages new and refreshing approaches to education in all its facets." "The course is very relevant especially to our situations at school. Whatever happens at a school you as a person knows it is because of A, B and C." "We have applied some things that we can, but some other things cannot be made possible because they are sensitive. If you come with some advice at the school, they think you want to be the principal of the school and take over." "Content is not received (in the school) gladly. If more or all members of the staff attended the course, things would be different. Communication skills have enabled me to formulate proposals and succeed in getting them accepted more often than before. Knowledge of interpersonal sensitivity has contributed to a greater interaction between myself, my colleagues and pupils." "The subject matter can be applied in our schools because it deals with the day to day running of the school as organization. Firstly I did not take the school as a serious organization with all the stakeholders. I could only recognize the Principal, staff and H.O.D. in the school, children, I took for granted and their parents; but now I they also play an important role as stakeholders."

A.3.3.3.2 Aspects rated negatively

Participants also agreed on negative aspects that should be changed the next time the course is presented. Aspects singled out in this respect are opportunities participants had to contribute to the discussions as well as the management of the course.

Points of criticism included the following:

"For each topic dealt with in every session, at least 40% of the time is used discussing the subject matter. Sometimes the contributions are relevant but I feel that participants

should be governed (during presentation of content) as ample opportunity is given during the workshop sessions.” “The presenters of the course should not be too friendly or too democratic. The administration should be done in good time .“ ”If we had a book specially prescribed for us, it was going to be much easier than reading these pile of notes which are sometimes confusing. The gaps between the sessions are very long and sometimes when we come back you find that you’ve already forgotten what you dealt with.” “The prescription of the subject matter leaves you mostly confused, you are not sure whether when you write an assignment you are expected to write your own experience.” “After each session we must be given a test to motivate us to read and to study hard.”

A.3.3.3.3 Individual feedback on the roles played by the three presenters

One of the participants wrote a note expressing her gratitude to the three presenters (the two gentlemen from George and myself). I include some of the key points here to provide some basic overview (by one of the participants) of the role each one of us had played, and especially of the advantages including local individuals in a programme like this can have. The content of this note also provides some insight into the benefits of being more than one presenter of a course, presenters who augment each other. Here are some of the paragraphs she wrote:

After receiving the assurance that I would be furthering my studies under the guidance of a lecturer who would travel from Port Elizabeth(330km away) to George for each lecture, I signed up to join the course. Nothing prepared me for the additional support and guidance of the trio of mentors and lecturers. Sympathetically they guided and transformed my attitude and mind-set. This was no mean feat taking into consideration my talkativeness and impatience (intolerance too!).

Mr Andy Lamont, whom I thought I knew personally, revealed a whole new world to me and demonstrated through activities that if one has an honorable vision which contributes to the improvement of a community, it takes knowledge, hard work and resilience. Mr Lamont facilitated and responded to my every need as a struggling student.

Dr Aubrey Douglas, a most sympathetic teacher, has played a major role in my development as a student, teacher and person. True to his word he

was always available both night and day to respond to queries and be my sound board. What I especially appreciate and will always be eternally grateful for, is the manner in which he would lead me to answering my own questions and correcting my perceptions without making me feel stupid, Mr Douglas has helped me to become more focused when embarking on an assignment. I especially enjoyed the workshops which provided an opportunity to put the theory in practice. During these sessions, creative thinking and participative decision making developed under his patient guidance. The sessions were gruelling but most productive.

Mr McFarlane balances the equation, filling all our minds with intrinsic values and philosophies thereof. Needless to say, I'm still figuring some of them out. He has taught me to take responsibility for the changes and decisions I have made. I am grateful to all these gentlemen for making me a better person.

A.3.4 Workshops

The workshops took on a new format in this last full term of the course. Some participants continued to see the mentor in groups, while those staying far contacted him and he travelled to them to assist them with their action research projects. The one principal at a school far from the others faxed his notes to Dr Douglas, while Dr Douglas replied in the same way.

A.4 1998: FOURTH TERM

A.4.1 Contact session (programme, see addendum B15)

The September contact session revolved mainly around the participants' action research projects. This implied that a full afternoon session was devoted to feedback on experiences and the sharing of new insights.

The remaining day-and-a-half were spent on four more topics: The teacher and the law, school governance, effective schools and classroom climate. These are all major topics which could only be touched on in the time we had at our disposal. This time limit again highlighted the problem of trying to do too much (even if all are important topics) in a preparation course for school leaders.

A.4.2 Workshops

The facilitation process continued right up to the end of October which was the deadline for the action research projects. Participants kept on coming to the mentor for last minute advice and support. One of the most significant aspects of these projects for me was highlighted by a phone call by the mentor after one of these workshops in October 1998. He phoned me to share his excitement about the change he had perceived in the way participants were approaching problems through their projects. What struck him in particular was the way participants had become involved with the particular problem they were investigating, how dedicated they had become to really get a solution for the problem, and to what extent they were already looking at other related problems that had also now come to their attention.

A.4.3 Examinations

One paper was written in November. This was taken together with the action research projects for assessment purposes. All the participants passed the course.

A.5 1999: OCTOBER - ASSESSMENT, ONE YEAR LATER

A.5.1 Introduction

During October 1999 I again visited the four schools of the four focus group principals, and interviewed all the participants except one who did not receive my message in time. The reason behind these visits and interviews was to try to determine how much of what the participants had been exposed to during the course, was still being utilized and influencing the daily operations in the schools where they are teaching. I also wanted to know which aspects of the course influenced their practice most, so that I could plan the next round of the programme with more insight. In between I had an interview with Dr Aubrey Douglas, the person who had been responsible for running the workshops over the two year period. I wanted to know more about his perspectives on the role the workshops had played, as well as on the way his role had changed, especially during the course of the last year.

In September I sent each participant a letter informing him/her of my proposed visit (addendum B16). Included with this letter, I also sent a questionnaire with a covering

letter (addendum B18) addressed to a colleague of the participant in which the colleague was requested to give his/her impressions of the influence this course had on the participant.

The visit to George and other areas took place from 4-8 October. I received both positive and negative feedback. I also gained new insights about the complexities and challenges involved in designing a preparation course for school leaders which will influence practice.

While six of the eleven participants I interviewed impressed me with their successes to implement what they had learned in the course, and thus to bring about change in their schools, I also realized how difficult it is to determine what the real success rate of a course like this is, especially if the person taking the course is not the principal of the school. It became evident to me that a specific person's level of frustration at not being given the opportunity to implement what he/she had learned, may be an equal valid reflection of what had been accomplished through this person's involvement in the course.

A.5.2 Questionnaires

I managed to receive back nine completed questionnaires of colleagues of participants. This did not happen without much extra asking, many phone calls and visits. I was amazed to see how sensitive participants were about this. Three expressed particular concern about what would be said about them, in view of the fact that they were given no chance to apply what they have learned in practice. One of them said:

We are concerned about what the principal will say on the questionnaire you gave us - he cannot say anything, because we are doing nothing, because they do not want to let us do anything, because they are scared

Two of the others, especially one of the principals, expressed a desire to get feedback on the colleague's views about positive changes in their approaches, something I welcomed.

While I found confirmation in the responses of colleagues of what participants had told me, some of the responses went further and touched on other aspects than those mentioned by participants themselves.

A.5.3 Key components

Participants were asked (for framework for interviews, see addendum B17) to rank the different components of the course in order of priority according to their influence on (a) their thinking about their roles in the schools, and (b) preparing them to bring about change in their schools.

The first four aspects according to the participants' ratings for the (a) category were: Lectures, workshops, group discussions and feedback on assignments, and in the (b) category, the lectures, readings, implementation of assignments in the schools and assignments (in that order). Comments made to explain these ratings, include "group discussions and the workshops were the most stimulating influences", "the personal contact with experienced educators was very enriching", "the lectures, readings and assignments form the foundation on which I act today, and using the information from these three sources I enabled me to experiment.

At least two of the participants expressed a problem they had with identifying those components of the course that had the biggest influence on their thinking/doing. One said it was unfair to ask that of her, while the other person said he found it impossible to distinguish between the various elements. One of them put it in the following words: "It was not one aspect but every part of it that has changed how I think and what I do". In reflecting on these reservations, and on the above-mentioned ratings which I had found inconsistent with the responses I received when asking them to discuss the strong points of the programme, I realized that their concerns were vital, because of the fact that so many components played a part in providing participants with a wide variety of experiences of which the separate and individual roles were impossible to determine.

In my field notes after the completion of the interview with one of the above participants, I wrote the following reflections:

Maybe I should not try to isolate or identify certain individual aspects of the course which were the most meaningful in terms of outcomes. The outcomes that do occur should be seen as the results of a total process within which components such as the workshops, lectures, feedback and underlying relationships play important roles.

One person confirmed my thinking in this respect when she responded to my question as to what aspects of the course brought about the changes she had attributed to the course:

It was not one aspect, but every part of it that had changed how I think and what I do. It has moved my focus to my primary concern(the learner). My plans always around the convenience of teachers. Today, using the skills I acquired in the course, I can strike a balance between what is good for the learner and the staff. I thought that it was never possible to change a person from one orientation to another, but in can be done in a caring manner.

ADDENDUM B1: Minutes of meeting and syllabus

Minutes of the meeting on 3 May 1996 between a delegation from George and the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE), concerning the presentation of the Further Diploma in Education: School Management, in Port Elizabeth

ATTENDANCE:

- Mr Eustache Johnstone Director, Western Cape Education Department
- Mr Sam Dyasi Area Manager, Western Cape Educational Department
- Dr Mallory duPlooy Principal, Great Brak Senior Secondary School
- Mr Les Malgas Ex-chairperson, George Principal Association
- Mr Andy Lamont Director, Southern Cape Learning Resource Unit (SCLRU)

- Prof Irene Moutlana Acting Head, Department of Didactics, UPE
- Mr Johann McFarlane Lecturer, Department of Didactics, UPE

CURRICULUM: (see addendum)

After a lengthy and thorough discussion, consensus was reached on the curriculum of the FDE in School Management. Decisions were to a large extent influenced by the needs of practitioners [a needs assessment was done in the George-Mossel Bay area prior to the meeting, and the practitioners at the meeting were given much room to share their needs].

EVALUATION

Students/participants will be evaluated by a four-levelled process repeated every term:

- portfolio evaluation, which will consist of various short and school-related tasks, reports, analyses of processes;
- observation in workshops;
- a seminar, in which each participant will be required to share his/her thoughts, and work on a particular topic with fellow participants;
- an open book examination (one paper)

In addition, participants will be required to write a single report on a particular topic dealt with during the course. Students will be informed of this requirement at the beginning of the course, but they would be allowed to do it any stage of the two year course.

ROSTER OF VISITS

- Orientation: A suitable Saturday in November will be identified for a meeting at George to facilitate the orientation/socialization of prospective participants. At this meeting students will be informed about the course content and format, the relevant dates (UPE visits and workshops), as well as the required reading in preparation for the course.
- UPE visits to George: The UPE lecturers will visit George on three weekends (Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings) during the first semester, and three weekends during the second semester. The tentative dates of these visits will be: end January, middle March, beginning May, end July, beginning September, middle October.
- Seminars: Students will be required to attend one seminar per semester. These seminars will afford the opportunity for each participant to speak on an area of interest to him/her (see evaluation).

WORKSHOPS

Facilitators from George or the surrounding areas will run workshops at various centres throughout the region. These workshops will consist of discussions and activities aimed at making content relevant to everyday issues and problems.

BROCHURE

- Johann will send the relevant information to Andy
- Andy and Mallory will design the pamphlet
- A draft copy will be sent to UPE for approval
- Andy will contact Danie Kok [UPE's Director of Finance]

LAUNCH

A function will be organized towards the end of July to publicly launch this FDE. Invitations will be sent to all schools in the Southern Cape, as well as to UPE members of staff (academic and administrative). The function will serve as an opportunity to announce details concerning both the FDE in School Management and the FDE in Educational Computing.

COURSE MATERIAL

UPE academic staff will be responsible for the development of the course material and reading assignments, and the workshop leaders for the workshop material.

RELEVANT INFORMATION Fees (estimated for 1997 and 1998):

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| First year: | Application | R100 | Second year | | |
| | Registration | R120 | | Registration fee R135 | |
| | Tuition fee per module | | | Tuition fee per module | |
| | PKR 101 | R500 | | PKR 201 | R870 |
| | PKR 102 | R500 | | PKR 202 | R870 |
| | PKS 101 | R500 | | PKU 101 | R570 |
| | PKS102 | R500 | | PKU 102 | <u>R570</u> |
| | PKT 101 | R500 | | TOTAL | <u>R3015</u> |
| | PKT 102 | <u>R500</u> | | | |
| | TOTAL | <u>R3320</u> | | | |
| Method of payment | | | | | |
| 1. | Included with application | R100 | | | |
| 2. | At registration | R1320 | | | |
| 3. | End of March | R300 | | | |
| 4. | End of July | <u>R1500</u> | | | |

Registration dates:

- " Final date for applications: 30 November 1996
- " Registration 24 January 1997

Registration venue:

SCLRU, P O Box 447, George

Lecture times for weekend visits:

Two 3-hour sessions. Suggested time slots:

Fridays: 16:00-19:00; Saturdays: 08:30-11:30

These times could be changed to accommodate participants who have to travel.

Centres where workshops will be offered as well as the dates of workshops:

These will be determined according to the needs of the participants

Contact persons:

Tel

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| UPE: Prof I N Moutlana | 041-504 2374 | SCLRU: | |
| Mr J McFarlane | 041-504-2375 | Mr A Lamont | 0441-878 2013 |
| Mrs S van Rensburg | 041-504-2574: | | |

Minutes prepared by: J McFarlane, 15 May 1996

ADDENDUM TO MEETING

Curriculum: Further Diploma in Education: School Management

| FIRST YEAR | SECOND YEAR |
|---|--|
| <u>School organizational processes and skills I</u> | <u>School organizational processes and skills II</u> |
| <u>Module PKR 101:</u> Schools as organizations Leadership and styles Communication | <u>Module PKR 201</u> Financial management Introduction to information technology Managing information Problem-solving Equity |
| <u>Module PKR 102</u> Managing change Conflict management Time and stress management | <u>Module PKR 202</u> Participative decision-making School discipline Conducting staff meetings Resource management Managing non-teaching staff |
| <u>Instructional and curriculum management</u> | <u>Context of school management</u> |
| <u>Module PKS 101</u> Managing the school curriculum Managing instruction | <u>Module PKU 101</u> Managing diversity Classroom climate School environment |
| <u>Module PKS 102</u> Supervision of staff Evaluation of staff | <u>Module PKU 102</u> Social and political context School governance |
| <u>Managing the instructional staff</u> | |
| <u>Module PKT 101</u> Professionalism Interpersonal skills | |
| <u>Module PKT 102</u> In-service development Motivation of staff Team-building | |

**ADDENDUM B2: PROBLEMS WITH PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESSES IN SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHERN CAPE
NOVEMBER 1997**

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>1. PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little analysis of problem 2. Little analysis of alternative situations 3. Little generation of solutions 4. Little involvement of the staff to help generate solutions 5. No prioritizing of problems 6. Problems often solved through the formulation of rules 7. Little reflection on hard facts 8. Little attention to small, immediate problems 9. Utilizing staff to apply solutions generated by management 10 Denial: "We do not have many problems here - only a few" 11. Teachers focus only on the problems they have to face in the classrooms 12.No consideration of school goals in problem-solving processes 13.No/little attention to key problems eg. a final year pass rate of 30% 14.No formal structures (eg. subject teams) to address problems | <p>2. MOTIVATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The motivation to really tackle problems and do something about them, is lacking 2. Problems are seen as the government's responsibility 3. Non-involvement of teachers 4. 3 is often the result of the principal's perception that he/she is to supply all the answers 5. Unrealistic expectations about solutions from outside 6. Staff members' pre-occupation with themselves 7. Temporary appointments of staff, also of senior staff in the promotional posts | <p>3. COMMUNICATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One directional communication (announcing solutions) 2. Not enough listening 3. Little social interaction 4. Few or no small group meetings 5. Few or no staff meetings 6. No meeting of senior staff apart from preparing for staff meetings 7. No feedback from senior staff to principal | <p>4. INTERPERSONAL FACTORS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tensions because of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - posts - money - absence of transparency - appointments - power games - group-forming - political factors - jealousy |
|--|--|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>5. LEADERSHIP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little or no "cognitive flexibility" 2. Little realization of "bounded rationality" (Leithwood, et al) 3. Little attention to care as an element of management 4. Little empowering of teachers 5. No understanding of leadership as service 6. No establishing a group vision/goals 7. No long term planning 8. The perception that the leader has to give all the answers 9. No utilization of senior staff 10. Principal's lack of self-confidence | <p>6. MEETING PROCEDURE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No/little notification of agenda 2. Few or no minutes 3. Little information about the issues to be discussed 4. Little feedback 5. Meetings not pre-planned by senior staff 6. No references to task teams 7. No/little time given to suggestions 8. Little utilization of meetings to generate solutions 9. Meetings only for problems | <p>7. CONFLICT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Few or no skills to handle stress and conflict 2. Conflicts allowed to simmer on. | <p>8. MANAGEMENT STYLE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talking down to people 2. No unity in management team 3. No utilization of human resources 4. No team building efforts |
| <p>9. DECISION-MAKING</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decisions made without consultation of staff 2. Little or no participative decision-making 3. Little or no understanding of various ways to influence a specific decision (PT, AP, CH, RP), (Schmuck and Runkel) | <p>10. ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little or no reference to organizational norms or goals 2. Divisive power plays 3. No unity of staff 4. No collaborative culture 5. No disciplining of transgressing staff 6. No transference or sharing of problems with the whole staff 7. No information management 8. No focussing on the strengths 9. Lack of transparency 10. Under-utilization of equipment 11. Little acceptance of authority | | |

ADDENDUM B3

FURTHER DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT, GEORGE

Session 1 - January 1998 Tentative Programme

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY</p> <p>09:00 Welcome and administration Session 1</p> <p>09:15 Glad, sad mad game</p> <p>10:30 Tea</p> <p>10:45 Lecture on leadership and organizational development in education</p> <p>Session 2</p> <p>11:30 Reading through case study and modifying it if necessary</p> <p>12:00 Initial attempt at suggesting solutions</p> <p>12:30 Lunch</p> <p>Session 3</p> <p>13:30 Group discussion of case studies (cont.) And feedback given (taped)</p> <p>15:00 Coffee</p> <p>Session 4</p> <p>15:15 Reading of notes</p> <p>16:00 Meeting in counterpart groups</p> <p>Evening: Preparation of topics to be presented on Thursday</p> <p>THURSDAY, 15 JANUARY</p> <p>Session 1</p> <p>09:00 Meeting of counterpart groups</p> <p>09:30 Conflict management</p> <p>10:30 Tea</p> | <p>Session 2</p> <p>10:45 Meeting procedure</p> <p>11:45 Problem solving</p> <p>12:45 Lunch</p> <p>Session 3</p> <p>13:45 Decision making</p> <p>14:45 Coffee</p> <p>15:00 Utilizing theoretical input and own thinking and experienced discussed and utilized in sessions 2 and 3, to develop ways in which the problems exposed in the case study can be dealt with. Prepare group feedback on newsprint.</p> <p>FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY</p> <p>09:00 Feedback on case study (by groups)</p> <p>10:30 Tea</p> <p>10:45 Discussion of feedback, discussing ways in which suggestions can be integrated and improved through the group process</p> <p>12:30 Lunch</p> <p>13:30 Discussion of relevance of course content and possible additions to meet the needs of practitioners having to deal with problems such as those represented in case study</p> <p>14:30 Evaluation of presentation modes and discussing alternative ways of teaching</p> <p>15:30 Administration, future dates, discussing assignments and workshops</p> <p>Closing</p> |
|---|--|

ADDENDUM B4

CASE STUDY

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| School | Motlana High School |
| Number of Pupils | 1200 |
| Number of Teachers | 35 |
| Area | Bongo Township |
| Address | Next to main entrance road to Bongo Township |

Mr Velapi, the principal, has many problems. Sometimes he feels as if it is not worth going on and trying to improve the school. It seems as if there is not one member of staff who support him in his efforts.

FACILITIES

The buildings are in disrepair with many window panes broken, little paint, dirty classrooms, no electricity in many rooms, and only 8 working toilets for 1200 pupils.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

There exists a deep undercurrent of interpersonal tension among the staff. This results in groups having been formed, which aggravate the situation. Another consequence is that very few staff meetings are held, and those that are held serve mainly as information sessions where the principal can read policy documents, and let these be discussed. It doesn't seem as if there exists any cooperation among the senior staff- as if they form a team in any sense. The senior staff feel the principal does not involve them in his solving of problems - he never takes them into his confidence or use them to plan meetings together.

MEETINGS

Reading the minutes of meetings held, the following problems become evident immediately.

- Staff members seem to think that when they have mentioned a problem in a meeting, they have done their duty - somebody else will have to look at it. There is little evidence of an analysis of the problem(s), of discussing different alternative solutions (targets), (T) and of analyzing what the school can do to reach those targets, (paths) (P).
- Few questions are ever asked. One gets the impression that everybody simply wants the meeting to be over as soon as possible. An example of this was a SRC-camp being canceled due to lack of funds.

MANAGEMENT STYLE

Staff members feel the principal thinks he has to produce all the answers, so he doesn't involve anybody in working out possible solutions. He seldom asks anyone his/her opinion, and never gives anyone any positive feedback.

CONFLICT

There are currently many power games being played out among the staff. (Appointments for the position of deputy principal and head of department still have to be made). When the principal says something in the staff room, everybody becomes quiet, but when they leave the meeting

meeting they start gossiping about the principal which impact very negatively on the atmosphere in the staff.

This probably comes from the appointment of the principal about a year ago, an inexperienced young man, from among the staff, for which he now has become the "boss".

PROBLEM SOLVING

It seems as if there is still an absolute reliance on somebody "out there" who will come to help sort out problems. This has also led to unrealistic expectations about what the department will and can do. When asked about the problem with the toilets, the staff responded by saying it has been more than two years that they have been waiting for the department to do something about the problem.

DECISION MAKING

Many decisions are taken by the principal, in which case the staff are just informed about the decision. Sometimes the principal allows a vote on a matter, after he has given his views, and asked for more responses from the staff.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

No annual budget is drawn up and there is not control over funds spent (eg. if a teacher needs money for an athletics meeting, he/she gets say R400, but is not required to bring back any proof like receipts for his/her expenditure). Very few pupils pay their school fees, so that there is little money to buy anything.

INSTRUCTION

The teachers show little enthusiasm and concern for teaching. Much instruction is lost through teachers not being in their classrooms.

CONSEQUENCES

Nobody seems committed to the school - all the teachers leave the moment the bell goes. It is as if everything has just grounded to a halt.

In the spaces provided you may add in details from your own situation at school (if you wish), to make the situation even more relevant to you.

Your task is to use your thinking and experience, together with the theoretical input you have studied, to work out a programme of what Mr Velapi should be doing to get his school going again.

ADDENDUM B5: ASSIGNMENTS - FIRST TERM

Analyse the four aspects dealt with in this session, namely managing conflict, staff meetings, problem solving and decision making with respect to:

- the current situation at your school
- identifying existing problems
- suggesting possible targets
- describing possible strategies (paths) the management of your school could follow to meet the various targets

Refer extensively to:

- your own insight and experience
- thoughts and solutions suggested by other participants in the course
- theoretical input.

The value of the assignment will be enhanced if feedback of possible discussions with your principal, or other colleagues, about your analysis of the situation and possible strategies to address problems are included.

The length of the assignment must be at least 7 typed pages (+/- 11 written) on each topic (conflict management, etc.) And the assignment be handed in at the start of the next session in March.

ADDENDUM B6

TO: PARTICIPANTS
FDE:SCHOOL MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF PORT ELIZABETH
GEORGE

FROM: JOHANN McFARLANE
UNISA
PRETORIA
CELL 083 656 9918

DEAR FRIENDS/COLLEAGUES

LECTURE SESSION, 30&31 MARCH, 1 APRIL

Enclosed please find two sets of readings as preparation for this session. This is as requested by you at our previous meeting. You will note (I hope!) that I have reduced the amount of reading considerably.

The emphasis is not so much on the readings, but on what the readings ask you to do. It is therefore imperative that you do read the few pages and then consider the questions (requests) at the end.

The first reading is from the book by Bolman and Deal :The Path to School Leadership - A Portable Mentor. You will notice that the book is written in the narrative form, sharing the experience of a new principal trying to find his feet. The two aspects I want you to consider, even if you cannot do that fully before you haven't heard the rest of the story from the others in your group, is the way in which he uses Brenda's advice to do his own thing - to develop his own story. The second aspect worth considering is the role Brenda played for him. Please think about that as you consider the questions at the end. I hope you enjoy the reading!

Each one of you is receiving the following from Bolman and Deal's book:

- Foreword
- Introduction
- One chapter

What you have to do:

Read the Foreword and Introduction to orientate yourself with respect to the book.

Then read the chapter sent to you. While everybody else in your group will also have received the Foreword and Introduction, you are the only one to have received this particular chapter. This implies that you will have to prepare the chapter so well that you will be able to share the content as well as your insights about the chapter with them in 5 minutes.

When each participant has had a chance to share his/her chapter with the others in the group, you will discuss the meaning of the book in your groups

The two basic questions I want you to think about after having read your part of the book, are:

1 What are the questions one would be asking yourself in looking for somebody to play Brenda's role - being a mentor for you? Should such a person be older than you, from the same sex or cultural background as you? Should he/she be a principal or a teacher or somebody from a completely different profession? What are your chances of finding somebody like that in your area?

2 What would Rodriguez have meant when he told Brenda: "You have helped me to develop my own story"? What do you make of this for yourself?

The second reading is on financial management. The notes represent a very superficial description of some of the elements of financial management in schools. The main purpose of the notes is to encourage you to start thinking about how this key aspect of management is dealt with in your school, and to consider possible alternatives and improvements. PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO LOOK AT THE QUESTIONS ON PAGE 12 AND TO CONSIDER THEM WELL WHILE YOU ARE STILL AT THE SCHOOL .

I hope you survive the rest of the term given this extra bit to attend to.

Regards

Johann McFarlane

ADDENDUM B7

FURTHER DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION : SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

SECOND SESSION, 1998 : 30,31 MARCH, 1 APRIL

SOUTHERN CAPE LEARNING RESOURCE UNIT
PACALTSDORP, GEORGE

Programme

MONDAY

Topic 1: Mentoring

- 9:00 Welcome, Introduction
- 9:30 Discussion of reading: Counterpart groups
Feedback on reading and discussion: Home groups
- 10:30 Tea
- 11:00 Group discussion on questions posed in readings
Handout on mentoring, Daresh and Playko
Discussion on ways in which participants can become involved in mentoring relationships
Developing your own story
The Principal Portfolio Brown and Irby
- 13:00 Lunch

Topic 2 : Financial Management

- 14:00- 17:00 Writing a funding proposal Mr A Lamont
Feedback on surveys in schools
Discussion of notes
Role of the governing body according to the Schools Act
Fee exemptions
Discussion of aspects of financial management which, at this stage, require the most urgent attention at your school.
Briefly looking at the assignments
- 15:30-16:00 Tea

TUESDAY

Topic 3: Managing Information

- 9:00- 13:00 Discussion of notes and readings
Managing information - what experience has taught me: Chris Swart

Discussion of assignments in groups:
Case study Designing a record system in your school

10:30 - 11:00 Tea

13:00-14:00 Lunch

Topic 4: Equity

14:00 - 17:00 Introduction

Discussing notes and readings
Looking at recent Government publications
Conclusions

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee

WEDNESDAY

Topic 5 : Discipline

9:00 - 13:00 The values basis of discipline

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Introducing a code of conduct for learners | Monde Sijaji |
| Introducing a code of conduct for teachers | Peter Louw |
| Developing a code of conduct : | Edulaw |
| Evaluating discipline in your school : | Edulaw |
| Developing a smart discipline tracking chart | Koenig |

Discussing the question : In what way do these inputs assist you with reference to the disciplinary problems you have to handle in your school?
A brief look at the assignment

Topic 6 : Policy

14:00 -16:00 Looking at the Schools Act

Background, Role of Governing Body (GB), Nature and functions of the GB, Financial and property matters, Language and religious policy (see also Government Notice, 9 May 1997).

1600 - 17:00 Administration

Assignments : Your assignments must be posted to me to reach me before or on the 22nd of May, to the following address:

Mr J McFarlane, Faculty of Education, University of South Africa, PO Box 392
0001 Pretoria

Please note that assignments received after the 22nd of May will not be taken into account for the calculation of the semester mark. Please do take this notice seriously

understanding that the logistics are extremely difficult for me having to work from Pretoria. Please remember to make copies for yourself as it will not be possible for me to send any back to you before the next session in June.

Examination

The examination takes place on Saturday the 30th of May, from 9:00 to 12:00. It will again be an open book exam consisting of five 25-mark questions of which you will be required to do four. The questions will be based to a large extent on the work done in the assignments and the readings. Please note that a basic requirement, as in the past, will be that you show that you are able to integrate the theoretical part of the course with your own practical experiential knowledge.

The following three topics are given now for those of you who wanted to have the readings beforehand, so that you can prepare yourself beforehand. We will consider these in June:

Topic 7 :

Governance

Readings:

The South African Schools Act : The place of the GB, Nature and functions of the GB

Edulaw : Drawing up a constitution for the GB

The Hunter Report : Capacity building for the GB

Assignment:

Discuss your perceptions about the idea to develop the capacity of the GB so as to enable this body to fulfil the requirements of section 21 of the Schools Act. This implies the allocation of the following functions by the Head of Department to the GB :

- The maintenance and improvement of the school's property
- The determination of the school's extra-mural curriculum and the choice of subject options , in terms of provincial curriculum policy
- The purchasing of textbooks, educational materials or equipment
- Making payments for various services rendered to the school, and other functions consistent with the Act and any applicable Provincial laws.

Think this through with reference to your school Governing Body.

Ask yourself questions like the following:

Will it be beneficial to the school if the GB had these powers?

Will the members of the GB be able and willing to carry out these functions?

What will need to be done to develop and to raise the GB's capacity to the required level?

Alternative assignment:

Facilitate a process through which the GB of your school draw up its own constitution. Ensure that quality work is done but keep in mind that a constitution is still the means to an end, not the end itself (which means the GB should not focus so much on the writing

of the constitution that it neglects its other responsibilities) . Submit the constitution together with a report of three pages about the process of constitution-writing. Remember to keep a journal in which you keep notes of everything that happened, so that report will reveal the highlights as the negatives of the whole process.

Topic 8 :Managing resources

Reading: Commonwealth Secretariat, Module 4 Unit 7.

Questions for reflection:

If one would assume that a very important aspect of this topic is the maintenance of tangible resources, what would you understand to be the principal's responsibility in this regard?

In what way does your school's environment work for or against the school in the maintenance of its tangible resources?

How do you see the Department's role in this regard (in terms of what you think the Department should take responsibility for)?

What are your perceptions about the Department's willingness and ability (keep in mind the facts of the situation as was discussed under the topic "Equity") to assist you in this regard? Do you see any possibility of an improvement at your school? Please explain.

Topic 9: Legal considerations

Reading: Understanding the Labour Relations Act (Edulaw)

Please read through this before our next session. You will find many facts that might be useful for you in terms of questions about industrial action by teachers etc. We hope to have more for you in June

A last reminder: Remember our dates in June/July:

Monday 29 June to Friday 3 July

This session will consist of a 2-day time with me, and the other 3 days of exposure to information technology, which implies an exposure to computer software packages vital for school management. Don't miss it!

I wish you a good and rewarding break in what's left of the holidays. Thank you for your attendance.

Johann McFarlane

ADDENDUM B8

MANAGING INFORMATION

Consider the case study of Mr. Velapi's school :

One of the problems facing the school as you will recall, was the fact that they had only 5 toilets for 800 pupils.

Discuss his possible approach to information gathering to solve this problem with reference to the following questions:

1. What types of information does he need?
2. What will be his best sources of information?
3. Which strategies or tools would be best to use in the data gathering process?
4. How will you organize the information to enable you to present to interested persons?

ASSIGNMENT

After having read the Commonwealth Secretariat's notes, and having listened to Chris's input, design a system for either staff or student assessment records in your school, and see what progress you make in getting it implemented.

Write a report on this project, in which you describe :

- Your own misgivings and apprehensions about the whole project
- How you went about to design the system (in other words, describe what you actually did
- The procedure you followed in getting the system implemented (or in trying to get it implemented)
- The way various members of staff reacted to your plans
- Possible benefits that have already materialized.

ADDENDUM B9: LETTER TO DR DOUGLAS

UNISA
PO BOX 392
0001 PRETORIA
FAX 012-429-4000
11 APRIL 1998

DR A DOUGLAS
SOUTHERN CAPE LEARNING RESOURCE UNIT (SCLRU)
PACALTS DORP
6534
FAX 044-878-1000

DEAR DR DOUGLAS

CHANGING FORMAT, SCHOOL MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

In the light of developments in our thinking during the previous two training sessions at the SCLRU, I have a few ideas to discuss with you as workshop facilitator or tutor. I am writing this letter in order to test my thoughts against your insight into the practical running and facilitating of the workshops. Please feel free to respond and suggest alternatives which may suit the situation better.

At the training session in January, the emphasis with respect to the assignments shifted to the encouragement of small scale research in the participants' schools on the topics dealt with during the training session. Added to that, participants were required to incorporate theory in suggesting and implementing alternative strategies in those areas where they detected problems in their organisations.

It is obvious that they need guidance in this. In fact, the experience gained elsewhere, especially in the United States and in Britain, shows very clearly that the transfer of knowledge and skills is effected best through experimentation and feedback.

The suggestion I want to put to you, is that you, instead of designing school related activities for the workshops so that participants can take part in the activity and discuss relevant issues, play a more passive role. This would imply that the workshops become opportunities for participants to discuss their assignments and possible problems they encountered in the implementation phase. These discussions can take place among themselves (as peer assisted learning), or/and with you as workshop facilitator. This then means that your role becomes that of a facilitator of peer interaction and learning, as well as that of a tutor.

Added to this, it seems to me that if we decide on this change in the format of the workshops and of your role, you should also play a bigger role in the assessment of the assignments. At this stage, as you know, the assignments are sent to me for assessment. In practice this means that I receive them through the course of the term, in most cases just in time to reach my deadline for end-of-term marks at the University. This implies that my evaluation of the participants' work cannot be anything else but summative - by the time the participants receive their assignments back the marks allocated to them are final and there is no opportunity for them to either improve their work or learn from their mistakes or omissions, except with reference to the work to be done in the following term or semester.

The assignments I have received back so far this term, basically fall into two categories. There were those where the participants had understood the questions posed to them, and did excellent work in investigating real problems in their schools and even succeeded in implementing strategies to try and solve these problems (assignments like these are however, in the minority). Then there were those assignments in which the participants failed to do what was required of them, especially with respect to the investigation of the real situation in the school and to the implementation of alternative strategies (many of the participants are not principals and this makes the implementation of new strategies dependent on the favourable attitude of the principal). The assignments in this category consisted either of long discussions and explanations of the theory given to them, and of speculation of how this could be implemented in practice, or of long descriptions of the situations at their schools and the daunting problems they have to contend with. (see appendix x). The problem I face when having to assess assignments like these, is that I am unable to either give them credit for those aspects they have omitted, or to give them an opportunity to add these.

It would be a much better system if one could see the participants more often, mark their assignments and give them feedback and, if they have scored a low mark, give them an opportunity to improve their work. This is the rationale behind my thinking that the person who does see them more often, would be in a much better position to guide them and give them feedback, than the lecturer who sees them only during once a term.

I realize that the person who designed the course and the assignments, will be in the best position to do the evaluation, and that if somebody else is to play that role, good and detailed guidance will have to be given. This I undertake to do for every assignment.

My suggestion with regard to the assessment of the assignments is therefore as follows:

1. The lecturer supply the tutor with a detailed framework for the assessment of each of the assignments given to the participants.

2. These frameworks are given to the participants so that they know exactly what is expected of them.
3. The workshops are utilised as opportunities for the discussion of the assignments, either with peers or with the tutor.
4. Assignments are handed in to tutor, who does the marking and hands them back to the participants at their next meeting, or at any other convenient occasion.
5. The following meeting is used as an opportunity where participants can discuss the feedback with the tutor and with one another, and also focus on the next assignment. They also get one chance to redo parts of or the whole assignment.

This system will have the following advantages:

- The participants will receive a more fair mark allocation because the tutor will have better insight into the process he/she had gone through, as well as the problems he/she faced with respect to implementation.
- The evaluation becomes a formative process through which participants may learn and improve.
- The participants receive immediate feedback so that they need not repeat the same mistakes with the other assignments.

I am including two evaluation sheets as examples (addendum B10) for all the assignments the participants are currently working on. Even in the case of us changing the format of the process as suggested above, I would still want them to have these sheets so that they have a better indication of what is required of them in each assignment.

Please consider my suggestions. I know it places an additional burden on you, but if we agree that you are freed from the preparation of the workshops in designing the activities, and if you become convinced that the way in which the evaluation sheets are designed makes the evaluation a fairly straight forward process, and if one considers the advantages this system may have for the participants, it may not look so bad. At any rate I will welcome suggestions from you in terms of any alternative way in which we can go about to increase the effectiveness of this aspect of the course. I will also phone you to discuss this in a less formal way.

Thank you for your attention.

Johann McFarlane

ADDENDUM B10: MARKSHEETS, ASSIGNMENTS

MARKSHEET FOR ASSIGNMENT ON THE PRINCIPAL PORTFOLIO

| Aspects | Mark out of 5 | Weight | Total |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|-------|
| 1. Introduction (+/- 1 page) | | x4 | |
| 2. Résumé (+/- 1 page) | | x4 | |
| 3. Leadership framework (+/- 2 pages) | | x10 | |
| 4. Five year goals (+/- ½ page) | | x2 | |
| | | Total (%) | |
| Scale (for individual scores) | 1 - You misunderstood the requirements 2 - You did not do everything required 3 - You fulfilled the basic requirements 4 - You did more than what was required 5 - New, creative, others can learn from this! | | |
| Scale (for total) | 0 - 30: You unfortunately missed the point completely. Please read the notes (Brown and Irby), consult the workshop leader, and try again 31 - 50: There is too little of yourself in this. Please consult your workshop leader on how to improve and redo those aspects where you scored below 3. 51 - 60: You're getting there! Spend time to reflect on those aspects where you scored below 3. How can you improve those particular parts of the assignment? (You may wish to discuss this with either your workshop leader or a person who can act as a soundboard for you) 61 - 80: Very good! Your assignment gives evidence of original, personal and honest thought about your work as well as the underlying values you subscribe to. Test and refine your ideas by speaking to your workshop leader or any other colleague 81+ : Excellent! We would like you to share your thinking and the experiences you had in completing this portfolio with the other participants at our next meeting. | | |

MARKSHEET FOR ASSIGNMENT ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

| Aspect | | Mark / 5 | Weight | Total |
|-----------------------------|---|----------|--------|-------|
| 1. | Identification of an aspect of financial management at your school where there is room for improvement (describe how you went about to determine this) | | x3 | |
| 2. | Identification of a person acting as soundboard for you (explain how you got hold of such a person and how the relationship worked) | | x2 | |
| 3. | Designing of a new system or procedure. (Make suggestions concerning a specific aspect of financial management at your school) | | x5 | |
| 4. | Referring to sources of theoretical inputs (notes or advice from another person) | | x3 | |
| 5. | Implementation or discussion of possible implementation | | x3 | |
| 6. | Report on the process you were involved in (responses of colleagues, times of self-doubt, satisfaction at having accomplished something meaningful) | | x4 | |
| | | | Total | |
| Scale (for scores out of 5) | <p>1 You misunderstood the issues under consideration</p> <p>2 You failed to do everything that was required</p> <p>3 You fulfilled the basic requirements</p> <p>4 You did more than was required</p> <p>5 New, creative others can learn from this!</p> | | | |
| Scale (Total) | <p>0-30: You unfortunately missed the point completely. Please consult your workshop leader on this and try again</p> <p>31-50: You obviously experienced many problems. Please consult your workshop leader or tutor on how these may be overcome and redo those aspects for which you got less than 3 out of 5</p> <p>51-60: You're getting there! Spend time to reflect on those aspects for which you scored less than 3. How can you improve on that particular part of the assignment? You may wish to discuss this with either the leader of the workshop or the person acting as a soundboard for you</p> <p>61-80: Very good! You're fast becoming the expert change agent who is bound to make a difference in your school! Please reflect on what your next step should be. Test and refine your ideas by speaking to your workshop leader or any other person</p> <p>81+ : Excellent! We would encourage you to share your thinking and experience in completing this project with the other participants at the next session</p> | | | |

ADDENDUM B11

UNISA
BOX 392
PRETORIA
18 JUNE 1998

TO ALL PARTICIPANTS
FDE: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT, GEORGE

DEAR FRIENDS

TEACHING SESSION, 29 JUNE- 3 JULY

Just a reminder of our week-long session during the June holidays. As I think you know, I will be there for Monday and Tuesday (DV), and then Pat Bean will take over from Wednesday to Friday, while the meeting times will remain the same (9:00-13:00, 14:00-17:00). His section is on various computer software packages for school administration (eg financial management). He often works with schools in this context and knows what he's talking about.

Enclosed a couple of readings which I would want you to read before we meet. You will notice that it is not much, but that it is fairly heavy reading. Please try to read it a couple of times- you'll see it becomes a lot clearer by the second or third reading. I will explain some parts of it but the problem is that most of it will be needed on the first day, and you will miss half of the beauty of this if you see it for the first time on Monday morning. Please remember to bring the notes I gave you in March (on Edulaw, The Schools Act and so on) with to the course.

Looking forward to see you all.

Johann McFarlane

ADDENDUM B12

SELF-AWARENESS

An analysis of participants' responses in the June exams.

George, June 1998

1. Form groups of four. Read through the scheme below and discuss the following questions:

Which is the better orientation, A or B?
Which orientation fits each individual in the group best?
Is it possible to change from the one to the other? How?

2. The statements in the table were all taken from what principals and teachers wrote earlier in 1998.

Read through each one and categorise as explained below.

3. Use your analysis to determine whether this group of principals and teachers have predominantly an A or a B orientation.
How would you define self-awareness, and of what importance is self-awareness to the school principal in the fulfilment of his/her duties?

STATEMENT ORIENTATION

Categorise each of the following statements according to the scheme given below. First determine whether a particular statement's orientation is nearer to the A or to the B column, and indicate your choice by writing the appropriate letter in the first column. When this is done, choose the number(s) of the description which fits the specific statement best and write this (these) number(s) in the second column. Your response depends entirely on your interpretation of the situation the particular statement refers to.

By identifying a specific column and number you can also indicate what a specific statement is not, eg if A3 would be used to categorise statement no 1, it may imply a short term perspective, or it may refer to the fact that this statement does not reflect the viewpoint of a reflective practitioner. Each statement may also reflect more than one categories in a specific column, eg no 4 may be categorised as B1,2,4.

The statements are represented here exactly as coined by the participants in either the exam or the assignments. No effort was made to improve the grammar or to interpret what the person wanted to say. The idea was keep to the original intention or meaning.

| A | B |
|---|--|
| 1. Outer directed (Looks to others, particular seniors, for guidance) | 1. Inner directed (Tends to independence of thought and expression) |
| 2. Survival oriented (Interested, at the moment, in meeting current work demands) | 2. Developmentally oriented (Busy, but always open to something new that is important) |
| 3. Short-term doer (Task oriented, short-term perspective) | 3. Reflective practitioner (willing to step back and reflect regularly) |
| 4. Efficiency oriented (Interested mainly in operational issues) | 4. Effectiveness oriented (Interested in strategic issues) |
| | (source: Zuber-Skerritt, O., 1996:105) |

| | A B | 1234 |
|---|--------|------|
| Financial management: in our school, things are properly done | | |
| The new system does not see to it that proper financial management is introduced. Still, it is the burden of the poor principal to organize workshops for the Governing Body (GB) | | |
| In managing our school, we need to start composing groups working on special tasks | | |
| Two of us went to the principal and asked him whether we could revise the codes of conduct with the help of the GB | | |
| When teachers are not committed, the education processes are not correct | | |
| Financial management: all this has been introduced to me by the course I'm doing - what about the other principals? | | |
| We needed very hard to convince the principal - told him we wanted to help him build the school | | |
| Our problem is the parents who are not cooperative in supplying information | | |
| Teachers can be given a questionnaire where they can indicate whether our meetings are predominantly positive or negative | | |
| The school has to draft a policy on discipline and finance | | |
| Because the school does not get enough money from the State, it is important that the school strive for its own finance | | |
| We are busy drafting a policy on discipline and on finance | | |
| There is still a lot that lies with schools themselves instead of blaming others. A change from within would be the first correct step | | |
| The obstacle in our school is the negative persons who do not want to change, the personal appointments that clash with staff meetings, people that are too lazy to read and the divisions within the school | | |
| A member of our GB works at and he promised to help us in persuading his management to fund us, as we are a school in a community which supports this company by buying its products | | |
| The few whites prepared to help must be accepted if we are serious with the future of the country | | |
| Give people tasks to present to the next meeting | | |
| We then chose a Saturday when all the stakeholders will be able to be present | | |
| It would be proper then, if the Department should take it upon themselves to train the GB - it would be ideal for them to start with policy frameworks.....to me this is the dream at present in most disadvantaged communities | | |
| We tried to work on strategies we would follow - consulting the GB, parents and the staff. | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| The GB was called that same week - they were delighted and agreed to approach the teachers with us. The teachers were then asked to conduct afternoon classes as well. The teachers were very angry and told us to consider the conditions they are working in - big classes, no free periods. | | |
| This course has made it apparent clear that Bantu education was just not too far from poison given to us and the recognition of that is only the first step to the right direction | | |
| Teachers and learners were given food to motivate them to come to the afternoon classes. When we came together after a month, you could see on the faces, especially those of the teachers, that there was a big difference from the previous meeting - hearing the stories, everybody was happy because through hard work we succeeded - the teachers insisted that they wanted to continue with the afternoon classes - what a success! | | |
| Our school has no camps among the staff | | |
| Our school should have a fund-raising committee because at the moment it is only the principal who handles school funds | | |
| I can proudly say through the knowledge I've gained our school is one of the best managed schools | | |
| We have the problem that our files are not placed in a confidential, safe place | | |
| I decided to do something about the bad results at our school | | |
| The two of us attending the course approached the principal with what we had learned and told him we felt we needed to do something about budgeting at our school | | |
| We need teachers who are committed | | |
| I would like to workshop our GB on meeting procedure and decision making | | |
| When you address teachers you must always be confident and clear about what you are going to say, so in this case, I had to quote from my notes (!) | | |
| I would like to see the teachers being more involved in the community, so as to be able to teach them also about decision making | | |
| I was opposed by the teachers in the GB, but the rest supported us, and that was great (there will always be obstacles if you want people to stop what they are used to be doing in order to do something new) | | |
| As I'm writing this today, our school has organised a study group, a winter school with afternoon classes | | |
| After the course on information management I thought I should make a difference - one swallow can make a summer this time (!) | | |
| I identified three I could sit down with and discuss the importance of developing a new system of information management. Together we worked overtime | | |
| Not a single teacher could produce his/her information on their matriculants which the area manager requested - one teacher even said we do not have any computers to keep all the records | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| My school is now running so smoothly that nobody at school and outside could believe - now we are operating as mentors for surrounding schools | | |
| We do accept the fact that we are disadvantaged communities, but at least what we have need to be properly managed - let us not have excuses | | |
| When you need money for a function or a trip, it's given to you with no account of how it was spent required afterwards | | |
| We had to workshop the whole GB on financial management. I recommended we get a neutral person who will act as my mentor to help educate these people about financial matters. I got approval from the staff and GB to get a teacher from a nearby coloured school to come and help us. The two of us had to prepare charts to be used during the workshop and mostly they had to be translated to the level of the lay person so he/she could understand | | |
| We are now helping the primary school to develop their own code of conduct | | |
| To encourage staff participation I, as principal, moved around consulting individual teachers the week prior to the meeting - this was also an attempt to get the feelings of the silent voices | | |
| We used one of the talkative staff members as the time keeper (!) | | |

ADDENDUM B13

PROGRAMME JUNE 1998 CONTACT SESSION

MONDAY, 29 JUNE

- 09:00 Welcoming and introduction
09:15 Feedback and discussion, examination and assignments
09:45 Topic 1: Self-awareness
Group discussion on statement orientation Questions 1-3
Readings: Introduction and discussion Biko, Fromm and Greene
Question 5
12:00 Espoused and in-use theories (see Argyris and Shon)
12:45 Johari window (Hersey and Blanchard)
13:00 Lunch

14:00 Topic 2: Action research (Zuber-Skerritt)
16:00 Term assignment
17:00 Closing

TUESDAY, 30 JUNE

- 09:00 Topic 3: Discipline (cont): reward as strategy
09:30 Topic 4: Governance and parent involvement
11:15 Topic 5: Managing resources
13:00 Lunch

14:00 Topic 6: Legal considerations
15:30 Admin: discussion of term programme
1. Leadership seminar
2. Training seminar for prospective participants for 1999
3. Workshops
4. Contact session, September
17:00 Closing

ADDENDUM B14

ACTION RESEARCH

Action research is defined by Zuber-Skerritt (1996:84) as “collaborative, critical and self-critical inquiry by practitioners (e.g. teachers, managers) into a major problem or issue of concern in their own practice”. According to her (p 83), its aims are “to bring about practical improvement, and the practitioners’ better understanding of their practices”. On pages 90 and 91 (3 in the notes) she mentions four barriers to ‘emancipatory’ action research, and on p95 (40) she illustrates action research’s cyclical nature.

In your groups of four you have to identify a ‘major (common) problem or issue of concern in your own practice’ (This should obviously not be a problem dealt with in one of the assignments you did earlier in this course. I would prefer something like the problem with student truancy or building the capacity of the Governing Body. It could be anything, the only condition being that you must ‘own’ the problem which you choose). You will then have to design an action research programme through which this problem will be addressed. The programme must be planned for at least three cycles of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning. This implies that your group will have to meet regularly and at least four times during the course of the semester. Each aspect of the design must be clearly documented (notes taken on decisions and observations) and a report of five pages handed in together with your documentation. Please note that this takes the place of the written assignments for the rest of the year. (you will, however also be evaluated on your performance in the seminar for prospective candidates of 1999).

Perhaps you will be allowed to choose as your group colleagues from your school (if you can at least three who are prepared to do this with you). Let us discuss the practical implications at our meeting,

I have not discussed this aspect with Dr Douglas yet, but I think it’s safe to say that his role will remain very much the same, with him attending at least some of your meetings and advising you on both practical and theoretical issues. At any rate, the final products must be handed in to him not later than the end of October.

ADDENDUM B15

**FURTHER DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT
GEORGE : 23-25 SEPTEMBER 1998**

WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER

14:00 - 17:00 FEEDBACK: ACTION RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. GROUP DISCUSSIONS:
 - 1.1 Identified projects
 - 1.2 Problems encountered
 - 1.3 Positive results so far
 - 1.4 What has been learnt in terms of the process
 - 1.5 The road ahead
2. FEEDBACK IN BIG GROUP.

THURSDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER

9:00 - 10:30 THE TEACHER AND THE LAW

LEGISLATION

The Constitution of South Africa

The South African Schools Act

The Labour Relations Act

Conditions of service

School rules as subordinate legislation

COMMON LAW

CASE LAW

11:00 - 13:00: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The place of the Governing Body in the governance of the school.
Nature and functions of the Governing Body
Admission of learners

14:00 - 17:00 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Correlates of effective schools
Categories of schools
Bad matric results

FRIDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER

9:00 - 12:00 CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Planning the physical environment
Planning the psychological environment

12:00 - 13:00 ADMINISTRATION

Discussion of examination
Future plans
Closing

ADDENDUM B16

To all participants of the FDE (School Management) programme, George, 1997, 1998

17 September 1999

Dear Friends

VISIT TO GEORGE, MOSSEL BAY AND CALITZDORP

I hope that you are all well, and that you can still manage the complexities of teaching even at this stage of the third term.

I intend to visit your area during the week of 4 to 8 October to finish off the data gathering for my research, and for this visit I need your assistance in the following:

I need somebody in each of your schools to complete the enclosed questionnaire, and send it back to me in the envelope included. The questionnaire aims to determine what changes have occurred in your role in the school, as well as in the broad operations of the school, since you have started and completed the course. If you are not the principal, it is preferable that the questionnaire be completed by either the principal or one of the senior members of staff. If you are the principal, the preferable person would be one of the senior staff members. The idea is that he/she completes this and sends it back to me without showing it to you. I am sorry if this sounds like trying to catch you out. This is not the case, because we are not asking him/her to include your name or even the name of the school, unless he or she wants to include these in the case of something very special and positive that you have accomplished, and he/she wants to commend you because of that. I have great confidence in you, but the requirements of a research project like mine is that one needs some objective information from the point where the activities took place. I already have much information through the assignments which you completed, now I need to get some feedback from somebody looking from a different angle.

I need to see each one of you individually. The reason for this is to hear from you personally how things are going, what problems you are encountering and especially how your personal and professional lives have been influenced by the course. My main concern is to find out, a year after you completed your studies, what difference your studies have made to your personal life, the way you do your work, and to the school you are teaching in.

If possible, I would like to visit your school, but only by invitation. This implies that I do not come to every school, but only to those for whom it is convenient to receive me

during that week. My objective with these visits to the schools are simply to see any exciting developments that have taken place as a result of your interventions. Such a visit could include a meeting with the principal or any other staff member who had been involved in what you are/were doing, but it could of course only imply meeting you and having you to show me around. In order to organize this, you need to check the dates which I will be in your area, and phone me directly or leave a message for me at Andy's center (see the relevant telephone numbers below). Please leave the school's address and telephone number, as well as the date and time that will suit you best.

To facilitate matters, I want to propose the following times and venues. I will then phone each one of you on Sunday the third or Monday the fourth to confirm or make alternative arrangements.

School visits:

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Monday and Tuesday: | George |
| Wednesday: | Mossel Bay |
| Thursday | Calitzdorp |

Meetings with individuals from George (at the Southern Cape Learning Resource Center)

| | | | | | |
|---------|-------|----------|----------|-------|--------|
| Monday: | 15:00 | Dukashe | Tuesday: | 15:00 | Grace |
| | 15:45 | Joyce | | 15:45 | Schaap |
| | 16:30 | Ignatius | | 16:30 | Peter |
| | 17:15 | Bonnie | | | |

Meetings with individuals from Mossel Bay (at Mondé's school, if possible Mondé)

| | | | | |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Wednesday: | 14:15 | Mondé | 15:45 | Theresa |
| | 15:00 | Roto | 16:00 | January |

Meeting with Chris at Calitzdorp

Thursday: Any time during the course of the morning or afternoon

Thank you for your attention to this.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again.

Johann McFarlane

Telephone numbers: SCLRU: 044 878 2013
 Work: 041 504 2375 (or if no reply: 041 5042371)

ADDENDUM B17

FURTHER DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

FRAMEWORK OF QUESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW, **SEPTEMBER 1999**

The main aim of the interview is to determine possible effects doing and completing the above course has had on each participant. The questions will focus on three areas, which are:

1. Personal life

1.1 In what ways did your involvement in the course bring about any changes in the way you think about yourself in terms of:

- your own potential
- your leadership abilities
- your ability to initiate change
- ways in which you can collaborate with other people

1.2 In what ways did you become more sure of yourself and of your purpose in life.

1.3 Please describe any other changes in your personal life which you would ascribe to your involvement in this course, which you haven't referred to so far.

2. Your involvement at the school

2.1 In what ways did the course cause any changes in the way you do and think about your work at school in terms of:

- approaching problems
- working together with colleagues
- taking a stand on certain issues
- dealing with learners

2.2 In what ways did your involvement with the course bring about changes in your relationships with your colleagues?

2.3 In what ways has your knowledge been appreciated and utilized?

3. The school itself

3.1 What tangible changes in the school would you say were the direct consequences of your involvement in the course? (explain).

3.2 Which projects or changes must still happen?

3.3 What was your role in 3.1, and what will your role be in 3.2 (if your response to 3.2 was positive?)

4. Please complete the following questionnaire:

4.1.1 Rate (on a scale of 1-13, 1 being the strongest influence and 13 the weakest), the influence each of the following aspects had on you in terms of equipping or preparing you to **change as a professional person**

| ASPECT | | ADDITIONAL COMMENTS |
|---|--|---------------------|
| 1. Lectures | | |
| 2. Readings/notes | | |
| 3. Workshops | | |
| 4. Assignments | | |
| 5. Group discussions | | |
| 6. Discussions with Dr Douglas | | |
| 7. Feedback on assignments | | |
| 8. Implementation of assignments in the school | | |
| 9. Informal contacts with other participants | | |
| 10. Inputs by Mr Lamont | | |
| 11. Contact with the lecturer | | |
| 12. Discussions with and feedback from colleagues | | |
| 13. Anything else | | |

4.1.2 Explain your choice of the first three aspects (those aspects that influenced you most.....

4.2.1 Rate (on a scale of 1-13, 1 being the strongest influence and 13 the weakest), the influence each of the following aspects had on you in terms of equipping or preparing you to **initiate or bring about change in your school**

| ASPECT | | ADDITIONAL COMMENTS |
|---|--|---------------------|
| 1. Lectures | | |
| 2. Readings/notes | | |
| 3. Workshops | | |
| 4. Assignments | | |
| 5. Group discussions | | |
| 6. Discussions with Dr Douglas | | |
| 7. Feedback on assignments | | |
| 8. Implementation of assignments in the school | | |
| 9. Informal contacts with other participants | | |
| 10. Inputs by Mr Lamont | | |
| 11. Contact with the lecturer | | |
| 12. Discussions with and feedback from colleagues | | |
| 13. Anything else | | |

4.2.2 Explain your choice of the first three aspects (those aspects that influenced you most)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.3 What do you think were the strong points of the course?

.....

.....

.....

4.4 Explain any tangible changes in your school which resulted (even for a small %) from your involvement with the course, and explain why you think there is a link with the course. What part (or aspect) of the course triggered that?

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

4.5.1 What were the main obstacles or problems **in the course** that prevented you from taking action in the school?

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

4.5.2 Suggestions how these problems could be solved or the obstacles removed

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

4.6.1 What were the main obstacles or problems **in the school** that prevented you from taking action in the school?

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

4.6.2 Suggestions how these problems could be solved or the obstacles removed

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

4.7 Any additional comments about the course?

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

4.8 Any suggestions how the course can be improved?

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

ADDENDUM B18: LETTER TO COLLEAGUES OF PARTICIPANTS

UNIVERSITY OF PORT ELIZABETH

**QUESTIONNAIRE
FURTHER DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (SCHOOL MANAGEMENT)**

P O Box 1600
Port Elizabeth
6000
Tel 041-504-2375
17 September 1999

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Colleague,

One or more staff members of your school successfully completed the above course at the end of 1998. We at the University of Port Elizabeth are interested to find out to what extent this course has been successful in equipping participants to bring about or facilitate change(improvements) at/in your school. We need your help to determine this. Would you please be so kind as to answer the following questions, and send the completed questionnaire back to me?

The idea behind this questionnaire is to obtain some objective information about the impact of the course on the practice of schooling in your area. This is *not a test* of the individual participant, or the school, and therefore you need not include either the school's or the individual's name. However, if there are positive things which you feel are worth mentioning, and are a credit to the school and the individual, I would love to know who the responsible person is, and at what school this took place. You are therefore absolutely free to either include or omit the relevant names. For your convenience, spaces have been made available, for you to either use or ignore. It will help me a great deal if you could return this to me as soon as possible, but not later than 8 October.

Thank you very much for your attention to this

J McFarlane
Lecturer: University of Port Elizabeth

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COLLEAGUES OF PARTICIPANTS

Name of participant:.....School:.....

Position of person completing this questionnaire (e.g. principal, deputy, etc)
.....Date:

Please note: All the questions refer to the impact of the course on the participant

1. Describe any personal changes that have become evident to you in the person concerned

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

2. Please explain any changes in the way (if any) he/she does his/her work

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

3. Name and describe any specific things he/she has done or initiated in the school.....

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

4. Can you think of any school-wide change that has occurred as a result of his/her initiative?

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

.....
.....
.....
5. Has he/she in any way influenced the thinking of the staff in the school?
Please explain (if applicable)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
6. Any general comments about the effects of this person's involvement in the
course you would want to add?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
7. Any possible suggestions about the course you would want to bring to my
attention?

.....
.....
.....
Thank you very much for your time
J McFarlane
Lecturer: University of Port Elizabeth
Telephone: 041 504 2375
Fax: 041 504 2822
E-mail: ttajjm@UPE.ac.za

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