

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EDUCATION DISTRICT IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY

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ABSTRACT

The district plays a key role in the education system. It is one of the few places that can drive systemic reform in schools, yet even the legislation is silent on the powers of the district. Not only have districts been neglected in research but much of the existing research on districts was considered to be sketchy and superficial. This research attempts to do an in-depth study of one district only i.e. the Johannesburg East District. The key aim of the research is to provide a set of systematic recommendations for improved practice.

The research method was a survey. There were two phases to the research. The first phase was a survey while the second phase provided a set of recommendations. This study is set against the theoretical backdrop of organisation development and change management. Organisation development and change management specifically aim to improve the effectiveness of organisations. A key principle here is that the people (district officials) who are expected to make the change are fully involved in the process. Therefore a questionnaire was distributed to all 51 district curriculum officials. Of the 51 questionnaires that were handed out, 49 were returned. The questionnaire was designed around the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' which provided a holistic way of analysing the organisational effectiveness of the district. The key questions were taken from the most important issues that emerged in the literature review.

The research found that strategy, systems and skills were basically functional. However, structure, style, staff and shared values need urgent attention. Improved communication is a key recommendation of this study. A synthesising model is developed which summarises the main findings of this study. These findings were crystallised from a lengthy process of analysis. It is hoped that this study will point the way towards more effective district curriculum delivery.

DECLARATION

I declare that this project report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Stephen Sadie

February, 2004

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the organisational effectiveness of the Johannesburg East District (JED) in curriculum delivery.

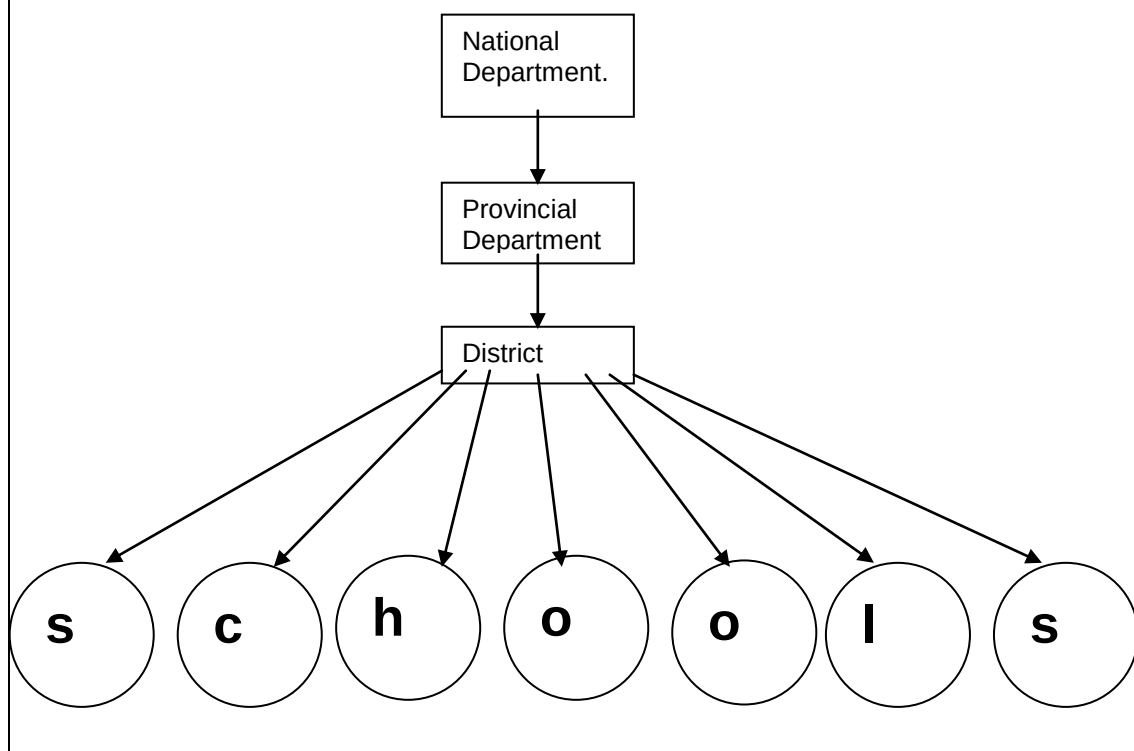
One of the key needs of the economy is human capital. The education system is primarily responsible for developing this human capital. In terms of education, South Africa has scored poorly in the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2003 (Institute for Management Development International, 2003), which compares 30 countries across a wide range of criteria. In terms of economic literacy, South Africa is rated 30th. Skilled labour is not readily available in the labour market (rated 29th). South Africa fares badly in the teaching of science in schools (rated 27th) and in the pupil-teacher ratio in primary schools (rated 27th). The only education criterion, which South Africa meets to a high degree, is public expenditure on education (rated sixth). From the above ratings, it is evident that the need for improvement in South Africa's education system is urgent.

A key issue in education is the delivery of curriculum to schools. The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) is responsible for public school education in this province. The core business of the GDE is curriculum delivery. The GDE has twelve district offices, which provide support to schools. The GDE has 1 661 817 learners in public schools (GDE, 2003a). This study will focus on the JED and the curriculum delivery it provides to schools, which fall under its jurisdiction.

The JED covers 125 public schools stretching from Kensington in the south to Midrand in the north. Very little research has been done on districts in the education system. According to Khulisa Management Services (Khulisa) and the Centre for Education Policy Development, Evaluation and Management (CEPD) (2003a), even the legislation is silent on the powers of districts.

However, districts are key agents in the curriculum implementation chain. This research is a study of one district, which has attempted to implement massive curriculum change. Figure 1 outlines the place of the district in the education system.

Figure 1: Place of the District in the Education System

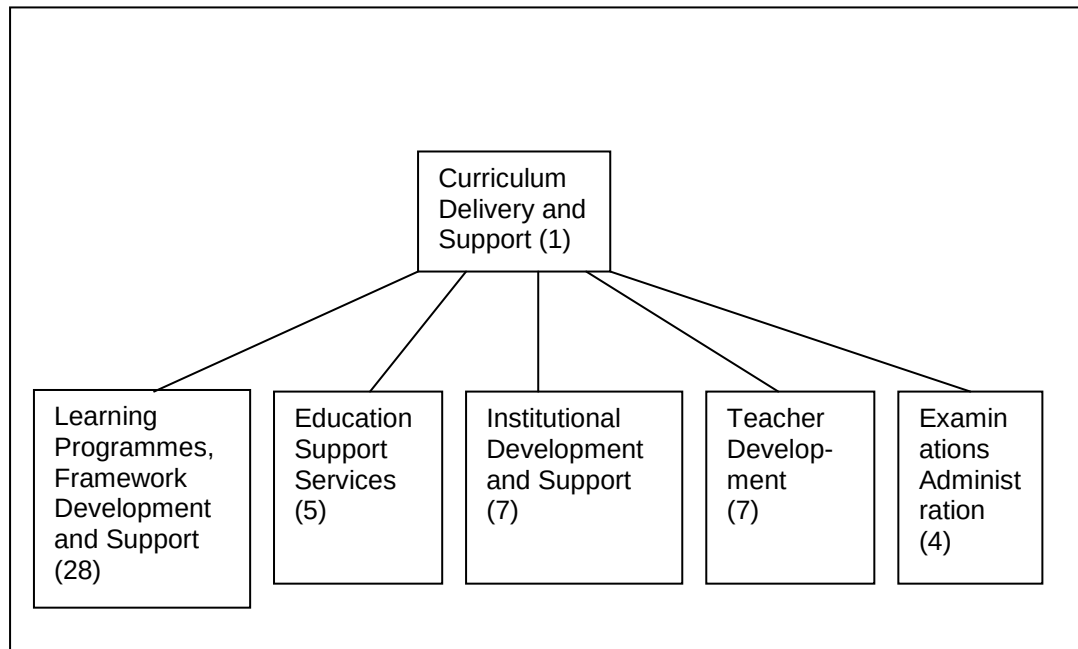


This study is concerned with the Curriculum Delivery and Support (CDS) sub-directorate of the district. The district is divided into three subdirectorates i.e. Finance and Administration, Human Resource Management and Development, and CDS. The CDS is divided into five units as illustrated in Figure 2.

In Figure 2, the numbers in brackets refer to the actual numbers of staff in each unit. The total number of district curriculum staff is 52. The Education Resources unit has been replaced by the Teacher Development unit as the first change that was introduced in JED in the 'tweaked organogram'. The Learning Programmes, Framework Development and Support (LPFDS) is further divided into three phases i.e. Further Education and Training phase,

the Intersen phase and the Foundation phase. The organogram illustrated in Figure 2 existed at the time of the administration of the questionnaire in October, 2003.

Figure 2: Description of Units in Curriculum Delivery and Support



Source: Adapted from Gauteng Department of Education (2001a).

Schools are caught up in a cycle of curriculum change. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was first introduced in 1998 to grade one classes. It has been implemented in grades 1 to 9. The old curriculum Report 550 is still being implemented in grades 10 to 12. C2005 has since been revised in what is now called the Revised National Curriculum Statements (Department of Education, 2002). The Revised National Curriculum Statements will be implemented in 2004 for the Foundation phase. It is in this context of ongoing curriculum change that this study is located. The district is the key agency in helping schools to implement this changing curriculum. There is a need to consolidate the lessons learnt in this process.

It is useful to clarify the meaning of some of the key concepts in this study. Curriculum is defined in a broad sense:

It refers to the teaching and learning activities and experiences, which are provided by schools. This definition includes the aims and objectives of the education system as well as the specific goals of schools; the

selection of content to be taught, how it is arranged into subjects, programmes and syllabuses, and what skills and processes are included; ways of teaching and learning, and relationships between teachers and learners (pedagogy); and the forms of assessment and evaluation which are used.

National Education Policy Initiative (1992: 1)

Handy (2001: 49), a prolific writer on organisation has also studied the school curriculum extensively and provides a useful perspective:

I remain convinced that we should use our schools as safe arenas for experimenting with life, for discovering our talents – we all have some even if they don't show up in examinations – for taking on responsibility for tasks and other people, for learning how to learn what and when we need to, and for exploring our values and beliefs about society. For me that is a more exciting curriculum than one packed full of facts.

Curriculum is what happens in the classroom. The District is responsible for delivering the curriculum to schools.

The theory of organisation development and change management will provide the backdrop to this study. Organisation development started in the 1960s and has had a profound effect on our understanding of organisation as it exists in the private and public sector alike. Organisation development is a growing field of enquiry, which has evolved quite considerably since its origins. One of the early pioneers of organisation development, Bennis (1969: 2), defines organisation development as:

a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organisations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets and challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself.

French & Bell (1995: xi) emphasise the people aspect of organisation development: "Organization development is the applied behavioural science

discipline dedicated to improving organizations and people in them through the use of theory and practice of planned change”.

This research is concerned with assessing the organisational effectiveness of a district. There are many conceptions of what constitutes organisational effectiveness. Robbins (1998: 51) provides a useful definition of organisational effectiveness which captures some of the different conceptions: “the degree to which an organization attains its short- (ends) and long-term (means) goals, the selection of which reflects strategic constituencies, the self interest of the evaluator, and the life stage of the organization”.

Organisational assessment needs to be based on a model of organisational performance, which helps to know what to measure and how to interpret the data (Lawler, Nadler & Cammann, 1980). This study will use the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ to evaluate the effectiveness of district curriculum delivery (Waterman, Peters & Phillips, 1980). The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ does not focus only on one aspect of an organisation such as structure but provides a holistic framework with which to analyse organisational effectiveness (Waterman *et al*, 1980).

Nadler (1977) makes a strong case for feedback in helping to improve the effectiveness of organisation. Rosenbach, Gregory & Taylor (1989) have used the survey feedback method effectively in a school district. One needs to move beyond perceptions or the manager’s current pet theory to a more systematic feedback of information. This is precisely what this study hopes to achieve. It is argued that some of the consultants employed to help the GDE have made use of very limited information which often consists of interviewing one or two senior people in each district and thereby hoping to provide a sound basis for improvement. The public sector depends heavily on consultants. Tskudu Associates (2001) are critical of the way some consultants work and provide pertinent advice to those in the public sector managing consultants. This study will drill deeper into one district with the expectation that the feedback would be more systematic.

The purpose of the study is to do an in-depth study of one district so as to provide recommendations for improved practice. As one of the GDEs strategic goals is to enhance the “GDEs organisational effectiveness”, it is vital that research on organisational effectiveness be undertaken (GDE, 2003c: 4). It is generally recognised that the district is a crucial layer in the education system but has been neglected in research. An in-depth study of one district will assist in filling this gap. While many have written on the role of districts, there is a lack of in-depth research on districts. Such research is needed to help policy makers “make informed decisions about the role and place of districts in the education system” (Khulisa & CEPD, 2003a: 21).

1.2 The Project Aim

The project aim is to assess the organisational effectiveness of district curriculum delivery in order to improve such delivery.

1.3 Background to the Study

There is a growing interest in the role of districts in the education system (Buckland & de Wee, 1996; Coombe, 1996; Spillane & Thompson, 1997; Potterton, 1999; Massel, 2000; Corcoran, Fuhrman & Belcher, 2001; Roberts, 2001; Prew, 2002). The national Department of Education (DoE) even launched a District Development Project in 1998 precisely to improve the effectiveness of districts (Mphahlele, 2001).

There are four levels of curriculum delivery i.e. national, provincial, district and school. This makes curriculum delivery a long and cumbersome process. The DoE is responsible for developing curriculum policy. The provinces are tasked with implementation of curriculum policy. If there are still policy gaps at the DoE level this problem will be passed onto the provinces (de Clerq, 2001a). District offices are tasked with the monitoring and support of the curriculum whereas schools are the place where curriculum is practiced. It is widely recognised that education reforms “live or die by the success of their implementation at school level” (Fullan cited in Verspoor, 1992: 237).

The DoE uses a top down approach. This amounts to the DoE issuing a policy statement and then “devising a sequence of controlling steps to ensure that the different implementation levels execute their policy management and administrative role” (Elmore cited in de Clerq, 2001a: 43). Whenever a problem occurs, the policy is not found wanting but instead the blame is inevitably laid at the door of poor resources or capacity or inadequate controls in the implementation process (de Clerq, 2001a). However, the link between policy and implementation is often interactive and dynamic. Many of the curriculum delivery problems can be traced back to the policy design itself (DoE, 2000). Curriculum policies, like any other policies, are open to all sorts of interpretations, which can further compound the implementation process.

While there is legislation covering schools and the provincial department, the legislation is largely silent on the role of the district. Districts exist as legacies of the past or by delegated authority of the province. In the past, districts were authoritarian structures, which depended on higher authorities for decisions and modes of operation. In essence, they were administrative units “functioning as post offices passing down” decrees from above (Khulisa & CEPD, 2003a: 11).

Districts are an important layer in the education system. They are closest to schools and thus allow their impact to be felt (Taylor, Muller & Vinjevold, 2003). They also have an important role to play in driving systemic reforms (de Clerq, 2001b). Schools have difficulty redesigning themselves and thus depend on districts for continuous and long-term improvements (Chinsamy, 2000). Fullan (1991: 203) puts this more succinctly: “The school will never become the centre of change if left to its own devices.” Given the importance of the district, Taylor *et al* (2003: 127), bemoan the fact that it has been neglected in terms of “setting the policy direction and building the capacity required for playing its appropriate role in improving the quality of schooling”.

There is considerable debate as to whether districts should focus more on policy compliance or educator support. While commentators lean to either of

the poles, many accept the need for both to occur. However, the issue is the type of mix that needs to occur (Fleisch, 2001). According to Fullan (1991), successful change requires both central policy mandate and school-by-school assistance. Fleisch (2002a: 95) agrees with this sentiment:

Centralised or state policy mandated changes are often good at ensuring distribution of resources and setting ambitious standards, but cannot directly impact on the daily functions of teachers and learners in the classroom. Similarly, without external pressure, school-based improvement projects often do not have the right mix of incentives and sanctions to translate support into new practice. Increasingly, best improvement practices attempt to engage at both levels.

There is however a tension between support and pressure, which don't always complement each other. Schools complain that they rarely experience support but most often experience policy compliance (de Clerq, 2002a). Many district officials "understand their work narrowly as passing down policies and ensuring that the latter are implemented at school level" (de Clerq, 2002a: 116).

In the early days of the GDEs existence, it prided itself on the power given to districts. Districts were seen as the "kingpin between the provincial department and the schools and were there to ensure regular and reliable feedback on policy implementation and school change" (de Clerq, 2001a: 44). Districts are to a large extent dependent on the provincial department. Directorates at provincial department drive many programmes. District officials in the relevant unit are often called to meetings at which a programme is unveiled and district officials are expected to implement this across the province.

Much of the research on districts has been superficial. The Khulisa & CEPD (2002a, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b) research has done a thorough study on evaluating C2005. However, the volume on the role of district support is sketchy. This is openly acknowledged by the research report itself: "Another limitation is that the school level data represents only a few schools per

district and therefore cannot make an authoritative statement on the level of support for each of the districts” (Khulisa & CEPD, 2003a: 6).

One of the most prolific writers on the GDEs organisational capacity is de Clerq. She has made a thorough study of the GDE in a number of published articles (de Clerq, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2002a, 2002b). Her observations are incisive and telling. However, she has focused on the GDE as a whole and not on any one district. According to de Clerq (2002a), her research methodology consisted of participant observation through conference reporting at GDE district development conferences in 1999 and 2001, training workshops and research projects. She has also established good working relationships with various GDE officials and was thus able to interview them. She also used “secondary sources such as external departmental evaluations and primary sources such as GDE internal reports and research findings” (de Clerq, 2002a).

The GDE also commissioned a public opinion survey whereby members of the public were approached at random and interviewed at various public places such as taxi ranks (Progressus Research and Development Consultancy, 2002). Approximately 600 members of the public were surveyed. One of the questions asked to these members of the public was on the effectiveness of districts. It is not clear how a member of the public was expected to comment on this question as they would seldom, if ever, come into contact with a district. Nevertheless district effectiveness was rated in the least satisfactory section by the public (Progressus Research and Development Consultancy, 2002). However, a further 50 telephonic interviews were conducted with GDE officials such as district managers, principals and teachers (Progressus Research and Development Consultancy, 2002). This seems to have been an add-on to a public opinion survey, which had already been designed. For Taylor *et al* (2003: 127), in terms of research, there is a lack of “systematic information on the efficacy of districts”. There is clearly a gap in the available body of knowledge for in-depth research into a district.

1.4 Delimitations

The research focuses only on one district i.e. the JED district. Other research into the GDE has cut across a number of districts. Although this study focuses on one district only, the broad processes and structures are largely uniform in all districts. The central location of Johannesburg East meant that staff were attracted to work there from a wide range of areas. This is obviously not the case in other districts such as Sedibeng East/West, Ekurhuleni East/West, Gauteng West which largely recruit staff from their surrounding geographical area.

The research is only conducted in one province of South Africa i.e. Gauteng. It is generally acknowledged that Gauteng is a leading province in education. Many of the other provinces cover bigger geographical areas. Therefore the districts would cover bigger geographical areas as well. Gauteng is also a wealthy province and has a highly concentrated population density. Gauteng has a high immigration rate both from other countries as well as other provinces, which has an effect on the provision of education. In the 10th Day Snap Survey in 2003, there was a migration of 63 000 learners into the province (GDE, 2003c). All these factors will obviously limit the generalisation of the findings of this study.

The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' covers a very broad spectrum. One could probably do an entire project report on any one of the S's alone. In going for the full package, the depth that each S could be analysed is obviously limited. The focus of this project report is not in the content of each S but on how all of them combine to provide an in-depth analysis of the district.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review will cover the key theoretical contributions in assessing organisational effectiveness. A growing body of literature exists on organisation development and change management. An extensive body of literature on the effectiveness of the education department also exists. The literature review will fuse these two bodies of literature together to look at organisation development in education.

A brief road map is provided below to explain the logic of the literature review. Organisational effectiveness is defined and is the title of this research. There are a number of competing ways at looking at organisational theory. The two dominant approaches are the culture-excellence approach and the Japanese approach. Any attempt to assess organisational effectiveness is located within this broader debate. Organisational theory is then narrowed down to organisational development and change management. Both organisational development and change management provide the theoretical backdrop to this study. They are both concerned about how organisations respond to change in the broader environment and how the different aspects of an organisation need to be aligned. Organisation development and change management are similar but not synonymous.

A comparison is then drawn between various models of organisational diagnosis. The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' was not just chosen in an adhoc way but emerges from the literature review and is a particular approach to organisations. There are many others but this chapter will demonstrate the logical process of selecting this particular framework and how it fits into the broader literature review. Organisation development and change management can be applied to any organisation in both the public sector and private sector alike. The education department is part of the public sector and hence public sector dynamics are analysed. The literature review then

proceeds to look at organisation development in education in particular. Finally, the district that is the focus of this study is part of the GDE and hence the district's constraints and possibilities occur in relation to this particular context. The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' is used as a framework to review the relevant literature on the GDE.

2.2 Organisational Effectiveness

The term organisational effectiveness is generally used quite loosely in the literature. There are many possible ways of determining criteria of effectiveness. Most commentators distinguish between efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency means achieving objectives with the acceptable use of resources. Effectiveness means efficiency and adaptability (Carnall, 1995).

A typical example of a list of criteria for effectiveness can be found in Fortune magazine's annual survey of 'Most Admired Corporations':

- Quality of management.
- Quality of products/services.
- Innovativeness.
- Long-term investment value.
- Financial soundness.
- Ability to attract, develop and keep talented people.
- Responsibility to the community and the environment.
- Wise use of corporate assets.

Kreitner & Kinicki (1998: 572)

However there is no single approach to organisational effectiveness, which is appropriate for all occasions and circumstances (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998). Seashore (1996) presents a framework for distinguishing between different kinds of criteria:

- Ends vs. means.
- Time reference.
- Long vs. short run.
- 'Hard' vs. 'soft'.

- Values.

Seashore (1996) maintains that to achieve effectiveness, organisations need to take into account multiple, conflicting and changing goals.

In a similar vein, Cameron (cited in Burke, 1987: 132) develops four criteria models:

- The goal model. Organizational effectiveness is defined in terms of the extent to which the organization accomplishes its goals.
- The system resource model. Effectiveness is equated with the ability to acquire needed resources.
- The process model. Effectiveness is defined in terms of how smoothly the organization functions, especially the degree of absence of internal strain in the organization.
- The strategic constituencies model. Effectiveness is determined by the extent to which the organization satisfies all its strategic constituencies – special interest groups.

This study cuts across all four of these models. Carnall (1995) provides two reasons to assess effectiveness. Finding sources of ineffectiveness can lead to restructuring or reorganisation. The GDE has been through major restructuring. Secondly, ineffective organisations make it more difficult to implement technological, product or service changes.

One of the reasons this research is grounded in organisation development theory is precisely because organisation development is a “process that applies behavioural science knowledge and practices to help organizations to achieve greater effectiveness” (Cummings & Worley, 2001: 1). The key criteria generated by the literature review will be used to assess the organisational effectiveness of the JED.

2.3 Organisation Theory

This project report is about organisational effectiveness. It is thus necessary to ground an understanding of organisational effectiveness in a broader

understanding of organisation theory. It is argued that there are two main approaches to organisation theory i.e. the culture-excellence approach and the Japanese approach. Each one will be considered in turn.

2.3.1 Culture – Excellence Approach

The dominant organisational approach in the west is the culture-excellence approach. This approach has been developed most prominently by Peters & Waterman (1982), Kanter (1989) and Handy (1989). Peters & Waterman (1982) conducted a study of 62 of America's most successful companies out of which they developed eight attributes of excellence:

- A bias for action
- Close to the customer
- Autonomy and entrepreneurship
- Productivity through people
- Hands-on, value-driven
- Stick to the knitting
- Simple form, lean staff
- Simultaneous loose-tight properties

It has been noted that five years after this study was published, two-thirds of those companies had "slipped from the pinnacle" (Pascale, 1990: 16). According to Peters & Waterman (cited in Burnes, 1996: 81), the main attributes of excellent companies are:

flat, anti-hierarchical structures; innovation and entrepreneurship; small corporate and middle-management staffs; reward systems based on contribution rather than position or length of service; brain power rather than muscle power; and strong, flexible cultures.

Kanter builds on this approach to develop a post-entrepreneurial model arguing that "corporate elephants need to learn to dance as nimbly and speedily as mice" (Burnes, 1996: 82). Both Peters/Waterman and Kanter see

the need for: “Flexibility in how work is done; everyone being an innovator; and greater information flow” (Burke, 1987: 23).

While Kanter agrees with Peters & Waterman on most issues, Kanter is more critical of these developments. According to Kanter (cited in Burnes, 1996: 88), there is a contradiction in the post-entrepreneurial model:

Are people – their skills, motivation and loyalty – central to the success of the organisation of the future or are they just another commodity to be obtained and dispensed with as circumstances and their performance require?

Although Handy is from Europe there is much congruence with the above-mentioned American authors. Handy (1989) also believes organisations need to be smaller, more flexible and flatter. According to Handy (cited in Burnes, 1996: 89):

organisations in both private and public sectors face a tougher world – one in which they are judged more harshly than before on their effectiveness and in which there are fewer protective hedges behind which to shelter.

Culture is given prominence in the culture-excellence approach. Structures have become less important as culture becomes the directing and controlling mechanism (Burnes, 1996). Even though the culture-excellence approach is dominant, there are a number of criticisms levelled at it. People are seen as the major asset in these organisations. However these organisations only value people who perform exceptionally well. This value could create intense competition in the very company and work against performance (Wilson, 1992). Politics is ignored and thus the struggle for resources amongst different groups in the organisation could be increased. Although culture is emphasised, it is a one-size-fits-all type of culture irrespective of size, environment and other circumstances (Wilson, 1992).

2.3.2 Japanese Approach

The Japanese approach to organisation has been seen as more successful than western models by a number of authors (Pascale & Athos, 1981; Keys & Miller, 1989). Pascale & Athos (1981) argue that the superiority of the Japanese lies not in their homogenous population but in their managerial skill. Spiritual and social life in the west resides outside the workplace but not so in Japan (Pascale & Athos, 1981). This is not an argument for the Japanisation of American companies: "We can't ape the Japanese system. But we can incorporate some of their approach, which will strengthen our areas of weakness" (Pascale & Athos, 1981: 27).

Pascale & Athos (1981) draw a comparison between a Japanese corporation CEO (Matsushita from the Matsushita Electric Company) and an American CEO (Geneen from the International Telephone and Telegraph Company) to illustrate key differences. American companies are very similar to Japanese companies in the 'hard' S's but there is a marked difference in the 'soft' S's (Pascale & Athos, 1981).

There are a number of characteristics around employees. Japanese companies believe in lifelong employment. This creates a strong sense of loyalty to the company. There is thus a strong emphasis on staff development, which will not be lost to the company. Most promotion posts are filled from within the company. There is a strong emphasis on teamwork. There is a wide range of welfare benefits for their employees and a strong commitment to hard work (Burnes, 1996). In a similar vein, Cummings & Worley (2001: 504) attribute the success of Japanese companies to their "strong corporate culture emphasizing employee participation, open communication, security, and equality".

In terms of business practices, there is a range of characteristics. Companies are not obsessed with short-term profit maximisation but instead there is long-term planning. The Japanese can bring products to markets faster largely

because of teamwork. Their commitment to quality is well-known i.e. total quality management (Burnes, 1996).

The Japanese approach is not without criticism. Many question the long hours of work. There is also a strong authoritarian nature in the company. The social isolation of anyone who does not conform can be overbearing. There is also a lack of independent trade unions (Burnes, 1996).

The type of organisational approach is key to getting an overall understanding of how an organisation operates. These two contrasting approaches set the context for a more detailed examination of organisations using organisation development and change management theory. This study takes aspects from both approaches to understand the dynamics at play in the district.

2.4 Organisation Development

2.4.1 Introduction

This research is concerned with improving organisational effectiveness. Organisation development has a number of concepts and techniques precisely for improving organisational effectiveness. Organisation development does not have an all-encompassing theory but consists of a number of smaller theories, which explain aspects of organisation development (Burke, 1987). Organisation development has a number of sources and has roots in numerous methodologies, theories and concepts (Burke, 1987). In particular, organisation development draws from sociology, psychology, social psychology, education, economics, psychiatry and management (French, Bell & Zawacki, 1989). The influence of organisation development can be seen in that general management literature and practice have absorbed many of the concepts, values and methods of organisation development (Beer & Walton, 1989).

The roots of organisation development lie in five stems:

- Laboratory Training - T-groups, sensitivity training.

- Action Research/Survey Feedback – Lewin.
- Participative Management – Likert.
- Quality of Work Life.
- Strategic Change (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

With this background in mind, the literature review turns to the relevance of organisation development for this study.

2.4.2 Relevance of Organisation Development

According to French *et al* (1989), there are four reasons why organisation development is important:

- It works.
- The use of organisation development is spreading rapidly.
- The most important assets of organisations are human assets.
- It is a critical managerial tool.

Given the rapid change that is occurring in our world, particularly in the fields of globalisation, information technology, and management practices, organisation development is playing an increasingly important role (Cummings & Worley, 2001). According to Cummings & Worley (2001: 5): “It is helping organizations assess themselves and their environments, and revitalize and rebuild their strategies, structures and processes.” This is precisely the aim of this research. At the heart of organisation development is a concern for a more humane workplace. Weisbord (1987: 378) captures this concern well:

Unless we are deeply involved in our work, we cannot feel good about ourselves. Unless we work with others toward valued goals, we cannot infuse hope and inspiration into our lives. Unless we treat one another as equals, we cannot find dignity, meaning, and community in our work.

2.4.3 Different Approaches to Organisation Development

The field of organisation development has a number of different approaches. For example, Burke (1987) adopts a normative approach, Albrecht (1983) and Beer (1980) a total systems approach, Porras, Harkness & Kiebert (1989) a stream approach, while Harvey (1992) adopts an experiential approach. While there are differences, most organisation development approaches use an open-systems approach to assessing organisations (Hayes, 2002).

Organisation development distinguishes itself from other similar approaches. Training and development, technological innovation or operations management tend to focus on one or only a few aspects of the system. They tend to focus on individuals within a system, improving particular products or processes, or the development of production or service delivery functions. On the other hand, organisation development tends to focus on the entire system be it a whole organisation, division or a plant (Cummings & Worley, 2001). While the above-mentioned approaches focus on the economic, financial and technical aspects, organisation development is more concerned with the personal and social characteristics of the system (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

2.4.4 Process

The process of organisation development normally starts with contracting a consultant, diagnosing the problem, providing feedback and then applying one or more interventions (French *et al*, 1989; French & Bell, 1995; Cummings & Worley, 2001). Hayes (2002), captures this slightly differently, asserting that organisation development has a framework for analysing organisations i.e. diagnosis, interventions, managing change. Burke (1987), on the other hand, defines the process as: diagnosis, feedback, discussion and action. Even though there are slight differences, all of above-mentioned processes are fairly similar.

2.4.5 Interventions

The interventions occur across a broad range from team, intergroup, comprehensive, structural to training interventions (French & Bell, 1995). Cummings & Worley (2001) have categorised interventions slightly differently as human process, technoststructural, human resource management and strategic interventions. Table 1 gives an indication of what the different types of interventions entail.

Table 1: Types of Interventions

Human Process Interventions	Technostructural Interventions	Human Resources Management Interventions	Strategic Interventions
Interpersonal and Group Process Approaches	Restructuring Organizations	Performance Management	Organization and Environment Relationships
Organization Process Approaches	Employee Involvement	Developing and Assisting Members	Organization Transformation
	Work Design		

Source: Cummings & Worley (2001: 15).

One of the strengths of organisation development is the wide variety of interventions that are available to organisations. A criticism is that some organisation development practitioners tend to use the same interventions that they are comfortable with even if they are not always applicable to the situation (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

Beer & Walton (1989) criticise organisation development for its weakness in building theory. From the above it can be seen that much of the literature on organisational development is in the form of 'how to do' manuals and tend to be quite repetitive. This is a major critique of the organisation development literature.

2.5 Change Management

2.5.1 Introduction

The issue of change has become one of the greatest challenges facing organisations. The GDE has faced widespread change. In 2001, the GDE underwent a major restructuring exercise and again in 2003. The introduction of C2005 has also meant major changes to curriculum in the education system.

The pace of change has increased dramatically in the past few years. Some companies have flourished with change, while others have gone into decline. Nadler, Shaw & Walton (1995: xiv) call the former change-capable companies: "Change-capable organizations recognize change as a constant element of the landscape, and stability as the exception." The pace of change has affected the concept of organisation itself. According to Nadler & Shaw (1995: 9), "Basic machine-bureaucracy theory, based on concepts of Taylor and Weber, was designed to create stability in organizations; the new environments demand speed, innovation, and flexibility – the very opposite of stability." Change can also be distinguished into incremental and discontinuous (i.e. major) change. The type of change will determine different change management strategies (Nadler & Tushman, 1995).

Change management began approximately 50 years ago with the origin of the planned change approach. Change management is an integral part of organisation development. Although the two fields are related, they do not mean exactly the same thing. Both change management and organisation development are concerned with the effective implementation of planned change. The value orientation however differs. Organisation development is concerned with human potential, participation and development whereas change management is more concerned with economic potential and competitive advantage. Furthermore, organisation development focuses on the transfer of skills whereas change management does not necessarily involve this (Cummings & Worley, 2001). This difference is neatly summed up

by Cummings & Worley (2001: 3): “In short, all OD involves change management, but change management may not involve OD.” Change management can be divided into a planned approach and an emergent approach.

2.5.2 Planned Approach

Change often happens to an organisation. However, here the concern is with change that is planned. The models below are based on Lewin’s thinking.

a) Action Research

Research is conducted and then action is taken on the basis of that research. Lewin who was central to action research stated that there is no “action without research and no research without action” (cited in Burke, 1987: 54). This model focuses on planned change as a cyclical process of research and action (Cummings & Worley, 2001). The action research model has a number of stages: problem identification, consultation with behavioural science expert, data gathering and preliminary diagnosis, feedback to key client or group, joint diagnosis of problem, joint action planning, action and data gathering after action (Cummings & Worley, 2001). This flow of the process has become the basis for organisation development.

b) Lewin’s Three-Step Procedure of Change

Lewin (1989) sees change as passing through three steps i.e. unfreezing, moving and freezing. Lewin is widely quoted in the organisation development literature. A successful change includes three aspects: “unfreezing (if necessary) the present level L1, moving to the new level L2, and freezing group life on the new level” (Lewin, 1989: 87). The last step is often called refreezing which attempts to ensure the change becomes permanent (Burke, 1987). Lewin developed the technique of Force Field Analysis to illustrate how the equilibrium would move in one direction or the other (French *et al*, 1989). Force Field Analysis has been used in chapter 7 to synthesise the findings of

this study. These three steps are relatively broad and hence have been elaborated on as can be seen in the next model.

c) Phases of Planned Change

Lewin's three-step model is increased to five phases in another model by Lippit, Watson and Westley (Burke, 1987). The five phases consist of:

- Development of a need for change (Lewin's unfreezing)
- Establishment of a change relationship
- Working towards change (moving)
- Generalization and stabilization of change (refreezing)
- Achieving a terminal relationship.

Burke (1987: 57)

d) Critique of planned change

There is widespread critique of the theory of planned change. Beer & Walton (1989) critique organisation development for focussing too narrowly on planned, internal efforts without taking into account the broader environment. In particular, they criticise organisation development's narrow focus of change:

Rather than cataloguing the technology of organizational change, we need to catalogue how external forces create the opportunities for change. Rather than assume there is a single way to change organizations, a way consistent with our technology and values, we should develop a contingency theory of change.

Beer & Walton (1989: 73)

Politics of the organisation is also often overlooked in change management. Any new order could upset established executives who could block change (Robbins, 1998). Planned change seems to assume that consensus can be reached. This assumption could ignore conflict and power struggles within the organisation (Burnes, 1996).

Cummings & Worley (2001: 154) find that much of the material on change management is “highly prescriptive, advising managers about how to plan and implement organizational changes”. Porras & Robertson (cited in Cummings & Worley, 2001: 39) note that, the key to organisational change “is change in the behaviour in each member and that the information available about the causal mechanisms that produce individual change is lacking”. It would also seem that the models spell out a set of general steps to be followed but there are a variety of situations, sizes of organisations and magnitudes of change that it becomes difficult for this theory to be applicable in all situations (Cummings & Worley, 2001). Others have also criticised planned change for appearing rational and orderly. However, the reality is that planned change has a more “chaotic quality, often involving shifting goals, discontinuous activities, surprising events, and unexpected combinations of changes” (Cummings & Worley, 2001). This has led to the rise of a contingency or emergent approach to change.

2.5.3 Emergent Approach

While the planned approach is neatly laid out, the emergent approach is more developmental and unpredictable. One dimensional change interventions will only deliver short-term results, which will “heighten instability rather than reduce it” (Dawson cited in Burnes, 1996). Change that occurs in the external environment needs effective responses from within the organisation. In what sounds fairly similar to the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’, this response needs to take into account a thorough understanding of “strategy, structure, systems, people, style and culture, and how these can function either as sources of inertia that block change, or alternatively, as levers to encourage an effective change process” (Wilson cited in Burnes, 1996: 189).

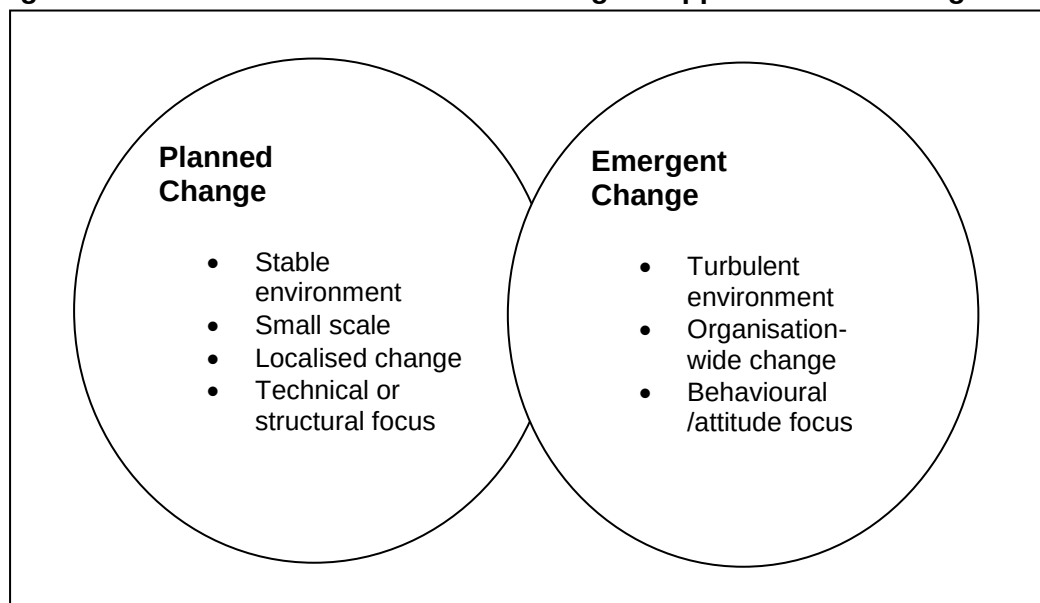
An emergent approach to change favours flatter organisational structures. They believe in customer-centred organisations where structures are responsive to different markets rather than different functions (Burnes, 1996).

In addition this approach also favours a managerial style where managers are coaches and facilitators as opposed to directing and controlling managers (Burnes, 1996).

Organisational change is a continuous process of trying out different methods of change according to a dynamic and uncertain environment. At times these could be small incremental changes, at other times they could be major transformations (Burnes, 1996). Because organisations operate in a dynamic and turbulent world, they need to continually scan the environment to respond to these changes. The planned approach would thus not be suitable for turbulent and rapidly changing environments (Burnes, 1996).

While planned change is more top-down and has a beginning, middle and end, emergent change is more bottom-up and open-ended. The emergent approach assumes organisations operate in unpredictable and uncertain environments over which they have little control. This may not always be the case. In a sense, both approaches may be contingency approaches depending on the prevailing environment (Burnes, 1996). Figure 3 illustrates the conditions appropriate for each approach.

Figure 3: Conditions for Planned and Emergent Approaches to Change



Source: Burnes (1996: 339).

In an attempt to lift the debate out of the either/or planned-emergent change model, Burnes (1996) develops his own choice management–change management model. This model while recognising different contexts argues that the choice of the manager is much more critical than allowed by other models.

Given that the GDE has been faced with high levels of change. This change needs to be located in the theory of change management. The GDE has experienced contexts of both planned change and emergent change. The ongoing pace of change has affected its ability to effectively deliver curriculum. One of the concrete steps in organisation development and change management is organisational diagnosis.

2.6 Organisational Diagnosis

Diagnosis is defined as “a collaborative process between organization members and the OD consultant to collect pertinent information, analyze it, and draw conclusions for action planning and intervention” (Cummings & Worley, 2001: 83). It differs drastically with medical diagnosis, which relies on the doctor whereas in organisation development there is much more collaboration (Cummings & Worley, 2001). According to Carnall (1995: 29), there is a clear link between organisational effectiveness and diagnosis: “The improvement of organizational effectiveness involved depends on our ability to diagnose the organization’s problems, to identify solutions, and to adopt and adapt these solutions to organizational life.” This is a basic premise of this study.

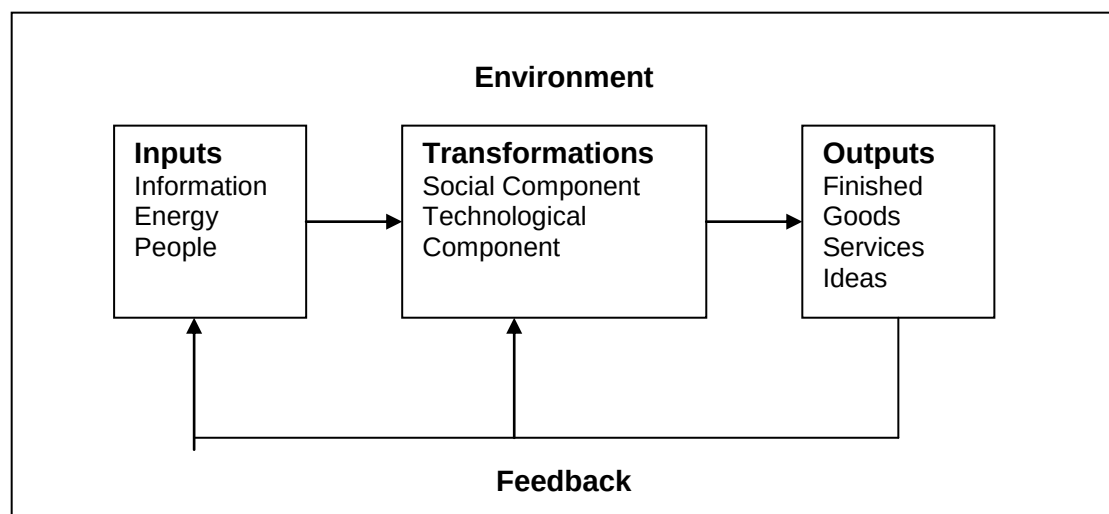
The organisation development literature abounds with models for diagnosing problems in organisations. A model gives us a way of looking into an organisation. No model can completely capture the totality of an organisation. Burke (1987: 80) expresses this well:

Without a framework for understanding the information an OD practitioner collects about a client organization, the data may be nothing more than a mass of confusion – merely an array of comments from a

variety of people, representing nothing more than who said what about whom and never rising above the individual and personal level.

Organisation development uses open-systems theory. Open systems exchange information and resources with their environments. An open system is depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4: The Organisation as an Open System



Source: Cummings & Worley (2001: 85).

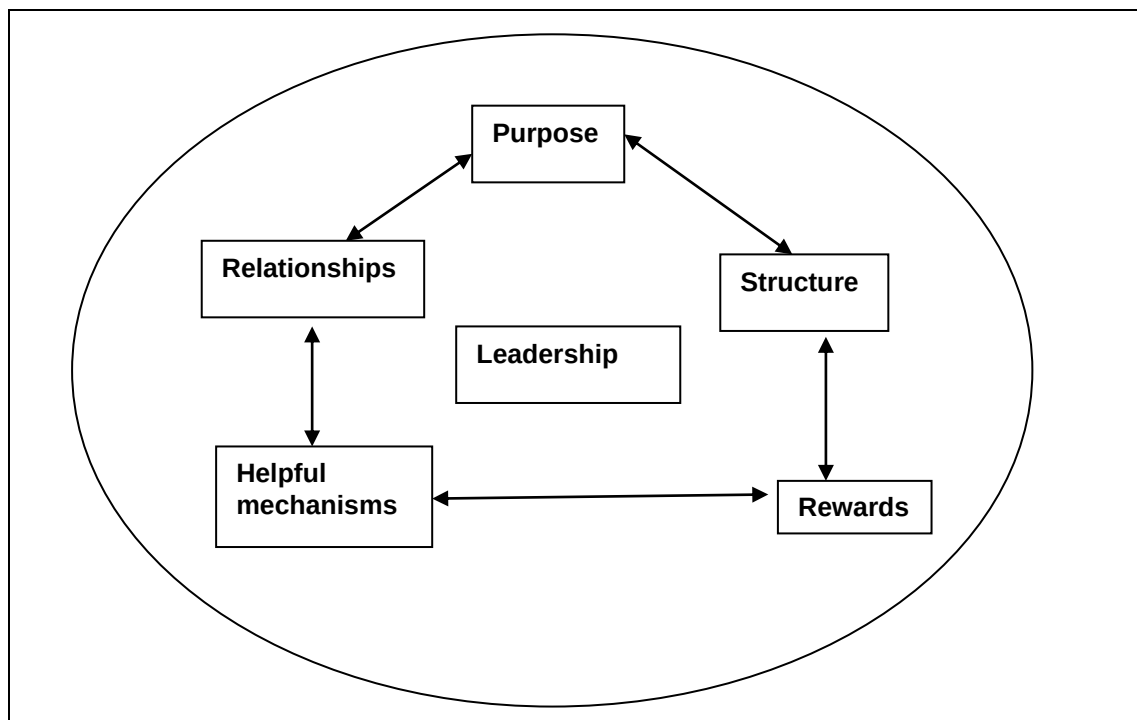
Key aspects of an open systems model are inputs, transformations, and outputs. Closed systems have rigid and impenetrable boundaries. Conversely open systems interact with their environment. Information used to control the future functioning of the system is called feedback (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

Alignment is a crucial factor in open systems. The overall effectiveness of a system is the extent to which the different aspects are aligned to each other. Diagnosis in this context is a search for the misfits in the system (Cummings & Worley, 2001). This is precisely what this research is about. This study will use the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' as a diagnosis model. However, other prominent diagnosis models will be examined first.

There are a number of models, which stand out in the literature. Cummings & Worley (2001) have developed a diagnosis model. The five major design components are strategy, technology, structure, measurement systems, and human resources systems which is similar to the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'. The crucial aspect in this model is the alignment of these five design components to each other and to the environment. According to Cummings & Worley (2001), organisation effectiveness will be high when there is good alignment.

Weisbord (1989) has developed a six-box model, which focuses on purpose, relationships, leadership, structure, helpful mechanisms and rewards. Figure 5 demonstrates the link between the six boxes. A key notion in this model is the gap between the formal dimensions of the organisation (e.g. the structure) and its informal policies (e.g. how authority is exercised). The model indicates that the larger the gap, the more ineffective the organisation. This model is useful for uncomplicated problems or when a speedy service is required (Burke, 1987).

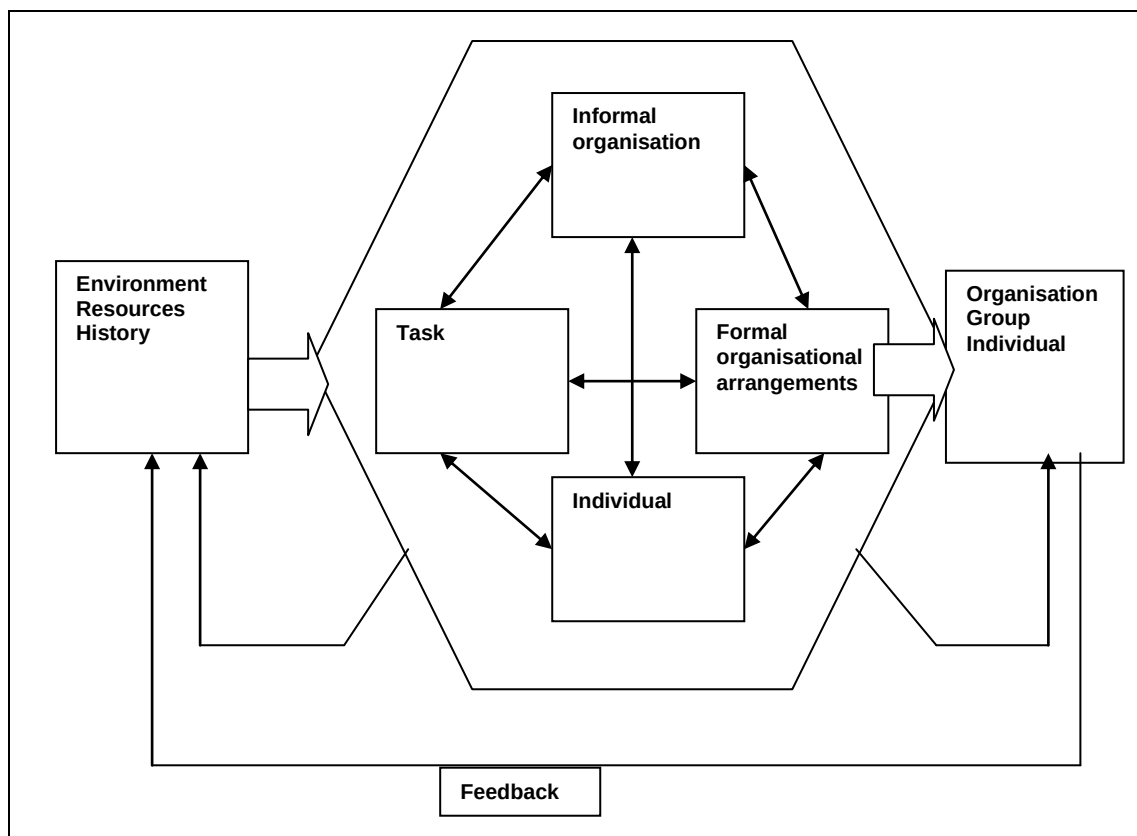
Figure 5: Six-Box Organisational Model



Source: Weisbord (1989: 169).

Nadler & Tushman (1980) have developed a congruence model, which allows for inputs, a transformation process and outputs. This model is illustrated in Figure 6. Their focus is on the relationship between the organisation and the environment. This is a major weakness of the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' where the relationship with the environment is neglected. The strategy of the organisation is given prominence. The inputs i.e. strategy, environment, history and resources define how people behave in the organisation (Burke, 1987). Once again, effectiveness is determined by how well the organisation's performance aligns with its strategy. Nadler & Tushman (1980) emphasise the term 'fit', which is the measure of congruence between the different parts. According to Nadler & Tushman (1980), the better the fit, the more effective the organisation will be.

Figure 6: Congruence Model



Source: Nadler & Tushman (1980: 274).

Kotter (1980) has developed an integrative model of organisational dynamics. This model focuses on both internal and external alignment. It offers short-term, medium term and long term perspectives. Changes to any one part of the system will cause changes to other parts of the system (Hayes, 2002).

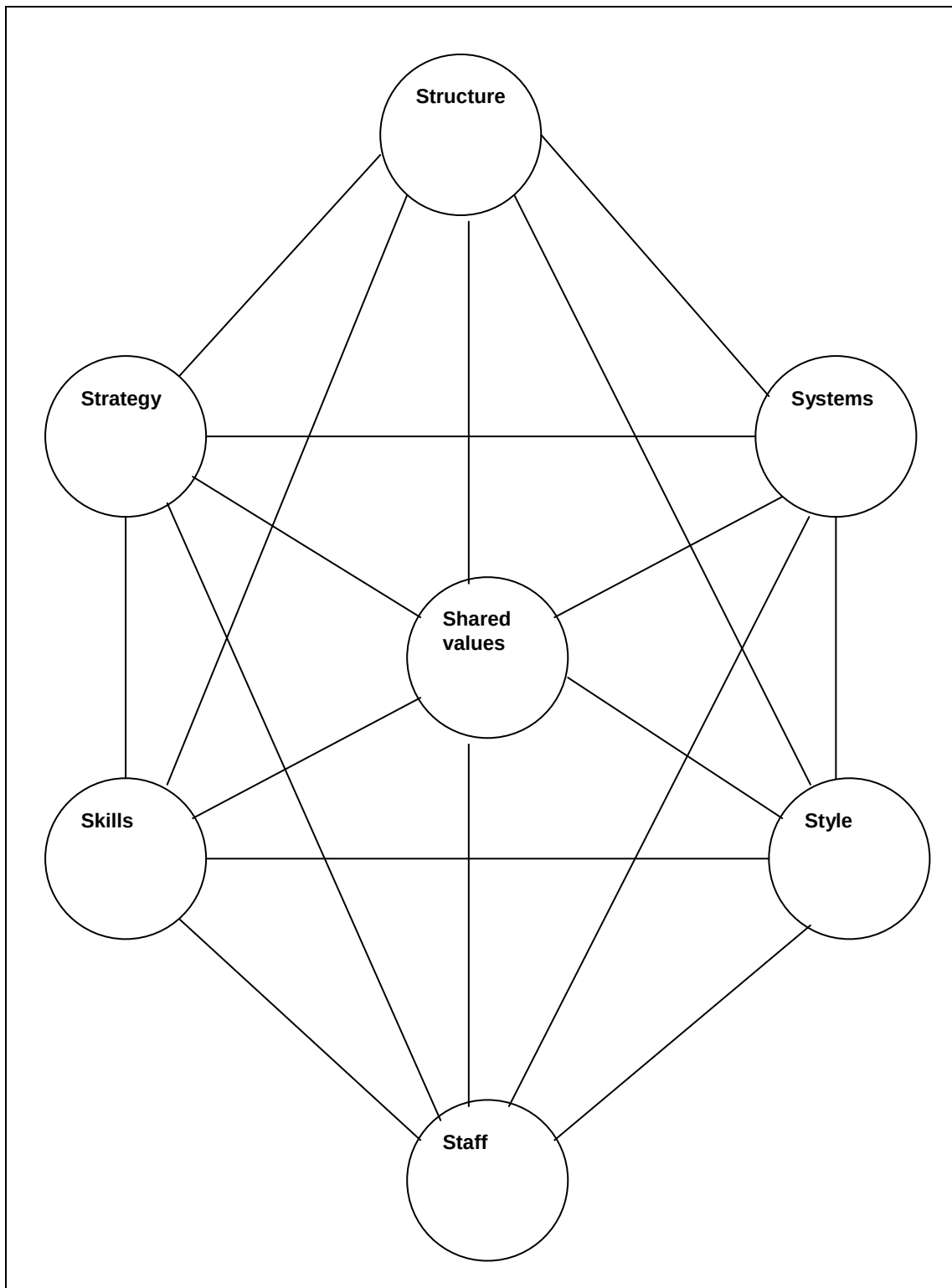
Burke & Litwin (1992) have developed a causal model of organisational performance and change. The model deals with both transformational and transactional change.

2.7 The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’

The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ is a model that is in some respects similar to these other models. The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ focuses on structure, skills, systems, strategy, staff, style, and shared values (Waterman *et al*, 1980; Pascale & Athos, 1981; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Superordinate goals was later changed to shared values (Peters & Waterman, 1982). The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ dovetails quite well with organisation development. According to Beer (cited in French *et al*, 1989: 13), the aim of organisation development is to enhance “the congruence between organizational structure, processes, strategy, people, and culture”.

The ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ first appeared in the Waterman *et al* (1980) article. It then appeared in a book by Pascale & Athos (1981) that looked at Japanese Management. It was given a serious boost by appearing in the top-selling book “In Search of Excellence” (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Pascale adapted some features of the model in a later book (Pascale, 1990; Chris Fox Inc., 2003). However, it was the McKinsey stamp of approval that saw this framework spread rapidly around the globe. The alliteration effect of the seven S’s has helped the popularity of this tool. Others have also used this alliteration effect: Five P’s for Strategy (Mintzberg, 1992); Seven R’s of Self-Esteem (Sethi, 1997). Figure 7 provides a diagram of the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’.

Figure 7: The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'



Source: Peters & Waterman (1982: 10).

The framework gives a major impetus to including the traditionally 'soft' issues. According to Peters & Waterman (1982: 11):

What our framework has really done is to remind the world of professional managers that 'soft is hard.' It has enabled us to say, in effect, all that stuff you have been dismissing for so long as the intractable, irrational, intuitive, informal organization can be managed.

Chandler's (1962) classic study argued persuasively that structure needed to be consistent with strategy for successful organisations. However 20 years later a bit of a quagmire had developed. The 'McKinsey Seven-S framework' lifted the debate out of the strategy-structure quagmire in the 1980s (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Chandler's idea that structure followed strategy was becoming a circular argument (Peters & Waterman, 1982). When a new person occupies a post, he/she was unlikely to act in exactly the same way as the predecessor. Structure could not provide all the answers and so the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' was adopted where seven interdependent variables had to be treated (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Skills refer to those things that the company does particularly well e.g. Apple is skilled at marketing computers well. Skills are always listed last because it is the dependent variable. Skills are the derivative of the other six S's (Peters, 1992; Pascale, 1990).

The focus of this model is on internal alignment. As this is a systems model, if any one of the seven S's is out of alignment, this will cause poor performance. French & Bell (1995: 6) capture this slightly differently: "When structure, strategy and culture and processes are not aligned, performance suffers". Alignment is the amount of "congruence or consistency within an agency's culture: how well do the various systems, structures, messages (both spoken and unspoken), and styles support and reinforce each other on an everyday basis" (Linden cited in Fardink, 2003: 1). Alignment is a key process in the above-mentioned diagnosis models.

This study will analyse the JED through the lens of the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'. Beck (1994) has done a similar study by applying the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' successfully to the field of visual arts.

2.8 Organisation Development in the Public Sector

The education department falls within the public sector. Hence it is necessary to understand the dynamics and nuances of the public sector before proceeding to analyse the education department. Organisation development in the public sector needs to be understood in terms of a bureaucratic system, which has its own processes and challenges (Golembieski, 1989). According to Bryson (1995: 3), public organisations face “difficult challenges in the years ahead. Upheaval and change surround them”. The public sector has not been exempt from the massive changes occurring in society. According to Cummings & Worley (2001: 499): “Public demand for less government and lowered deficits forced public sector agencies to streamline operations and deliver more for less.”

There are special characteristics facing organisational development in public organisations. Golembieski (1989: 541) asserts that a phenomenon of “multiple access to multiple authoritative decision makers” exists. There also exists a greater variety of people with a greater variety of interests and values. In addition, public sector personnel show a tendency to stress procedural regularity and caution (Golembieski, 1989).

There is less freedom to make organisational changes in the public sector. In corporations, usually a few people make decisions on change which can be justified if they believe that the shareholders will benefit. By contrast, in the public sector, decision making involves more consensus with a wide variety of groups (Becker, George, Goolsby, & Grissom, 2001). There is also the problem of re-election: “Government leaders who wish to be re-elected or reappointed may prefer to preserve the status quo rather than plant seeds of change that might take years to bear fruit” (Becker *et al*, 2001: 2).

British Telecom underwent a number of changes including privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation. The Western London District of British Telecom used organisation development to help staff to adapt to these changes (Price & Murphy, 1993). There were a number of concerns with the prevailing organisation culture which seem to be typical of many public sector organisations:

- A public service orientation rather than a business orientation towards the customer with insufficient distinction made between sectors of the market.
- Little or no identification with the business aims as newly expressed, among staff generally.
- A punitive management style encouraging subordinates to 'keep the lid on the dustbin'.
- Extensive indulgence in blame laying – it was always 'the other division's fault.'
- Alienation of junior management – 'we are just the meat in the sandwich'.

Price & Murphy (1993: 158-159)

This research is based on a public sector organisation. Hence it is necessary at times to make adjustments to relevant criteria. The eight attributes of excellence developed by Peters & Waterman (1982) have been adapted in Table 2 to fit public organisations (Sipel cited in Bryson, 1995). As can be seen in Table 2, there are only a few criteria differences.

The education system is part of the public sector. Curriculum delivery occurs in the context of a huge bureaucracy. Provincial departments in general, and the GDE in particular, have been "plagued by limited management capacity in both competence as well as adequate quantity" (Waspe, 2002: 5). Curriculum delivery occurs through the public sector, which has its own administrative systems and procedures. Any effective delivery of curriculum would have to not only understand these public sector procedures but also negotiate them properly in order to deliver curriculum to educators (Waspe, 2002).

Table 2: Comparison between Public and Private Sector Excellence Criteria

Local government excellence criteria	Peters & Waterman criteria	Criteria differences	Public sector special conditions making “excellence” attainment difficult
1. Action orientation	A bias for action	None	Laws making it difficult for local government to act quickly. Low inclination to take risks. Limited resources
2. Closeness to citizens	Close to the customer	Customer becomes citizen	Multiplicity of public sector “publics”. Captive consumers
3. Autonomy and entrepreneurship	Autonomy and entrepreneurship	None	Reluctance by local government to “market” or take risks
4. Employee orientation	Productivity through people	None	People-oriented programs sometimes perceived as a waste of taxpayers’ money
5. Values	Hands-on, value driven	None	Traditional values that are hard to change
6. Mission, goals and competence	Stick to the knitting	Expansion to include mission and goals	Difficulty of determining mission and goals. Difficulty of measuring results
7. Structure	Simple form, lean staff	Combination of “simple form and loose-tight properties	Some local governments with complex structures written into basic law
8. Political relationships	Simultaneous loose-tight properties	New local government criterion	Frequent changes in key actors. Perceptions that roles of policy makers and administrators are different and/or conflicting

Source: Sipel (cited in Bryson, 1995: 294).

Because the education system is part of the public sector, it needs to be understood in this context. The focus now moves to organisation development in education.

2.9 Organisation Development in Education

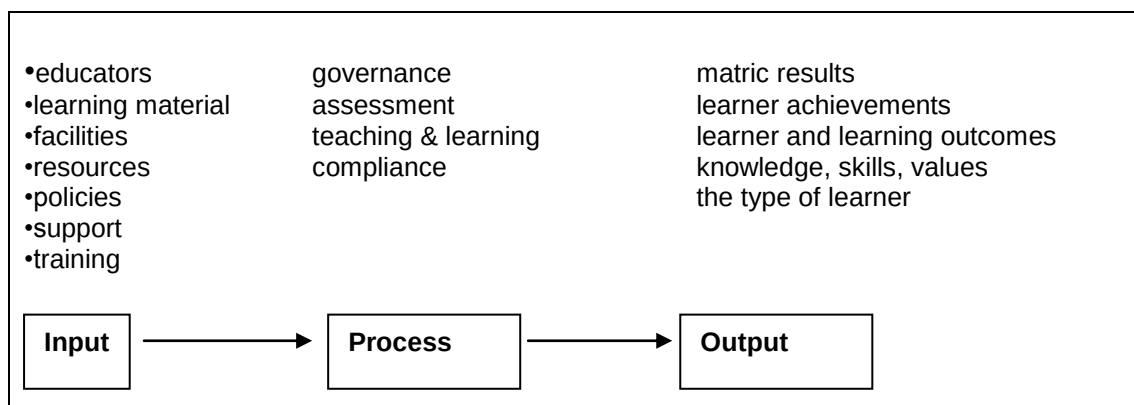
Organisation development has been applied to a range of different areas. Organisation development has also been applied to the education system. The first systematic effort on organisation development in education was carried out in the 1960s by Miles, who worked with a school district near New York City and one near Pittsburgh (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). Generally organisation development was slow to take off in education because conditions seemed to be quite different to business organisations. However, organisation development in schools has grown steadily since those small beginnings (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). Schmuck & Miles (1971) brought out a classic titled “Organisation Development in Schools”. Public schools started

using group training and survey feedback (Schmuck & Miles, 1971). Cummings & Worley (2001), contextualise the early projects that took place in suburban middle-class schools where the tensions of an urban environment, ethnic differences and socio-economic differences were not pronounced.

One of the key reasons for having organisation development in education is that educational organisations need to achieve a “sustained capacity for solving their own problems” (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994: 13-14). Another key reason, according to Schmuck & Runkel (1994), is that many efforts at educational reform have failed precisely because of lack of attention to the organisational context in which the reforms were attempted. As far back as the 1970s, Schmuck & Miles (1971) pleaded for organisation development practitioners to work within districts. Owens (cited in van der Westhuizen, 2002: 243) even goes so far to say that organisation development is the “principal process involved in the self-renewal of school districts and schools”.

In line with organisation development’s approach to systems, Waspe (2002) proposes a systems model. This model is presented in Figure 8. The model is divided into inputs (teachers, learning support materials), processes (teaching and learning, governance) and outputs (matric results, learner achievements). He argues that most of our thinking goes into inputs and processes while outputs are not often considered. He suggests that we need to see learner achievement as our primary output (Waspe, 2002).

This is more easily done with the matric results because they are standardised. There are very few standardised measures for other grades besides matric. Because there is virtually no other public measure of educational outputs, there is an obsession with matric results. The process passes through an annual ritual of the release of results and the concomitant blaming on various factors for disappointing results (Waspe, 2002).

Figure 8: A Systems Model in Education

Source: Waspe (2002: 3).

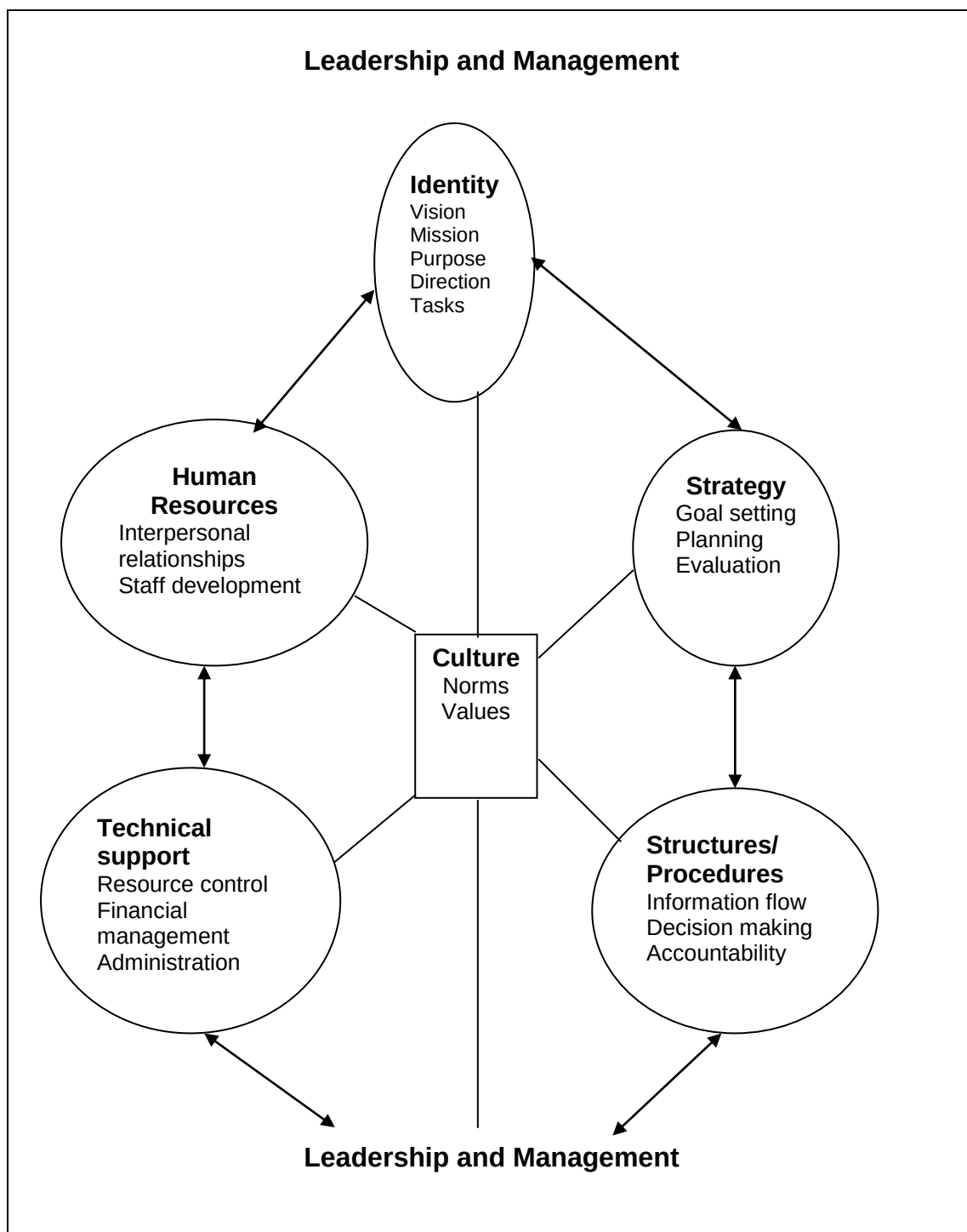
Davidoff & Lazarus (1997) are the major proponents of organisational development in education in South Africa. Their book titled “The Learning School: An Organisation Development Approach” makes an important contribution to the debate around effective schools. They argue that the school needs to primarily be seen as an organisation. According to Davidoff & Lazarus (1997: xvi):

Learning to think organisationally, to understand the way in which schools work, and to enable them to work optimally, where all the various interdependent aspects of school life weave together, are the challenge of organisation development interventions.

Davidoff & Lazarus (1997) have proposed a model to understand the organisational dynamics of schools, which is illustrated in Figure 9. This model deals with the school first and foremost as an organisation. They highlight issues such as strategy, structure, culture, human resources, identity and technical support as being crucial to making schools effective places of learning.

The aspects of their model closely resemble many of the previous organisation development models. While they recognise that many changes are needed in education i.e. training of educators, developing new teaching methodologies, however all these changes occur in the context of the whole school environment which will either constrain or enable individual educators to make these changes (Davidoff & Lazarus, 1997).

Figure 9: Elements of Organisational Life



Source: Davidoff & Lazarus (1977: 18).

Culture is placed at the centre because of its importance. According to Davidoff & Lazarus (1997), change strategies won't be effective if the culture of the school is not acknowledged and then transformed.

Calaca (1999) has undertaken research in South Africa on organisation development in education. She develops a model, which combines the principles of a learning organisation with the principles of Catholic Whole School Renewal. Calaca (1999) finds much common ground in these two distinctive approaches around purpose, process and principles. Calaca (1999) calls for further research on organisation development in education in South Africa.

There are two views on applying organisation development to education. On the one hand, educators see schools as unique and distinct from other organisational types. On the other hand, some see schools as normal bureaucratic systems (Spittler, 2001). According to Spittler (2001), there is truth in both of these views. Organisation development techniques can be used in schools on condition that they are refocused. For example, public schools have an almost monopoly status and lack serious competition (Spittler, 2001). There are a number of implications for organisation development in schools:

- Schools have highly developed administrative structures.
- Tasks performed by schools are uncertain e.g. the number of immigrants can change dramatically from year to year.
- Teachers committed to their work will receive greater intrinsic rewards if task-related issues are resolved properly.
- Although schools appear to be bureaucratic systems, they are often underorganised systems e.g. communication between educators is fragmented (Spittler, 2001).

Although the challenge for school reform is acknowledged, Spittler (2001: 600) argues that it is difficult to bring about this reform:

The loose coupling of various aspects of schools and the isolated functioning of teachers conspire against a systemic approach to change. Schools do not have a tradition of strategy formulation and goal setting, nor are accountability and performance management systems well developed or accepted there.

According to Davidoff & Lazarus (1997), organisation development is also referred to as whole school development. This approach emphasises improving the whole school and not just parts of it. South Africa has introduced an Office for Standards in Education. This body was brought into being with the Policy on Whole School Evaluation and is responsible for assessing standards in schools (Republic of South Africa, 2001). Generally its approach is supportive and developmental as opposed to punitive and judgemental. Whole School Evaluation demonstrates the need for all schools “to look continuously for ways of improving, and the commitment of Government to provide development programmes designed to supplement their efforts” (Republic of South Africa, 2001: 10).

At the heart of various school reform strategies is the question of fit. Success and failure depends on the fit between school type and reform model. According to Slavin (1998), dysfunctional schools would require the breaking up of existing schools. Average schools would require comprehensive and subject specific models (prescriptive models with learner support material, teacher manuals). Lastly, high capacity schools lend themselves to organisation development (school development planning, critical friends, collaborative management) (Slavin, 1998).

The GDE has developed a strategy for dealing with dysfunctional schools through the Education Action Zones strategy. Fleisch (2002a: 114) argues that there has been a shift from “consultation and empowerment, stakeholder participation and bottom-up reform, school development plans and democratic governance to high-stakes directive government intervention in targeted dysfunctional schools”.

2.10 The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' Applied to the GDE

2.10.1 Introduction

There has been a substantial amount written on the GDE, which pertains to this research. The JED is located in the GDE. This forms an essential part of the context in which the JED operates. This research will focus on just one district. However the patterns that occur in the larger provincial organisation will impact on a district and is thus pertinent to this research. The literature on the GDE has been grouped under the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'. The analysis begins with the 'hard' S's and proceeds to the 'soft' S's.

2.10.2 Systems

There are four key systems to consider in the GDE i.e. business process systems, communication systems, school visit systems and workshop systems.

a) Business Process Systems

Business process systems can be applied to curriculum delivery. PricewaterhouseCoopers (2000b) have designed an effective business process model of curriculum delivery. Such a business process system has helped the GDE to see that a range of counterproductive structures was operating. Duplicating structures and processes need to be removed from the system. Huge bureaucracies have a tendency to keep growing and growing without necessarily adding value to the process (Sadie, 2001).

The flowchart designed by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2000b) enables different role players to locate themselves in the overall process. The benefit of a flowchart is that it takes the confusion out of the process and reduces a complex system to its essential processes. The flow of movement

demonstrates the value adding process (Keller & Meinhardt, 1994). A flowchart is not a hierarchical functional system detailing who falls under whom. Instead it shows the business process as it moves through the different stages. Bottlenecks can easily develop in a flowchart. If learning support materials are not delivered, this can seriously hamper the smooth delivery of curriculum. If district officials fail to provide the necessary support to educators, curriculum delivery can be seriously compromised (Sadie, 2001).

b) Communication Systems

Communication is vital in implementing curriculum. The GDE relies on circulars and memoranda to convey its policies to schools. These circulars and memoranda are distributed through district offices to schools.

It is impossible to have curriculum support without a proper curriculum management information system. The non-existence of electronic information systems makes monitoring schools impossible (Taylor *et al*, 2003). There is very little information on which to base decisions. Reports are kept haphazardly and filing systems are often nonexistent or in total disarray. Schools are seldom given any feedback except of a most cursory type. Districts are also seldom given any feedback by the provincial department (Accenture, 2002).

The GDE has thrown a lot of energy and resources into the Gauteng Online Project which aims to put 25 computers into every school. There are great expectations which, according to the GDE (2003c: 21) will “revolutionize teaching and learning, business processes and communication”. However it is still too early to see the results of this ambitious project.

Effective communication is one of the essential systems in successful organisations today. Generally, communication can be used for control, motivation, emotional expression and information (Robbins, 1998). Direction

of communication is an important dimension. It is essential to balance downward communication with upward communication. Lateral communication is another essential direction of communication. According to Robbins (1998: 316): "Strict adherence to the formal vertical structure for all communications can impede the efficient and accurate transfer of information." Face-to-face communication helps particularly in times of uncertainty and change such as restructuring. This helps staff to see managers as "living, breathing people who understand the needs and concerns of the workers" (Robbins, 1998: 327).

c) School Visit Systems

One of the key systems operating in the district is school visits. Curriculum support can be effectively provided to educators through school visits. These can be done as an individual, as a unit or as a matrix team (people from different units).

The South African Democratic Teachers Union has stated that it is opposed to class visits (South African Democratic Teachers Union, 2002). There has been an ongoing conflict with this union around class visits. Some educators have accused district officials of trying to reintroduce the type of inspections that occurred in the old departments (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002b).

There seems to be no pattern of school visits. Some schools can receive multiple visits while others may not have seen a district official in months. There seems to be little follow-up to what is discovered in schools. Many of the Institutional Development and Support (IDS) officials have been accused of visiting the school only to have tea and cake with the principal without adding any value. They have also been accused of simply being postmen by delivering mail to schools (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002b).

A key aspect of monitoring is the use of curriculum monitoring instruments. These monitoring instruments would need to capture both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Not only do better monitoring instruments need to be

developed but also district facilitators need to be trained on using these instruments properly. There have been cases where provincial department and district facilitators have come to widely divergent views on a particular school's implementation of C2005. This would necessitate some degree of quality assurance over district curriculum monitoring (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002b). The provincial department has acknowledged that there is no standardised set of curriculum monitoring instruments (Tloubatla, 2003).

d) Workshop Systems

Workshops are a key system in the district. A few years ago district officials were much more hands-on in training educators. The trend in the GDE in the past few years has been to acquire the services of outside service providers to provide training. This could result in the role of district officials being reduced to "managers of tenders and nothing else" (Prew, 2002: 4). While this may help to bring in outside expertise which is essential, the unintended side effect could be that district officials stop doing any training. District officials have become dependent on service providers to run workshops. Part of the reason why some district officials were appointed was precisely because of their experience and expertise in a particular field. The idea was that the district officials would transfer some of these skills to educators in schools. A major decision was taken to hand over the training of educators on C2005 over to the Higher Education Institutes (Khulisa & CEPD, 2003b). The particular cohort of educators was trained in the year preceding the planned implementation of C2005 for their grade. However, this was not intended to stop district officials from training *per se*.

Education receives the lion's share of the Gauteng provincial budget. For the 2003/4 financial year, the GDE received R7 843 093 000 from the province and a further R1 005 747 000 in conditional grants from the DoE (GDE, 2003d). A large chunk of the budget goes into workshops of one sort or another, it is therefore imperative that the system of workshops be improved.

2.10.3 Structures

Organisational structures are crucial to curriculum delivery. The GDE has been through a major restructuring process in order to deliver a better service to schools. PriceWaterhouseCoopers were brought in and developed improved structures (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2000a; 2000b). There has been ongoing advice from consultants in improving GDEs structures (Accenture, 2002). The organisational model favoured by these consultants, is criticised by de Clerq (2002b: 97) as a “rational cost efficient managerial approach to change which clashes with the nature and politics of the GDE and its values and ethos of social justice and redress”.

The restructuring process compromised the ability of district offices to provide support to grade 4 and 8 educators in 2001 (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002a). The confusion generated by the restructuring process, is well captured: “district offices have been very vocal in expressing their apparent confusion as to their actual roles and responsibilities in relation to schools and provincial department divisions” (Waspé & Swartz, 2001: 5). The new organogram was implemented in February 2001. That organogram has undergone further modifications, known as the ‘tweaked organogram’, which was implemented in 2003. This was inevitable, according to the GDE (2003c: 21), “in view of the establishment of the Gauteng Shared Services Centre (GSSC).”

The unit that has the most responsibility for curriculum delivery is the LPFDS. It is generally argued that the LPFDS section suffered from a lack of senior posts in the organogram in February 2001 (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002b). This was slightly corrected in the 2003 ‘tweaked organogram’. Others have called for more creative internal district reorganisation to meet the unique challenges occurring in each district. The units at provincial department are mirrored at district level. This has resulted in most of the direction coming from provincial department directorates with districts not exercising much leadership except in basic managerial functions (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002b).

Patel (2001) has developed a strong case for more autonomous districts. Another way of putting this is decentralisation. Decentralisation or centralisation is a key structural choice for any organisation. The GDE has swung rapidly between decentralisation and centralisation:

The system went too quickly and without sufficient preparation into a decentralisation mode with the wrong assumption that it will promote greater efficiency and democracy. It then reacted by re-centralising power but in an inappropriate way that might suffocate the positive energies and commitment to build an effective, professional, accountable and customer-oriented administration.

de Clerq (2000: 25)

Malcolm (1999) provides three organisational models for analysing districts i.e. bureaucratic, market-led and community approaches. The bureaucratic model is a controlling one passing down policies and conducting inspections. In the market-led model, the district's role is limited mostly to co-ordination and providing information. The community model lies somewhere between these two. It would seem that the GDE fits the bureaucratic model most closely.

According to de Clerq (2002b: 98), the GDE should stop looking for the ideal structure and instead invest its energy on an:

effective human and financial resources development strategy to prioritise, manage and collaborate effectively with various partners to mediate and improve the policy development process and service delivery.

de Clerq (2002b: 98)

2.10.4 Strategy

The GDEs major strategy is the “allocation of resources based on poverty and need” (GDE, 2003c: 21). There are a number of shortcomings in the GDEs approach to strategy (Fraser, 1997). The GDE uses a balanced scorecard to

capture its strategy, which was recommended by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2002a). The GDE renamed the balanced scorecard as the integrated scorecard. The integrated scorecard is uniform across all districts. The introduction of new public managerialist tools and systems such as operational plans, performance indicators, programme and matrix management without sufficient support and training in these tools has led to heightened levels of stress (Khulisa & CEPD, 2002a). These strategic management tools are criticised by de Clerq (2002b: 97):

These tools were based on rudimentary management information systems based on easily measurable outputs which were often not valid diagnostic tools to understand how to correct and improve performance.

The GDEs swing to performance-based accountability does not necessarily work. Elmore argues that:

the experience worldwide is that performance accountability does not work for average or low-performing institutions because the latter need, above all, to have access to appropriate sources of support and capacity building.

(cited in de Clerq, 2002a: 117)

Fleisch (2002b: 22) stresses that strategy for districts is not adequately handled:

While the inclination is often to focus on tangible components such as structure, skills, systems and staff, real issues related to strategy are often neglected. The overarching strategic thinking around districts is often fuzzy and even contradictory.

It becomes very difficult for districts to do proper strategising and planning. Head-office calls districts continually to implement its plans. Head-office suffers from the same problem. Their plans are always disrupted by “unexpected last-minute new priorities from the national DoE or politicians” (de Clerq, 2002a). Bryson (1995) argues that strategy in public organisations cannot rely on a system of formal rationality. Instead he argues that public

organisations need to adopt a system of political rationality. Public organisations cannot move simply from goals, policies and programmes to actions to achieve these goals. Political rationality involves conflict and this needs to be built into the system. According to Bryson (1995, 12), “every key decision maker in a large public or nonprofit organisation is, in effect, a political decision maker”.

2.10.5 Staff

A district is a complex phenomenon. A disparate grouping of people are thrown together each with their own background, with a wide variety of skills and approaches to education. These staff have to work together to provide effective curriculum delivery.

There is a “high level of attrition particularly at middle management level” (GDE, 2003c: 21). The high level of mobility could create a disjuncture as district officials pursue promotion opportunities both within the department and outside of it. Career progression in the LPFDS is limited. There is only one co-ordinator post in the LPFDS unit to aspire to. With approximately thirty people in the unit and only one promotion possibility, district officials have looked to other units, which are not curriculum based. This leads to a loss of curriculum skills whereby people take other posts simply because they are at a higher level. There is thus a high turnover of staff (JED, 2002).

A simple perusal through the original staff list indicates that 27 out of 49 curriculum officials have left the district since its inception in February 2001 (GDE, 2001b). This does not include officials who have left the curriculum subdirectorates to join other subdirectorates in the district. This is a turnover of 55 percent, which is by all accounts, a substantial turnover. A substantial number of new district officials are then recruited after a long delay and are expected to implement programmes that they have little understanding of (JED, 2002). There is a shortage of LPFDS staff and expertise. Some learning

areas are without facilitators, which results in other facilitators having to 'baby-sit' learning areas without the required knowledge and skills (JED, 2002).

Rowney (2002) bemoans the lack of a clear human resources strategy with respect to mathematics and science teachers in the GDE. Mathematics and science teachers are a very scarce commodity. According to Taylor & Cosenza (cited in Rowney, 2002: 95-96), the challenge is now to develop an "integrated human resource strategy as well as a marketing strategy to promote the status of the profession, to highlight the remuneration and benefits and to select the right candidates in the first place". This finding on mathematics and science teachers can logically be extended to district curriculum facilitators as well. According to de Clerq (2002a 120), the GDE needs to recruit "high calibre leadership and identify the appropriate professional development strategies". The GDE needs to manage its human resources holistically, if it wants to "attract and retain adequately skilled staff, and maximise its return on human capital" (Rowney, 2002: 98).

The Performance Management and Development Scheme was only introduced into the GDE in 2003 (Education Labour Relations Council, 2002). District officials suffer from dual accountability problems. On the one hand, they are accountable to their district superiors. On the other hand, they are also accountable to their counterparts at head-office (de Clerq, 2002a). This creates confusion in the mind of the district officials. How does a district manager do a performance appraisal when somebody else at head-office is *de facto* managing your staff? This has been a comfortable position for managers at the district level, in that many of their responsibilities are in fact carried out by head-office staff.

There is a lack of detailed job descriptions, which allows for a great deal of flexibility and looseness. Job descriptions have been under discussion for more than two years. They have yet to be finalised (CEPD, 2002). There is also very little career pathing done for district curriculum officials. The facilitators themselves need a great degree of training and professional development in order to fulfil their roles satisfactorily (de Clerq, 2002b). There

is a need for a proper human resource development strategy for district facilitators in order to provide proper curriculum support to schools, which will incorporate attraction, retention and motivation strategies.

2.10.6 Style

Style refers to management style. There is concern about management style at the highest levels of the GDE:

If we cannot ensure even a basic level of good service at our schools, then we have failed dismally as departmental officials. We occupy high positions, but do not do justice to this authority we have.

PeTje (2003:3)

Waspe (2002: 5) elaborates further on the weaknesses in the GDEs management style:

Management with minimal experience at managing large bureaucratic institutions; inadequate emphasis on the development of business processes and systems; appointment and redeployment exercises (human resource management) which has not prioritised suitability for the functions or the level of human capacity and expertise needed.

This has had a negative effect on curriculum delivery to educators. The leadership spent more time on crisis management and conflict resolution than on making the bureaucratic system work (de Clerq, 2001a). This led to multiple tensions between provincial department, districts and schools “with each blaming the other for the policy overload, weak implementation capacity and resources, and little quality delivery” (de Clerq, 2001a: 46-47).

Leadership is the key to management style as reflected in the writings of some of the most prominent authors on business (Bennis, Spreitzer & Cummings, 2001). It is acknowledged that there is a huge debate on the difference between leadership and management, however there is substantial overlap in these terms (Law & Glover, 2000). Both strong leadership and

strong management are necessary for organisational effectiveness. However, according to Kotter (cited in Robbins, 1998: 347), most organisations today are “underled and overmanaged”. Furthermore, Kotter (cited in Robbins, 1998: 347) argues that we need to focus more on leadership in organisations because “the people in charge today are too concerned with keeping things on time and on budget and with doing what was done yesterday, only with doing it 5 percent better”.

Good managers generally have a wide range on strategies. According to Law & Glover (2000: 8): “They know how and when to utilize professional judgement, when to ‘push’, when to ‘support’ and when to give others opportunities to lead.” Using the right strategy at the right time is an essential skill for managers.

One of the key characteristics of a good leader is the ability to match words with actions. The old adage that actions speak louder than words is particularly true here. This is well captured by Robbins (1998: 326): “When the implicit messages that managers send contradict the official messages as conveyed in formal communications, the managers lose credibility with employees.” There is a great variety of management capacity and skills between districts which to a large extent reflects the “leadership style of the District Director” (Mc Lennan, 2000: 288).

2.10.7 Shared Values

The GDEs stated shared values are captured in the vision statement (GDE, 2003b). These are: smart service delivery of quality public education; at the cutting edge of curriculum delivery; access to quality lifelong learning opportunities; principles of transformation, equity, redress and *ubuntu*. The GDE has developed a charter of values, although this is not widely known (GDE, 2003c). However, according to de Clerq (2001a), bureaucratic values seem to dominate. Because reward systems are non-existent, a culture of poor work ethics can set in (de Clerq, 2001a).

Another way of understanding shared values is to analyse the organisation's culture. There has been renewed interest in the role of culture in the education system (Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1999). Poppleton (1997), in particular, has done in-depth research into the organisational culture of the GDE. One of the most prolific writers on culture is Schein (1992). He is against superficial understandings of culture. Instead, Schein (1992: 4) argues that one needs to get at the "hidden and complex aspects" of organisations. The culture of a group is defined as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Schein (1992: 12)

There has been a resurgence in the role of organisation culture (Cummings & Worley, 2001). As organisations change design, there will be more internal competition between different business units. Job titles, formal structures and bureaucratic procedures will hold less sway (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). There is a growing recognition that "values, culture and shared goals are replacing formal structures as the glue that holds organisations together" (Nadler & Tushman, 1999: 58). However, there is still widespread confusion as to what culture actually entails. Cummings & Worley (2001) break culture down into four major elements:

- Artefacts - These are visible symbols of the deeper levels of culture. E.g. observable behaviour of members, structures, systems, procedures and rules.
- Norms – These are the unwritten rules of behaviour.
- Values – These indicate what is important in the organisation and what deserves their attention.
- Basic Assumptions – These are at the deepest level of cultural awareness and are nonconfrontable and nondebatable.

Many efforts at transforming organisations have failed because of a failure to understand the organisation's culture. For example, attempts to implement a new business strategy can fail because a company's culture does not fit with the new business strategy (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

Schein (1992) argues for a deeper understanding of culture where problems which were perceived to be communication failures or lack of teamwork are in essence cultural problems. For Schein (1992), culture can be a serious source of resistance in organisation development. However, because this is poorly understood, it can be frustrating "when so much effort on the part of change agents yields so little change" (Schein, 1992: xiv).

Schein (1992) asserts that the most important role of a leader is the creation and management of culture. He puts this quite strongly: "One of the most decisive functions of leadership is the creation, the management and sometimes even the destruction of culture" (Schein, 1992: 5).

2.10.8 Skills

As the district does not deliver a product but provides a service, the skills level of its staff is paramount. Of late, the GDE has become concerned with its ability to meet the expectations of the public. A number of surveys have been commissioned to test the public's perception of the GDEs ability (Accenture, 2002; Progressus Research and Development Consultancy, 2002).

When one is dealing with a service as opposed to a product, it is vital that the service meets acceptable standards. There is a widespread perception in the media that public service standards are not very high. According to Pillay (2003: 18), who was previously a chief director in the post-94 government, "ultimately the public suffers in terms of poorly designed policies, poor implementation and poor service delivery".

At the heart of the process is the skills level of district officials in supporting educators. There is an assumption that district officials have more skills than educators. However recruitment practices may not ensure this. The best educators in schools, for a range of reasons, do not often work in the district office. This creates a disjuncture where the district official doing the support work is not necessarily accorded respect by his/her colleagues at school level.

De Clerq (2002a) argues convincingly that the key to many of the GDEs problems is a lack of human and social capacity. Since people were allowed to choose their own jobs in the 2001 restructuring, this ended up with people being mismatched in jobs. Schools and educators experienced this mismatch, which led to a decrease in the legitimacy and authority of district officials whose performance “was seriously lacking because of their lack of experience and expertise” (de Clerq, 2002a).

There is hardly any system of quality assurance. To a large extent the ability of districts to deliver a quality service depends on the guidance, training and support that they receive from the provincial department. Khulisa & CEPD (2002b) assert that districts have been inadequate in their monitoring and support work because the provincial department has not provided sufficient monitoring, guidance and co-ordination.

The GDE recognises that the “competence of personnel requires great development and is the major challenge of the department” (GDE, 2003c: 21). The GDE has a skills development plan which is in line with the Human Resources Development strategic framework of the Gauteng Province (GDE, 2003c). According to de Clerq (2002a), the GDE has put a lot of effort into trying to empower district and head-office officials. However, this has had little effect because such programmes were poorly carried out:

Not only were these training programmes poorly conceptualised, but they never built in or were accompanied by systemic quality assurance and accountability mechanisms. There were no sufficiently sophisticated and comprehensive mechanisms by which to monitor and evaluate the

training approach, content and pedagogical methodology as well as the training impact on trainees' work performance.

de Clerq (2002a: 120)

2.11 Conclusion

Organisational effectiveness has been defined and located in the broader organisation theory debates. The culture-excellence and Japanese organisational approaches have been contrasted. The literature on organisation development and change management has been extensively reviewed to provide the tools with which to do an in-depth analysis of the district. A number of organisational diagnosis model were considered. The literature review has illustrated the importance of the 'Mckinsey Seven-S Framework' and its popularity as an organisational diagnosis tool. Organisation development in the public sector was analysed to understand the broader dynamics at play in the public sector. This was narrowed down into organisation development in education. The 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' was used as an organising framework to analyse the literature on the education system.

The literature review has developed, analysed and critiqued the key concepts in the literature which pertain to assessing the organisational effectiveness of the district's curriculum delivery.

3. RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

The research propositions follow the outline of the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' i.e. strategy, structure, systems, style, staff, shared values and skills (Waterman *et al*, 1980). The propositions are:

- Proposition 1: The district does not have a coherent strategy in place for curriculum delivery.
- Proposition 2: The structure of the district is not appropriate for effective curriculum delivery.
- Proposition 3: The various systems i.e. communication, finance, school visits and workshops are not sufficiently geared to supporting curriculum delivery.
- Proposition 4: The management style is not appropriate to providing effective curriculum delivery.
- Proposition 5: The staff are not properly recruited, motivated or retained for providing effective curriculum delivery.
- Proposition 6: There are insufficient shared values, which hold the district together.
- Proposition 7: The district facilitators do not have the required skills for curriculum delivery.

The research will generate a set of recommendations based on the propositions above.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research method was a survey as described by Cooper & Schindler (1998), and Nadler (1977). It was felt that there was not sufficient feedback from district officials in previous efforts at research into districts. Nadler (1977: 21), one of the key proponents of the survey feedback method, asserts that: "Information is an important factor of organizational life and the use of information for planned organizational change is therefore an area worth thinking about." Leedy & Ormrod (2001: 196) describe survey research as follows:

Survey research captures a fleeting moment in time, much as a camera takes a single-frame photograph of an ongoing activity. By drawing conclusions from one transitory collection of data, we may extrapolate about the state of affairs over a longer period of time. At best the extrapolation is a conjecture, and sometimes a hazardous one at that, but it is the only way to generalize from what we see.

Survey feedback is an integral part of organisation development. The assumption is that the difference between the ideals of the organisation and the actual responses will spur people into action (Friedlander & Brown, 1989). According to Chase (cited in Friedlander & Brown, 1989), the feedback process tended "to equalize power even in a highly threatening environment".

A questionnaire based on the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework' was designed and administered. A set of recommendations emerged from the research.

4.2 Method

There were two sequential phases. Phase one was the survey. In this phase, questionnaires were sent to all district officials dealing with curriculum. The

questionnaires were detailed and generated substantial data on the effectiveness of the district in curriculum delivery.

Phase two developed a set of recommendations based on the results. The output of this study is a set of recommendations. Organisation development is primarily concerned with improving organisations. As this study fits into an organisation development framework, a number of recommendations are made in this regard.

4.3 Phase One - Survey

The descriptive survey method was used. The descriptive survey method demands the technique of observation. In this case it is not personal observation but observation drawn from questionnaires (Leedy, 1989). It is a highly effective method for getting a considerable amount of feedback. Because of the vastness of the data, it needs to be amenable to being organised and systematically presented (Leedy, 1989; Wisker, 2001).

4.3.1 Population and Sample

The population consisted of all curriculum district officials in the JED. The research targeted 51 district curriculum officials. This is the entire population of the district staff involved in curriculum delivery. The district officials who returned the questionnaire formed the sample. It was decided to use district officials in the research process because organisation development methods stress involving people in the process in order for them to make the desired changes. Ultimately it is about empowering people to become actors in their organisations rather than passive recipients. This is well captured by Nadler (1977: 173):

Improving organizations through participative processes implies the need to collect data about how the organization functions at present and to give the data in some form to people in the organization so that

they can work with it and ultimately use the information for problem solving.

4.3.2 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was central to the research. The questionnaire was structured around the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'. This was done to ensure that a holistic picture of the organisation would emerge. The questionnaire was based on the central issues that emerged in the literature review. The researcher went through the literature review a number of times to ensure that the most important issues were captured in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was refined a number of times to ensure that the critical issues raised in the literature review were tackled. Given that the structure of the questionnaire followed the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework', there was an attempt to ensure that the most relevant issues under each S were included. The draft questionnaire was shortened considerably so that only the essential issues went in.

The questions consisted of both the open and close-ended type. The Likert scale which is a version of the summated rating scale was also used (Cooper & Schindler, 1998). The neutral option was specifically excluded to prevent the problem of central tendency. Rating scales also have problems of leniency whereby raters can be 'easy raters' or 'hard raters' (Cooper & Schindler, 1998). In this particular study it was anticipated that 'easy raters' would be more prevalent because the respondents were rating themselves and close colleagues. It was decided to factor this into the expectations of the research. One anticipated problem around this research was that district officials were doing a self-assessment. At one point, it was considered doing a similar survey with schools in the district as well to counter this possibility. However this would have substantially increased this research beyond the scope of a project report.

A “don’t know” option was included in the close-ended questions. This was to ensure that those who had no knowledge of a particular area did not bias the other responses.

The questionnaire was tested on one person outside the district and two district officials to see if the questions were clearly stated and if they were relevant to the study. Questions which were not immediately clear were removed. For example, questions on the district business process systems were removed because it was not immediately clear what this was in the district even though business process systems was a pertinent aspect of the literature review. The questions were also checked to see if they captured the essence of the particular S as it applied to the district. Questions which were considered peripheral to the central issues were also removed. This is in line with Leedy (1989: 143) who stresses that a good questionnaire should be “quality tested again and again for precision of expression, objectivity, relevance, suitability to the problem situation, and probability of favourable reception and return”.

Although there are a host of standardised questionnaires such as Servqual (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1996; Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990), it was felt a customised one was more suitable for this type of research. The strength of this research was based on capturing important issues in the questionnaire. It was felt that this could not be done by adopting a standardised questionnaire.

4.3.3 Data Collection

The researcher distributed all the questionnaires. They were returned to a secretary to provide anonymity.

4.3.4 Data Analysis

Graphs and Tables were constructed in Excel to organise and display the data. A large amount of information was generated from the answers to the questionnaire. The information was analysed and grouped to facilitate the key findings.

4.4 Phase Two - Recommendations

A set of recommendations was determined from the data analysis. Many of the questions in the questionnaire were directed at suggestions for improvement. It would be self-defeating to do research on this level purely for understanding the problems. A key aspect of this research is directed at making districts more effective in curriculum delivery.

Content analysis was utilised with the open-ended questions to analyse the data (Babbie, 1989). Similar suggestions were grouped. These suggestions were then ranked. The raw scores are provided in each Table. Only the top few in the suggestion Tables were analysed. However, there were excellent suggestions in the suggestion Tables which may not have been in the top few, which also throw light on how the district could be improved.

Interpretation is the key task at hand in this research. This is well captured by Leedy (1989: 168):

Amassing great quantities of data gives them a sense of well-being. Like Midas, looking at his hoard of gold, they lose sight of the ultimate demands that the problem itself makes upon those data. They feel that now all they need to do is to present the data in displays and summaries – graphs, charts, tables. Unfortunately these do nothing more than demonstrate the researcher's acquisitive skills and consummate ability to present the same facts in different settings. Survey research ultimately aims to solve problems.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

4.5.1 Internal Validity

Validity can be both internal and external. Leedy & Ormrod (2001: 103) explain internal validity as the “extent to which its design and the data that it yields allow the researcher to draw accurate conclusions about cause-and-effect”. This pertains to whether the questionnaire measures what it is supposed to. The questionnaire was tested by district officials to ensure this occurred. The findings and conclusions of the research were also reviewed by a district official to see whether valid interpretation and conclusions have been made.

4.5.2 External Validity

External validity is the “extent to which its results apply to situations beyond the study itself” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 105). This criterion is about generalising the findings of this study. As this is a project report, the external validity criterion was not applied.

4.5.3 Reliability

Reliability is the consistency with which “a measuring instrument yields a certain result when the entity being measured hasn’t changed” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 31). The accuracy of the measurement depends on the consistency of the measurement. The same questionnaire was distributed to all respondents at the same time to ensure reliability.

4.6 Conclusion

The research method was the survey method. This involved collecting reliable data on the organisational effectiveness of the district’s curriculum delivery. A questionnaire was the key instrument used. Forty nine out of fifty one

questionnaires were returned. The key task was the analysis of the data. The data was collated into Graphs and Tables. Content analysis was used to determine recommendations. The research methodology involved two phases. These consisted of the survey and the recommendations.

The purpose of the research is to provide recommendations for improving the organisational effectiveness of the district's curriculum delivery. This is in line with Nadler's (1977: 174) thinking:

Through systematic collection and use of data in organizations, we may be able to take at least small steps towards improving organizations, toward making them more effective, and towards making them better places for people to work.

5. RESULTS

This chapter provides the results of the research. The responses to the questionnaire were collated into numerous Graphs and Tables. The chapter follows the propositions raised in chapter 3.

5.1 Sample Description

Fifty one questionnaires were distributed to all district curriculum officials. Forty nine were returned. The Graphs below all use the raw numbers which are shown on the vertical axis in each Figure in this chapter.

Figure 10: Years in Education

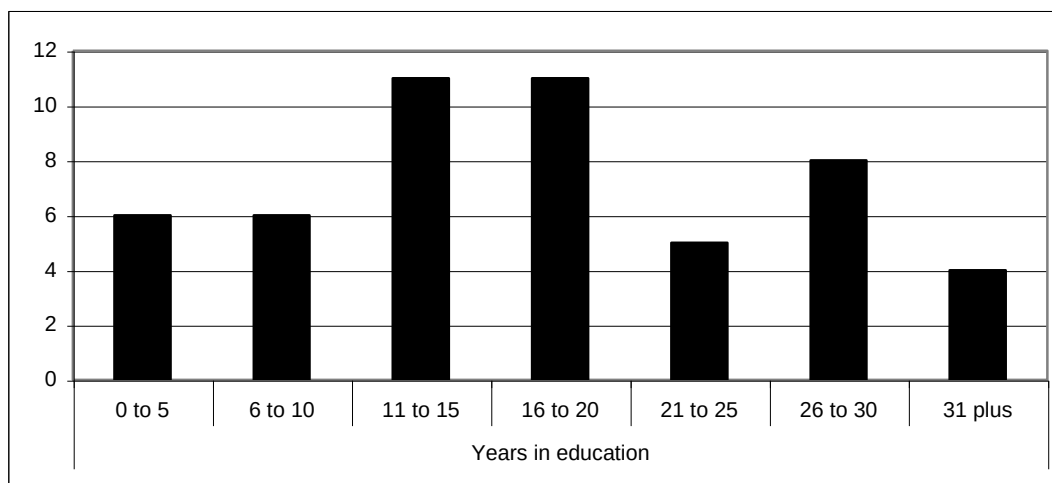


Figure 10 provides the number of years district curriculum officials have been working in the education system. This approximates a normal distribution with more than half of the respondents having been in education for more than 15 years which illustrates the depth of experience in the district.

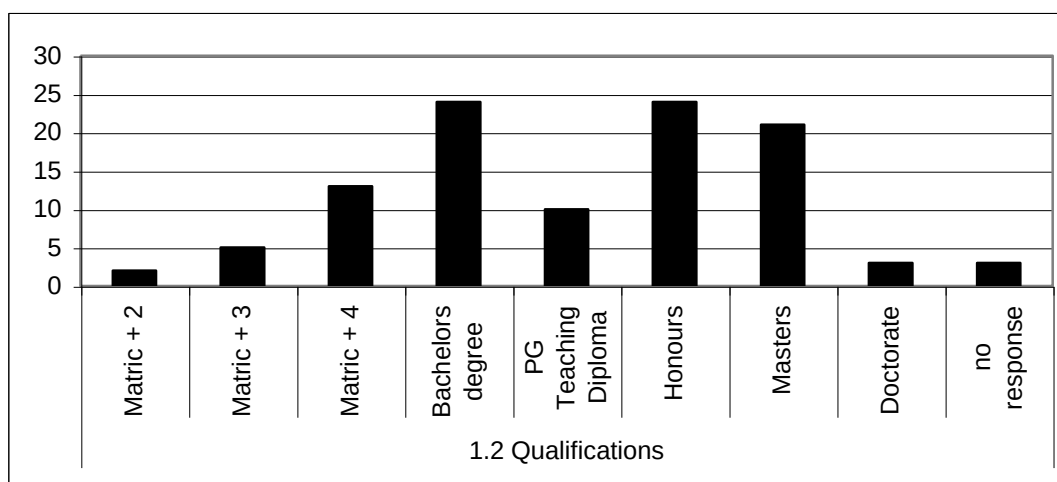
Figure 11: Qualifications

Figure 11 provides the educational qualifications of the district officials. As can be seen the officials are relatively highly qualified with a large number holding honours and masters degrees and even a few with doctorates. Respondents were asked to indicate at each level of the qualifications hierarchy and not just their highest qualification.

5.2 Effectiveness of District Curriculum Delivery

The majority of the respondents felt at the outset of the questionnaire that the district is moderately effective in curriculum delivery (Figure 12). Respondents were asked for their initial viewpoint before they proceeded with the bulk of the questionnaire. This was done to see whether their views remained consistent throughout the course of the questionnaire.

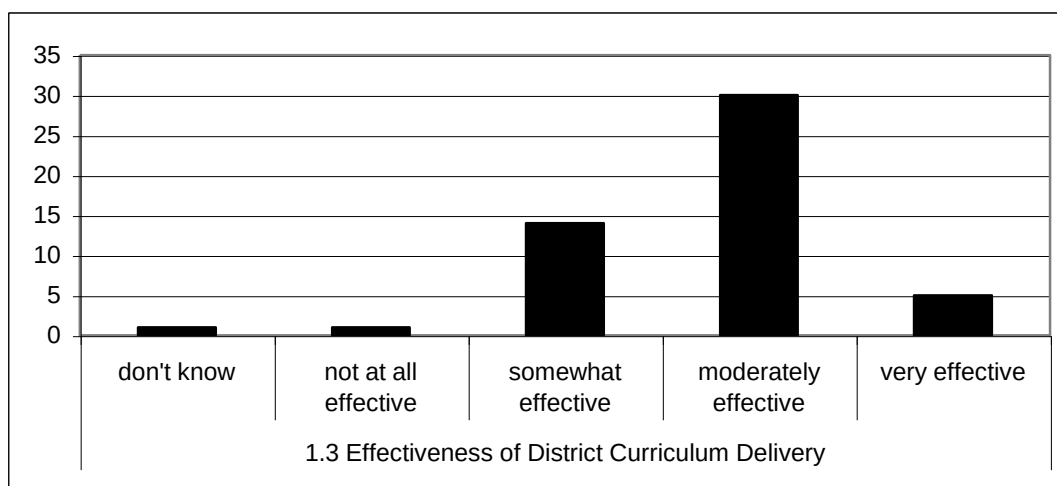
Figure 12: Effectiveness of District Curriculum Delivery

Table 3 provides the initial responses on how the district could better facilitate curriculum delivery. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Once again, this was an initial response before the respondents got into the heart of the questionnaire.

Table 3: Provide One Recommendation on How the District Could Better Facilitate Curriculum Delivery

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Fill all vacant posts	5
1	More support to educators	5
1	Improved alignment of activities	5
1	Better planning	5
2	Better workshops	4
3	Greater team work	3
3	Daily school visits	3
3	Better communication	3
3	More in-service training	3
3	Focus on line function not projects	3
4	Allocate fewer schools to facilitators	2
5	Instead of using service providers use district skills more	1
5	More support from management	1
	No response	6

5.3 Proposition 1: Strategy of the District

The strategy of the district was analysed. Four aspects of strategy were taken into account.

Figure 13: Rating of the District's Operational Plan

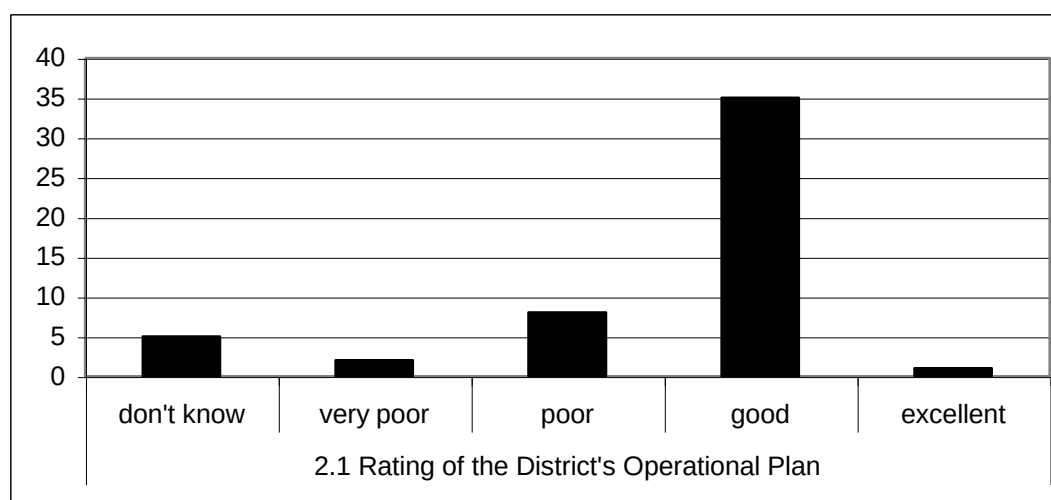


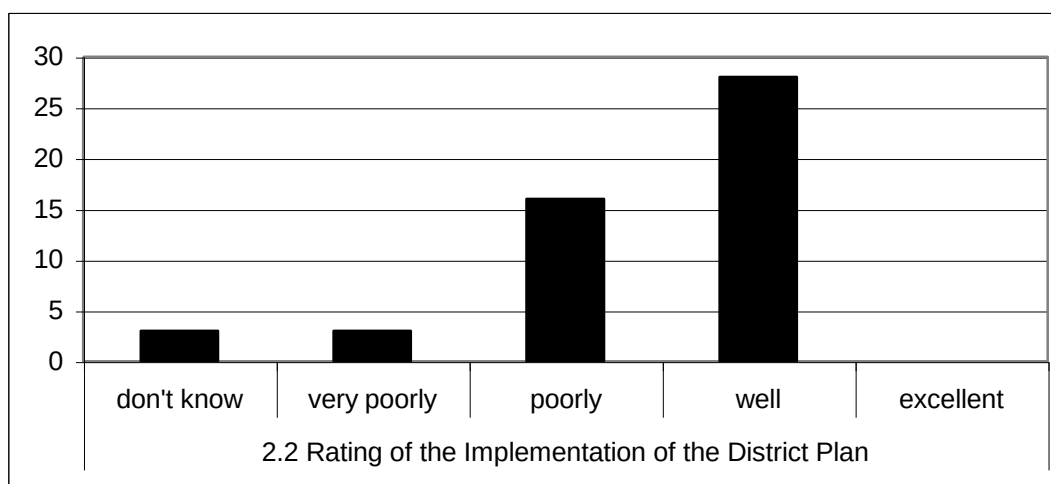
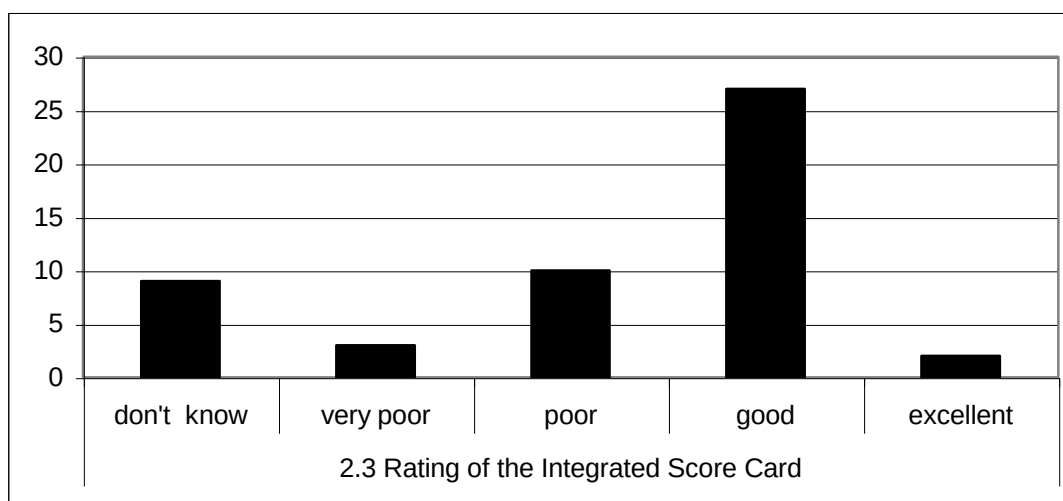
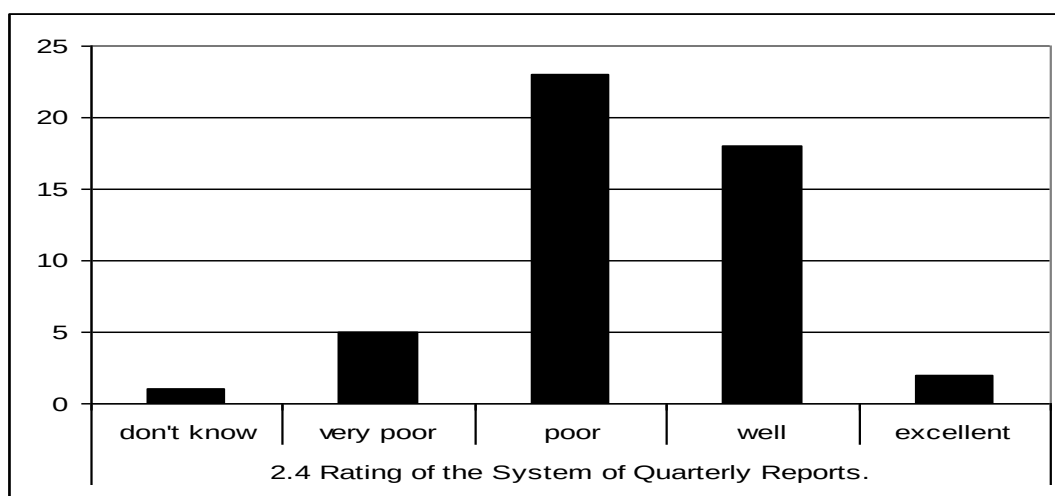
Figure 14: Rating of the Implementation of District's Operational Plan**Figure 15: Rating of the Integrated Scorecard****Figure 16: Rating of the System of Quarterly Reports**

Table 4 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to strategy.

Table 4: Modal Ratings for Strategy

2.1	How would you rate the district's operational plan?	Good
2.2	How well does the district implement its operational plan?	Well
2.3	How would you rate the integrated scorecard?	Good
2.4	How well does the system of quarterly reports function?	Poorly

Table 5 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on strategy. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Each respondent could give three or four suggestions in the space allocated on the questionnaire. Thus the number of suggestions could be much higher than 49. This applies to all the suggestion Tables in this chapter. Table 5 has 61 suggestions from 42 respondents

Table 5: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Strategy in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	The unit should sit together and plan activities	9
2	Improve communication between different units	8
3	Quarterly reports should provide insight into the way forward	7
4	The format should be clear	5
5	Proper alignment of the district's activities	4
5	Better feedback from management	4
5	Do away with unnecessary duplication	4
5	Morale and respect needs to be developed	4
5	Unplanned activities cause planned activities not to occur	4
6	Everybody should be workshoped on the integrated scorecard	3
7	Co-ordinators to focus and organise units more effectively	2
7	Activities need to be prioritised and given implementation dates	2
8	More monitoring of achievement of objectives and goals	1
8	Get head-office's operational plan before the district draws up its own	1
8	Quarterly reports to be submitted only at the completion of the quarter	1
8	Link the district's operational plan to the schools plans	1
8	Ensure that the systems necessary for the success of a strategy are provided for e.g. time, resources and support	1
	No response	7

5.4 Proposition 2: Structure of the District

The structures of the district were analysed. Five aspects of structure were taken into account and are reported on below.

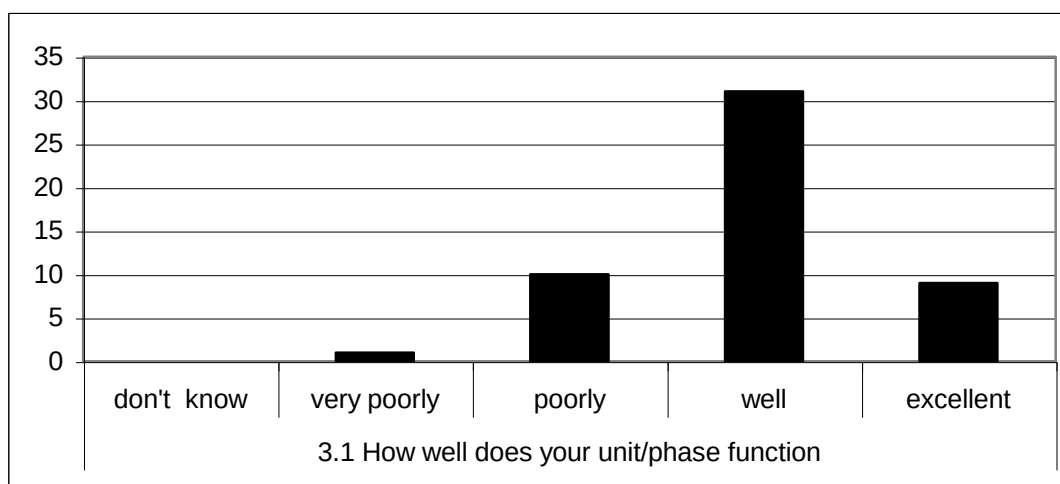
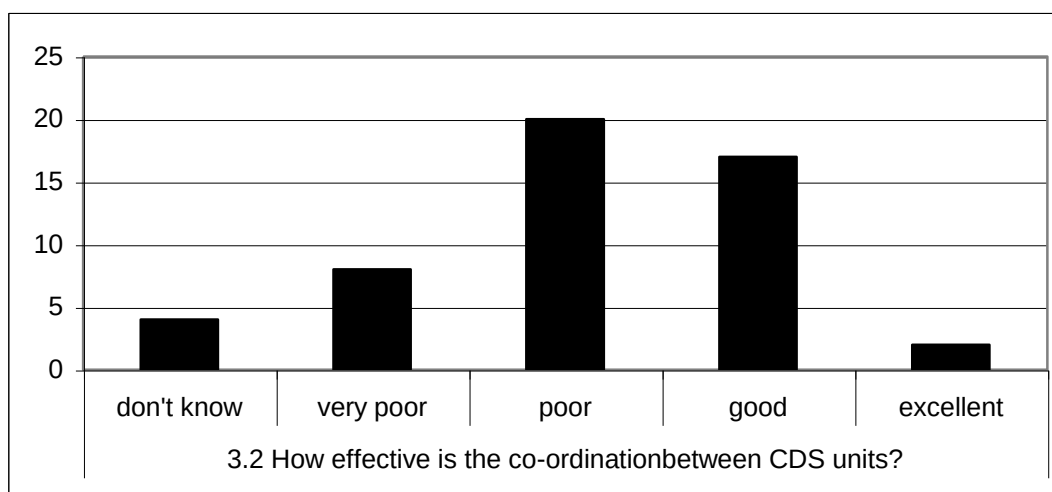
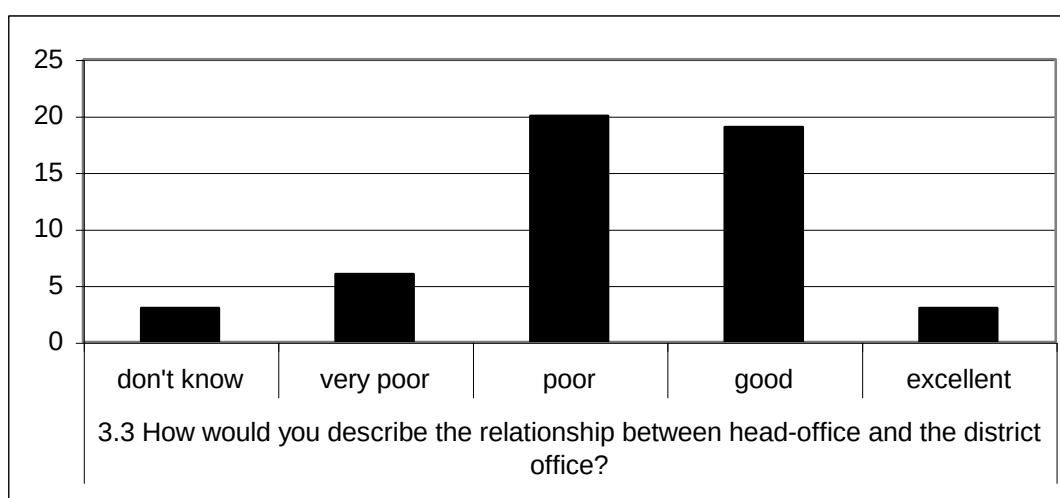
Figure 17: How Well Does Your Unit/Phase Function?**Figure 18: How Effective is the Coordination between CDS units?****Figure 19: How Would You Describe the Relationship between Head-office and the District Office?**

Figure 20: How Would You Describe the Relationship Between the District Office and Schools?

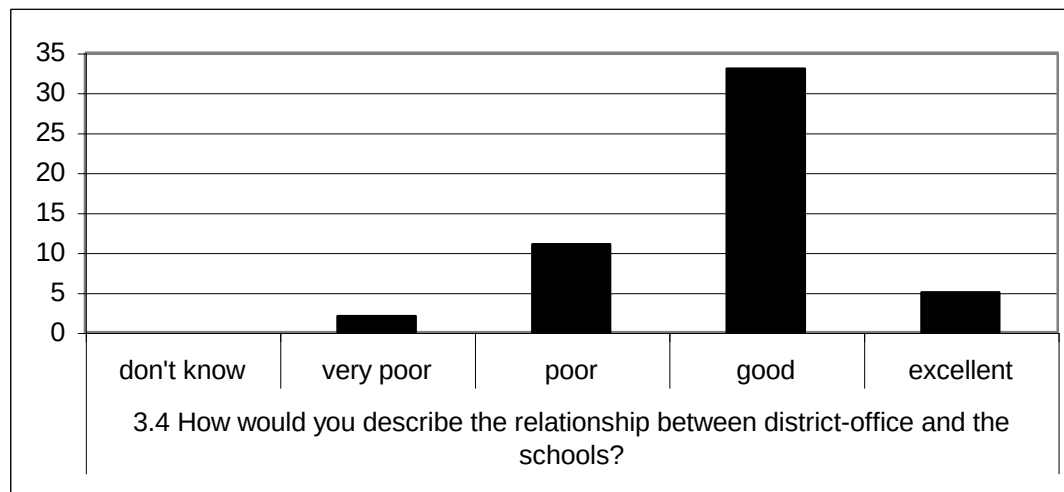


Figure 21: How Autonomous should Districts be?

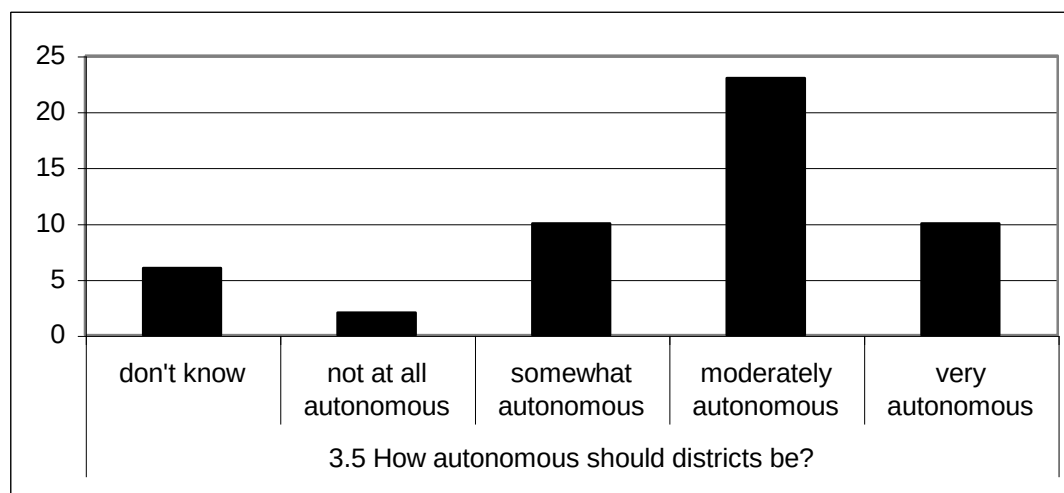


Table 6 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to structure.

Table 6: Modal Rating on Structure

3.1	How well does your unit/phase function?	Well
3.2	How effective is the co-ordination between units?	Poor
3.3	How would you describe the relationship between head-office and the district office?	Poor
3.4	How would you describe the relationship between the district office and schools?	Good
3.5	How autonomous should districts be?	Moderately autonomous

Table 7 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on structure. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 7 has 47 responses from 39 respondents.

Table 7: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Structure in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Improved communication between units in the district, between schools and the district office, and between head-office and districts	13
2	More collaboration between units	6
2	Districts should have much more autonomy from head-office	6
3	Co-ordinators to lead by example	4
3	Better support from management	4
4	People in structures should have strong characters	3
4	Get qualified staff into the structures	3
4	An organisation chart that clearly indicates responsibility	3
5	A change of structure is not going to improve – culture and leadership needs attention	1
5	A well structured monitoring system	1
5	Re-examine structures regularly	1
5	Inclusion, life orientation and psychological services should be placed in one unit	1
	No response	10

5.5 Proposition 3: Systems of the District

Four key systems of the district were analysed. These are communications, finances, school visits and workshops.

Figure 22: Head-office Communicates Policies Primarily through Circulars. How Have You Found the Circulars?

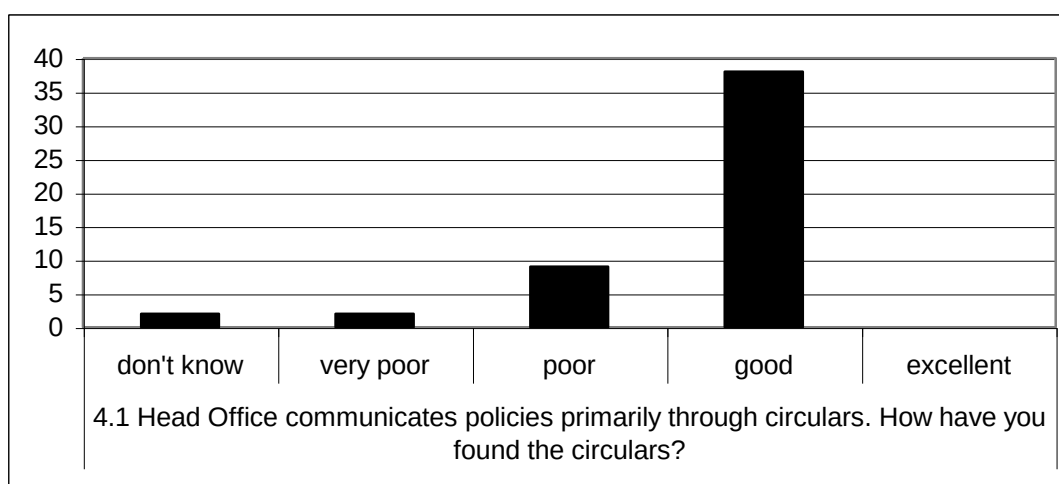


Figure 23: Head-office Provides Curriculum Booklets from Time to Time. How have you found these Booklets?

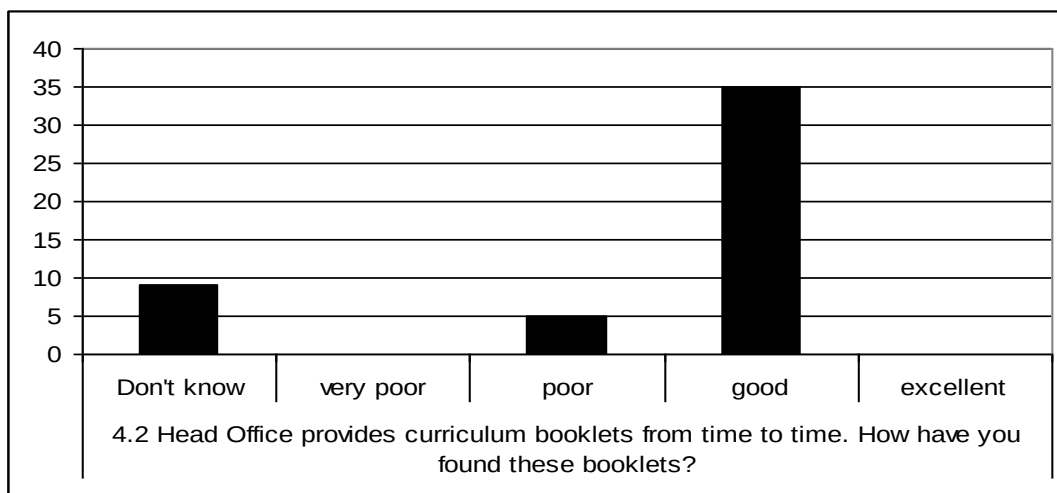


Figure 24: How Effective is the Correspondence from the District Office to the Schools?

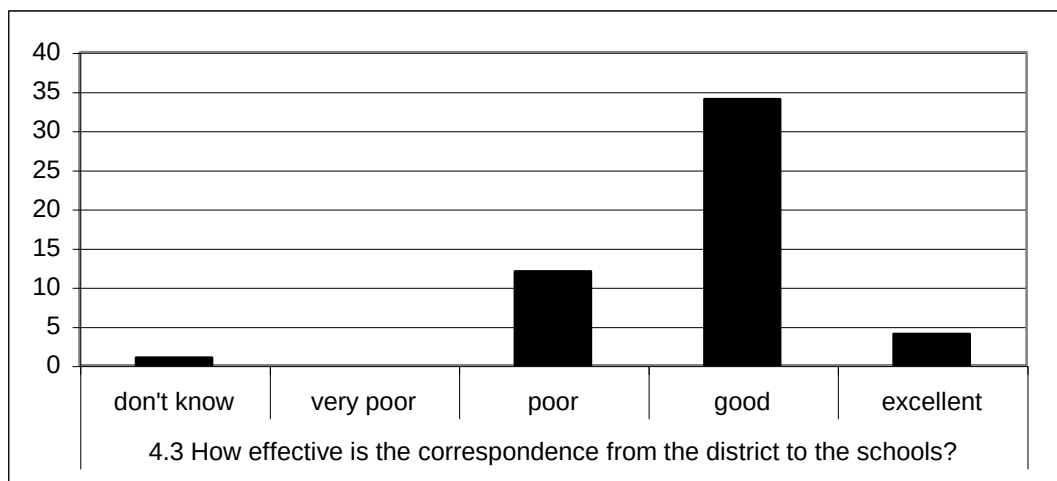


Figure 25: How Well does the District's Financial System Function?

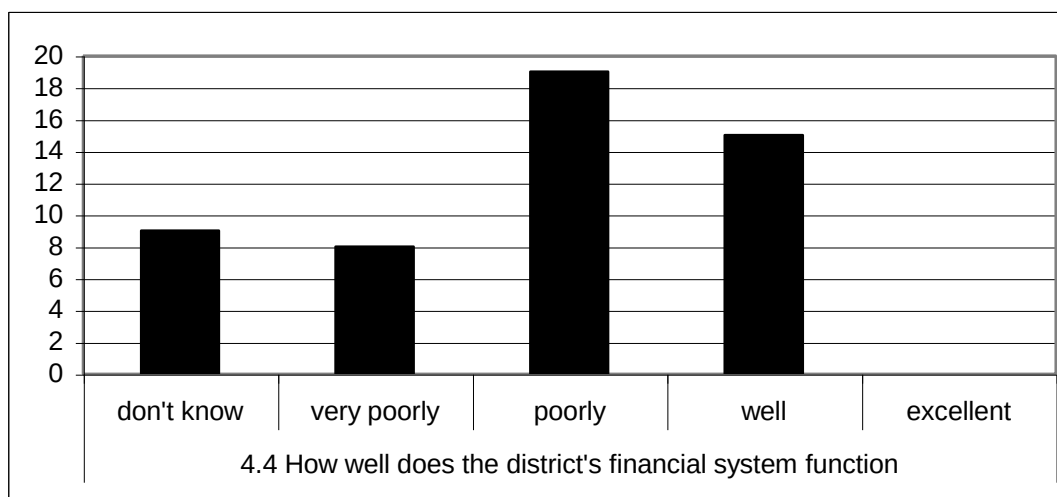


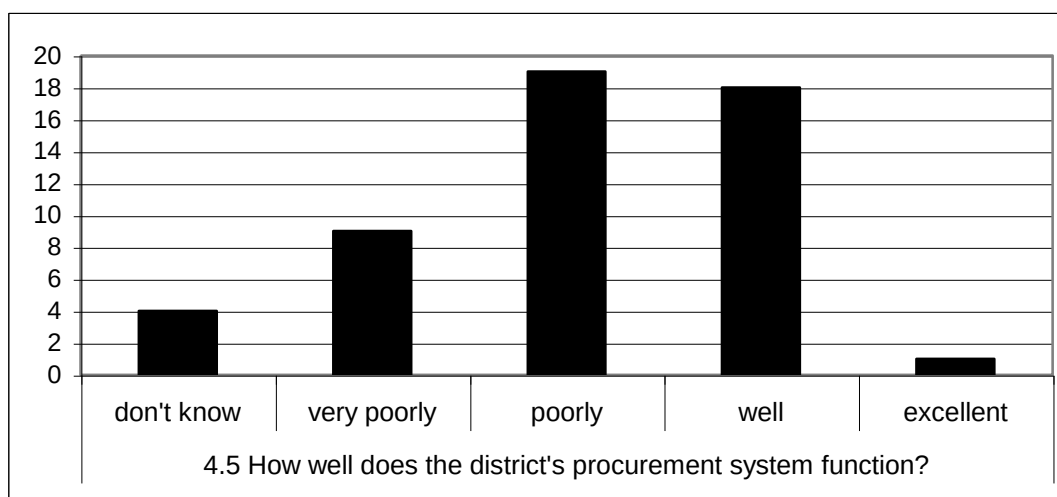
Figure 26: How Well Does the District's Procurement System Function?

Table 8 indicates the mode for the questions relating to communication and financial systems

Table 8: Modal Rating on Communication and Financial Systems

4.1	Head-office communicates policies primarily through circulars. How have you found the circulars?	Good
4.2	Head-office provides curriculum booklets from time to time. How have you found these booklets?	Good
4.3	How effective is the correspondence from the district office to the schools?	Good
4.4	How well does the district's financial system function?	Poorly
4.5	How well does the district's procurement system function?	Poorly

Table 9 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on communication and financial systems. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 9 has 63 responses from 43 respondents.

Table 9: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Communication and Financial Systems in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Information sessions and communication on procurement need to be held	12
2	Improve the procurement system by: notifying the project leader as to who the service provider is timeously; less focus on trivia of suppliers; less head-office intervention in IT; Gauteng Shared Services Centre to supply a catalogue; and procurement to be guided by curriculum objectives and strategy.	10
3	Qualified and knowledgeable people need to handle procurement	7
4	Honesty and transparency in selecting service providers	6
4	Move away from bureaucratic nature of the financial system which causes under/over expenditure	6
5	The district needs to open more communication channels with the Gauteng Shared Services Centre to improve the procurement system	4
5	Reverse the procurement system back from the Gauteng Shared Services Centre to the district	4
6	Procurement must stop being a last minute activity	3
6	Empowerment workshops for all district officials not only the chosen few	3
7	Joint responsibility and accountability for finances	2
8	One official to edit all correspondence	1
8	Budget should be ratified earlier	1
8	Budget should be set according to priorities and not the other way round	1
8	Improved supervision of subordinates in finance and procurement	1
8	The post should go out to schools twice a week in order to expedite communication with schools	1
8	Let the units that are a priority in terms of the GDE programme go first in the financial system	1
8	Monthly newsletter for district officials and develop a communication strategy	1
	No response	6

Figure 27: Your Unit Visits Schools from Time to Time. How Would You Rate these Visits?

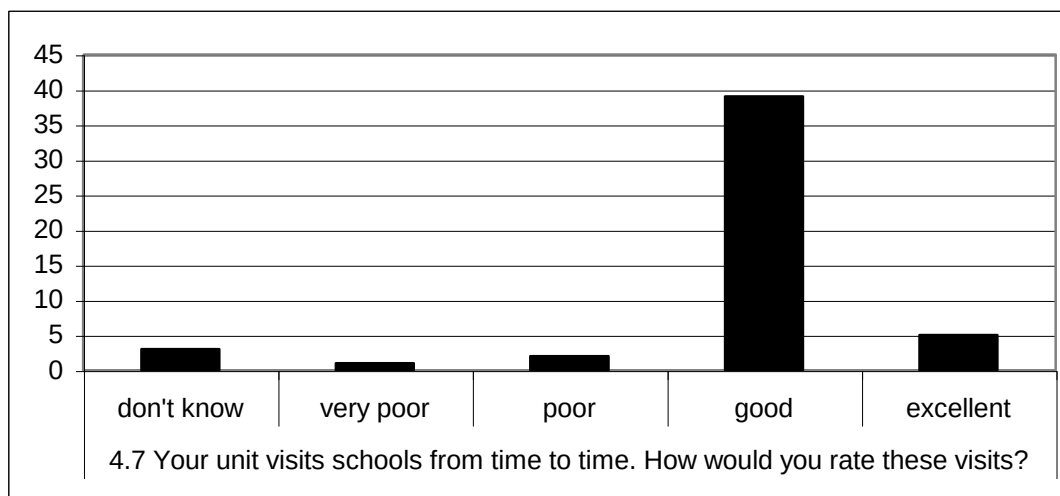


Figure 28: When Visiting Schools What Combination of Support and Pressure does Your Unit Generally Provide?

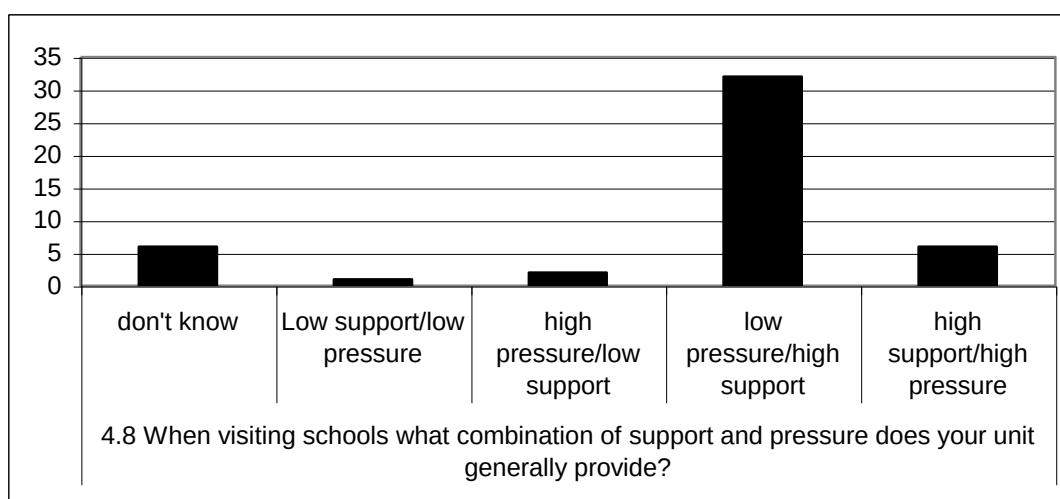


Figure 29: Once a Term Matrix Visits are Carried out. How Would You Rate these Matrix Visits?

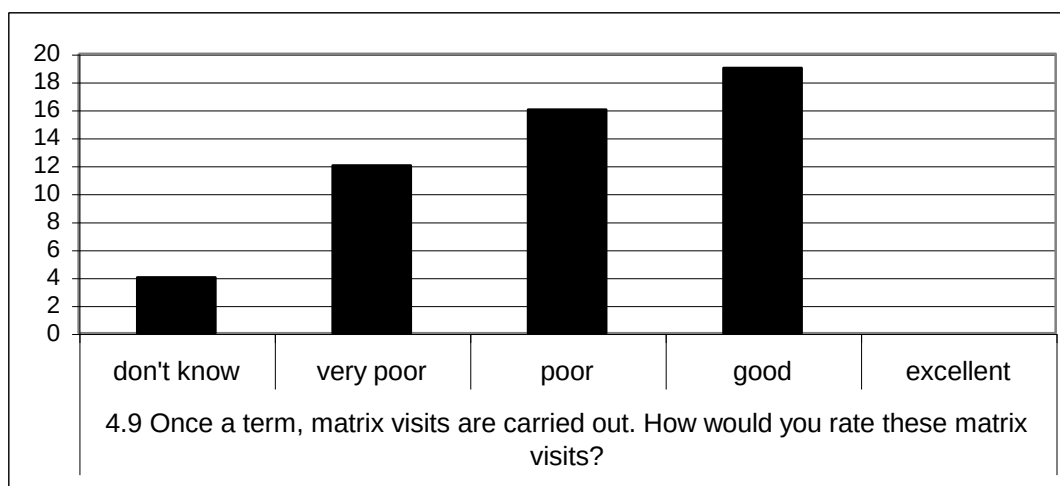


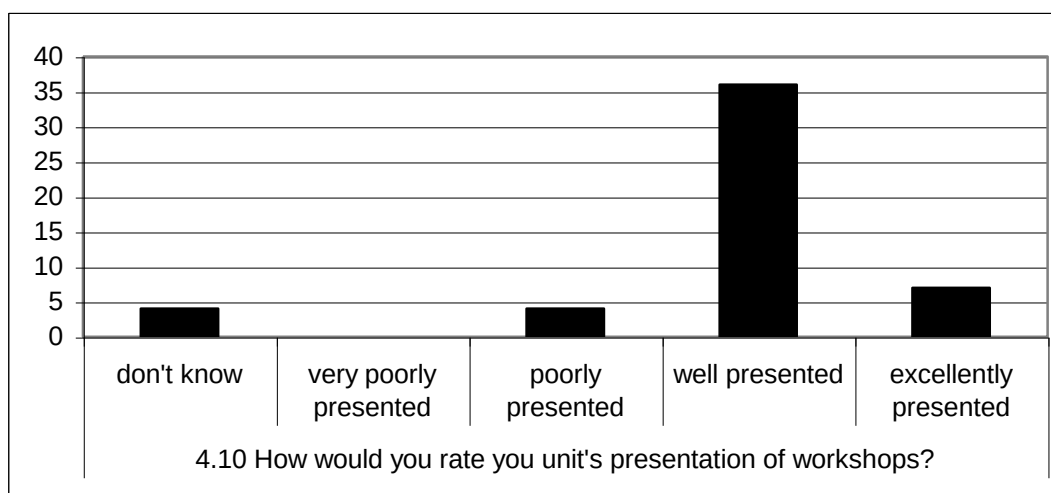
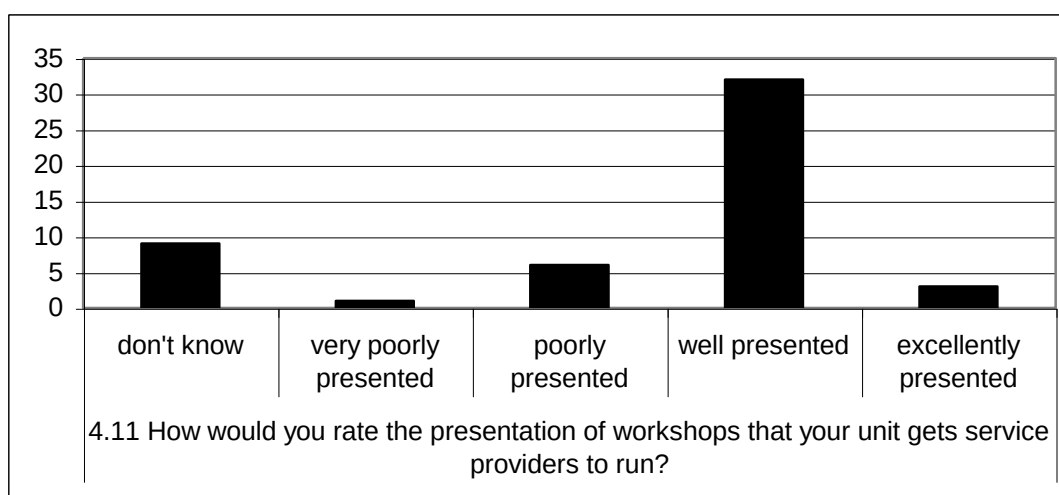
Figure 30: How Would You Rate Your Unit's Presentation of Workshops?**Figure 31: How Would You Rate the Presentation of Workshops that Your Unit Gets Service Providers to Run?**

Table 10 indicates the mode for questions relating to school visits and workshops.

Table 10: Modal Rating on School Visits and Workshops

4.7	Your unit visits schools from time to time. How would you rate these visits?	Good
4.8	When visiting schools what combination of support and pressure does your unit generally provide?	Low pressure/ high support
4.9	Once a term, matrix visits are carried out. How would you rate these matrix visits?	Good
4.10	How would you rate your unit's presentation of workshops?	Well presented
4.11	How would you rate the presentation of workshops that your unit gets service providers to run?	Well presented

Table 11 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on school visits and workshops. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 11 has 62 responses from 39 respondents.

Table 11: What Can You Suggest to Improve on School Visits and Workshops in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Some service providers should not be used again, should be well researched beforehand, facilitators should choose their own service providers, have frequent meetings with service providers to clarify district expectations and the district should conduct more of its own workshops	10
2	There should be immediate feedback to the school after the visit	6
3	School visits should have a clear purpose and focus	5
3	Conduct a needs analysis for workshops	5
4	Regular reviews of workshops and school visits	4
4	Decrease the number of workshops and avoid duplication of workshops	4
4	All district facilitators should be trained in workshop presentation skills	4
4	Unit visits should be done by the whole unit, can be unplanned and should not disrupt the school	4
5	Prioritise school visits to schools which really need support	3
5	Give timeous notification for workshops and school visits	3
5	Have a professional approach to workshops: notify well in advance; professional dress code; good logistics; attendance registers; name tags; interactive workshops and well prepared presentations	3
5	Matrix visits should be done to all schools, should be followed up by unit visits and should change the questions from term to term	3
6	Try to get behind the window dressing of some educators and spend more time in one-on-one discussions with educators	2
6	Better follow-up on principals and educators complaints and follow-up school visits should be done to ascertain whether problematic issues were addressed by the school	2
6	Workshop principals on curriculum issues more and involve tertiary institutions in curriculum training	2
7	The whole school evaluation model should be used for school visits	1
7	Workshop information should be monitored as follow-up in the classroom	1
7	More time should be spent on school visits and less on demands from head-office	1
	No response	10

5.6 Proposition 4: Style of the District

The management style of the district was analysed. Management refers to the senior manager, the deputy director and the unit coordinator. Four aspects of management style were taken into account.

Figure 32: What are Your Impressions of the Management Style (Senior Manager, Deputy Director, Unit Coordinators) in the District?

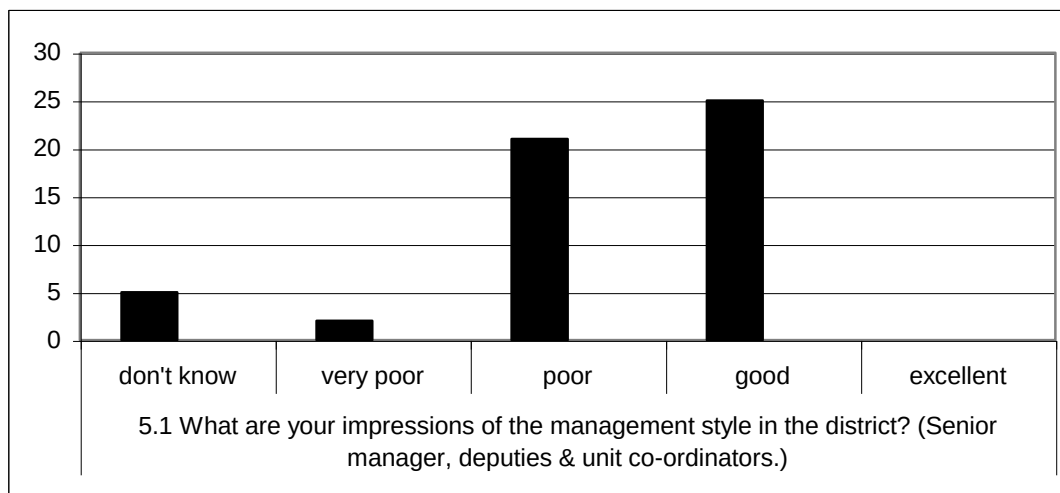


Figure 33: How Closely Does the Behaviour of Management Match with what They Say?

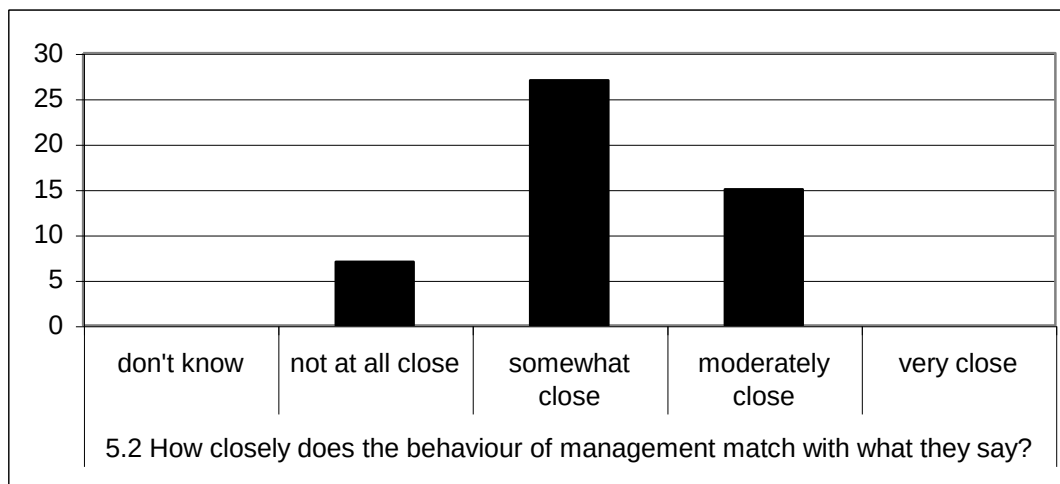


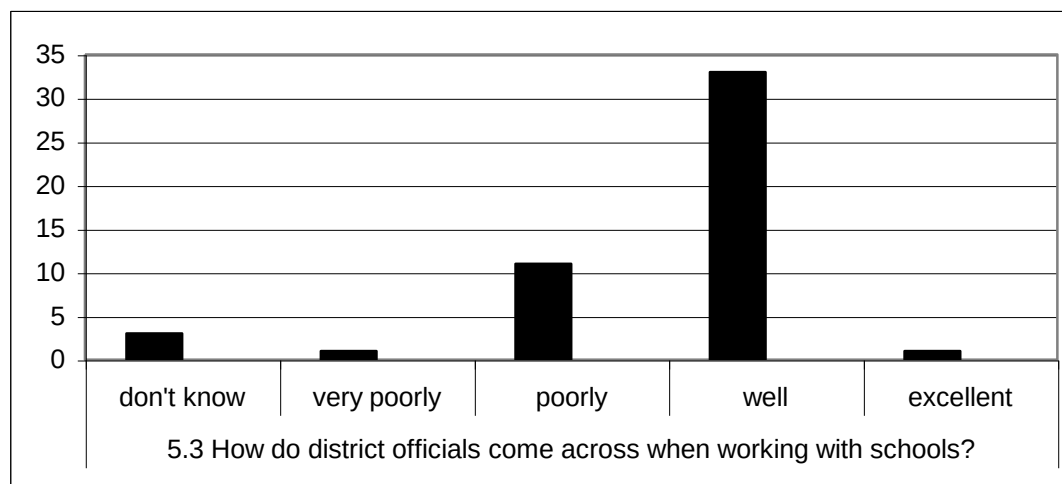
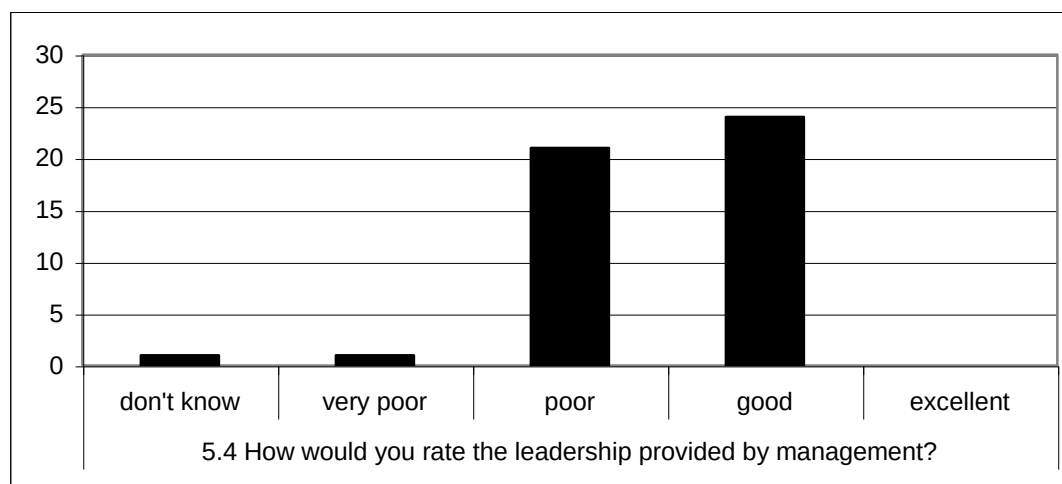
Figure 34: How Do District Officials Come Across when Working with Schools?**Figure 35: How Would You Rate the Leadership Provided by Management?**

Table 12 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to management style.

Table 12: Modal Rating of Management Style

5.1	What are your impressions of the management style (senior manager, deputy director, unit coordinators) in the district?	Good
5.2	How closely does the behaviour of management match with what they say?	Somewhat close
5.3	How do district officials come across when working with schools?	Well
5.4	How would you rate the leadership provided by management?	Good

Table 13 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on management style. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 13 has 67 responses from 38 respondents.

Table 13: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Management Style in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Improved communication and consultation with staff	15
2	There should be less favouritism	7
3	Management should be more present at meetings, school visits and workshops	6
3	Management should be more approachable, work more closely and talk more to district officials	6
4	Top-down management should be avoided	4
4	There should be more support systems and more mentoring	4
5	There should be collective vision and decision-making	3
6	There should be more transparency	2
6	More appreciation should be shown to all officials	2
6	Management should conduct some research on issues before implementation	2
6	Management style should be more situational	2
6	Management should be sent on a good management course	2
6	Management should avoid gossip	2
6	Management should actually be involved in solving problems with less delegation	2
7	Management should not be so confined to their offices	1
7	Management should improve their interpersonal skills	1
7	There should be less sarcasm	1
7	Management should follow through with what is said	1
7	There should be a higher level of co-ordinated planning amongst managers	1
7	The management style should be underpinned by human rights values	1
7	District Management Team meetings should be less isolated	1
7	District officials should be servants rather than authorities in schools and give support and guidance rather than condemnation	1
	No response	11

5.7 Proposition 5: Staff of the District

The staff of the district was analysed. Seven aspects of staff were taken into account.

Figure 36: How Motivated is the Staff for Providing Effective Curriculum Delivery?

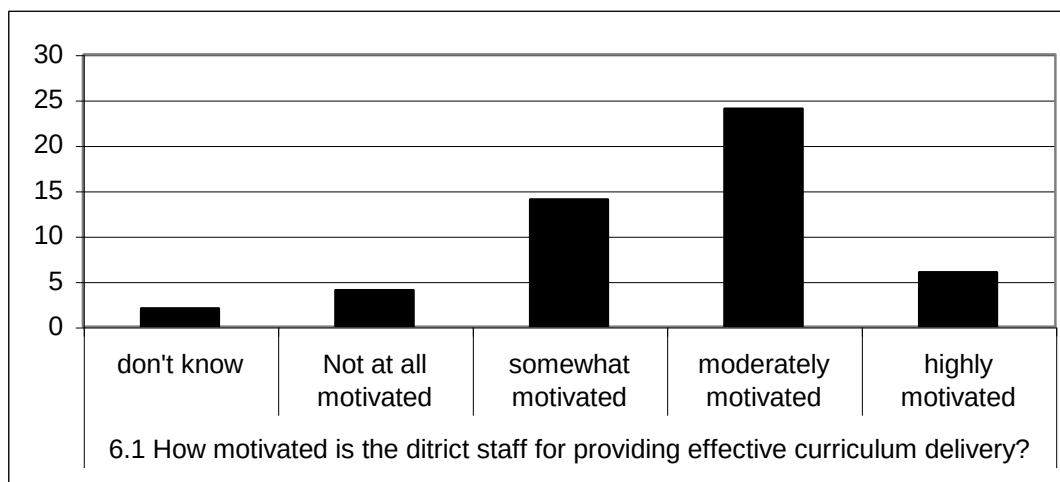


Figure 37: How Well Trained are the District Staff for Providing Effective Curriculum Delivery?

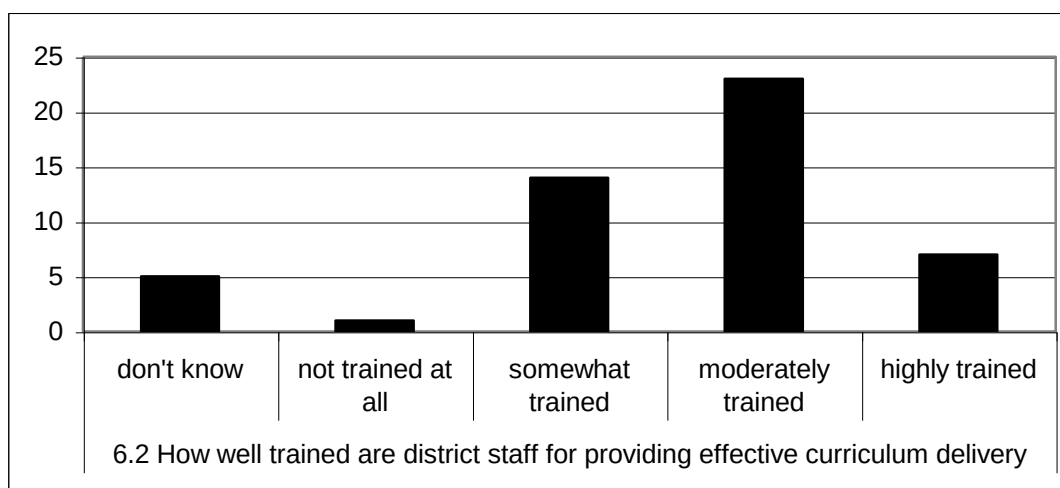


Figure 38: How is the Performance Management of Staff Carried Out?

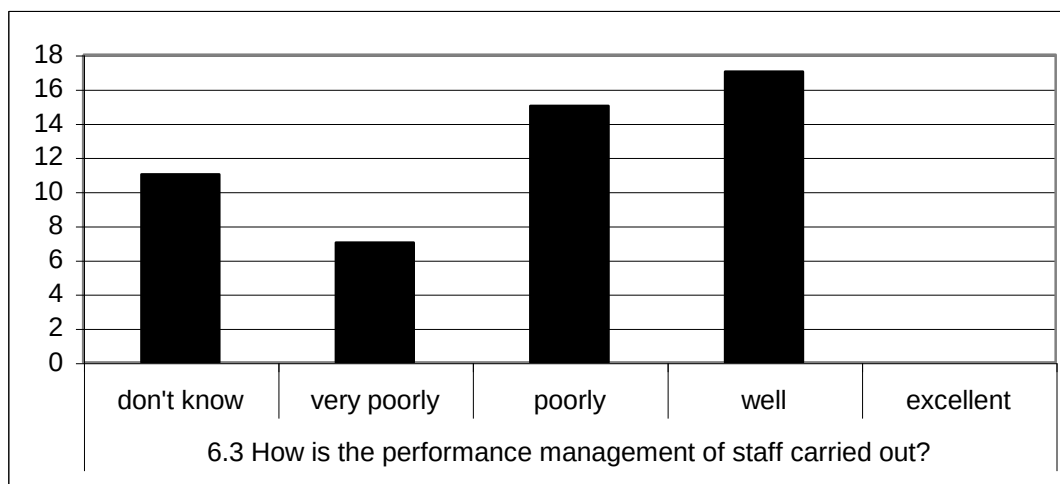


Figure 39: What is the Calibre of Staff Recruited by the District?

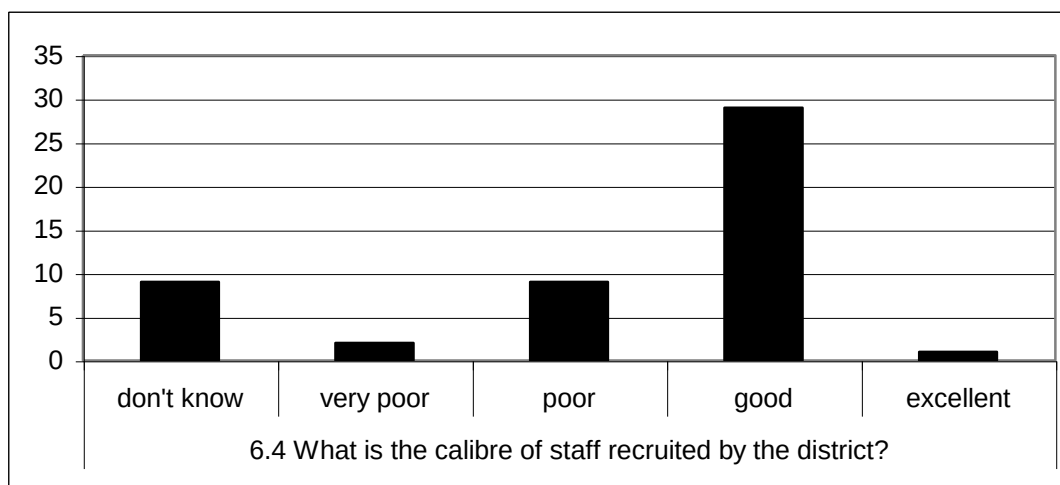


Figure 40: How Well does the District Retain Staff?



Figure 41: Do You Have a Clear, Written Job Description?

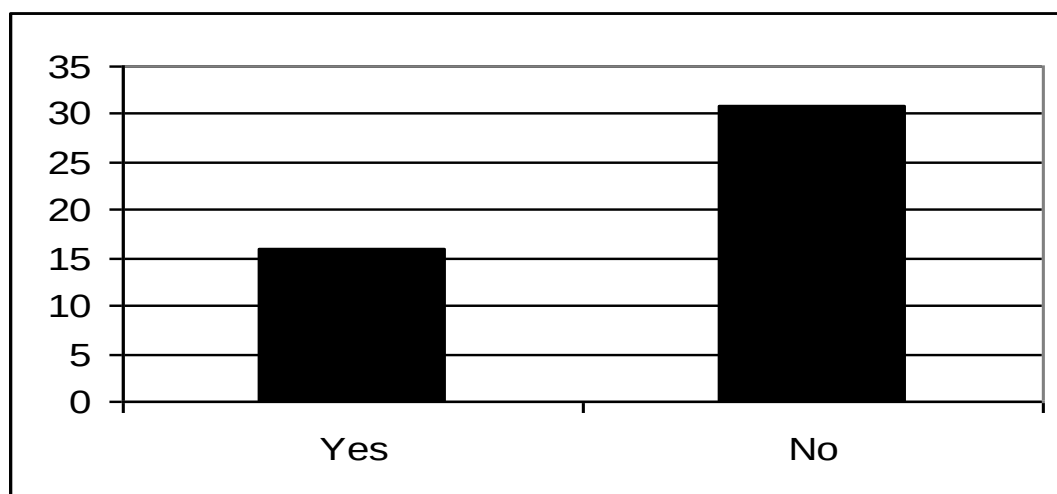


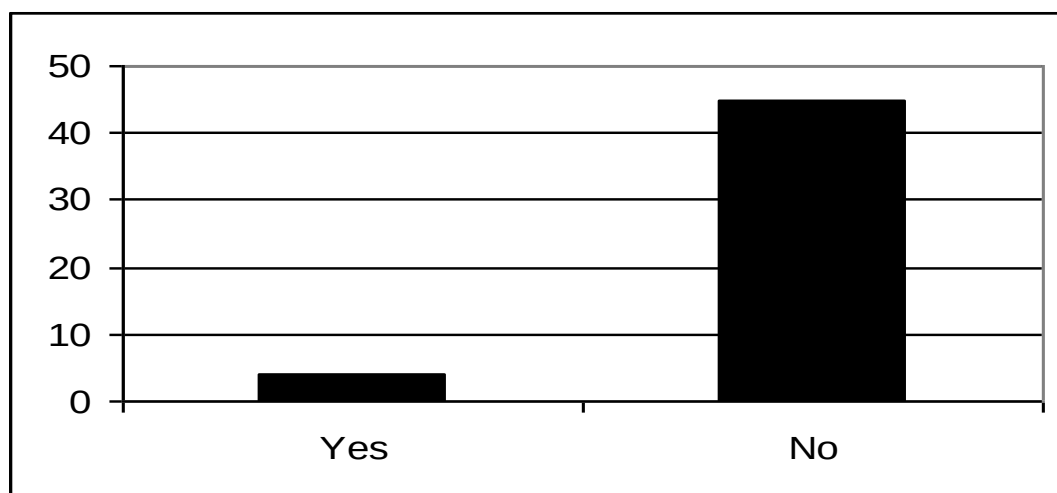
Figure 42: Has Career Pathing been done for You?

Table 14 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to staff.

Table 14: Modal Rating of Staff

6.1	How motivated is the district staff for providing effective curriculum delivery?	Moderately motivated
6.2	How well trained are district staff for providing effective curriculum delivery?	Moderately trained
6.3	How is the performance management of staff carried out?	Well
6.4	What is the calibre of staff recruited by the district?	Good
6.5	How well does the district retain staff?	Low turnover
6.6	Do you have a clear, written job description?	No
6.7	Has career pathing been done for you?	No

Table 15 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on staff. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 15 has 60 responses from 39 respondents.

Table 15: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Staff in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Staff development workshops should be run	9
2	Recruitment should be more thorough by taking greater care and appointing people who are loyal and committed	8
3	All vacancies must be filled so the workload is manageable and there is no 'babysitting' of vacant positions	5
3	Motivate staff	5
4	Induction workshops should be run extensively	4
4	Clear job descriptions need to be done	4
4	Identify the skills that are needed and draw up a skills plan	4
4	Develop a strategy for staff to voice concerns without being made to feel vulnerable	4
5	Put skills first and equity second	2
5	Create space for debriefing sessions	2
5	Don't always allocate duties to the same people	2
5	Appreciate personnel	2
6	Have termly performance appraisals	1
6	Look at work environment and conditions	1
6	Cut down on movement of staff	1
6	Mentor new staff to avoid them being thrown into the deep end	1
6	Focus more on people skills, personality and presence rather than knowledge which can always be learnt later	1
6	Clamp down on 'shirkers' and abusers of government cars	1
6	Promote from within	1
6	Provide incentives like the private sector	1
6	More research and implementation of findings	1
	No response	10

5.8 Proposition 6: Shared Values of the District

The shared values of the district were analysed. Four aspects of shared values were taken into account. Table 16 indicates what district staff feels the shared values of the district are. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 16 has 53 responses from 37 respondents.

Table 16: In Your Opinion, What are the Shared Values of the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	The district does not have any shared values	15
2	Service delivery to schools	6
3	Teamwork	4
4	Lack of teamwork	3
4	" <i>Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu</i> " (A person is a person through other people)	3
5	Respect for one another	2
5	Demotivation and despair	2
5	Hard work	2
6	Good labour relationship	1
6	Striving for excellence	1
6	Communication between units	1
6	"Batho Pele"	1
6	Support from our school communities	1
6	Improve matric results	1
6	Self enrichment	1
6	Destructive criticism, negativism and complaining	1
6	Finding reasons to do the least	1
6	Honesty	1
6	Belonging to various groups	1
6	Anti-racism	1
6	Speed, accuracy and direction	1
6	Punctuality	1
6	Do what you know best in your area	1
6	Meetings	1
	No response	12

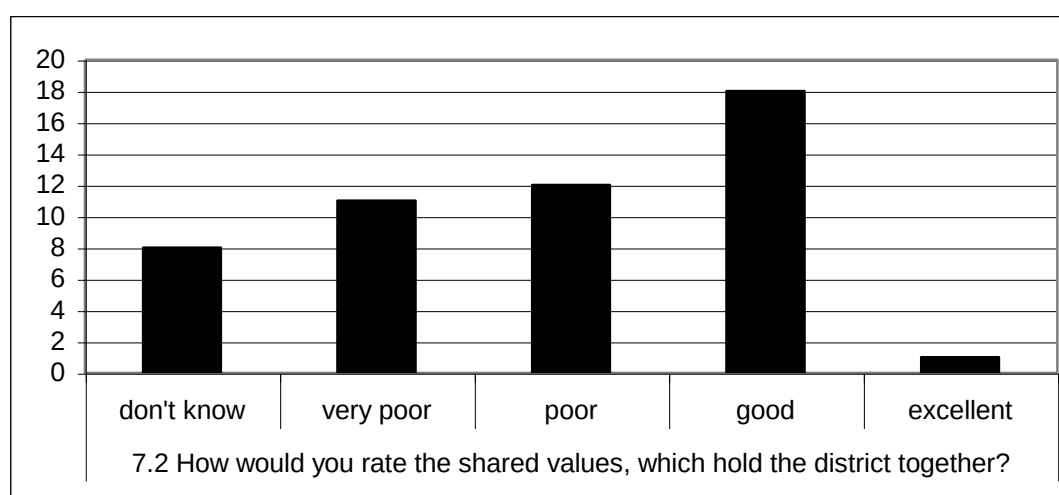
Figure 43: How Would You Rate the Shared Values, which Hold the District Together?

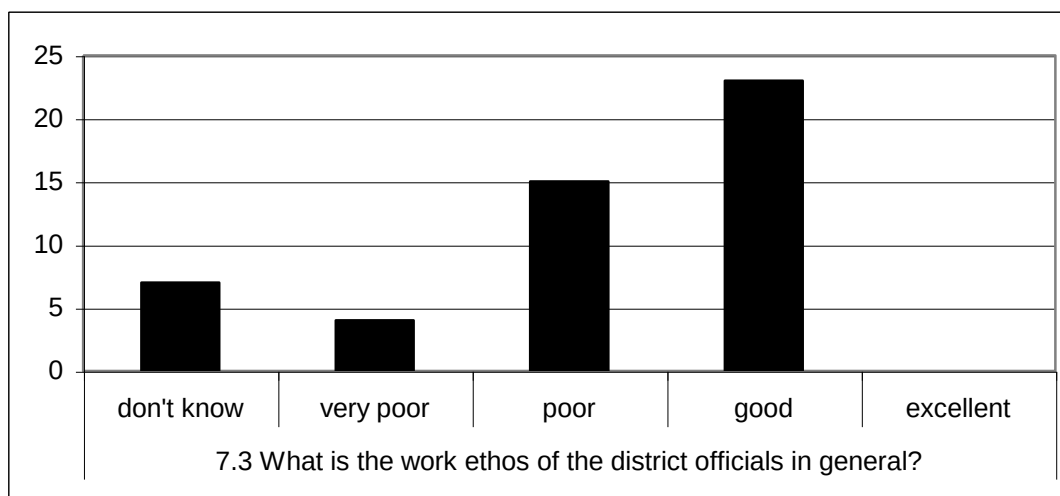
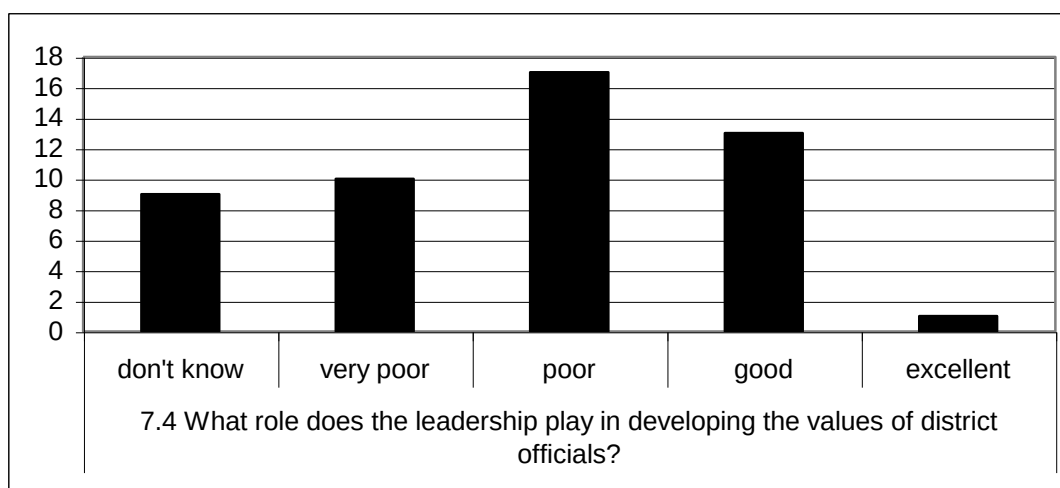
Figure 44: What is the Work Ethos of the District Officials in General?**Figure 45: What Role Does the Leadership Play in Developing the Values of District Officials?**

Table 17 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to shared values.

Table 17: Modal Rating of Shared Values

7.2	How would you rate the shared values, which hold the district together?	Good
7.3	What is the work ethos of the district officials in general?	Good
7.4	What role does the leadership play in developing the values of district officials?	Poor

Table 18 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on staff. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 18 has 49 responses from 33 respondents.

Table 18: What Can You Suggest to Improve on Shared Values in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Creating shared values	8
2	More effective communication around shared values	7
3	Treat all officials equally	5
3	Management to show an interest in district officials work	5
4	Team-building	4
5	Have a vision for the district	3
6	Work ethos of the district should be drawn up and adhered to	2
7	Weekly meetings for prayer	1
7	Acknowledge excellence thereby enhancing excellence as culture	1
7	Be compassionate and understanding	1
7	Space for debriefing and evaluation constantly	1
7	Allowing tasks and projects to work in line with shared values	1
7	To be consistent in our treatment of schools i.e. if punctuality is adopted don't give unrealistic deadlines	1
7	To do away with corridor chatter which is non-informative and destructive	1
7	To lead by example	1
7	To support one another for the realisation of excellence, harmony and togetherness	1
7	A strong and deliberate pursuit of human rights values	1
7	Treat subordinates as individuals with their unique and different talents	1
7	Careful selection when appointing people into district posts	1
7	Get corporate involvement in personnel development and skills i.e. administration skills and customer relations	1
7	More honest communication	1
7	The values held by the leadership need to be shared with the lower structures	1
	No response	16

5.9 Proposition 7: Skills of the District

The skills level of the district was analysed. The skills level was analysed per unit. In total 16 different types of skills were taken into account.

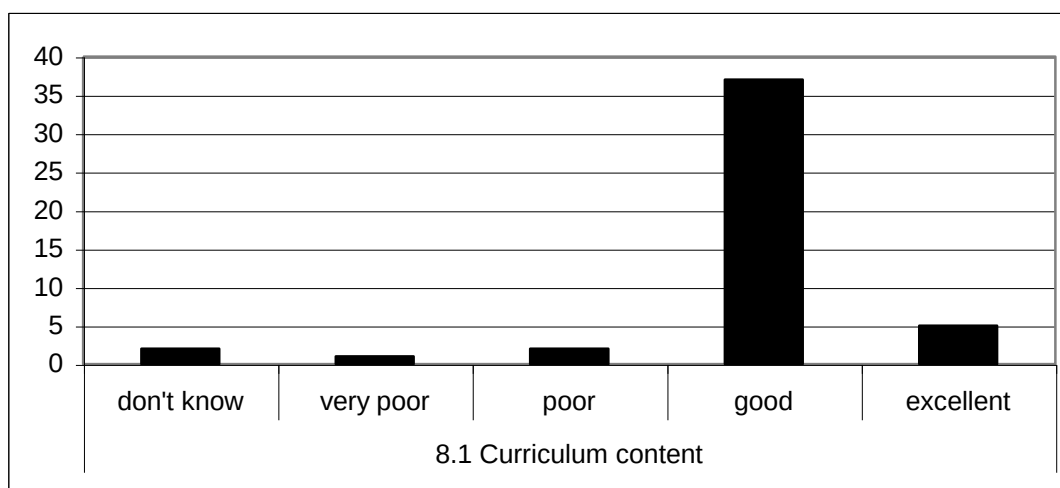
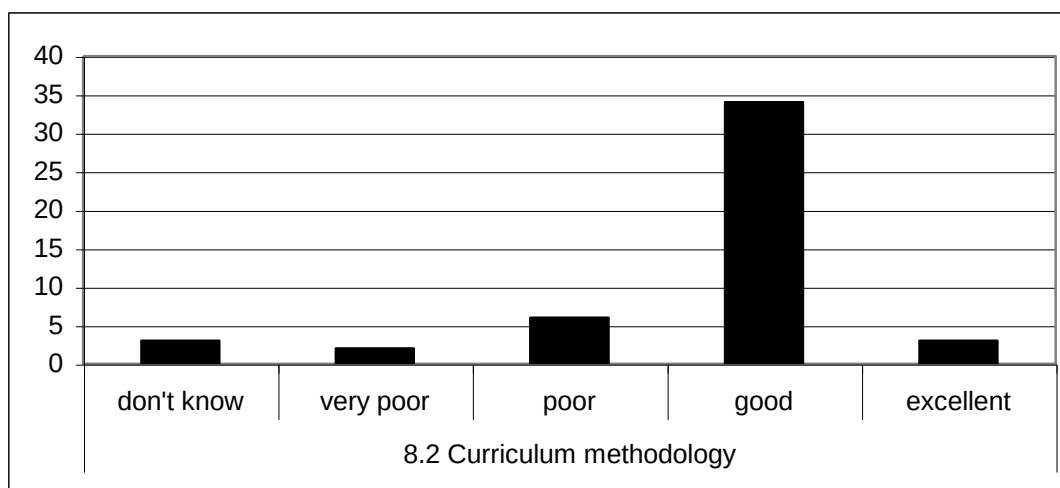
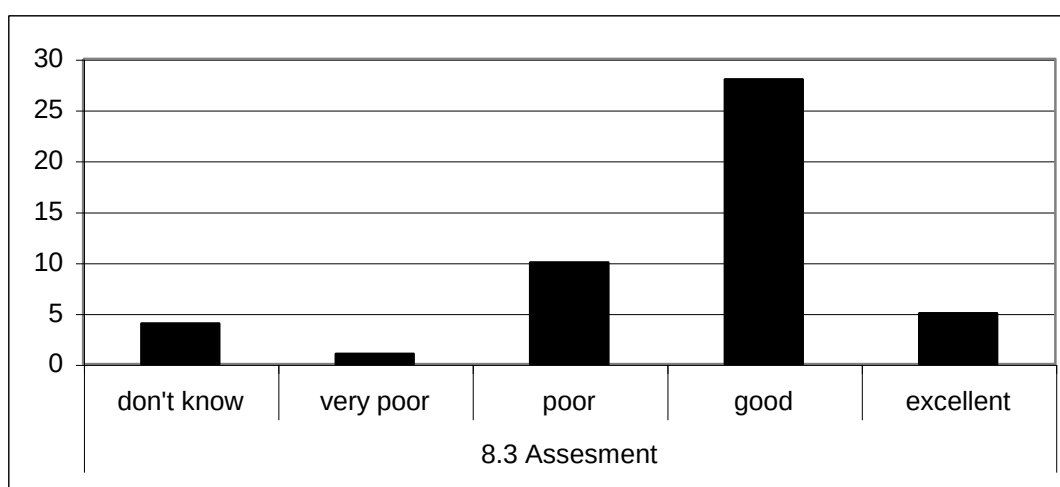
Figure 46: Curriculum Content**Figure 47: Curriculum Methodology****Figure 48: Assessment**

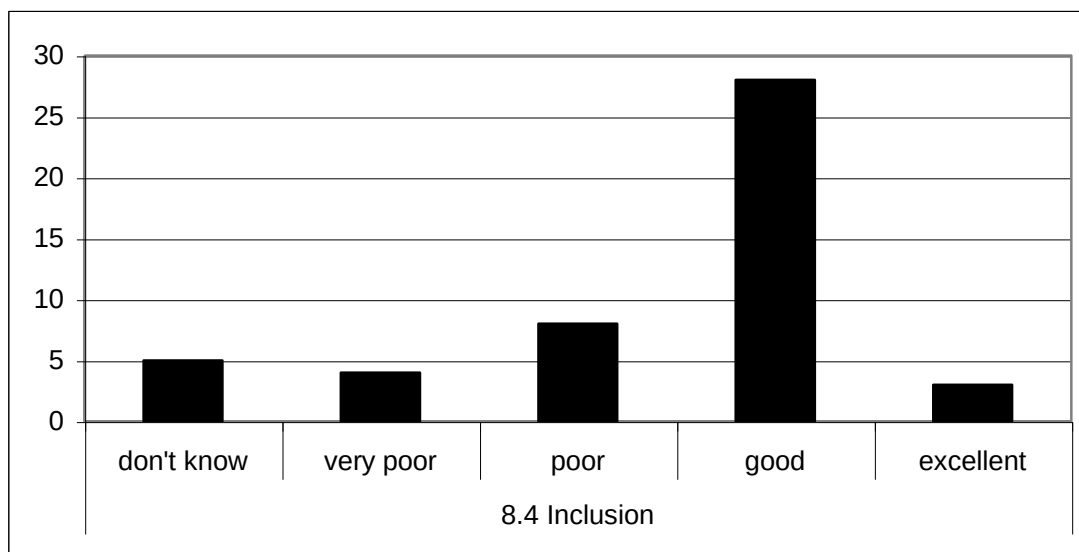
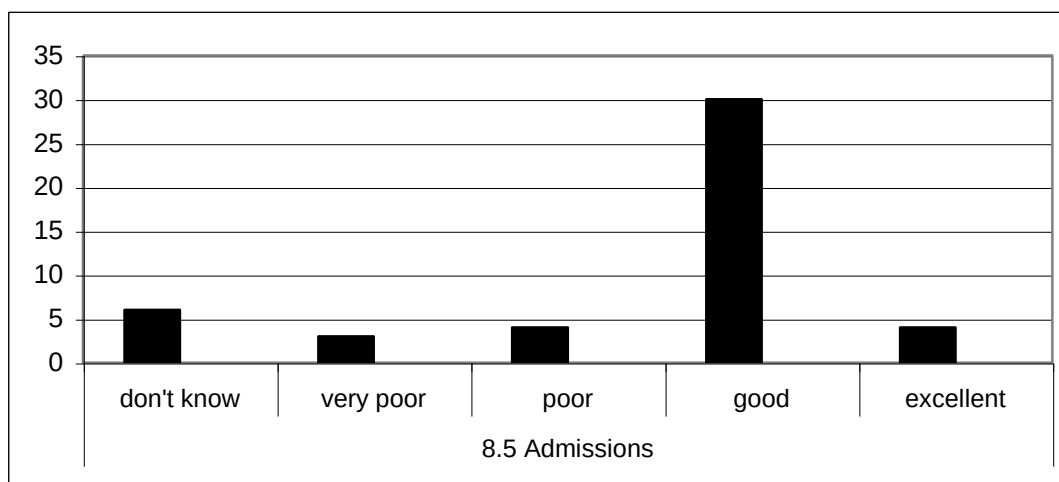
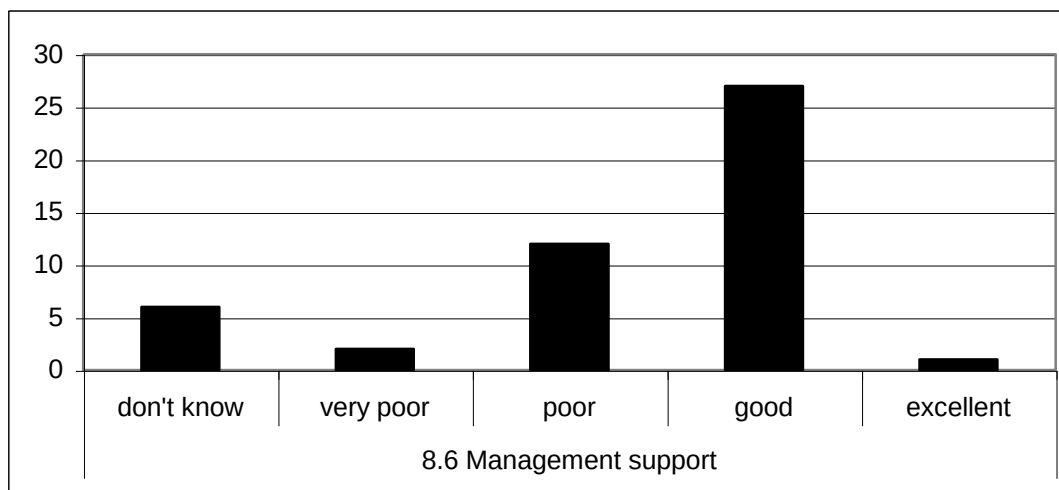
Figure 49: Inclusion**Figure 50: Admissions****Figure 51: Management Support**

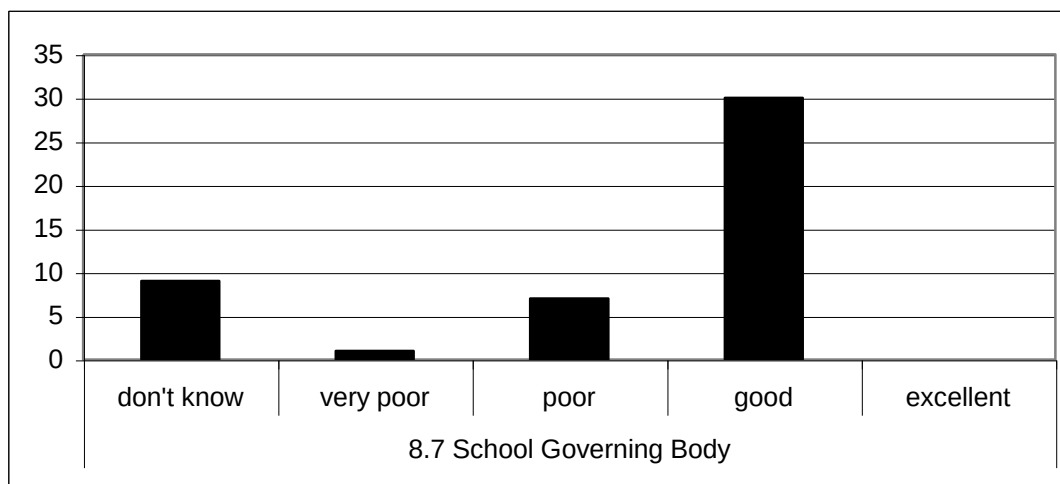
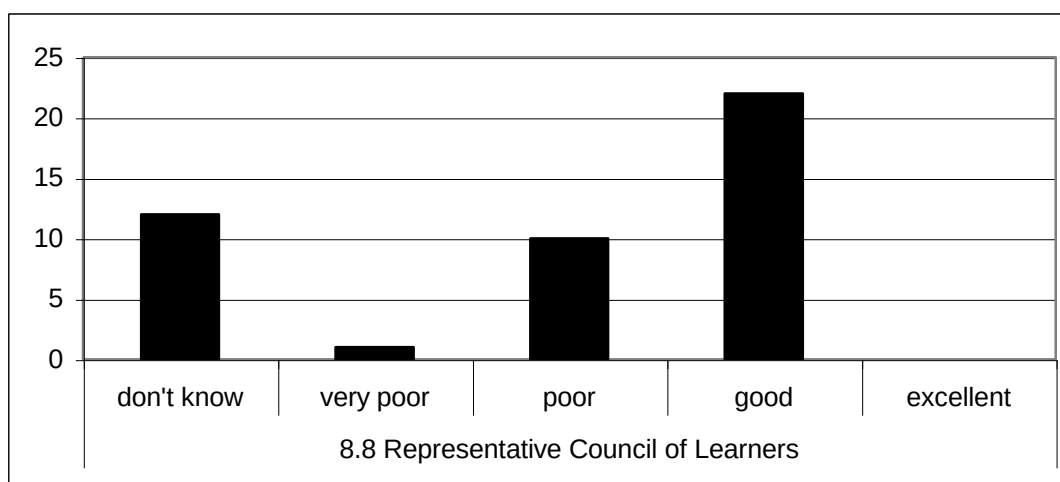
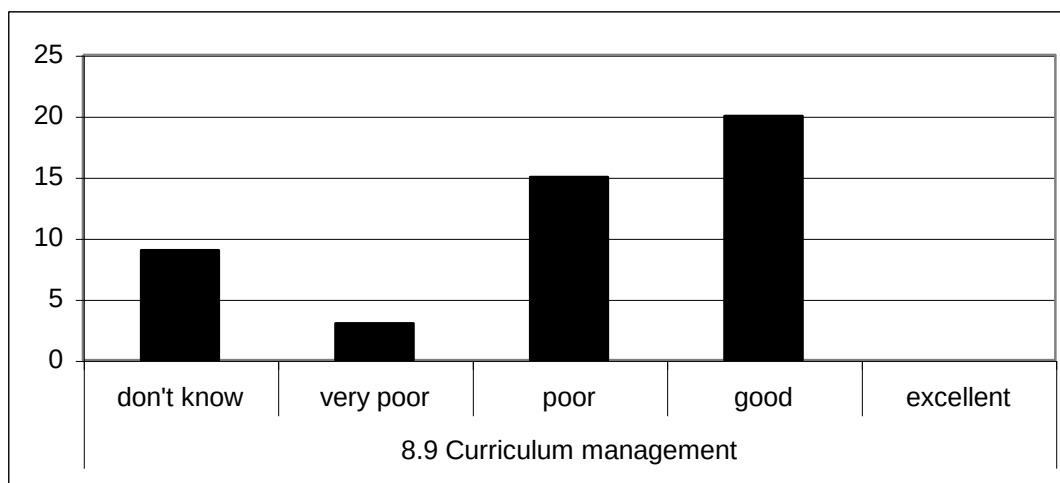
Figure 52: School Governing Body**Figure 53: Representative Council of Learners****Figure 54: Curriculum Management**

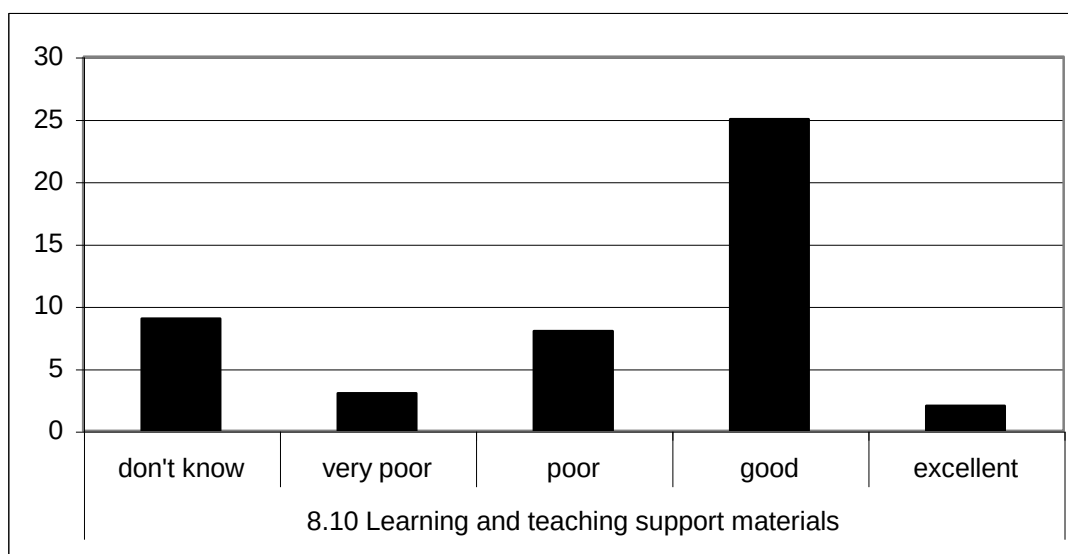
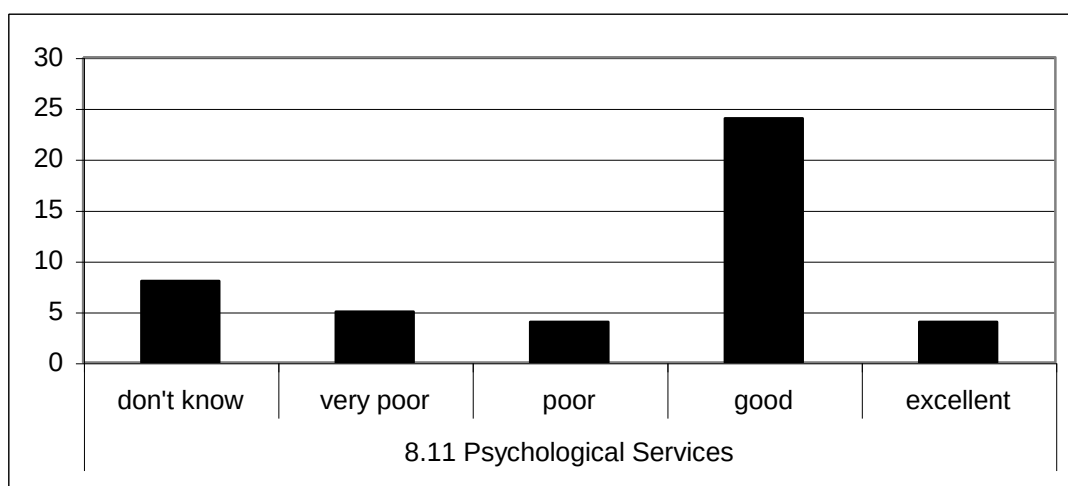
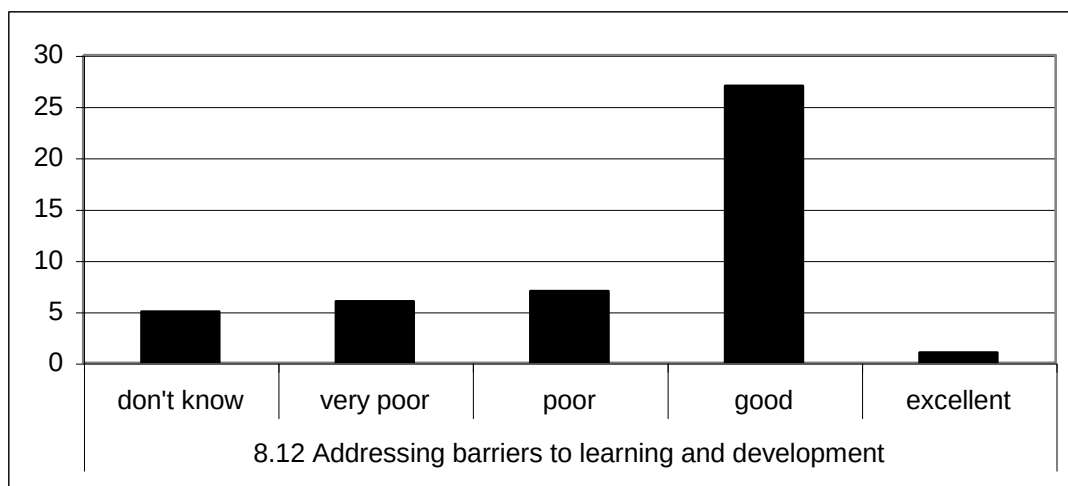
Figure 55: Learning and Teaching Support Materials**Figure 56: Psychological Services****Figure 57: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Development**

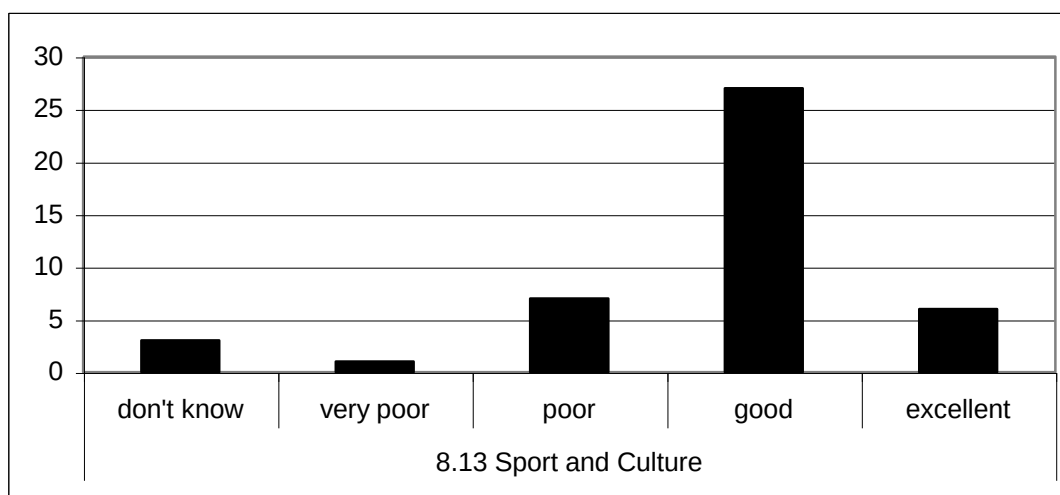
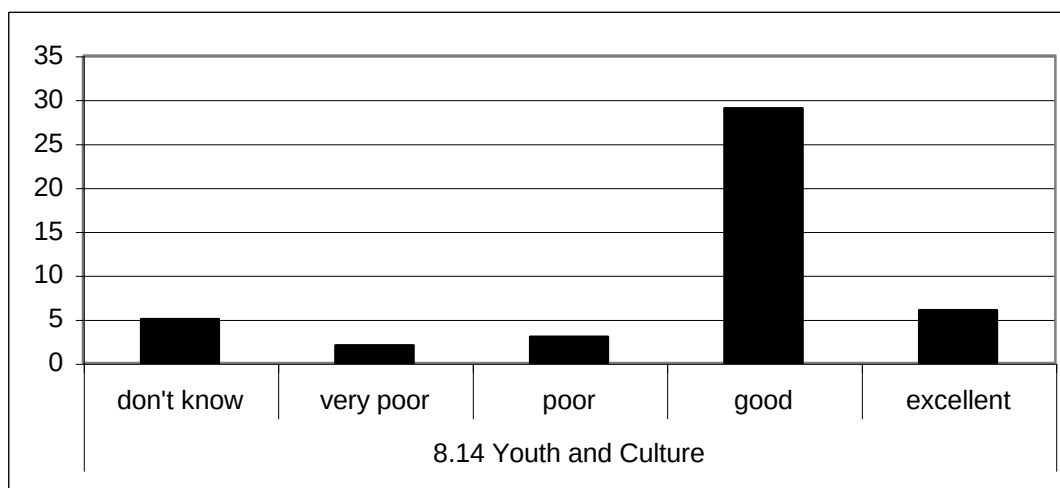
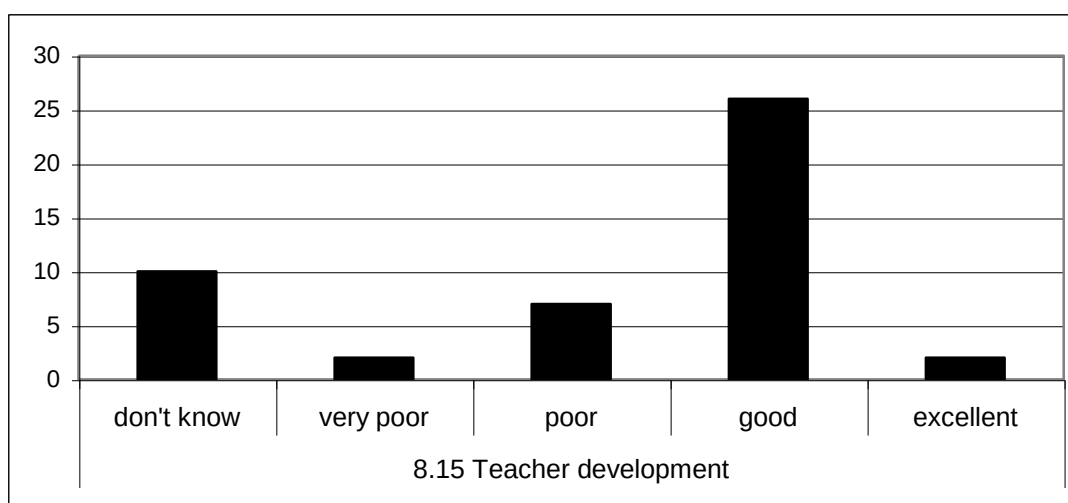
Figure 58: Sports and Culture**Figure 59: Youth and Culture****Figure 60: Teacher Development**

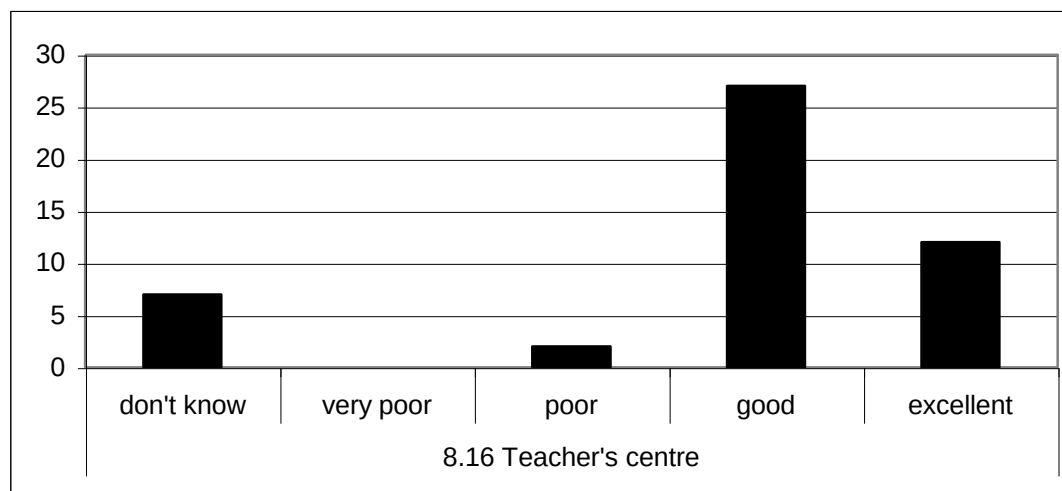
Figure 61: Teacher Centre

Table 19 indicates the mode for all the questions relating to skills.

Table 19: Modal Rating on Skills Level of Staff

	Learning Programmes, Framework Development and Support unit	
8.1	Curriculum content	Good
8.2	Curriculum methodology	Good
8.3	Assessment	Good
8.4	Inclusion	Good
	Institutional Development and Support unit	
8.5	Admissions	Good
8.6	Management support	Good
8.7	School Governing Body	Good
8.8	Representative Council of Learners	Good
8.9	Curriculum management	Good
8.10	Learning and teaching support materials	Good
	Education Support Services unit	
8.11	Psychological Services	Good
8.12	Addressing barriers to learning and development	Good
8.13	Sports and culture	Good
8.14	Youth and culture	Good
	Teacher Development unit	
8.15	Teacher development	Good
8.16	Teacher centre	Good

Table 20 asks the respondents to suggest ways of improving on the skills level. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 20 has 47 responses from 30 respondents.

Table 20: What Can You Suggest to Improve on the Skills Level in the District?

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Workshops and capacity building on skills required	11
2	Do a skills audit	8
3	Recruitment/appointment of competent and experienced individuals	3
3	Implement the performance management and development scheme	3
4	Obtain services of well-qualified service providers or experienced professionals	2
4	Develop each other and share ideas with each other in unit meetings	2
4	Courses on computer literacy	2
5	Self-mastery	1
5	Have a good grasp of policies from head-office and national	1
5	More development workshops for all officials according to their job description	1
5	Adding officials to units that are understaffed	1
5	Make more use of teacher centre and district library	1
5	Skills development should be ongoing	1
5	Skills development should be in line with the business world	1
5	No resources should be spared in training if we are to keep abreast with the ever changing technologies	1
5	Avoid undermining inputs from, labelling or discriminating against other unit members.	1
5	Training on administrative skills and interpersonal skills	1
5	Training should be provided with equal opportunities for all	1
5	One/two year sponsored courses	1
5	A strategy that will ensure that skills are utilised to the fullest	1
5	Know employees strengths and weaknesses and tap into their strengths	1
5	The teacher development unit needs to have consultative meetings with other units before deciding on capacity building programmes	1
5	Common understanding of inclusion	1
	No response	19

5.10 Helping District Curriculum Delivery

In Table 21, the respondents are asked to describe two key issues which currently help district curriculum delivery. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 21 has 66 responses from 36 respondents

Table 21: Describe Two Key Issues, which Help District Curriculum Delivery

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Good communication	9
2	Training of district officials	8
3	Good management style	7
4	Workshops for educators	6
5	Regular school visits	5
5	Support to schools	5
6	Commitment of district officials	4
6	Team work	4
6	Proper planning	4
6	Sufficient resources	4
7	The relationship between head-office and districts	2
7	Give educators enough time to do their work properly without overloading them with extra things	2
8	Survey on needs analysis for schools	1
8	Show appreciation to staff	1
8	Job satisfaction	1
8	Upholding the vision of the GDE	1
8	Transparency	1
8	Proactiveness on the part of policy developers	1
	No response	12

5.11 Hindering District Curriculum Delivery

In Table 22, the respondents are asked to describe two key issues which currently hinder district curriculum delivery. This was an open-ended question for which content analysis was conducted. Table 22 has 66 responses from 36 respondents.

Table 22: Describe Two Key Issues, which Hinder District Curriculum Delivery

Ranking	Answers	No. of responses
1	Poor communication	9
2	Poor co-ordination between head-office and districts	8
2	Lack of capacity	8
3	Poor management style	6
4	Lack of planning	4
4	Poorly run workshops for schools – overburdening educators, lack of preparation, non-attendance	4
4	Lack of dedication and commitment by some officials	4
5	Very strict timeframes	3
6	No mentoring	2
6	Lack of skills and professionalism	2
6	Facilitators involved in too many different projects	2
6	Poor co-ordination of activities	2
7	Dissatisfaction	1
7	Poorly defined job description	1
7	Short and unstructured LPFDS meetings	1
7	No clearly formulated vision and mission	1
7	Budgetary constraints	1
7	Too little time to check up on implementation of training	1
7	Procurement	1
7	Lack of support to schools	1
7	Changes in policy	1
7	Negative attitude of schools	1
7	Continuous crisis management	1
7	Lack of transport	1
	No response	13

There are significant patterns which have emerged in this results chapter. These results are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

6. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the interpretation of research results which were described in chapter 5. The research results will be analysed in terms of the literature review in chapter 2. The results will also be analysed in terms of the research propositions outlined in chapter 3.

6.2 Sample Description

District curriculum officials formed the sample. Fifty one questionnaires were distributed and forty nine were returned. The district officials have very high levels of experience in the education system (Figure 10). They are also highly qualified (Figure 11).

6.3 Effectiveness of District Curriculum Delivery

At the outset of the questionnaire, 30 officials out of 49 felt that the district's curriculum delivery was moderately effective. This is significant in that the overall perception of the district's curriculum delivery is largely positive. Generally the respondents maintained this positive outlook throughout the rest of the questionnaire. The top initial recommendations on improving curriculum delivery, indicated in Table 3, were as follows: "fill all vacant posts" (staff); "improved alignment of activities" (strategy); "better planning" (strategy); "more support to educators" (systems) and "better workshops" (systems).

6.4 Proposition 1:

The district does not have a coherent strategy in place for curriculum delivery.

District officials rated the district's operational plan as "good" (Figure 13). This could be attributed to the fact that district officials had drawn up the operational plan themselves and thus there was high participation and therefore ownership. However, the level of satisfaction drops considerably with the implementation of the operational plan (Figure 14). There was not

even one official who rated the implementation as excellent with a substantial amount of officials rating implementation as “poor” and “very poor”. It is generally acknowledged in the literature that there is a huge gap between plans and implementation. This is similar to the policy formulation and policy implementation scenario. The DoE has some of the best educational policies in the world but struggles to implement them. As de Clerq (2001a) has pointed out, the DoE sets the policies while the provinces are tasked with implementing them. A major challenge, therefore, for the district is to improve on its capacity for implementation. At the heart of implementation is the district’s management skills level and its ability to monitor the implementation of plans.

The integrated scorecard was considered to be “good” (Figure 15). However nine officials could not rate this question which is considerably higher than other questions. This ties in with the sixth ranking in Table 5 which suggests that “everybody should be workshopped on the integrated scorecard”. This implies that a number of district officials don’t know much about the integrated scorecard. The integrated scorecard is developed at head-office and is uniform for all districts. There is also a significant “poor” and “very poor” rating for the integrated scorecard. This is in strong contrast to the district’s operational plan. The integrated scorecard used by the GDE is a far cry from the balanced scorecard developed by Kaplan & Norton (1996). The GDE uses the integrated scorecard as a lengthy checklist without any focus on the four perspectives of the balanced scorecard (JED, 2003). The GDE has taken a powerful tool and reduced it to a shell.

Khulisa & CEPD (2002a) have criticised what they term the new public managerialist tools which have added to the stress of officials because they have not been given sufficient support and training in these new public managerialist tools. For de Clerq (2000), these tools are an attempt to centralise power in the GDE. It could be argued that the GDE has gone for advanced planning systems without the necessary training and support of district officials.

Most officials considered quarterly reports to be “poor” (Figure 16). This was one of the few instances where a “poor” rating was modal (Table 4). There is clearly a problem with the system of quarterly reports. The third and fourth rankings of the suggestions in Table 5 concern the quarterly report. The suggestions are that the quarterly report should “provide insight into the way forward” and also that the “format should be clear”.

Table 5 looked at suggestions for improvement. The suggestions were topped by the idea that units “should sit together and plan activities”. This would suggest that one or two individuals are planning for the unit as a whole. This implies that the district would often just submit the operational plan because of a short deadline to meet head-office’s requirement without thoroughly involving all members in a unit in drawing up the operational plan.

The second highest suggestion is that communication between units should be improved. Different units need to communicate more about strategy. One unit’s plans will affect another unit’s plans. This ties in with a fifth level ranking about “proper alignment”. Improved communication comes up under almost every proposition and needs to be given serious attention. The fifth suggestion of proper alignment of district activities goes hand in hand with eliminating “unnecessary duplication”. Another fifth level suggestion is that “proper feedback from management” is needed. This echoes similar suggestions, which have emerged under the proposition on management style. A further suggestion that “morale and respect needs to be developed” is also important. This reinforces suggestions under the proposition on shared values which follow later. Even though the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ is the organising framework, there is nevertheless a considerable amount of overlap between the different propositions.

The level of strategising at the district is very basic. There seems to be a schism between head-office which develops the strategies and the district which simply implements. This undermines the district’s ability to strategise and therefore ownership of strategies is compromised. This is in tandem with Fleisch (2002b: 22) who asserts that: “The overarching strategic thinking around districts is often fuzzy and even contradictory.” If the district becomes

merely an implementer, then their strategic skills become non-existent. The district's strategy is not as good as it should be, precisely because it does not take the time to develop strategies and depends on head-office to play this role.

From the above comments, it can be noted that district officials felt that most of the items under strategy were "good" besides the system of quarterly reports, which stands out in that it is considered to be "poor". The district officials feel that strategy is functional. Therefore the proposition is rejected. However, according to Table 5, there are certain areas where improvement is needed. Better planning should be done by the unit as a whole. Furthermore, there should be improved "communication between units". "Quarterly reports should provide insight into the way forward" and the quarterly report "format should be clear".

6.5 Proposition 2:

The structure of the district is not appropriate for effective curriculum delivery.

Figure 17 indicates that district officials felt that their unit functioned "well" and quite a number also felt that their unit functioned "excellently". The LPFDS unit is very large and is subdivided into phases. In this question, officials were only rating their own unit/phase and it can be expected that they would rate it positively. Figure 18 demonstrates that although the modal rating on effective coordination between the various CDS units is poor, it is only marginally so. Given that the CDS sub-directorate is fairly large in numbers i.e. 52 district officials as indicated in Figure 2, this would pose coordination problems. The 'tweaked organogram' has moved the IDS unit and the ESS (Education Support Services) unit out of the Curriculum Delivery subdirectorate which will make this problem easier to handle.

Figure 19 indicates that there is a poor relationship between head-office and the district office. However there is only a marginal difference. This points to a

serious problem in the GDE. Head office cannot implement anything in schools without going through the districts. The poor relationship between head-office and districts is a major structural weakness in the organisation. The problems between head-office and the district office could be attributed to the recentralisation of power by head-office (de Clerq, 2000).

On the other hand, district officials perceive that there is a good relationship between the district office and schools (Figure 20). It remains to be seen whether schools would respond in same way. One of the areas where further research is needed is to run a similar survey with schools as the target group as opposed to district officials.

Figure 21 deals with the issue of autonomy of districts. There is a clear indication that the majority would prefer a situation of moderate autonomy. Quite a sizeable number have even opted for the district to be “very autonomous”. The tensions between head-office and the district have fed directly into this debate.

Table 6 indicates that there are two areas, which need attention. These have already been alluded to above i.e. the coordination of CDS units and the relationship between head-office and districts. Table 7 provides suggestions for improving on structure. The highest ranking suggestion was for “improved communication”. A clear lack of communication is perceived by district officials. The lack of communication exists at various levels i.e. “between units in the district, between schools and the district office and between head-office and districts”. The second highest ranking is for “more collaboration between units”. This reinforces the problem mentioned in relation to figure 18, which indicates that there is poor coordination between units.

The third highest suggestion is for “districts to have much more autonomy from head-office. Patel (2001) has argued persuasively for more autonomy for districts. GDE has swung between extremes on the pendulum. The GDE started off being fairly decentralised but in the past few years has recentralised power (de Clerq, 2000). At the heart of the debate is whether

districts will be more effective with more or less autonomy. Proponents of centralisation argue that a strong head-office is needed to drive programmes and that without this clear direction, districts would falter. On the opposite end, proponents of decentralisation argue that the creativity and initiative at district level is being smothered (de Clerq, 2000). It seems that the GDE needs to find this illusive balance and not swing from pole to pole.

The three key structures in the GDE are the provincial department, the district and the school. It is not uncommon under times of stress for the one structure to blame the other as the perceived source of stress. A common tactic when there are problems is to blame someone else. According to de Clerq (2001a: 46-47), there are multiple tensions between provincial department, districts and schools “with each blaming the other for the policy overload, weak implementation capacity and resources, and little quality delivery”. One needs to locate the tensions between the provincial department, the district and schools within this context of pressure and stress.

A number of suggestions on improving structure revolve around improving the people in the structures. It is suggested that coordinators should “lead by example”, that “better support from management” is required, that “people in structures should have strong characters” and that there should be “qualified staff in structures”. It is well recognised that for structures to function effectively, the people filling the structures need to be good (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Some of these suggestions for improving structure relate to staff and will be taken up under proposition 5 on staff. There is an interesting suggestion which argues that a change of structure will not improve matters but rather that “culture and leadership need attention”. This reinforces Schein’s (1992) contention and will be analysed in more depth under proposition 6. This also demonstrates the interrelatedness of the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ and its focus on alignment between the various S’s.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that there is a need to improve the relationship between head-office and the districts which could threaten to undermine the effectiveness of the GDE as a whole. There is “poor”

coordination between the CDS units. There is a need for “improved communication between units in the district, between schools and the district office, between head office and the districts”. Therefore the proposition on structure is accepted.

6.6 Proposition 3:

The various systems i.e. communication, finance, school visits and workshops are not sufficiently geared to supporting curriculum delivery.

This section has been divided into two parts i.e. communication and finance; and school visits and workshops. Communication and finance systems will be considered first while school visits and workshops will be considered second. District officials find the circulars from head-office to be “good” (Figure 22). However, there is not one “excellent” response. They also find the curriculum booklets from head-office to be “good” (Figure 23). There are ten respondents who “don’t know” which could suggest that they have not seen these booklets. Generally the district officials are also pleased with correspondence from the district office to schools (Figure 24). In a huge bureaucracy such as the GDE, it is vital that there is a clear communication system. This good communication is supported by the above analysis.

While there is general satisfaction with the communication system, the financial system is heavily criticised (Figure 25). There is a similar dissatisfaction from district officials on the procurement system (Figure 26). Procurement falls under the financial system in this research. In Table 8, the mode on communication matters is good while on financial and procurement matters it is poor.

Table 9 provides suggestions for improving communication and financial systems. It is remarkable that out of 64 suggestions for improvement, only three refer to communications. This indicates that communication systems are fine while financial and procurement systems require urgent attention. It is

also significant that out of the remaining 61 suggestions, 52 are related to procurement. This serious preoccupation with the procurement system indicates major frustration with the current procurement procedures.

As occurred under structure in proposition 2, “information systems and communication on procurement” was the most popular suggestion. The second highest ranking provides a number of logistical ideas for improving procurement such as timeous notification of the project leader as to who the appointed service provider is. Although such details may look small, they can derail the plans of curriculum delivery. The third highest ranking proposed that “qualified and knowledgeable people need to handle procurement”. This refers to administrative staff that are responsible for the procurement process. Generally administrative staff are not as highly educated as curriculum staff. This leads to frustration by the curriculum staff that their projects are not handled properly by administrative staff in the provisioning unit.

The fourth highest ranking is an issue that often crops up in relation to procurement is “honesty and transparency in selecting service providers”. This is a big challenge to the GDE as the implications of dishonesty in the procurement process would seriously undermine proper curriculum delivery. Transparency also begs a number of questions such as: who is making the selection and based on what criteria? There is a real tension between getting the cheapest quote and getting service providers who can provide real value. To some extent the procurement system is biased towards the cheapest quote which may not always provide real value. The challenge for district officials is to navigate the bureaucratic procurement system to ensure that their curriculum objectives are achieved. Waspe (2002) has argued that any effective delivery of curriculum would have to not only understand public sector procedures but also negotiate them properly. This is easier said than done. This calls for multi-skilling of district officials who need not only to be curriculum experts but also able to achieve their objectives within a bureaucratic system. The empowerment of administrative officials is also urgent because any lack of skill on their part will inevitably affect curriculum delivery.

There are two fifth level rankings which both concern the GSSC. One suggests opening “more communication channels” with them and the other suggests reversing “the procurement system back from the Gauteng Shared Services Centre to the district”. One of the reasons why the GSSC was established in the first place, was precisely to overcome the inefficient procurement procedures of the 11 departments in Gauteng. However, given that the GSSC has such a wide scope of work and a relatively short history, it will be some time before its systems start operating optimally. A sixth level ranking states succinctly that “procurement must stop being such a last minute activity”. This is a pattern prevalent where the actual appointment of the service provider is done at the last minute, which results in numerous errors.

It is clear from the suggestions contained in Table 9 that the implications of poor procurement would mean poor curriculum delivery and support. Hence questions of curriculum delivery are inevitably intertwined with the procurement process.

The second part of this proposition on systems is on school visits and workshops. District officials feel that their unit visits to schools are good (Figure 27). Given that district officials are doing less and less training, the majority of their work thus occurs in school visits. In terms of the debate on what combination of pressure and support the unit provides, the overwhelming majority uses a low pressure/high support combination (Figure 28). One of the strengths of this questionnaire is that a question distils a major debate and asks district officials to make a simple choice. This is an important finding because, according to the district officials, the major part of their role is support with an element of pressure. In terms of the debate in the literature review (Fleisch, 2001) on the balance between pressure and support, this survey clearly states that while some pressure is necessary, the focus of district officials is primarily support. This is in direct contrast to de Clerq’s (2002a) finding that many district officials “understand their work narrowly as

passing down policies and ensuring that the latter are implemented at school level”. This does not seem to be the case in this district.

The GDE is structured very hierarchically with clear divisions of work located in particular units. Matrix visits are one of the few opportunities where officials work across units. While the mode for matrix visits is “good”, the combination of the “poor” and “very poor” ratings is higher (Figure 29). There is thus a need for improvement on matrix visits.

Switching over to workshops, district officials feel that workshops are well presented by their unit (Figure 30). Similarly, they also feel that the workshops run by service providers are also well presented (Figure 31). The modal rating in Table 10 indicates in each case that district officials are satisfied with school visits and workshops.

Table 14 indicates the suggestions for improving school visits and workshops. The most popular suggestion is on the district’s relationship to service providers i.e. “some service providers should not be used again, should be well researched beforehand”. There is a big debate underway in the GDE about the whether the GDE is receiving value for its money from service providers. Very little quality assurance is done. Penalties are seldom, if ever, imposed for poor delivery as occurs in building projects. This also raises the issue of district officials running workshops. If all workshops are run by service providers the district could cut down on its staff complement dramatically. There should be some type of balance between in-house workshops and outside service provider workshops.

The second level ranking is on “immediate feedback to the school after a visit”. Given that school visits are the major component of a district official’s job description, it is vital that there be proper feedback to the school. The third level ties in with the previous one that “school visits should have a clear purpose and focus”. Rushed, unclear visits do not add value. It is important that the purpose of a school visit is clearly worked out if there is to be some meaningful gain. The shortage of monitoring instruments is also a problem in

this regard (Tloubatla, 2003). Given that district support occurs primarily in school visits, further research is needed to establish the level of this support. Basic questions such as the length of time an official spends in a school needs to be established. Is the support given in the classroom or outside the classroom? How many visits does an educator receive per annum from a district official in his/her learning area? This is a critical area for future research.

The next third level ranking calls for a “needs analysis for workshops”. It would seem that topics for workshops always come from district officials or particular programmes that originate at head-office and that a needs analysis had not been undertaken. The next three rankings concern workshops. There should be “regular reviews of workshops”, no “duplication of workshops” and “district facilitators should be trained in workshop presentation skills”. Workshops are a crucial site of interaction between district officials and educators. The manner in which those workshops are run will impact on the credibility of district officials long after the workshop is over.

The proposition on systems is rejected. However, serious attention needs to be given to the procurement system.

6.7 Proposition 4:

The management style is not appropriate to providing effective curriculum delivery.

The research does not distinguish between different levels of management (senior manager, deputy director and unit coordinator) but groups these together. These three levels could have a wide range of management styles but it was not feasible to analyse them separately. Figure 32 indicates that district officials find that the management style is “good” but by adding the “poor” and “very poor” ratings, the “good” rating is only marginally ahead. This links up with Waspe’s (2002: 5) criticism (although he is referring to managers

across the GDE) that managers have “minimal experience at managing large bureaucratic institutions (and) inadequate emphasis on the development of business processes and systems”.

There is only a “somewhat close” match between what management says and what management does (Figure 33). The sign of a good leader is the ability to match words with actions. According to Robbins (1998: 326): “When the implicit messages that managers send contradict the official messages as conveyed in formal communications, the managers lose credibility with employees.”

A key aspect of style is how district officials come across when working with schools. According to Figure 34, district officials come across well. Once again this would be an important question to put to schools as they would be the best judges of this. This issue is not directed at management but at district officials.

Leadership is an important aspect of management. District officials rate the leadership provided by management as “good” but by adding the “poor” and “very poor” ratings, it is only marginally so (Figure 35). Kotter’s words seem apt: “the people in charge today are too concerned with keeping things on time and on budget and with doing what was done yesterday, only with doing it 5 percent better” (cited in Robbins, 1998: 347).

Table 12 provides the modal rating of the management style. The way district officials come across is not really a management issue. The match between words and behaviour, is on the negative side. Impressions of management style and leadership have an almost equal number of positive and negative ratings.

Table 13 looks at the suggestions on improving management style in the district. Once again, the most popular suggestion is “improved communication and consultation with staff”. This distinctly specifies that in addition to communication there is also a need for more consultation. Improved

communication has been the most popular suggestion under structure, communication and financial systems and the second highest suggestion under strategy. There is clearly a need for systems which will allow for improved communication in the district. Downward communication needs to be balanced with upward and lateral communication (Robbins, 1998).

The second highest suggestion is that “there should be less favouritism”. Favouritism makes for an ineffective organisation. Those who are less favoured will not perform to their full potential. This goes directly against the grain of an anti-bias approach, which the GDE has adopted as one of its training programmes (Koopman & Robb, 1997). A third level ranking is that “management should be more present at meetings, school visits and workshops”. This would suggest that district officials would like to see management more present in their interactions with schools, in other words at the frontline. Another third level ranking wants “management to be more approachable, work more closely and talk more to district officials”. A fourth level ranking suggests directly that “top-down management should be avoided”. Top-down management styles are old fashioned and are somewhat out of kilter with a democratic South Africa. These suggestions are all similar in that they are urging management to move down closer to district officials, to have improved communication and consultation, and for less favouritism, in short a move away from a top-down management style (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Handy, 1989; Kanter, 1989 and Robbins, 1998).

In the next fourth level ranking, district officials recommend that “there should be more support systems and mentoring”. Given that district officials work under an enormous amount of pressure, support systems are crucial. A mentoring system is a powerful idea to help develop people in their jobs. From the above, it can be noted that district officials have found it far easier to be critical of management than they have of themselves. They have switched from ‘easy raters’ to a ‘hard raters’ (Cooper & Schindler, 1998). This is to some extent to be expected.

As Mc Lennan (2000: 288) has noted, there is a great variety of management capacity and skills between districts which to a large extent reflects the “leadership style of the District Director”. Leadership is essentially a personal style. This reinforces Law & Glover’s (2000: 8) assertion, that it is crucial to know “when to ‘push’, when to ‘support’ and when to give others the opportunities to lead”.

From the above, it can be seen that there is a poor match between what management say and what they do. The positive and negative ratings on impressions of management style and the leadership provided by management are almost equal. There is a need for “improved communication and consultation with staff” and for “less favouritism”. There is a need for “management to be more present” and to be “more approachable”. Therefore the proposition on management style is accepted.

6.8 Proposition 5:

The staff are not properly recruited, motivated or retained for providing effective curriculum delivery.

Figure 36 indicates that staff are “moderately motivated” for providing effective curriculum delivery. Similarly, district officials are “moderately trained” for providing effective curriculum delivery (Figure 37).

In terms of performance management, although the mode is “well”, the “poorly” and “very poorly” ratings jointly easily outweigh the “well” and “excellent” ratings (Figure 38). It is however, significant that 11 respondents indicate a “don’t know” for this question. This could possibly be because the Performance Management and Development Scheme was only introduced into the GDE in 2003 (Education Labour Relations Council, 2002). The problem of dual accountability for district officials is a serious one (de Clerq, 2002a). At the end of the day to whom does a district official really report? There can also be a long and cumbersome process of sorting out a problem

with a district official. If a particular district official does not carry out a provincial programme properly, the reporting process would go something like this. The head-office official would complain to his/her head-office senior manager that a district official has not done his/her job properly. The head-office senior manager would then complain to the district senior manager about the concerned district official. The district senior manager would then eventually take it up with the concerned district official.

Figure 39 indicates that the calibre of staff recruited by the district is “good”. One of the recurring problems around recruitment however, is that when the GDE does recruit, it all happens at once through a big advertisement in the newspaper. Most of the vacant posts at head-office and the districts are filled by existing head-office and district personnel. The implication of this is that new vacancies are created. The advertising process is so slow that it then takes about a year to fill the new vacancy (JED, 2003). In essence, the staff capacity does not increase in real terms. The vacant posts simply play musical chairs.

In Figure 40, on how well the district retains staff, the mode is a “low turnover”. However, if one adds the “very low” and “low” together and the “high” and “very high” together, there is an equal amount on both sides. Eight respondents are unable to answer. However, a look at an original staff list indicates that 27 out of 49 curriculum officials left the district since its inception, i.e. a turnover of 55 percent (GDE, 2001b). This is a direct follow-up to the contention that promotion posts in the LPFDS section (which is by far the biggest unit in the CDS) are limited and thus LPFDS officials move to other posts where their curriculum expertise is lost (JED, 2002).

The majority indicate that they do not have a clear, written job description (Figure 41). The lack of a clear written job description will have significant consequences for proper performance management. An even greater majority indicate that career pathing has not been done for them (Figure 42). This relates to the high levels of mobility in the district. The district does not engage in career pathing which is left solely in the hands of the individual.

Table 14 provides the modal rating of staff. Although the mode of performance management is “well”, the “poor” and “very poor” ratings outweigh the “well”. This indicates that attention needs to be paid to this situation. The district turnover of staff is high which indicates that not all is well in the district. The fact that district officials do not have clear, written job description is cause for concern as is the fact that career pathing has not been done for district officials. This means that the district continues to lose its best staff because there is little room for upward mobility in a district.

Table 15 deals with the suggestions to improve on staff. The most popular suggestion is that “Staff development workshops should be run”. District officials realise that if they are to do their jobs properly, they need to be developed so as to keep abreast of the issues in their field. The second highest suggestion states that “Recruitment should be more thorough by taking greater care and appointing people who are loyal and committed.” Getting the right people into the job prevents possible problems later on. It is clear from the above that the GDE lacks a clear recruitment strategy. This reinforces Rowney’s, (2002: 98) argument that the GDE needs to manage its resources holistically, if it wants to “attract and retain adequately skilled staff, and maximise its return on human capital”. One of the key weaknesses of the GDE as a whole and the district in particular, is the weak human resources strategy.

The third highest ranking suggests that “All vacancies must be filled so that the workload is manageable and there is no ‘babysitting’ of vacant positions.” While this was one of the top rankings which respondents gave at the onset of the questionnaire (Table 3), it is interesting to note that it has now fallen to third place. Another third level ranking calls for the motivation of staff. This is a key problem. If staff are not motivated, they are hardly likely to perform well. As there is relatively little financial incentive, motivation levels play an important role in determining whether an individual performs well or not. Most staff issues normally fall under the human resources department. It needs to be taken into account that the Human Resource Management and

Development subdirectorates were only introduced at district level in February 2001 (GDE, 2001a).

Given that performance management is poor, that there is a high turnover of staff, that there are only a few with a job description and almost no career pathing done by the district, the proposition on staff is accepted.

6.9 Proposition 6:

There are insufficient shared values, which hold the district together.

This section starts off differently to the other propositions, by asking respondents what the shared values of the district are (Table 16). The highest ranking is that “the district does not have any shared values.” The raw score here is more than double the second highest ranking. This indicates that there is a serious problem around shared values. If shared values are meant to be the glue which holds the district together then in this instance they have failed. The district lags behind other organisations where values and culture have replaced formal structures as the glue which holds organisations together (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Instead de Clerq’s (2001a) assertion, that bureaucratic values still hold sway, would seem to be borne out.

The second highest ranking is “service delivery to schools”. This is the *raison d’être* of the district so it makes sense that it is captured as the highest shared value. This is also mentioned in the GDEs (2003b) vision statement. The third highest ranking is “teamwork”. However this is immediately undone by the fourth highest ranking which is “lack of teamwork”. Another fourth level ranking is “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*” (a person is a person through other people). This ties in with the value of *ubuntu* which is mentioned in the GDEs (2003b) vision statement. According to the district officials, these are the shared values, as contradictory as they are, which exist in the district.

Figure 43 indicates that the mode of the rating of the shared values is “good”. However, the “very poor” and “poor” together easily add up to more than the “good” and “excellent” ratings. This follows on with the finding in Table 16 which indicated that “the district does not have any shared values.” Figure 44 indicates that the work ethos of district officials is “good” but again it is not by a very high margin. This bears out de Clerq’s (2001a) assertion that because reward systems are non-existent, a culture of poor work ethics can set in. The role of the leadership in developing the values of the district officials is seen as “poor” (Figure 45). For Schein (1992), the most important role of a leader is precisely the creation and management of culture. This ties in with the poor management style indicated under proposition 4.

Table 17 looks at the modal rating of shared values. The shared values and work ethos are rated as “good” while the role of leadership is rated as “poor”. Table 18 provides the suggestions on improving shared values in the district. The top ranking suggestion is “creating shared values”. This makes perfect sense as the majority found that there were no shared values. The second highest ranking is “more effective communication around shared values”. Communication has come up consistently in the previous propositions. This implies that the district really needs to get its communication strategies in place. More importantly the district needs to create the space where officials can freely discuss what their shared values are and what they would like them to be.

A third level ranking is to “treat all officials equally”. This leads on from Table 13 on management style in which the second highest ranking was that “there should be less favouritism”. One of the strengths of the ‘McKinsey Seven-S Framework’ is that it seeks alignment between the seven S’s. In this case, it was felt that the management style should display less favouritism. It follows logically that a desirable shared value of the district would be to treat people equally. Weisbord (1987: 378) expresses this succinctly: “Unless we treat one another as equals, we cannot find dignity, meaning, and community in our work.”

Another third level ranking wants “management to show an interest in district officials’ work”. This is an unusual request that one does not often find when compiling values for vision and mission statements. However, showing an interest in district officials’ work is a powerful value in this particular context where officials may feel neglected. A fourth level ranking calls for “teambuilding” which is appropriate given the assertion in Table 16 that there is a lack of teamwork. There needs to be greater efforts at teambuilding. An annual teambuilding event will probably not suffice.

Schein (1992) argues for a deeper understanding of culture. He finds that often problems which are perceived to be communication failures or lack of teamwork, as mentioned above, are in essence cultural problems. This would seem to be the case in the district. There are deeper problems around culture which seem to manifest themselves as communication or teamwork problems. Similarly, Davidoff & Lazarus (1997) place culture at the centre of their model of the school highlighting the importance of acknowledging and transforming culture. Schein (1992) posits three levels of culture i.e. artefacts, espoused values and basic underlying assumptions. It would seem that, in the case of the district, the artefacts are fine, but when one moves down to the espoused values and basic underlying assumptions then the district is deeply divided. Some of the GDEs attempts to transform the district may have failed precisely because the culture does not fit with the business strategy (Cummings & Worley, 2001).

From the above, it can be seen that the shared values of the district are in disarray. The proposition is therefore accepted.

6.10 Proposition 7:

The district facilitators do not have the required skills for curriculum delivery.

The results of proposition 7 are remarkably similar. The rating mode for all 16 questions was “good” without exception (Table19). Even by adding “poor” and

“very poor” ratings together, the modal pattern remained “good” on each skill. This analysis will thus focus on any slight variations to this pattern. For example, if a particular skill had a higher “excellent” or “poor” or “very poor” or “don’t know” rating than normal then this will be analysed. Each respondent rated every unit irrespective of whether they belonged to the unit or not. Once again, it should be noted that district officials are rating themselves and their colleagues. This is what Cooper & Schindler (1998) have termed the ‘easy raters’. Were this to be done by schools, the ‘hard raters’, a completely different pattern could emerge. The skills level of the various units in the CDS subdirectorate (Figure 2) will be analysed separately.

The first unit is the LPFDS unit. Curriculum content skills (Figure 46) and curriculum methodology skills (Figure 47) were rated as “good”. Assessment skills had a slightly higher than normal poor rating which needs to be investigated (Figure 48). Assessment has become a controversial area amongst educators and entailed a whole host of changes in assessment procedures. Inclusion skills (Figure 49) also had a slightly higher poor rating. Inclusion can be compared to assessment, which is also a highly specialised area. On the whole, the skills level rating of the LPFDS unit is “good”.

The second unit to be analysed is the IDS unit. Admissions skills were rated as “good” (Figure 50). In contrast, management support skills had a high “poor” rating (Figure 51). School Governing Body skills were rated as “good” (Figure 52). However, in Representative Council of Learner skills, there was a high poor rating and an even higher “don’t know” rating (Figure 53). Both School Governing Bodies and Representative Council of Learners are governance structures in schools which are supposed to be supported by IDS officials. The higher incidence of “don’t know” answers could suggest that IDS officials spend less time at Representative Council of Learners meetings than they do at School Governing Body meetings and therefore speak less about them. In terms of curriculum management skills, IDS officials score the highest “poor” rating for all 16 skills (Figure 54). The combination of “very poor” and “poor” ratings almost exceed the “good” and “excellent” ratings.

There have been numerous complaints by LPFDS officials that the IDS officials are lagging behind in their understanding of C2005 and outcomes-based education. This is made worse by IDS officials who tend to abrogate curriculum management to LPFDS officials because of their lack of expertise in it (JED, 2003). Learning and teaching support materials are rated as “good” (Figure 55). On the whole, the skills level rating of the IDS unit is weaker than the other units.

The third unit to be analysed is the ESS unit. Psychological services are rated as “good” (Figure 56). There is some concern in relation to addressing barriers to learning with the ratings on “very poor” and “poor” (Figure 57). Both sport and culture (Figure 58) and youth and culture (Figure 59) are rated as “good” and they both have some indication of “excellence”. On the whole, the skills level rating of the ESS unit is “good”.

The fourth unit to be analysed is the Teacher Development unit. Teacher development is rated as “good” (Figure 60). However, there is a very high “don’t know” component which suggests that the other units do not know what programmes the teacher development unit is running. It is noteworthy that, the teacher’s centre receives the highest measure of “excellence” in all 16 categories (Figure 61). This suggests that the teacher’s centre officials have the respect of their peers. On the whole, the skills level rating of the Teacher Development unit is “good”.

As indicated above, the mode of all the skills ratings is “good” (Table 19). In terms of a comparison between the units, the IDS unit has fared the worst while the Teacher Development unit has fared the best. An area for improvement in the skills level, is to increase the number of “excellent” ratings.

Table 20 provides the suggestions for improvement on the skills level. As expected, the highest ranking suggestion is “workshops and capacity building on skills required”. The GDE recognises that “competence of personnel requires great development and is the major challenge of the department”

(GDE, 2003c: 21). Everybody agrees that this is the key challenge. The question remains as to how the GDE goes about this. As mentioned previously, de Clerq (2002a), is highly critical of the effect of the training programmes that the GDE has put in place.

The second highest suggestion is to “do a skills audit.” This is a valuable suggestion and could lead to a plan on raising the skills level. A third level ranking is the “recruitment/appointment of competent and experienced individuals.” This aligns itself well with suggestions already made under the staff proposition. This reinforces Rowney’s (2002) advocacy of developing a proper human resources strategy to attract and retain talent. Another third level ranking is to “implement the performance management development system.” This holds great promise, if properly implemented, as a performance appraisal would encapsulate areas where development is needed. It is also linked to a salary increase which could provide the necessary motivation to follow it through. The fact that it is linked to a salary increase could help it to be taken seriously unlike its predecessor, the developmental appraisal system which was abandoned. Although there are minor variations, all 16 skill areas were rated as “good”, the proposition on skills is therefore rejected.

6.11 Helping District Curriculum Delivery

In Table 21 respondents describe key issues which help district curriculum delivery. The rationale for ending off the questionnaire with two key issues that help district curriculum delivery is that the respondents have had a chance to assess the organisation holistically by systematically going through the seven S’s. The respondents would be in a position to crystallise their thinking around just two key issues which help curriculum delivery.

“Good communication” is ranked first. This follows on logically in that improved communication came up under a number of propositions. The whole issue of communication seems to be a key factor in effective curriculum delivery. While communication falls under systems, it also cuts across many of the seven S’s. It is not surprising that communication has emerged so

prominently in this study as many of the techniques of organisation development and change management focus on good communication.

The second ranking is “training of district officials”. This is located in the skills proposition. It has been recognised that while the skills level rating of district officials is “good”, there needs to be more “excellent” ratings of skills. Given that the district is in the business of service delivery and not in the business of selling products, the skills level of district officials is absolutely crucial.

The third ranking is “good management style”. This follows on logically from the proposition on management style which was assessed as weak. All sorts of problems emerged under a poor management style.

The fourth ranking is “workshops for educators”. Workshops are one of the key systems in the district. Without workshops for educators, there is very little space for improving on curriculum delivery.

The fifth ranking is “regular school visits”. School visits are also a key system in the district. It is clear from the analysis of school visits, that they are vital in improving curriculum delivery. Another fifth level ranking is “support to schools”. This is similar to school visits but support can be given in other ways as well e.g. workshops, publications, and information meetings. This is also part of the systems in the district. This reinforces the district officials understanding that they primarily provide support with less emphasis on pressure.

These six issues then are the key to helping district curriculum delivery. It is interesting to note that issues under systems, style and skills have emerged in the top six issues to help curriculum delivery.

6.12 Hindering District Curriculum Delivery

In Table 22 respondents describe key issues which hinder district curriculum delivery. The respondents would be in a position to crystallise their thinking around just two key issues which hinder curriculum delivery.

“Poor communication” is ranked top as an issue which hinders curriculum delivery. The issue of communication has consistently emerged as a theme which the district needs to urgently tackle. The second highest ranking is “poor coordination between head-office and districts.” This problem has been discussed thoroughly under the proposition on structure. There is clearly tension between head-office and districts. One of the broader issues around this relationship is the issue of the autonomy of the district.

Another second level ranking is lack of capacity. This is congruent with a first level ranking recommendation in Table 3 which is to “fill all vacant posts”. It also emerged as a third level ranking on suggestion on staff (Table 15). There is a constant refrain from district officials that they are overworked because they are doing more than one job (JED, 2003).

The third level ranking is “poor management style”. This is congruent with “good management style” which was ranked third in Table 21 under helping district curriculum. Management style is a crucial variable in effective curriculum delivery and cannot be underestimated. Poor management style and the problems associated with it can certainly hinder curriculum delivery.

A fourth level ranking is “lack of planning”. This ties in with a first level ranking in Table 3, which provides one recommendation to better facilitate curriculum delivery. The problems with a lack of planning have been extensively discussed under the proposition on strategy. A second fourth level ranking is “poorly run workshops for schools” which has been analysed under systems. A third fourth level ranking is the “lack of dedication and commitment by some officials”. At the end of the day, effective district curriculum relies on dedication and commitment.

These seven issues are central hindrances to district curriculum delivery. It is interesting to note that issues under systems, structure, staff, style, strategy and skills have emerged in the top seven issues hindering curriculum delivery.

6.13 Conclusion

The interpretation of results has isolated the key issues in relation to district curriculum delivery. The Figures and Tables have been analysed to cut through to the most important issues on district curriculum delivery. Each proposition has been thoroughly analysed to determine whether it would be rejected or accepted. In the end, after rigorous analysis, the propositions on structure, style, staff and shared values were accepted. These four areas need urgent attention and reflect the weaknesses of the district. The propositions on strategy, systems and skills were rejected. These three areas are functional and reflect the strengths of the district. This is indicated in Table 23. It is noteworthy that most of the 'soft' S's were problematic while most of the 'hard' S's were functional.

Table 23: Summary of Propositions Accepted and Rejected

Proposition accepted	Proposition rejected
Structure	Strategy
Style	Systems
Staff	Skills
Shared Values	

The chapter ended off with a crystallisation of the key issues which help or hinder district curriculum delivery. Linkages were made with the literature review to reinforce or counter findings. By the end of this chapter, a holistic picture has emerged of the strengths and weaknesses of the district. Often there was continuity running through the various propositions such as the recurring theme of communication. The next step is to turn to the conclusions and recommendations.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

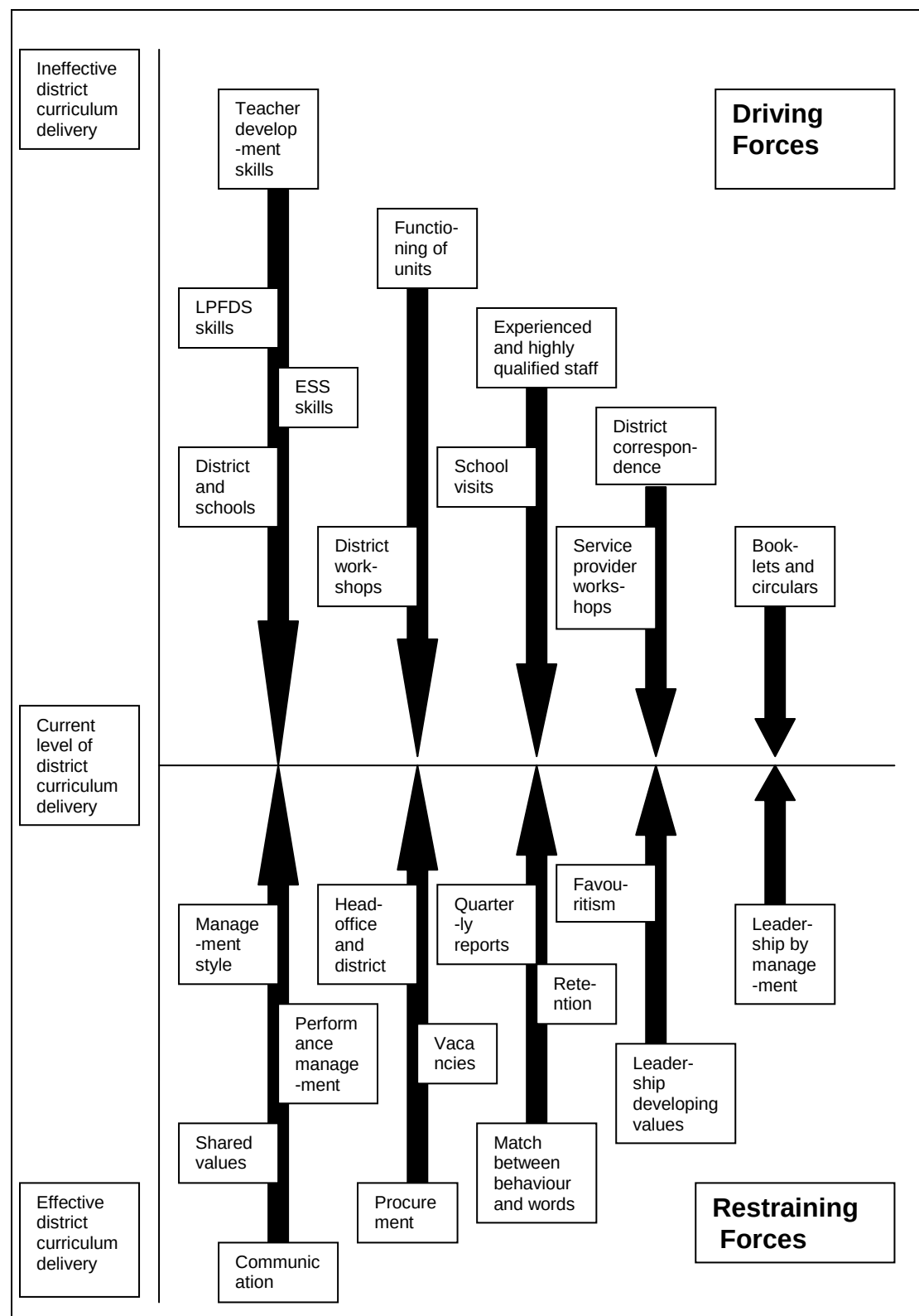
7.1 Introduction

This research set out to understand the factors involved in the organisational effectiveness of a district in curriculum delivery. Organisation development and change management perspectives have been used to understand the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum delivery in a district. The district has been analysed holistically through the lens of the seven S's. Chapter 6 has provided an in-depth interpretation of the results. A synthesis of the research is presented in this chapter. A key aspect of the interpretation is the suggestions for improvement. This chapter will provide recommendations in terms of the propositions analysed in chapter 6. Ideas for further research will also be offered.

7.2 Synthesising Model

A synthesising model is developed, which captures the main findings of this research. It is a Force-Field Analysis model. Force Field Analysis was originally developed by Lewin in 1947 (French & Bell, 1995). The synthesising model is presented in Figure 62. This is an important model in that it attempts to summarise the findings of this study in one diagram. The thrust of the model is to move towards the ideal state i.e. effective curriculum delivery. There are driving forces which push towards the ideal state. There are also restraining forces which prevent the ideal state from being achieved. At any one point in time, an equilibrium is achieved, where the two opposing forces balance each other out. This is the state of equilibrium in the time period of this study. The current level of district curriculum delivery is one third away from effective district curriculum delivery as depicted in Figure 62.

Figure 62: Synthesising model



The pertinent findings under each proposition have been isolated and presented in the model. These findings emerged in chapter 6 through the analysis of the results. The length of the arrows indicates the strength of the force. Long arrows indicate a strong force and short arrows indicate a weak force. The tags are attached to particular arrows. The tags closer to the tail end of the arrow have more power while those tags closer to the point of the arrow have less power. There is thus an order around the location of the tags. For example, the longest arrow in the restraining forces indicates that the most powerful factor is communication followed by shared values, performance management and management style in order of decreasing power.

7.3 Recommendations

The recommendations are dealt with under each proposition.

7.3.1 Recommendations on Strategy

The proposition on strategy was rejected therefore strategic processes are functional. While the operational plan is functional, the actual implementation needs improvement. The units need to work together more on their planning skills. The whole unit needs to be involved in drawing up the operational plan and not just a few individuals. There seems to be a level of duplication which needs to be removed. There needs to be improved communication between different units as all units work with exactly the same schools.

The system of quarterly reports, in particular, needs to be improved. Not only does the format need to be made clearer, but the quarterly reports also need to provide direction for the way forward. The integrated scorecard should not just be a lengthy checklist but the scorecard should instead use the four perspectives properly. All of the district curriculum staff need to be workshopped on the integrated scorecard. The GDE needs to provide much more support and training on these strategic planning tools.

Generally the district itself, needs to be involved in strategising. It needs to break out of the mould whereby strategising only occurs at head-office and implementation only occurs at the district. By involving itself in strategising, the district will have better ownership of the strategies and hence do better on the implementation of strategy. The level of strategising at the district needs to increase, obviously within the broad GDE strategic framework.

7.3.2 Recommendations on Structure

The proposition on structure was accepted hence there is a need for a major reworking of structure. The poor relationship between head-office and the district needs to improve substantially as this has the capacity to weaken the GDE as a whole. The GDE needs to find the right balance between centralisation and decentralisation so that it does not swing from pole to pole. There needs to be more autonomy from head-office so that districts can be more creative in responding to issues from schools.

Collaboration between units is an area of special importance. While the reduced size of the Curriculum Delivery subdirectorates in the 'tweaked organogram' should make this easier, continuous attention nevertheless needs to be paid to this aspect. Coordinators need to lead their units by example and there needs to be better support from management. Structures need to be staffed by people with strong characters and good academic qualifications.

7.3.3 Recommendations on Systems

Improved communication has been the highest ranking suggestion under almost all propositions. As communication has been dealt with under systems in the literature review, it will be looked at in this section. A distinction needs to be drawn between means of communication such as curriculum booklets and circulars and communication in general. The former were found to be fine while the latter was found to be very problematic. What follows deals with communication in general. Improved communication was the highest rank

under structure, communication and financial systems, style, shared values and the second highest suggestion under strategy. It was also the highest ranking issue helping curriculum delivery and the lack of communication was the highest ranking issue hindering curriculum delivery. The only three places where it did not rank highly were school visit and workshop systems, staff and skills. There is clearly a need for improved communication. This has emerged as the key recommendation of this study. Organisation development and change management specialise in a wide variety of techniques for improving communication. Some of these techniques should be urgently implemented.

The proposition on systems was rejected therefore the processes on systems are functional. However, the procurement system needs to function properly. As it stands, it has a negative effect on curriculum delivery. Information sessions on procurement need to be conducted. The procurement system needs improvement particularly around timely notification on the appointment of service providers. The administrative staff need to be better trained to do their work properly. There also needs to be more honesty and transparency in selecting service providers.

The second part of systems deals with recommendations on school visits and workshops. These two systems are absolutely crucial for providing effective curriculum delivery. The key recommendation here is the critical use of service providers in running workshops. The overdependence on service providers impacts on the job description of the district officials. There needs to be a balance between in-house and service provider workshops. A needs analysis, which is always spoken about, actually needs to be conducted. Workshop presentation skills need to be improved. Workshops need to be reviewed afterwards and the duplication of workshops should be eliminated.

District officials prefer a high support/low pressure combination. Given that the primary role of district curriculum officials is to provide support and that support is mostly provided through school visits, it is important that the whole system of school visits be improved on. Immediate feedback after a school visit is important in that educators are supposed to learn from these visits. In

addition, the purpose and focus of each school visit needs to be clear both to the district official and the school. The system of matrix visits also requires improvement.

7.3.4 Recommendations on Style

Style needs drastic improvement as the proposition on style was accepted. The district's management style has many problems. There needs to be a closer match between what managers say and what they do. For leaders, actions speak louder than words. Downward communication needs to be balanced by upward and lateral communication. Consultation needs to be more practiced in the district. One of the responsibilities of management is to create communication systems. Given that improved communication has come up under almost every proposition including this one, it is vital that management improves its practice around communication systems. The leadership provided by management also needs improvement.

The practice of entrenched favouritism needs to be done away with. This flies in the face of the GDEs commitment to an anti-bias approach and its principles of equity and *ubuntu*. Management needs to be more present at meetings, school visits and workshops. Management also needs to be more approachable, work more closely with and talk more to district officials. Lastly a top-down management style should be done away with. It is imperative that management style is improved, because this has a major impact on all the other S's in the district.

7.3.5 Recommendations on Staff

The proposition on staff was accepted, hence there is a major impetus for improvement on staff. The performance management of staff needs serious reworking. This should be possible given the impetus with the introduction of the Performance Management and Development Scheme. However, as with most new systems, they depend on the effectiveness with which they are implemented. Written job descriptions are a necessity, particularly around

differences of opinion, which are likely to emerge in the performance appraisal process. The high turnover of staff means that the district cannot retain its skilled officials for very long. It has to continually be training people on the job. This ties in directly with the lack of upward mobility possibilities at the district. Most companies today assist their employees with career pathing. If this does not happen, the district will continue to lose its best staff.

Much more effort needs to go into staff development. This should not be a haphazard process. There needs to be better conceptualisation around which training models work best. Recruiting skilled, able and loyal staff would make a big difference to the district's ability to provide effective curriculum delivery. All vacancies need to be filled so that the workload becomes manageable. The GDE needs to have a quicker turn around time in relation to vacancies being filled, particularly because filling old vacancies inevitably creates new ones.

Staff motivation is very important. Generally people have not joined the teaching profession because it will make them rich. They depend a lot on the intrinsic rewards in educating others. District officials are no longer in the classroom. Their motivation levels can vary drastically. Most district officials do not become educators so they can one day become district officials. Through a variety of circumstances, including promotion possibilities, they find themselves in district offices. It is crucial that effort goes into motivating district officials. There is also mention of the need for dedication and commitment in district officials. In short, the district needs to develop a holistic human resources strategy

7.3.6 Recommendations on Shared Values

The proposition on shared values was accepted hence there is a major impetus for improvement on shared values. This is the weakest area of the district. The crucial finding here is that the district does not have any shared values. A key recommendation is that the district urgently needs to develop some shared values. These should not be imposed on district officials but

should be developed through a process of building consensus around what district officials would like. One of key roles of leaders is precisely to help develop shared values. This leadership role needs improvement.

A further recommendation here is to treat all district officials equally. This came up in management style as less favouritism and it has come up again under shared values in a slightly different form. Finding dignity, meaning and community at work depend on being treated as equals. Management needs to show more of an interest in district officials' work. If shared values are to be the glue, which holds the district together then far greater attention will need to be paid to this aspect of district life. The problems around poor communication and lack of teamwork probably exist at a deeper level as the lack of shared values in the district. If a substantial effort were to be made in improving shared values, the payoff in the other S's would be great.

7.3.7 Recommendations on Skills

The proposition on skills was rejected therefore skills levels are not a problem. The district needs to be praised here as the skills level seems to be consistently at a high level. This was consistent across all units. In the LPFDS unit, assessment and inclusion skills need to be improved. In the IDS unit, management support and Representative Council of Learners need improvement while curriculum management needs special attention. The Teacher Development unit needs to improve on making its programmes known.

Schools still need to rate the skills level of district officials for a more complete picture. Raising the skills level of district officials is still a challenge for the district. While all skills were rated as "good" there needs to be far more "excellent" ratings. The district is only as good as its district officials are. Proper programmes of development should be put in place where real skills development takes place. A skills audit of district officials needs to be done. This would then guide the district in what types of skills development needs to

occur. At the same time, an effort must be made to recruit competent and experienced individuals into the district who already have a deep skills base. A proper implementation of the Performance Management and Development Scheme would also indicate in which areas district officials need to improve and also provide a form of motivation for this to occur. In general, there needs to be better alignment between the different S's.

7.4 Suggested Areas for Future Research

The same research needs to be carried out to determine the schools' perceptions of the JED. The schools, after all, are the customers of the JED. The findings can then be compared with these results. It has been suggested, on numerous occasions, that schools may rate district officials differently to the way district officials have rated themselves.

The research on organisational effectiveness of district curriculum delivery can also be done in all districts of the GDE and results of the different districts can then be compared to each other to build up a picture for the whole province. This should include both district officials and schools as target groups. Research also needs to be undertaken individually on each S. This will deepen our understanding of a particular S's quite considerably.

Research is needed to establish the level of support to schools provided by district officials. Basic issues such as the length of time an official spends in a school need to be established. Is the support given in the classroom or outside the classroom? How many visits does an educator receive per annum from a district official in his/her learning area? This is a critical area for future research. Given that support is one of the key roles of district officials, the level of support needs to be researched.

7.5 Conclusion

It was stated at the outset of this research that the district is a key institution in effective curriculum delivery. The JED has been holistically analysed by systematically going through the 'McKinsey Seven-S Framework'. The

strengths and weaknesses of the district have been investigated. Strategy, systems and skills seem to be functioning well. There is room for a great deal of improvement on structure, style, staff and shared values. The JED has both strengths and weaknesses. It needs to build on its strengths and reduce the weaknesses. Although this study analysed the problems in the district in detail, the JED nevertheless obtained the highest matric results in 2003 out of all 12 Gauteng districts (The Star, 2003).

This type of rigorous investigation has lessons for how districts operate. It has helped move away from a superficial understanding of and simplistic generalisations about districts. Districts are not homogenous blocs but contain pockets of strength and pockets of weakness. The usefulness of providing feedback to an organisation has been demonstrated. This information could not have been known beforehand. Organisation development is committed to assisting organisations improve their processes. Organisation development involves people in the process of bringing about change in their own organisations. It was stated at the outset that a key aim of this research was to develop recommendations to improve on practice. Recommendations have been crystallised from a lengthy process of analysis. It is hoped that the district officials in the JED will follow through with these recommendations. Hopefully this research will assist in the process of making the JED, and all other districts in South Africa, more effective in curriculum delivery.

Effective organisations remain a major challenge both in the private and public sector. This study fills a glaring gap in the research on the organisational effectiveness of district curriculum delivery.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

So often one relies on hearsay and impressions. Proper feedback is essential in attempting to improve district curriculum delivery. While this questionnaire is for academic purposes, it is hoped that your answers will contribute to improved curriculum delivery in the district.

This questionnaire is totally confidential. Please be honest in your answers. Thank you for your time in answering this questionnaire.

Please circle the appropriate answer in the boxes provided below. A don't know option is included in all questions, if you feel you are not able to answer a question.

1. Biographical Data

1.1 How many years have you been in education?

1.2 What are your qualifications? (Please indicate in all categories)

Matric + 2 (diploma)	Yes	No
Matric + 3 (diploma)	Yes	No
Matric + 4 (diploma)	Yes	No
Bachelors degree	Yes	No
Postgraduate teaching diploma	Yes	No
Honours degree	Yes	No
Masters degree	Yes	No
Doctorate	Yes	No

1.3 How effective is the district in curriculum delivery?

Don't know	not at all effective	somewhat effective	moderately effective	very effective
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1.4 Provide one recommendation on how the district could better facilitate curriculum delivery.

2. Strategy

2.1 How would you rate the district's operational plan?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
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2.2 How well does the district implement its operational plan?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

2.3 How would you rate the integrated scorecard?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

2.4 How well does the system of quarterly reports function?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

2.5 What can you suggest to improve on strategy in the district?

3. Structure

3.1 One of the key structures is your unit/phase. How well does your unit/phase function?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

3.2 How effective is the coordination between CDS units?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

3.3 How would you describe the relationship between head-office and the district office?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

3.4 How would you describe the relationship between the district office and schools?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

3.5 How autonomous should districts be?

Don't know	not at all autonomous	somewhat autonomous	moderately autonomous	very autonomous
------------	-----------------------	---------------------	-----------------------	-----------------

3.6 What can you suggest to improve on structures in the district?

4. Systems

a) Communication Systems

4.1 Head-office communicates policies primarily through circulars. How have you found the circulars?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

4.2 Head-office provides curriculum booklets from time to time. How have you found these booklets?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

4.3 How effective is the correspondence from the district office to the schools?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

b) Financial Systems

4.4 How well does the district's financial system function?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

4.5 How well does the district's procurement system function?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

4.6 What can you suggest to improve on systems in the district?

c) School Visits

4.7 Your unit visits schools from time to time. How would you rate these visits?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

4.8 When visiting schools what combination of support and pressure does your unit generally provide?

Don't know	low support- low pressure	high pressure- low support	low pressure- high support	high support- high pressure-
------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------

4.9 Once a term, matrix visits are carried out. How would you rate these matrix visits?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
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d) Workshops

4.10 How would you rate your unit's presentation of workshops?

Don't know	very poorly presented	poorly presented	well presented	excellently presented
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4.11 How would you rate the presentation of workshops that your unit gets service providers to run?

Don't know	very poorly presented	poorly presented	well presented	excellently presented
------------	-----------------------	------------------	----------------	-----------------------

4.12 What can you suggest to improve on school visits and workshops in the district?

5. Style

5.1 What are your impressions of the management style (senior manager, deputy director, unit coordinators) in the district?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

5.2 How closely does the behaviour of management match with what they say?

Don't know	not at all close	somewhat close	moderately close	very close
------------	------------------	----------------	------------------	------------

5.3 How do district officials come across when working with schools?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

5.4 How would you rate the leadership provided by management?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

5.5 What can you suggest to improve on management style in the district?

6. Staff

6.1 How motivated is the district staff for providing effective curriculum delivery?

Don't know	Not at all motivated	somewhat motivated	moderately motivated	highly motivated
------------	----------------------	--------------------	----------------------	------------------

6.2 How well trained are district staff for providing effective curriculum delivery?

Don't know	not trained at all	somewhat trained	moderately trained	highly trained
------------	--------------------	------------------	--------------------	----------------

6.3 How is the performance management of staff carried out?

Don't know	very poorly	poorly	well	excellently
------------	-------------	--------	------	-------------

6.4 What is the calibre of staff recruited by the district?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

6.5 How well does the district retain staff?

Don't know	very low turnover	low turnover	high turnover	very high turnover
------------	-------------------	--------------	---------------	--------------------

6.6 Do you have a clear, written job description? Yes/no

6.7 Has career pathing been done for you? Yes/no

6.8 What can you suggest to improve on staff in the district?

7. Shared Values

Shared values are the values that hold the district together. Shared values are the values, beliefs and attitudes that the district upholds. This is sometimes referred to as the culture of the district.

7.1 In your opinion, what are the shared values of the district?

7.2 How would you rate the shared values, which hold the district together?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

7.3 What is the work ethos of the district officials in general?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

7.4 What role does the leadership play in developing the values of district officials?

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

7.5 What can you suggest to improve on shared values in the district?

8. Skills

P.S. Please answer all the questions for each unit below even if you are not in that unit.

Please rate the skills level of staff in the **Learning Programmes, Framework Development and Support unit** in the following areas:

8.1 Curriculum content:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.2 Curriculum methodology:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.3 Assessment:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.4 Inclusion:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

How would you rate the skills level of staff in the **Institutional Development and Support unit** in the following areas?

8.5 Admissions:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.6 Management support:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.7 School Governing Body:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.8 Representative Council of Learners:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.9 Curriculum management:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.10 Learning and teaching support materials

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

How would you rate the skills level of staff in the **Education Support Services unit** in the following areas?

8.11 Psychological Services

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.12 Addressing barriers to learning and development:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.13 Sports and culture:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.14 Youth and culture:

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

How would you rate the skills level of staff in the **Teacher Development unit** in the following areas?

8.15 Teacher development

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.16 Teacher centre

Don't know	very poor	poor	good	excellent
------------	-----------	------	------	-----------

8.17 What can you suggest to improve on the skills level in the district?

9. General

9.1 Describe two key issues, which help district curriculum delivery.

9.2 Describe two key issues, which hinder district curriculum delivery.

Thank you for your time!